



## **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**

VII. To --- on returning his letters.

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Nutzungsbedingungen

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do from spaniels, and show themselves by a dumb surly sort of fidelity, rather than by a complaisant and open kindness.—Will you never leave commending my poetry? In fair truth, Sir, I like it but too well myself already: expose me no more, I beg you, to the great danger of Vanity, (the rock of all men, but most of young men) and be kindly content for the future, when you would please me thoroughly, to say only you like what I write.

Yours, &c.

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## LETTER VII.

Dec. 5, 1712.

**Y**OU have at length complied with the request I have often made you, for you have shown me, I must confess, several of my faults in the sight of those letters. Upon a review of them, I find many things that would give me shame, if I were not more desirous to be thought honest than prudent; so many things freely thrown out, such lengths of unreserved friendship, thoughts just warm from the brain, without any polishing or dress, the very dishabile of the understanding. You have proved yourself more tender of another's embryo's than the fondest mothers are of their own, for you have

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preserv'd every thing that I miscarried of. Since I know this, I shall in one respect be more afraid of writing to you than ever, at this careless rate, because I see my evil works may again rise in judgment against me; yet in another respect I shall be less afraid, since this has given me such a proof of the extreme indulgence you afford to my slightest thoughts. The revisal of these letters has been a kind of examination of conscience to me; so fairly and faithfully have I set down in them from time to time the true and undisguised state of my mind. But I find, that these, which were intended as sketches of my friendship, give as imperfect images of it, as the little landscapes we commonly see in black and white do of a beautiful country; they can represent but a very small part of it, and that deprived of the life and lustre of nature. I perceive that the more I endeavour'd to render manifest the real affection and value I ever had for you, I did but injure it by representing less and less of it: as glasses which are design'd to make an object very clear, generally contract it. Yet as when people have a full idea of a thing first upon their own knowledge, the least traces of it serve to refresh the remembrance, and are not displeasing on that score; so, I hope, the foreknowledge  
you



you had of my esteem for you, is the reason that you do not dislike my letters.

They will not be of any great service (I find) in the design I mentioned to you: I believe I had better steal from a richer man, and plunder your letters (which I have kept as carefully as I would Letters Patents, since they intitle me to what I more value than titles of honour.) You have some cause to apprehend this usage from me, if what some say be true, that I am a great borrower; however I have hitherto had the luck that none of my creditors have challenged me for it: and those who say it are such, whose writings no man ever borrow'd from, so have the least reason to complain; and whose works are granted on all hands to be but too much their own. Another has been pleas'd to declare, that my verses are corrected by other men: I verily believe theirs were never corrected by any man: but indeed if mine have not, 'twas not my fault; I have endeavour'd my utmost that they should. But these things are only whisper'd, and I will not encroach upon Bays's province and *pen-whispers*, so hasten to conclude

Your, &c.



## L E T T E R   V I I I .

From my Lord LANDSDOWN.

Oct. 21, 1713.

**I** Am pleas'd beyond measure with your design of translating Homer. The trials which you have already made and published on some parts of that author, have shewn that you are equal to so great a task : and you may therefore depend upon the utmost services I can do you in promoting this work, or any thing that may be for your service.

I hope Mr. Stafford, for whom you was pleas'd to concern yourself, has had the good effects of the Queen's Grace to him. I had notice the night before I began my journey, that her Majesty had not only directed his pardon, but order'd a Writ for reversing his Outlawry.

Your, &amp;c.