



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

II.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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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

to

to write if you please, and possibly it may keep you from employing yourself worse: it may save some honest neighbouring gentleman from three or four of your pestilent glances. Cast your eyes upon paper, Madam, there you may look innocently: men are seducing, books are dangerous, the amorous ones soften you, and the godly ones give you the spleen: If you look upon trees, they clasp in embraces; birds and beasts make love; the sun is too warm for your blood; the moon melts you into yielding and melancholy. Therefore I say once more, cast your eyes upon paper, and read only such letters as I write, which convey no darts, no flames, but proceed from innocence of soul, and simplicity of heart. Thank God I am an hundred miles off from those eyes! I would sooner trust your hand than them for doing me mischief; and tho' I doubt not some part of the rancour and iniquity of your heart will drop into your pen, yet since it will not attack me on a sudden and unprepar'd, since I may have time while I break open your letter to cross myself and say a Pater-noster, I hope Providence will protect me from all you can attempt at this distance. I am told you are at this hour as handsome as an angel; for my part I have forgot your face since two winters. You may be grown to a giantess for all I know. I can't tell

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