

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

XXIV. Corrections sent.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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LETTER XXIV.

April 15, 1710.

Receiv'd your most extreme kind letter but I just now. It found me over those papers you mention, which have been my employment ever fince Easter-monday: I hope before Michaelmas to have discharg'd my task; which, upon the word of a friend, is the most pleasing one I cou'd be put upon. Since you are so near going into Shropshire, (whither I shall not care to write of this matter for fear of the miscarriage of any letters) I must defire your leave to give you a plain and fincere account of what I have found from a more ferious application to them. Upon comparison with the former volume, I find much more repeated than I till now imagin'd, as well as in the present volume, which, if (as you told me laft) you would have me dash over with a line, will deface the whole copy extremely, and to a degree that (I fear) may displease you. I have every where mark'd in the margins the page and line, both in this and the other part. But if you order me not to cross the lines, or would any way else limit my commission, you will oblige me by doing it in your next letter; for I am at once equally fearful of sparing you, and E 2

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of offending you by too impudent a correction. Hitherto however I have cross'd 'em so as to be legible, because you bade me. When I think all the repetitions are struck out in a copy, I sometimes find more upon dipping in the first volume, and the number encreases so much, that, I believe, more shortning will be requisite than you may be willing to bear with, unless you are in good earnest resolv'd to have no thought repeated. Pray, forgive this freedom, which as I must be sincere in this case so I could not but take; and let me know if I am to go on at this rate, or if you would prescribe any other method.

I am very glad you continue your resolution of seeing me in my Hermitage this summer; the sooner you return, the sooner I shall be happy, which indeed my want of any company that is entertaining or esteemable, together with frequent infirmities and pains, hinder me from being in your absence. 'Tis (I am sure) a real truth, that my sickness cannot make me quite weary of myself when I have you with me; and I shall want no company but yours, when you are here.

You see how freely and with how little care I talk rather than write to you: this is one of the many advantages of friendship, that one can say to one's friend the things that stand in need

of pardon, and at the same time be sure of it. Indeed I do not know whether or no the letters of friends are the worse for being sit for none else to read. 'Tis an argument of the trust reposed in a friend's good nature, when one writes such things to him as require a good portion of it. I have experienced yours so often and so long, that I can now no more doubt of the greatness of it, than I hope you do of the greatness of my affection, or of the sincerity with which I am, &c.

LETTER XXV.

From Mr. WYCHERLEY.

April 27, 1710.

Y O U give me an account in your letter of the trouble you have undergone for me, in comparing my papers you took down with you, with the old printed volume, and with one another, of that bundle you have in your hands; amongst which (you say) you find numerous Repetitions of the same thoughts and subjects; all which, I must confess, my want of memory has prevented me from imagining, as well as made me capable of committing: since, of all figures, that of Tautology is the last I would

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