



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

XX. To Mr. Jervas, of the same.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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all people in general are prejudiced against new beginners ; and when they have got a little above contempt, then some particular persons, who were before unfortunate in their own attempts, are sworn foes to them only because they succeed.—Upon the whole, one may say of the best writers, that they pay a severe fine for their fame, which it is always in the power of the most worthless part of mankind to levy upon them when they please.

I am, &c.

LETTER XX.

TO MR. JERVAS.

July 28, 1714.

I Am just enter'd upon the old way of life again, sleep and musing. It is my employment to revive the old of past ages to the present, as it is yours to transmit the young of the present, to the future. I am copying the great Master in one art, with the same love and diligence with which the Painters hereafter will copy you in another.

Thus I should begin my Epistle to you, if it were a Dedicatory one. But as it is a friendly letter, you are to find nothing mention'd in
your

your own praise but what one only in the world is witness to, your particular good-natur'd offices to me.

I am cut out from any thing but common acknowledgments, or common discourse: The first you would take ill, though I told but half what I ought: so in short the last only remains.

And as for the last, what can you expect from a man who has not talk'd these five days? who is withdrawing his thoughts as far as he can, from all the present world, its customs, and its manners, to be fully possess'd and absorpt in the past? When people talk of going to Church, I think of sacrifices and libations; when I see the parson, I address him as Chryses priest of Apollo; and instead of the Lord's prayer, I begin,

God of the silver Bow, &c.

While you in the world are concerned about the Protestant Succession, I consider only how Menelaus may recover Helen, and the Trojan war be put to a speedy conclusion. I never inquire if the Queen be well or not, but heartily wish to be at Hector's funeral. The only things I regard in this life, are whether my friends are well? whether my Translation go well on? whether Dennis be writing criticisms?

cisms? whether any body will answer him, since I don't? and whether Lintot be not yet broke?

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XXI.

To the same.

Aug. 16, 1714.

I Thank you for your good offices, which are numberless. Homer advances so fast, that he begins to look about for the ornaments he is to appear in, like a modish modern author,

*Picture in the front,
With bays and wicked rhyme upon't.*

I have the greatest proof in nature at present of the amusing power of Poetry, for it takes me up so entirely, that I scarce see what passes under my nose, and hear nothing that is said about me. To follow poetry as one ought, one must forget father and mother, and cleave to it alone. My Rêverie has been so deep, that I have scarce had an interval to think myself uneasy in the want of your company. I now and then just miss you as I step into bed; this minute indeed I want extremely to see

U

you,