



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

V. Concerning the Tragedy of Cato.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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FROM SIR W. TRUMBULL. 217

care. The instances I daily meet with of these agreeable awakenings of friendship, are of too pleasing a nature not to be acknowledged whenever I think of you. I am

Your, &c.

LETTER V.

April 30, 1713.

I Have been almost every day employ'd in following your advice, and amusing myself in painting, in which I am most particularly obliged to Mr. Jervas, who gives me daily instructions and examples. As to poetical affairs, I am content at present to be a bare looker-on, and from a practitioner turn an admirer, which is (as the world goes) not very usual. Cato was not so much the wonder of Rome in his days, as he is of Britain in ours; and though all the foolish industry possible has been used to make it thought a party-play, yet what the author once said of another may the most properly in the world be apply'd to him, on this occasion,

*Envy itself is dumb, in wonder lost,
And Factions strive, who shall applaud him most.*

The numerous and violent claps of the Whig-party on the one side of the theatre, were echo'd

cho'd back by the Tories on the other ; while the author sweated behind the scenes with concern to find their applause proceeding more from the hand than the head. This was the case too of the prologue writer^a, who was clapp'd into a stanch whig, at almost every two lines. I believe you have heard, that after all the applauses of the opposite faction, my Lord Bolingbroke sent for Booth, who play'd Cato, into the box, between one of the acts, and presented him with fifty guineas ; in acknowledgment (as he express'd it) for defending the cause of liberty so well against a Perpetual Dictator. The whigs are unwilling to be distanc'd this way, and therefore design a present to the same Cato very speedily ; in the mean time they are getting ready as good a sentence as the former on their side : so betwixt them, 'tis probable that Cato (as Dr. Garth express'd it) may have something to live upon, after he dies. I am

Your, &c.

^a Himself.

L E T T E R