



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

XXV. From Mr. Wycherley. In answer to the account of the state of his
papers.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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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 fit 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.

L E T T E R XXV.

From Mr. WYCHERLEY.

April 27, 1710.

YOU 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

use, or least forgive myself for. But seeing is believing; wherefore I will take some pains to examine and compare those papers in your hands with one another, as well as with the former printed copies, or books of my damn'd Miscellanies; all which (as bad a memory as I have) with a little more pains and care I think I can remedy. Therefore I would not have you give yourself more trouble about them, which may prevent the pleasure you have, and may give the world in writing upon new subjects of your own, whereby you will much better entertain yourself and others. Now as to your remarks upon the whole volume of my papers; all that I desire of you is to mark in the margin (without defacing the copy at all) either any repetition of words, matter, or sense, or any thoughts, or words too much repeated; which if you will be so kind as to do for me, you will supply my want of Memory with your good one, and my deficiencies of sense, with the infallibility of yours; which if you do, you will most infinitely oblige me, who almost repent the trouble I have given you, since so much. Now as to what you call freedom with me, (which you desire me to forgive) you may be assur'd I would not forgive you unless you did use it; for I am so far from thinking your plainness an offence to me, that
I think

I think it a charity and an obligation ; which I shall always acknowledge, with all sort of gratitude to you for it ; who am, &c.

All the news I have to send you, is, that poor Mr. Betterton is going to make his Exit from the stage of this world, the Gout being gotten up into his head, and (as the Physicians say) will certainly carry him off suddenly.

L E T T E R XXVI.

May 2, 1710.

I Am sorry you persist to take ill my not accepting your invitation, and to find (if I mistake not) your exception not unmix'd with some suspicion. Be certain I shall most carefully observe your request, not to cross over, or deface the copy of your papers for the future, and only to mark in the margin the Repetitions. But as this can serve no further than to get rid of those repetitions, and no way rectify the Method, nor connect the Matter, nor improve the Poetry in expression or numbers, without further blotting, adding, and altering ; so it really is my opinion and desire, that you should take your papers out of my hands into your own, and that no alterations may be made but when both us are present ; when you may be satisfied with every blot, as well as