



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

Letter I.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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LETTERS

T O

SEVERAL LADIES^a.

LETTER I.

MADAM,

March 1, 1705.

I Send you the book of rudiments of Drawing, which you were pleas'd to command, and think myself obliged to inform you at the same time of one of the many excellencies you possess without knowing of them. You are but too good a Painter already ; and no picture of Raphael's was ever so beautiful, as that which you have form'd in a certain heart of my acquaintance. Indeed it was but just that the finest lines in nature should be drawn upon the

^a Most of these were printed without the Author's Consent, and no doubt are the same upon which the censure is pass'd in the Preface. "That they have too much of a juvenile

"ambition of Wit, and affectation of Gaiety." And it is pleaded in Excuse, "that they were written very young, and the folly was soon over." P.

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most durable ground, and none could ever be met with, that would so readily receive, or so faithfully retain them, as this Heart. I may boldly say of it, that you will not find its fellow in all the parts of the body in this book. But I must complain to you of my hand, which is an arrant traitor to my heart; for having been copying your picture from thence and from Kneller these three days, it has done all possible injury to the finest face that ever was made, and to the liveliest image that ever was drawn. I have Imagination enough in your absence, to trace some resemblance of you; but I have been so long us'd to lose my Judgment at the sight of you, that 'tis past my power to correct it by the life. Your picture seems least like when placed before your eyes; and, contrary to all other pictures, receives a manifest disadvantage by being set in the fairest light in the world. The Painters are a very vain generation, and have a long time pretended to rival nature; but to own the truth to you, she made such a finish'd piece about three and twenty years ago (I beg your pardon, Madam; I protest, I meant but two and twenty) that 'tis in vain for them any longer to contend with her. I know you indeed made one something like it, betwixt five and six years past: 'Twas a little girl, done with abundance of spirit and life, and wants nothing
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but time to be an admirable piece: but, not to flatter your work, I don't think 'twill ever come up to what your father made. However I would not discourage you; 'tis certain you have a strange happiness, in making fine things of a sudden and at a stroke, with incredible ease and pleasure.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R II.

IT is too much a rule in this town, that when a lady has once done a man a favour, he is to be rude to her ever after. It becomes our sex to take upon us twice as much as yours allow us; by this method I may write to you most impudently, because you once answer'd me modestly; and if you should never do me that honour for the future, I am to think (like a true coxcomb) that your silence gives consent. Perhaps you wonder why this is address'd to you rather than to Mrs. M—, with whom I have the right of an old acquaintance, whereas you are a fine lady, have bright eyes, &c. First, Madam, I make choice of you rather than of your mother, because you are younger than your mother. Secondly, because I fancy you spell better, as having been at school later. Thirdly, because you have nothing to do but

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