



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

II. Mr. Pope to Mr. Jervas.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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Poet's while, to travel, in order to store his mind with strong images of Nature.

Green fields and groves, flowery meadows and purling streams are no where in such perfection as in England: but if you would know lightsome days, warm suns, and blue skies, you must come to Italy: and to enable a man to describe rocks and precipices, it is absolutely necessary that he pass the Alps.

You will easily perceive that it is self-interest makes me so fond of giving advice to one who has no need of it. If you came into these parts I should fly to see you. I am here (by the favour of my good friend the Dean of St. Patrick's) in quality of Chaplain to the Earl of Peterborough; who about three months since left the greatest part of his family in this town. God knows how long we shall stay here.

I am, Your, &c.

LETTER II.

Mr. POPE to Mr. JERVAS in Ireland.

July 9, 1716.

TH O', as you rightly remark, I pay my tax but once in half a year, yet you shall see by this letter upon the neck of my last, that
I pay

I pay a double tax, as we non-jurors ought to do. Your acquaintance on this side of the sea are under terrible apprehensions from your long stay in Ireland, that you may grow too polite for them; for we think (since the great success of such a play as the Non-juror) that politeness is gone over the water. But others are of opinion it has been longer among you, and was introduced much about the same time with Frogs, and with equal success. Poor Poetry! the little that is left of it here longs to cross the seas, and leave Eusden in full and peaceable possession of the British laurel: and we begin to wish you had the singing of our poets, as well as the croaking of our frogs, to yourselves, *in secula seculorum*. It would be well in exchange, if Parnelle, and two or three more of your Swans would come hither, especially that Swan, who, like a true modern one, does not sing at all, Dr. Swift. I am (like the rest of the world) a sufferer by his idleness. Indeed I hate that any man should be idle, while I must translate and comment; and I may the more sincerely wish for good poetry from others because I am become a person out of the question; for a Translator is no more a poet, than a Taylor is a man.

You are, doubtless, persuaded of the validity of that famous verse,

'Tis

'Tis Expectation makes a Blessing dear :

but why would you make your friends fonder of you than they are? There is no manner of need of it. We begin to expect you no more than Anti-christ; a man that hath absented himself so long from his friends, ought to be put into the Gazettee.

Every body here has great need of you. Many faces have died for want of your pencil, and blooming Ladies have wither'd in expecting your return. Even Frank and Betty (that constant pair) cannot console themselves for your absence; I fancy they will be forced to make their own picture in a pretty babe, before you come home: 'twill be a noble subject for a family piece. Come then, and having peopled Ireland with a world of beautiful shadows, come to us, and see with that eye (which, like the eye of the world, creates beauties by looking on them) see, I say, how England has alter'd the airs of all its heads in your absence: and with what sneaking city attitudes our most celebrated personages appear, in the mere mortal works of our painters.

Mr. Fortescue is much yours; Gay commemorates you; and lastly (to climb by just steps and degrees) my Lord Burlington desires you may be put in mind of him. His gardens flourish,

rish, his structures rise, his pictures arrive, and (what is far more valuable than all) his own good qualities daily extend themselves to all about him : of whom I the meanest (next, to some Italian Fiddlers, and English Bricklayers) am a living instance. Adieu.

L E T T E R III.

To the same.

Nov. 14, 1716.

IF I had not done my utmost to lead my life so pleasantly as to forget all misfortunes, I should tell you I reckoned your absence no small one ; but I hope you have also had many good and pleasant reasons to forget your friends on this side the world. If a wish could transport me to you and your present companions, I could do the same. Dr. Swift, I believe, is a very good landlord, and a chearful host at his own table : I suppose he has perfectly learnt himself, what he has taught so many others, *rupta non insanire lagena* : else he would not make a proper host for your humble servant, who (you know) tho' he drinks a glass as seldom as any man, contrives to break one as often. But 'tis a consolation to me, that I can do this, and many other enormities, under my own roof.

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