



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

XXI. To the same.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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SEVERAL LADIES. 199

me. I would fain imagine this was not accidental, but proceeded from a penetration, which, I know, you have, in finding out the truth of people's sentiments; and that you were willing, the last man that *would have* parted from you, should be the last that *did*. I really looked upon you just as the friends of Curtius might have done upon that Hero, at the instant when he was devoting himself to glory, and running to be lost out of generosity: I was obliged to admire your resolution, in as great a degree as I deplored it; and had only to wish, that Heaven would reward so much virtue as was to be taken from us, with all the felicities it could enjoy elsewhere!

I am, &c.

LETTER XXI.

I Can never have too many of your letters. I am angry at every scrap of paper lost, and tho' it is but an odd compliment to compare a fine lady to a Sibyl, your leaves, methinks, like hers, are too good to be committed to the winds; tho' I have no other way of receiving them but by those unfaithful messengers. I have had but three, and I reckon that short one

from D——, which was rather a dying ejaculation than a letter.

You have contrived to say in your last the two things most pleasing to me: The first, that whatever be the fate of your letters, you will continue to write in the discharge of your conscience. The other is, the justice you do me, in taking what I writ to you, in the serious manner it was meant; it is the point upon which I can bear no suspicion, and in which, above all, I desire to be thought serious. It would be vexatious indeed, if you should pretend to take that for wit, which is no more than the natural overflowing of a heart improved by an esteem for you: but since you tell me you believe me, I fancy my expressions have not been entirely unfaithful to my thoughts.

May your faith be encreased in all truths, that are as great as this; and, depend upon it, to whatever degree it may extend, you can never be a bigot.

If you could see the heart I talk of, you would really think it a foolish good kind of thing, with some qualities as well-deserving to be half-laughed at, and half-esteemed, as most hearts in the world.

Its grand *foible* in regard to you, is the most like Reason of any *foible* in nature. Upon my
word

word this heart is not like a great warehouse, stored only with my own goods, or with empty spaces to be supplied as fast as Interest or Ambition can fill them: but is every inch of it lett out into lodgings for its friends, and shall never want a corner where your idea will always lie as warm, and as close, as any idea in Christendom.

If this distance (as you are so kind as to say) enlarges your belief of my friendship, I assure you, it has so extended my notion of your value, that I begin to be impious upon that account, and to wish that even slaughter, ruin, and desolation may interpose between you and the place you design for; and that you were restored to us at the expence of a whole people.

Is there no expedient to return you in peace to the bosom of your country? I hear you are come as far as —: do you only look back to die twice? is Eurydice once more snatched to the shades? If ever mortal had reason to hate the King, it is I, whose particular misfortune it is, to be almost the only innocent person he has made to suffer; both by his Government at home, and his Negotiations abroad.

If you must go from us, I wish at least you might pass to your banishment by the most pleasant way; that all the road might be roses
and

and myrtles, and a thousand objects rise round you, agreeable enough to make England less desirable to you. It is not now my interest to wish England agreeable: It is highly probable it may use me ill enough to drive me from it. Can I think that place my country, where I cannot now call a foot of paternal *Earth* my own? Yet it may seem some alleviation, that when the wisest thing I can do is to leave my country, what was most agreeable in it should first be snatched away from it.

I could overtake you with pleasure in —, and make that tour in your company. Every reasonable entertainment and beautiful view would be doubly engaging when you partook of it. I should at least attend you to the sea coasts, and cast a last look after the sails that transported you. But perhaps I might care as little to stay behind you; and be full as uneasy to live in a country where I saw others persecuted by the rogues of my own religion, as where I was persecuted myself by the rogues of yours. And it is not impossible I might run into Asia in search of liberty; for who would not rather live a freeman among a nation of slaves, than a slave among a nation of freemen?

In good earnest, if I knew your motions, and your exact time; I verily think, I should be once more happy in a sight of you next spring.

I'll

I'll conclude with a wish, God send you with us, or me with you.

LETTER XXII.

YOU will find me more troublesome than ever Brutus did his evil Genius; I shall meet you in more places than one, and often refresh your memory before you arrive at your Philippi. These shadows of me (my letters) will be haunting you from time to time, and putting you in mind of the man who has really suffer'd very much from you, and whom you have robb'd of the most valuable of his enjoyments, your conversation. The advantage of hearing your sentiments by discovering mine, was what I always thought a great one, and even worth the risque I generally run of manifesting my own indiscretion. You then rewarded my trust in you the moment it was given, for you pleas'd or inform'd me the minute you answer'd. I must now be contented with more slow returns. However, 'tis some pleasure, that your thoughts upon paper will be a more lasting possession to me, and that I shall no longer have cause to complain of a loss I have so often regretted, that of any thing you said, which I happen'd to forget. In earnest,
Madam,