



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

XXX. From Mr. Cromwell.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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which seems so favourable to me. I shall ever have such a fund of affection for him as to be agreeable to myself when I am so to him, and cannot but be gay when he is in good humour, as the surface of the earth (if you will pardon a poetical similitude) is clearer or gloomier, just as the sun is brighter or more over-cast—I should be glad to see the verses to Lintot which you mention, for, methinks, something oddly agreeable may be produced from that subject—For what remains, I am so well, that nothing but the assurance of your being so can make me better; and if you would have me live with any satisfaction these dark days in which I cannot see you, it must be by your writing sometimes to

Your, &c.

L E T T E R X X X .

From Mr. C R O M W E L L .

Dec. 7, 1711.

MR. Wycherley has, I believe, sent you two or three letters of invitation; but you, like the fair, will be long solicited before you yield, to make the favour the more acceptable to the lover. He is much yours by his talk; for that unbounded genius which has rang'd at
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large like a libertine, now seems confin'd to you : and I should take him for your mistress too by your simile of the sun and earth : 'Tis very fine, but inverted by the application ; for the gaiety of your fancy, and the drooping of his by the withdrawing of your lustre, persuades me it would be juster by the reverse. Oh happy favourite of the Muses ! how *pernoctare*, all night long with them ? but alas ! you do but toy, but skirmish with them, and decline a close engagement. Leave Elegy and translation to the inferior class, on whom the Muses only glance now and then like our winter-sun, and then leave them in the dark. Think on the dignity of Tragedy, which is of the greater poetry, as Dennis says, and foil him at his other weapon, as you have done in Criticism. Every one wonders that a genius like yours will not support the sinking Drama ; and Mr. Wilks (tho', I think, his talent is Comedy) has express'd a furious ambition to swell in your buskins. We have had a poor Comedy of Johnson's (not Ben) which held seven nights, and has got him three hundred pounds, for the town is sharp-set on new plays. In vain would I fire you by interest or ambition, when your mind is not susceptible of either ; tho' your authority (arising from the general esteem, like that of Pompey) must infallibly assure you of success ; for which

in all your wishes you will be attended with
those of

Your, &c.

L E T T E R XXXI.

Dec. 21, 1711.

IF I have not writ to you so soon as I ought, let my writing now atone for the delay; as it will infallibly do, when you know what a sacrifice I make you at this time, and that every moment my eyes are employ'd upon this paper, they are taken off from two of the finest faces in the universe. But indeed 'tis some consolation to me to reflect, that while I but write this period, I escape some hundred fatal darts from those unerring eyes, and about a thousand deaths or better. Now you, that delight in dying, would not once have dreamt of an absent friend in these circumstances; you that are so nice an admirer of beauty, or (as a Critic would say after Terence) *so elegant a spectator of forms*; you must have a sober dish of coffee, and a solitary candle at your side, to write an epistle lucubratory to your friend; whereas I can do it as well with two pair of radiant lights, that outshine the golden god of day and silver goddesses of night, and all the refulgent eyes of
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