



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

III. [To a Lady.]

Nutzungsbedingungen

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tell in any respect what sort of creature you are, only that you are a very mischievous one, whom I shall ever pray to be defended from. But when your Minister sends me word you have the small-pox, a good many freckles, or are very pale, I will desire him to give thanks for it in your parish church; which as soon as he shall inform me he has done, I will make you a visit without armour: I will eat any thing you give me without suspicion of poison, take you by the hand without gloves, nay venture to follow you into an arbour without calling the company. This, Madam, is the top of my wishes, but how differently are our desires inclined! You sigh out, in the ardour of your heart, Oh play-houses, parks, opera's, assemblies, London! I cry with rapture, Oh woods, gardens, rookeries, fish-ponds, arbours! Mrs. M——.

LETTER III.

TO a LADY.

Written on one column of a Letter, while Lady M. wrote to the Lady's Husband on the other.

THE wits would say, that this must needs be a dull letter because it is a married one. I am afraid indeed you will find, what spirit there

there is, must be on the side of the wife, and the husband's part, as usual, will prove the dullest. What an unequal pair are put together in this sheet? in which, tho' we sin, it is you must do penance. When you look on both sides of this paper, you may fancy that our words (according to a Scripture expression) are as a two-edg'd sword, whereof lady M. is the shining blade, and I only the handle. But I can't proceed without so far mortifying Sir Robert as to tell him, that she writes this purely in obedience to me, and that it is but one of those honours a husband receives for the sake of his wife.

It is making court but ill to one fine woman to shew her the regard we have for another; and yet I must own there is not a period of this epistle but squints towards another over-against it. It will be in vain to dissemble: your penetrating eyes cannot but discover, how all the letters that compose these words lean forward after lady M's. letters, which seem to bend as much from mine, and fly from them as fast as they are able. Ungrateful letters that they are! which give themselves to another man, in the very presence of him who will yield to no mortal, in knowing how to value them.

You will think I forget myself, and am not writing to you; but, let me tell you, 'tis you forget

forget yourself in that thought, for you are almost the only woman to whom one can safely address the praises of another. Besides, can you imagine a man of my importance so stupid, as to say fine things to you before your husband? Let us see how far Lady M. herself dares do any thing like it, with all the wit and address she is mistress of. If Sir Robert can be so ignorant (now he is left to himself in the country) to imagine any such matter, let him know from me, that here in town every thing that lady says, is taken for satire. For my part, every body knows it is my constant practice to speak truth, and I never do it more than when I call myself

Your, &c.

LETTER IV.

YOU have put me into so much gayety of temper, that there will not be a serious word in this day's letter. No more, you'll say, there would, if I told you the whole serious business of the town. All last night I continued with you, tho' your unreasonable regularity drove me out of your doors at three a clock. I dreamed all over the evening's conversation, and saw the little bed in spite of you. In the morning