



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

VI. Of his Juvenile Poems.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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FROM H. CROMWELL, Esq. 85

If you will oblige me at your leisure with the confirmation of your recovery, under your own hand, it will be extremely grateful to me, for next to the pleasure of seeing my friends, is that I take in hearing from them; and in this particular I am beyond all acknowledgments obliged to our friend Mr. Wycherley. I know I need no apology to you for speaking of him, whose example as I am proud of following in all things, so in nothing more than in professing myself, like him,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R VI.

March 7, 1709.

YOU had long before this time been troubled with a letter from me, but that I deferred it till I could send you either the ^a Miscellany, or my continuation of the version of Statius. The first I imagin'd you might have had before now, but since the contrary has happen'd, you may draw this moral from it, That authors in general are more ready to write nonsense than booksellers are to publish it. I had

^a Jacob Tonson's sixth volume of Poetical Miscellanies, in which Mr. Pope's

Pastorals, and some versions of Homer and Chaucer were first printed. P.

I know not what extraordinary flux of rhyme upon me for three days together, in which time all the verses you see added, have been written; which I tell you, that you may more freely be severe upon them. 'Tis a mercy I do not assault you with a number of original Sonnets and Epigrams, which our modern bards put forth in the spring-time, in as great abundance, as trees do blossoms, a very few whereof ever come to the fruit, and please no longer than just in their birth. They make no less haste to bring their flowers of wit to the press, than gardeners to bring their other flowers to the market, which if they can't get off their hands in the morning are sure to die before night. Thus the same reason that furnishes Covent-garden with those nosegays you so delight in, supplies the *Muses Mercury* and *British Apollo* (not to say *Jacob's Miscellanies*) with verses. And it is the happiness of this age, that the modern invention of printing poems for pence a-piece, has brought the nosegays of Parnassus to bear the same price; whereby the publick-spirited Mr. Henry Hills of Black-friars has been the cause of great ease and singular comfort to all the learned, who never over-abounding in transitory coin, should not be discontented (methinks) even tho' poems were distributed gratis about the streets,
like

like Bunyan's sermons and other pious treatises, usually publish'd in a like volume and character.

The time now drawing nigh, when you use with Sappho to cross the water in an evening to Spring-garden, I hope you will have a fair opportunity of ravishing her: — I mean only (as Oldfox in the Plain-dealer says) thro' the ear, with your well-penn'd verses. I wish you all the pleasures which the season and the nymph can afford; the best company, the best coffee, and the best news you can desire: and what more to wish you than this, I do not know; unless it be a great deal of patience to read and examine the verses I send you: I promise you in return a great deal of deference to your judgment, and an extraordinary obedience to your sentiments for the future, (to which, you know, I have been sometimes a little refractory.) If you will please to begin where you left off last, and mark the margins, as you have done in the pages immediately before (which you will find corrected to your sense since your last perusal) you will extremely oblige me, and improve my translation. Besides those places which may deviate from the sense of the author, it would be very kind in you to observe any deficiencies in the diction or numbers. The Hiatus in particular I would avoid as much as possible, to

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which you are certainly in the right to be a profess'd enemy: tho', I confess, I could not think it possible at all times to be avoided by any writer, till I found by reading Malherbe lately, that there is scarce any throughout his poems. I thought your observation true enough to be pass'd into a rule, but not a rule without exceptions, nor that ever it had been reduced to practice: But this example of one of the most correct and best of their Poets has undeceived me, and confirms your opinion very strongly, and much more than Mr. Dryden's authority, who, tho' he made it a rule, seldom observ'd it.

Your, &c.

L E T T E R VII.

June 10, 1709.

I Have receiv'd part of the version of Statius, and return you my thanks for your remarks, which I think to be just, except where you cry out (like one in Horace's Art of Poetry) *pulchre, bene, recte!* There I have some fears you are often, if not always, in the wrong.

One of your objections, namely on that passage,

The rest revolving years shall ripen into fate,
may