



The Works Of Alexander Pope Esq.

In Nine Volumes Complete. With His Last Corrections, Additions, And
Improvements; As they were delivered to the Editor a little before his
Death

Containing The First of his Letters

Pope, Alexander

London, 1751

XX. From Mr. Wycherley.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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FROM MR. WYCHERLEY. 43

game, without being thought an eminent hand, (with which title Jacob has graciously dignify'd his adventurers and voluntiers in poetry.) Jacob creates poets, as Kings sometimes do knights, not for their honour, but for their money. Certainly he ought to be esteem'd a worker of miracles, who is grown rich by poetry.

*What Authors lose, their Booksellers have won,
So Pimps grow rich, while Gallants are undone.*

I am your, &c.

LETTER XX.

From Mr. WYCHERLEY.

May 26, 1709.

THE last I receiv'd from you was dated the 22d of May. I take your charitable hint to me very kindly, wherein you do like a true friend, and a true christian, and I shall endeavour to follow your advice, as well as your example.—As for your wishing to see your friend an Hermit with you, I cannot be said to leave the world, since I shall enjoy in your conversation all that I can desire of it; nay, can learn more from you alone, than from my
long

long experience of the great, or little vulgar in it.

As to the success of your poems in the late miscellany, which I told you of in my last; upon my word I made you no compliment, for you may be assur'd that all sort of readers like them, except they are writers too; but for them (I must needs say) the more they like them, they ought to be the less pleas'd with 'em: so that you do not come off with a bare saving game (as you call it) but have gain'd so much credit at first, that you must needs support it to the last: since you set up with so great a stock of good sense, judgment, and wit, that your judgment ensures all that your wit ventures at. The salt of your wit has been enough to give a relish to the whole insipid hotch-potch it is mingled with; and you will make Jacob's Ladder raise you to immortality, by which others are turn'd off shamefully to their damnation (for poetic thieves as they are) who think to be sav'd by others good works, how faulty soever their own are: but the coffee-house wits, or rather anti-wits the critics, prove their judgments by approving your wit; and even the news-mongers and poets will own, you have more invention than they; nay, the detractors or the envious, who never speak well of any body (not even of those they think well of

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of in their absence) yet will give you even in your absence their good word; and the critics only hate you, for being forced to speak well of you whether they will or no: All this is true upon the word of

Your, &c.

L E T T E R XXI.

From Mr. WYCHERLEY.

Aug. 11, 1709.

MY letters, so much inferior to yours, can only make up their scarcity of sense by their number of lines; which is like the Spaniards paying a debt of gold with a load of brass money. But to be a *plain dealer*, I must tell you, I will revenge the raillery of your letters by printing them (as Dennis did mine) without your knowledge too, which wou'd be a revenge upon your judgment for the raillery of your wit; for some dull rogues (that is the most in the world) might be such fools as to think what you said of me was in earnest: It is not the first time, your great wits have gain'd reputation by their paradoxical or ironical praises; your forefathers have done it, Erasmus and others. For all mankind who know me
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