



## **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**

X. The use of poetical studies. A panegyrick upon dogs.

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**Nutzungsbedingungen**

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Rich, who, like him, disdains all proposals of peace and accommodation. Several libels have been secretly affixed to the great gates of his imperial palace in Bridges-street; and a memorial, representing the distresses of these persons, has been accidentally dropt (as we are credibly informed by a person of quality) out of his first minister the chief box-keeper's pocket, at a late conference of the said person of quality and others, on the part of the Confederates, and his Theatrical Majesty on his own part. Of this you may expect a copy, as soon as it shall be transmitted to us from a good hand. As for the late Congress, it is here reported, that it has not been wholly ineffectual; but this wants confirmation; yet we cannot but hope the concurring prayers and tears of so many wretched ladies may induce this haughty prince to reason.

I am, &c.

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## LETTER X.

Oct. 19, 1709.

I May truly say I am more obliged to you this summer than to any of my acquaintance, for had it not been for the two kind letters you sent me, I had been perfectly *oblitus-*

H 2

*que*



*que meorum, obliviscendus & illis.* The only companions I had were those Muses, of whom Tully says, *Adolescentiam alunt, senectutem oblectant, secundas res ornant, adversis perfugium ac solatium præbent, delectant domi, non impediunt foris, pernoctant nobiscum, peregrinantur, rusticantur*: which indeed is as much as ever I expected from them: For the Muses, if you take them as companions, are very pleasant and agreeable; but whoever should be forced to live or depend upon 'em, would find himself in a very bad condition. That Quiet, which Cowley calls the *Companion of Obscurity*, was not wanting to me, unless it was interrupted by those fears you so justly guess I had for our friend's welfare. 'Tis extremely kind in you to tell me the news you heard of him, and you have deliver'd me from more anxiety than he imagines me capable of on his account, as I am convinced by his long silence. However, the love of some things rewards itself, as of virtue, and of Mr. Wycherley. I am surprized at the danger, you tell me, he has been in, and must agree with you, that our nation would have lost in him, as much wit and probity, as would have remain'd (for aught I know) in the rest of it. My concern for his friendship will excuse me (since I know you honour him so much, and since you know I love him above all men)

if



if I vent a part of my uneasiness to you, and tell you, that there has not been wanting one, to insinuate malicious untruths of me to Mr. Wycherley, which, I fear, may have had some effect upon him. If so, he will have a greater punishment for his credulity than I could wish him, in that fellow's acquaintance. The loss of a faithful creature is something, tho' of ever so contemptible an one; and if I were to change my dog for such a man as the aforesaid, I should think my dog undervalued: (who follows me about as constantly here in the country, as I was us'd to do Mr. Wycherley in the town.)

Now I talk of my Dog, that I may not treat of a worse subject, which my spleen tempts me to, I will give you some account of him; a thing not wholly unprecedented, since Montaigne (to whom I am but a dog in comparison) has done the same thing of his Cat. *Dic mihi quid melius desidiosus agam?* You are to know then, that as 'tis likeness begets affection, so my favourite dog is a little one, a lean one, and none of the finest shap'd. He is not much a spaniel in his fawning, but has (what might be worth any man's while to imitate him in) a dumb surly sort of kindness, that rather shows itself when he thinks me ill-us'd by others, than when we walk quietly and peaceably by



ourselves. If it be the chief point of friendship to comply with a friend's motions and inclinations, he possesses this in an eminent degree; he lies down when I sit, and walks when I walk, which is more than many good friends can pretend to, witness our walk a year ago in St. James's Park.—Histories are more full of examples of the fidelity of dogs than of friends, but I will not insist upon many of them, because it is possible some may be almost as fabulous as those of Pylades and Orestes, &c. I will only say for the honour of dogs, that the two most antient and esteemable books, sacred and prophane, extant (viz. the Scripture and Homer) have shewn a particular regard to these animals. That of Toby is the more remarkable, because there seem'd no manner of reason to take notice of the dog, besides the great humanity of the author. Homer's account of Ulysses's dog Argus is the most pathetic imaginable, all the circumstances consider'd, and an excellent proof of the old bard's goodness. Ulysses had left him at Ithaca when he embark'd for Troy, and found him at his return after twenty years (which by the way is not unnatural, as some critics have said, since I remember the dam of my dog was twenty-two years old when she dy'd: May the omen of  
longevity



longævity prove fortunate to her successors)  
You shall have it in verse.

A R G U S.

When wise Ulysses, from his native coast  
Long kept by wars, and long by tempests tost,  
Arriv'd at last, poor, old, disguis'd, alone,  
To all his friends, and ev'n his Queen unknown;  
Chang'd as he was, with age, and toils, and cares,  
Furrow'd his rev'rend face, and white his hairs,  
In his own palace forc'd to ask his bread,  
Scorn'd by those slaves his former bounty fed,  
Forgot of all his own domestic crew;  
The faithful dog alone his rightful master knew!  
Unfed, unhous'd, neglected, on the clay,  
Like an old servant now cashier'd, he lay;  
Touch'd with resentment of ungrateful man,  
And longing to behold his ancient Lord again.  
Him when he saw—he rose, and crawl'd to meet,  
(’Twas all he cou’d) and fawn’d, and kiss’d his  
feet,  
Seiz’d with dumb joy—then falling by his side,  
Own’d his returning Lord, look’d up, and dy’d!

Plutarch relating how the Athenians were  
obliged to abandon Athens in the time of The-  
mistocles, steps back again out of the way of his  
history, purely to describe the lamentable cries  
and howlings of the poor dogs they left behind.  
He makes mention of one, that follow’d his



master across the sea to Salamis, where he dy'd, and was honour'd with a tomb by the Athenians, who gave the name of the Dog's Grave to that part of the island where he was buried. This respect to a dog in the most polite people of the world, is very observable. A modern instance of gratitude to a dog (tho' we have but few such) is, that the chief order of Denmark (now injuriously call'd the order of the Elephant) was instituted in memory of the fidelity of a dog, nam'd Wild-brat, to one of their Kings who had been deserted by his subjects: he gave his Order this motto, or to this effect (which still remains) *Wild-brat was faithful*. Sir William Trumbull has told me a story<sup>a</sup> which he heard from one that was present: King Charles I. being with some of his court during his troubles, a discourse arose what sort of dogs deserv'd pre-eminence, and it being on all hands agreed to belong either to the spaniel or grey-hound, the King gave his opinion on the part of the grey-hound, because (said he) it has all the Good-nature of the other without the Fawning. A good piece of satire upon his courtiers, with which I will conclude my discourse of dogs. Call me a cynic, or what you please, in revenge for all this impertinence, I will be contented; provided you will but be-

<sup>a</sup> Sir Philip Warwick tells this story in his Memoirs.



FROM H. CROMWELL, Esq. 105

lieve me, when I say a bold word for a Christian, that, of all dogs, you will find none more faithful than

Your, &c.

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L E T T E R XI.

April 10, 1710.

I Had written to you sooner, but that I made some scruple of sending profane things to you in holy week. Besides, our family would have been scandaliz'd to see me write, who take it for granted I write nothing but ungodly verses. I assure you, I am look'd upon in the neighbourhood for a very well-dispos'd person, no great Hunter indeed, but a great admirer of the noble sport, and only unhappy in my want of constitution for that, and Drinking. They all say, 'tis pity I am so sickly, and I think 'tis pity they are so healthy. But I say nothing that may destroy their good opinion of me: I have not quoted one Latin author since I came down, but have learn'd without book a song of Mr. Thomas Durfey's, who is your only Poet of tolerable reputation in this country. He makes all the merriment in our entertainments, and but for him, there would be so miserable a dearth of catches, that, I fear, they would put either the  
Parson