



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 VII. Against the violence of parties, and the praise of general benevolence.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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us, and review his picture, and then to alter some things, so as to please himself; which I know will not be, till every thing in it is perfect; no more than I can be, till you believe me to be with that sincerity and esteem, that I am and will ever continue, your most faithful friend.

L E T T E R V I I .

Dec. 16, 1715.

IT was one of the Enigma's of Pythagoras, "When the winds rise, worship the Echo." A modern writer explains this to signify, "When popular tumults begin, retire to solitudes, or such places where Echo's are commonly found, rocks, woods, &c." I am rather of opinion it should be interpreted, "When rumours increase, and when there is abundance of noise and clamour, believe the second report:" This I think agrees more exactly with the echo, and is the more natural application of the symbol. However it be, either of these Precepts is extremely proper to be followed at this season; and I cannot but applaud your resolution of continuing in what you call your cave in the forest, this winter; and preferring the noise of breaking ice to that
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of breaking statesmen, the rage of storms to that of parties, the fury and ravage of floods and tempests, to the precipitancy of some, and the ruin of others, which, I fear, will be our daily prospects in London.

I sincerely wish myself with you, to contemplate the wonders of God in the firmament, rather than the madness of man on the earth. But I never had so much cause as now to complain of my poetical star, that fixes me, at this tumultuous time, to attend the gingling of rhymes and the measuring of syllables: to be almost the only trifler in the nation; and as ridiculous as the poet in Petronius, who, while all the rest in the ship were either labouring or praying for life, was scratching his head in a little room, to write a fine description of the tempest.

You tell me, you like the sound of no arms but those of Achilles: for my part I like them as little as any other arms. I listed myself in the battles of Homer, and I am no sooner in war, but, like most other folks, I wish myself out again.

I heartily join with you in wishing Quiet to our native country: Quiet in the state, which, like Charity in religion, is too much the perfection and happiness of either, to be broken or violated on any pretence or prospect whatsoever. Fire and sword, and fire and faggot,
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are equally my averfion. I can pray for oppo-
fite parties, and for oppofite religions, with
great fincerity. I think to be a lover of one's
country is a glorious elogy, but I do not think
it fo great an one as to be a lover of man-
kind.

I fometimes celebrate you under thefe deno-
minations, and join your health with that of
the whole world; a truly catholic health, which
far excels the poor narrow-fpirited, ridiculous
healths now in fafhion, to this church, or that
church. Whatever our teachers may fay, they
muft give us leave at leaft to wifh generously.
Thefe, dear Sir, are my general difpofitions;
but whenever I pray or wifh for particulars,
you are one of the firft in the thoughts and af-
fections of

Your, &c.

L E T T E R VIII.

From Sir WILLIAM TRUMBULL.

Jan. 19, 1715-16.

I Should be afhamed of my long idlenefs, in
not acknowledging your kind advice about
Echo, and your moft ingenious explanation of
it relating to popular tumults; which I own to
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