



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. To the same.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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

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 II.

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 asham'd 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

no

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no more to say, but to desire you to give my service (that is nothing) to your friends, and to believe that I am nothing more than

Your, &c.

Ex nihilo nil fit.

LUCR.

LETTER III.

May 10, 1708.

YOU talk of fame and glory, and of the great men of Antiquity: Pray, tell me, what are all your great dead men, but so many little living letters? What a vast reward is here for all the ink wasted by Writers, and all the blood spilt by Princes? There was in old time one Severus a Roman Emperor. I dare say you never call'd him by any other name in your life: and yet in his days he was styled Lucius, Septimius, Severus, Pius, Pertinax, Augustus, Parthicus, Adiabenicus, Arabicus, Maximus, and what not? What a prodigious waste of letters has time made! what a number have here dropt off, and left the poor surviving seven unattended! For my own part, four are all I have to take care for; and I'll be judg'd by you if any man cou'd live in less compass? Well, for the future I'll drown all high thoughts