



## **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**

VII. From Dean Berkley. A description of the island Inarime. Character of the Italians.

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**Nutzungsbedingungen**

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signing men, and which makes me always (even by a natural bond) their friend; therefore believe me very affectionately

Your, &c.

L E T T E R VII.

Rev. Dean<sup>a</sup> BERKLEY, to Mr. POPE.

Naples, Oct. 22. N. S. 1717.

I Have long had it in my thoughts to trouble you with a letter, but was discouraged for want of something that I could think worth sending fifteen hundred miles. Italy is such an exhausted subject, that, I dare say, you'd easily forgive my saying nothing of it; and the imagination of a Poet is a thing so nice and delicate, that it is no easy matter to find out images capable of giving pleasure to one of the few, who (in any age) have come up to that character. I am nevertheless lately returned from an island, where I passed three or four months; which, were it set out in its true colours, might, methinks, amuse you agreeably enough for a minute or two. The island Inarime is an epi-

<sup>a</sup> Afterwards Bishop of Cloyne in Ireland, Author of the Dialogues of Hylas

and Philonous, the Minute Philosopher, &c. P.

tome of the whole earth, containing within the compass of eighteen miles, a wonderful variety of hills, vales, ragged rocks, fruitful plains, and barren mountains, all thrown together in a most romantic confusion. The air is in the hottest season constantly refreshed by cool breezes from the sea. The vales produce excellent wheat and Indian corn, but are mostly covered with vineyards, intermix'd with fruit-trees. Besides the common kinds, as cherries, apricots, peaches, &c. they produce oranges, limes, almonds, pomegranates, figs, water-melons, and many other fruits unknown to our climates, which lie every where open to the passenger. The hills are the greater part covered to the top with vines, some with chesnut groves, and others with thickets of myrtle and lentiscus. The fields in the northern side are divided by hedge-rows of myrtle. Several fountains and rivulets add to the beauty of this landscape, which is likewise set off by the variety of some barren spots, and naked rocks. But that which crowns the scene, is a large mountain, rising out of the middle of the island (once a terrible Volcano, by the ancients called Mons Epomeus) its lower parts are adorned with vines, and other fruits; the middle affords pasture to flocks of goats and sheep; and the top is a sandy pointed rock, from which you  
have

have the finest prospect in the world, surveying at one view, besides several pleasant islands lying at your feet, a tract of Italy about three hundred miles in length, from the promontory of Antium to the cape of Palinurus: the greater part of which hath been sung by Homer and Virgil, as making a considerable part of the travels and adventures of their two Heroes. The Islands Caprea, Prochyta, and Parthenope, together with Cajeta, Cumæ, Monte Miseno, the habitations of Circe, the Syrens, and the Læstrigones, the bay of Naples, the promontory of Minerva, and the whole Campagna felice, make but a part of this noble landscape; which would demand an imagination as warm, and numbers as flowing as your own, to describe it. The inhabitants of this delicious isle, as they are without riches and honours, so are they without the vices and follies that attend them; and were they but as much strangers to revenge, as they are to avarice and ambition, they might in fact answer the poetical notions of the golden age. But they have got, as an alloy to their happiness, an ill habit of murdering one another on slight offences. We had an instance of this the second night after our arrival, a youth of eighteen being shot dead by our door: and yet by the sole secret of minding our own business, we found a means of living securely among  
these

these dangerous people. Would you know how we pass the time at Naples? Our chief entertainment is the devotion of our neighbours: besides the gaiety of their Churches (where folks go to see what they call *una bella Devotione* (i. e.) a sort of religious opera) they make fireworks almost every week, out of devotion; the streets are often hung with arras, out of devotion; and (what is still more strange) the ladies invite gentlemen to their houses and treat them with music and sweatmeats, out of devotion; in a word, were it not for this devotion of its inhabitants, Naples would have little else to recommend it, beside the air and situation. Learning is in no very thriving state here, as indeed no where else in Italy; however, among many pretenders, some men of taste are to be met with. A friend of mine told me not long since, that, being to visit Salvini at Florence, he found him reading your Homer: he liked the notes extremely, and could find no other fault with the version, but that he thought it approached too near a paraphrase; which shews him not to be sufficiently acquainted with our language. I wish you health to go on with that noble work, and when you have that, I need not wish you success. You will do me the justice to believe, that whatever relates to your welfare is sincerely wished by

Your, &c.

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