



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

II. Mr. Walsh to Mr. Pope. Concerning pastoral and pastoral comedy.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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them over several times with great satisfaction. The Preface is very judicious and very learned; and the Verses very tender and easy. The Author seems to have a particular genius for that kind of poetry, and a Judgment that much exceeds the years you told me he was of. He has taken very freely from the ancients, but what he has mix'd of his own with theirs, is not inferior to what he has taken from them. 'Tis no flattery at all to say, that Virgil had written nothing so good at his age^c. I shall take it as a favour if you will bring me acquainted with him: and if he will give himself the trouble any morning to call at my house, I shall be very glad to read the verses over with him, and give him my opinion of the particulars more largely than I can well do in this letter. I am, Sir, &c.

L E T T E R I I.

Mr. W A L S H t o Mr. P O P E.

June 24, 1706.

I Receiv'd the favour of your letter, and shall be very glad of the continuance of a correspondence by which I am like to be so great a

^c Sixteen. P.

gainer.

gainer. I hope, when I have the happiness of seeing you again in London, not only to read over the verses I have now of yours, but more that you have written since; for I make no doubt but any one who writes so well, must write more. Not that I think the most voluminous poets always the best; I believe the contrary is rather true. I mention'd somewhat to you in London of a Pastoral Comedy, which I should be glad to hear you had thought upon since. I find Menage in his observations upon Tasso's *Aminta*, reckons up fourscore pastoral plays in Italian: and in looking over my old Italian books, I find a great many pastoral and piscatory plays, which, I suppose, Menage reckons together. I find also by Menage, that Tasso is not the first that writ in that kind, he mentioning another before him which he himself had never seen, nor indeed have I. But as the *Aminta*, *Pastor Fido*, and *Filli di Sciro* of Bonarelli are the three best, so, I think, there is no dispute but *Aminta* is the best of the three: not but that the discourses in *Pastor Fido* are more entertaining and copious in several people's opinion, tho' not so proper for pastoral; and the fable of Bonarelli more surprizing. I do not remember many in other languages, that have written in this kind with success. Racan's *Bergeries* are much inferior to his lyric poems;

poems; and the Spaniards are all too full of conceits. Rapin will have the design of pastoral plays to be taken from the Cyclops of Euripides. I am sure there is nothing of this kind in English worth mentioning, and therefore you have that field open to yourself. You see I write to you without any sort of constraint or method, as things come into my head, and therefore use the same freedom with me, who am, &c.

L E T T E R I I I .

To Mr. W A L S H .

Windfor-Forest, July 2, 1706.

I Cannot omit the first opportunity of making you my acknowledgments for reviewing those papers of mine. You have no less right to correct me, than the same hand that rais'd a tree has to prune it. I am convinced as well as you, that one may correct too much; for in poetry, as in painting, a man may lay colours one upon another, till they stiffen and deaden the piece. Besides, to bestow heightening on every part, is monstrous: some parts ought to be lower than the rest; and nothing looks more ridiculous than a work, where the
thoughts,