



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

Letter I. To Mr. Cromwell.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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LETTERS

TO AND FROM

H. CROMWELL, Esq.

From the Year 1708 to 1711.

LETTER I.

March 18, 1708.

I Believe it was with me when I left the Town, as it is with a great many men when they leave the World, whose loss itself they do not so much regret, as that of their friends whom they leave behind in it. For I do not know one thing for which I can envy London, but for your continuing there. Yet I guess you will expect me to recant this expression, when I tell you that Sappho (by which heathenish name you have christen'd a very orthodox Lady) did not accompany me into the Country. Well, you have your Lady in the Town still, and I have my Heart in the Country still, which being wholly unemploy'd as yet, has the more room

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room in it for my friends, and does not want a corner at your service. You have extremely obliged me by your frankness and kindness; and if I have abus'd it by too much freedom on my part, I hope you will attribute it to the natural openness of my temper, which hardly knows how to show Respect, where it feels Affection. I would love my Friend, as my Mistress, without ceremony; and hope a little rough usage sometimes may not be more displeasing to the one, than it is to the other.

If you have any curiosity to know in what manner I live, or rather lose a life, Martial will inform you in one line:

Prandeo, poto, cano, ludo, lego, cæno, quiesco.

Every day with me is literally another yesterday, for it is exactly the same: It has the same business, which is Poetry, and the same pleasure, which is Idleness. A man might indeed pass his time much better, but I question if any man could pass it much easier. If you will visit our shades this spring, which I very much desire, you may perhaps instruct me to manage my game more wisely; but at present I am satisfy'd to trifle away my time any way, rather than let it stick by me; as shop-keepers are glad to be rid of those goods at any rate, which would otherwise always be lying upon their hands.

Sir,

Sir, if you will favour me sometimes with your letters, it will be a great satisfaction to me on several accounts; and on this in particular, that it will show me (to my comfort) that even a wise man is sometimes very idle; for so you must needs be when you can find leisure to write to

Your, &c.

L E T T E R I I .

April 27, 1708.

I Have nothing to say to you in this letter; but I was resolv'd to write to tell you so. Why should not I content myself with so many great Examples of deep Divines, profound Casuists, grave Philosophers; who have written, not letters only, but whole Tomes and voluminous Treatises about Nothing? Why should a fellow like me, who all his life does nothing, be ashamed to write nothing? and that to one who has nothing to do but to read it? But perhaps you'll say, the whole world has something to do, something to talk of, something to wish for, something to be employ'd about: But pray, Sir, cast up the account, put all these somethings together, and what is the sum total but just nothing? I have