



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

XXVIII. To the same, of the Farce called the What-d'ye-call-it.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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with my Lord Bolingbroke; I go to London in three days time, and will not fail to pay a visit to Mr. M——, whom I saw not long since at my Lord Hallifax's. I hoped from thence he had some hopes of advantage from the present administration: for few people (I think) but I, pay respects to great men without any prospects. I am in the fairest way in the world of being not worth a groat, being born both a Papist and a Poet. This puts me in mind of re-acknowledging your continued endeavours to enrich me. But, I can tell you, 'tis to no purpose, for without the *Opes, æquum mi animum ipse parabo.*

L E T T E R XXVIII.

To Mr. CONGREGVE.

March 19, 1714-15.

THE Farce of the What-d'ye-call-it^a has occasioned many different speculations in the town. Some look'd upon it as a mere jest upon the Tragic poets, others as a satire upon the late War. Mr. Cromwell, hearing none of the words, and seeing the action to be tragical, was much astonished to find the audience laugh;

^a Written by Gay.

and says the Prince and Princess must doubtless be under no less amazement on the same account. Several templars and others of the more vociferous kind of critics, went with a resolution to hiss, and confess'd they were forced to laugh so much, that they forgot the design they came with. The Court in general has in a very particular manner come into the jest, and the three first nights (notwithstanding two of them were court-nights) were distinguished by very full audiences of the first Quality. The common people of the pit and gallery received it at first with great gravity and sedateness, some few with tears; but after the third day they also took the hint, and have ever since been very loud in their claps. There are still some sober men who cannot be of the general opinion; but the laughers are so much the majority, that one or two critics seem determined to undeceive the town at their proper cost, by writing grave dissertations against it: to encourage them in which laudable design, it is resolved a Preface shall be prefix'd to the Farce, in vindication of the nature and dignity of this new way of writing.

Yesterday Mr. Steele's affair was decided: I am sorry I can be of no other opinion than yours, as to his whole carriage and writings of late. But certainly he has not only been punished by
others,

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others, but suffered much even from his own party in the point of character, nor (I believe) received any amends in that of interest, as yet, whatever may be his prospects for the future.

This Gentleman, among a thousand others, is a great instance of the fate of all who are carried away by party-spirit, of any side. I wish all violence may succeed as ill: but am really amazed that so much of that sour and pernicious quality should be joined with so much natural good humour as, I think, Mr. Steele is possessed of.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXIX.

TO MR. CONGREVE.

April 7, 1715.

MR. Pope is going to Mr. Jervas's, where Mr. Addison is sitting for his picture; in the mean time amidst clouds of Tobacco at a coffee-house I write this letter. There is a grand revolution at Will's; Morice has quitted for a coffee-house in the city, and Titcomb is restored, to the great joy of Cromwell, who was at a great loss for a person to converse with upon the fathers and church-history; the

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