



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

XXIII. More about the poems.

Nutzungsbedingungen

[urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-56122](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-56122)

FROM MR. WYCHERLEY. 49

the friendship of the world, rather to make a friend than be a friend ; but I am yours, as a true Plain-dealer.

L E T T E R XXIII.

From Mr. WYCHERLEY.

April 11, 1710.

I F I can do part of my business at Shrewsbury in a fortnight's time (which I propose to do) I will be soon after with you, and trouble you with my company, for the remainder of the summer : in the mean time I beg you to give yourself the pains of altering, or leaving out what you think superfluous in my papers, that I may endeavour to print such a number of them as you and I shall think fit, about Michaelmas next. In order to which (my dear friend) I beg you to be so kind to me, as to be severe to them ; that the critics may be less so ; for I had rather be condemn'd by my friend in private, than expos'd to my foes in public, the critics, or common judges, who are made such by having been old offenders themselves. Pray, believe I have as much faith in your friendship and sincerity, as I have deference to your judgment ; and as the best mark

E

of

of a friend is telling his friend his faults in private, so the next is concealing them from the public, 'till they are fit to appear. In the mean time I am not a little sensible of the great kindness you do me, in the trouble you take for me, in putting my Rhimes in tune, since good sounds set off often ill sense, as the Italian songs, whose good airs, with the worst words or meaning, make the best music; so by your tuning my Welsh harp, my rough sense may be the less offensive to the nicer ears of those critics, who deal more in sound than sense. Pray then take pity at once both of my readers and me, in shortning my barren abundance, and increasing their patience by it, as well as the obligations I have to you: And since no madrigaller can entertain the head, unless he pleases the ear; and since the crowded Opera's have left the best Comedies with the least audiences, 'tis a sign sound can prevail over sense; therefore soften my words, and strengthen my sense, and

Eris mihi magnus Apollo,

L E T T E R