



## **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**

XXVI. To the Hon. James Craggs, Esq. on the same.

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**Nutzungsbedingungen**

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Extract from a LETTER of  
Dr. ARBUTHNOT to Mr. POPE.

July 9, 1715.

— I congratulate you upon Mr. T\*'s first book. It does not indeed want its merit; but I was strangely disappointed in my expectation of a translation nicely true to the Original; whereas in those parts where the greatest exactness seems to be demanded, he has been the least careful, I mean the history of ancient ceremonies and rites, &c. in which you have with great judgment been exact.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XXVI.

Mr. POPE to the Honourable JAMES  
CRAGGS, Esq.

July 15, 1715.

**I** Lay hold of the opportunity given me by my Lord Duke of Shrewsbury, to assure you of the continuance of that esteem and affection I have long born you, and the memory of so many agreeable conversations as we have pass'd together. I wish it were a compliment to say,  
I such

such conversations as are not to be found on this side of the water: for the Spirit of diffension is gone forth among us: nor is it a wonder that Button's is no longer Button's, when old England is no longer old England, that region of hospitality, society, and good humour. Party affects us all, even the wits, tho' they gain as little by politics as they do by their wit. We talk much of fine sense, refin'd sense, and exalted sense; but for use and happiness, give me a little common sense. I say this in regard to some gentlemen, profess'd Wits of our acquaintance, who fancy they can make Poetry of consequence at this time of day, in the midst of this raging fit of Politics. For, they tell me, the busy part of the nation are not more divided about Whig and Tory, than these idle fellows of the feather about Mr. T\*'s and my Translation. I (like the Tories) have the town in general, that is the mob, on my side; but it is usual with the smaller party to make up in industry what they want in number, and that is the case with the little Senate of Cato. However, if our principles be well consider'd, I must appear a brave Whig, and Mr. T. a rank Tory: I translated Homer for the public in general, he to gratify the inordinate desires of one man only. We have, it seems, a great Turk in poetry, who can never bear a brother  
on

on the throne; and has his mutes too, a set of nodders, winkers, and whisperers, whose business is to strangle all other offsprings of wit in their birth. The new translator of Homer is the humblest slave he has, that is to say, his first Minister; let him receive the honours he gives me, but receive them with fear and trembling; let him be proud of the approbation of his absolute Lord, I appeal to the people, as my rightful judges and masters; and if they are not inclined to condemn me, I fear no arbitrary high-flying proceeding from the small Court-faction at Button's. But after all I have said of this great man, there is no rupture between us. We are each of us so civil and obliging, that neither thinks he is obliged: And I, for my part, treat with him, as we do with the Grand Monarch; who has too many great qualities not to be respected, though we know he watches any occasion to oppress us<sup>a</sup>.

When I talk of Homer, I must not forget the early present you made me of Monsieur de la Motte's book: And I can't conclude this letter without telling you a melancholy piece of news, which affects our very entrails, L\* is dead, and soupes are no more! You see I write in the old familiar way. "This is not to the

<sup>a</sup> We find here most of the sentiments he soon after put into verse on this occasion.

" minister

“minister, but to the friend<sup>b</sup>.” However it is some mark of uncommon regard to the minister that I steal an expression from a Secretary of State.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXVII.

To Mr. CONGREVE.

Jan. 16, 1714-15.

**M**Ethinks when I write to you, I am making a confession; I have got (I can't tell how) such a custom of throwing myself out upon paper without reserve. You were not mistaken in what you judged of my temper of mind when I writ last. My faults will not be hid from you, and perhaps it is no dispraise to me that they will not: the cleanness and purity of one's mind is never better proved, than in discovering its own fault at first view; as when a stream shews the dirt at its bottom, it shews also the transparency of the water.

My spleen was not occasioned, however, by any thing an abusive angry critic could write of me. I take very kindly your heroic manner

<sup>b</sup> Alluding to St. John's Letter to Prior, published in the *Report of the Secret Committee*.