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 I. Mr. Steele to Mr. Pope. Of Sir Charles Sedley's death. The author's Eclogue on the Messiah.

LETTERS

TO AND FROM

Mr. STEELE, Mr. ADDISON, Mr. CONGREVE, etc.

From 1712, to 1715.

LETTER I.

Mr. STEELE to Mr. POPE.

June 1, 1712.

I Am at a solitude, an house between Hamp-
stead and London, wherein Sir Charles Sed-
ley died. This circumstance set me a thinking
and ruminating upon the employments in which
men of wit exercise themselves. It was said of
Sir Charles, who breath'd his last in this room,

Sedley *has that prevailing gentle art,*
Which can with a resistless charm impart
The loosest wishes to the chastest heart;

Raise

Raife fuch a conflict, kindle fuch a fire
Between declining Virtue and Defire,
Till the poor vanquifh'd Maid diffolves away
In dreams all night, in fighs and tears all day.

This was an happy talent to a man of the town, but, I dare fay, without prefuming to make uncharitable conjectures on the author's prefent condition, he would rather have had it faid of him that he had pray'd,

Oh thou my voice infpire,
Who touch'd Ifaiah's hallow'd lips with fire!

I have turn'd to every verfe and chapter, and think you have preferv'd the fublime heavenly fpirit throughout the whole, efpecially at —— *Hark a glad voice* —— and —— *The lamb with wolves fhall graze* —— There is but one line which I think below the original,

He wipes the tears for ever from our eyes.

You have exprefs'd it with a good and pious, but not fo exalted and poetical a fpirit as the prophet, *The Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces.* If you agree with me in this, alter it by way of paraphrafe or otherwife, that when it comes into a volume it may be amended. Your poem is already better than the Pollio. I am

Your, &c.

LETTER