



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

XXIV.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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

waking knew not where he was, in the short passage from Corcyra to Ithaca. I like Trapp's versions for their justness; his Psalm is excellent, the prodigies in the first Georgic judicious (whence I conclude that 'tis easier to turn Virgil justly in blank verse, than rhyme.) The eclogue of Gallus, and fable of Phaeton pretty well; but he is very faulty in his numbers; the fate of Phaeton might run thus,

*The blasted Phaeton with blazing hair,
Shot gliding thro' the vast abyss of air,
And tumbled headlong, like a falling star.* }

I am,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R XXIV.

Nov. 24, 1710.

TO make use of that freedom and familiarity of style, which we have taken up in our correspondence, and which is more properly talking upon paper, than writing; I will tell you without any preface, that I never took Tycho Brahe for one of the ancients, or in the least an acquaintance of Lucan's; nay, 'tis a mercy on this occasion that I do not give you an account of his life and conversation; as how he liv'd some years like an enchanted knight in

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a certain island, with a tale of a King of Denmark's mistress that shall be nameless—But I have compassion on you, and would not for the world you should stay any longer among the Genii and Semidei Manes, you know where; for if once you get so near the moon, Sappho will want your presence in the clouds and inferior regions; not to mention the great loss Drury-lane will sustain, when Mr. C—— is in the milky way. These celestial thoughts put me in mind of the priests you mention, who are a sort of Sortilegi in one sense, because in their lottery there are more blanks than prizes; the adventurers being at best in an uncertainty, whereas the setters-up are sure of something. Priests indeed in their character, as they represent God, are sacred; and so are Constables as they represent the King; but you will own a great many of them are very odd fellows, and the devil of any likeness in them. Yet I can assure you, I honour the good as much as I detest the bad, and I think, that in condemning these, we praise those. The translations from Ovid I have not so good an opinion of as you; because I think they have little of the main characteristic of this author, a graceful easiness. For let the sense be ever so exactly render'd, unless an author looks like himself, in his air, habit, and manner, 'tis a disguise, and not a translation.

FROM H. CROMWELL, Esq. 137

translation. But as to the Psalm, I think David is much more beholden to the translator than Ovid; and as he treated the Roman like a Jew, so he has made the Jew speak like a Roman.

Your, &c.

LETTER XXV.

From Mr. CROMWELL.

Dec. 5, 1710.

THE same judgment we made on Rowe's sixth of Lucan will serve for his part of the sixth, where I find this memorable line,

*Parque novum Fortuna videt concurrere, bellum
Atque virum.*

For this he employs six verses, among which is this,

As if on Knightly terms in lists they ran.

Pray can you trace chivalry up higher than Pharamond? will you allow it an anachronism?—Tickel in his version of the Phœnix from Claudian,

*When nature ceases, thou shalt still remain,
Nor second Chaos bound thy endless reign.*

Claudian thus,

Et