

An Epistle from Mr. Pope, to Dr. Arbuthnot

[written 1731-4; published 1735]

*Neque sermonibus Vulgi dederis te, nec in Premiis humanis spem
posteris rerum tuarum: suis te oportet illecebris ipsa Virtus trahat
ad verum decus. Quid de te alii loquantur, ipsi videant, sed loquen-
tur tamen.*

TULLY [*De Re Publica*, Lib. VI, cap. XXIII].

ADVERTISEMENT

This Paper is a Sort of Bill of Complaint, begun many years since, and drawn up by snatches, as the several Occasions offer'd. I had no thoughts of publishing it, till it pleas'd some Persons of Rank and Fortune [the Authors¹ of Verses to the Imitator of Horace, and of an Epistle to a Doctor of Divinity from a Nobleman at Hampton Court,] to attack in a very extraordinary manner, not only my Writings (of which being publick the Publick judge) but my Person, Morals, and Family, whereof to those who know me not, a truer Information may be requisite. Being divided between the Necessity to say something of Myself, and my own Laziness to undertake so awkward a Task, I thought it the shortest way to put the last hand to this Epistle. If it have any thing pleasing, it will be That by which I am most desirous to please, the Truth and the Sentiment; and if any thing offensive, it will be only to those I am least sorry to offend, the Vicious or the Ungenerous.

Many will know their own Pictures in it, there being not a Circumstance but what is true; but I have, for the most part spar'd their Names, and they may escape being laugh'd at, if they please.

I would have some of them know, it was owing to the Request of the learned and candid Friend to whom it is inscribed, that I make not as free use of theirs as they have done of mine. However I shall have this Advantage, and Honour, on my side, that whereas by their proceeding, any Abuse may be directed at any man, no Injury can possibly be done by mine, since a Nameless Character can never be found out, but by its Truth and Likeness.

Shut, shut the door, good John! fatigu'd I said,
Tye up the knocker, say I'm sick, I'm dead,

¹ Authors] Lord Hervey and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu.
1. good John] Pope's servant, John Serle.

The Dog-star rages! nay 'tis past a doubt,
 All *Bedlam*, or *Parnassus*, is let out:
 Fire in each eye, and Papers in each hand,
 They rave, recite, and madden round the land.
 What Walls can guard me, or what Shades can hide?
 They pierce my Thickets, thro' my Grot they glide,
 By land, by water, they renew the charge,
 They stop the Chariot, and they board the Barge.
 No place is sacred, not the Church is free,
 Ev'n *Sunday* shines no *Sabbath-day* to me:
 Then from the *Mint* walks forth the Man of Ryme,
 Happy! to catch me, just at Dinner-time.
 Is there a Parson, much be-mus'd in Beer,
 A maudlin Poetess, a ryming Peer,
 A Clerk, foredoom'd his Father's soul to cross,
 Who pens a Stanza when he should *engross*?
 Is there, who lock'd from Ink and Paper, scrawls
 With desp'rate Charcoal round his darken'd walls?
 All fly to *Twit'nam*, and in humble strain
 Apply to me, to keep them mad or vain.
Arthur, whose giddy Son neglects the Laws,
 Imputes to me and my damn'd works the cause:
 Poor *Cornus* sees his frantic Wife elope,
 And curses Wit, and Poetry, and *Pope*.
 Friend to my Life, (which did not you prolong,
 The World had wanted many an idle Song)
 What *Drop* or *Nostrum* can this Plague remove?
 Or which must end me, a Fool's Wrath or Love?
 A dire Dilemma! either way I'm sped,
 If Foes, they write, if Friends, they read me dead.
 Seiz'd and ty'd down to judge, how wretched I!
 Who can't be silent, and who will not lye;

3. *The Dog-star rages*] Sirius reappears in late summer, the customary time of rehearsing poetry in Ancient Rome.
 8. *my Grot*] see *Sat.* II i 124n, p. 617.
 10. *the Barge*] Pope employed a waterman to convey him between London and Twickenham.
 13. *the Mint*] see *Sat.* II i 99n, p. 616.
 15. A reference to the late poet laureate, Laurence Eusden—the word *bemus'd* echoes his name—a type of the Drunken Poet.
 23. *Arthur . . . Son*] Arthur Moore a politician, and James Moore Smythe, who had given offence by refusing to remove some of Pope's unpublished verses from his comedy *The Rival Modes*, 1727.
 33. *ty'd down*] Contemporary readers would recall the scene in Wicherley's *Plain Dealer* (v. 3), where Oldfox gags and ties down the Widow, to hear his well-penned stanzas.

To laugh, were want of Goodness and of Grace,
 And to be grave, exceeds all Pow'r of Face.
 I sit with sad Civility, I read
 With honest anguish, and an aking head;
 And drop at last, but in unwilling ears,
 This saving counsel, 'Keep your Piece nine years.'
 Nine years! cries he, who high in *Drury-lane*
 Lull'd by soft Zephyrs thro' the broken Pane,
 Rymes e're he wakes, and prints before *Term* ends,
 Oblig'd by hunger and Request of friends:
 'The Piece you think is incorrect: why take it,
 I'm all submission, what you'd have it, make it.'
 Three things another's modest wishes bound,
 My Friendship, and a Prologue, and ten Pound.
Pitholeon sends to me: 'You know his Grace,
 I want a Patron; ask him for a Place.'
Pitholeon libell'd me—'but here's a Letter
 Informs you Sir, 'twas when he knew no better.
 Dare you refuse him? *Curl* invites to dine,
 He'll write a *Journal*, or he'll turn *Divine*.
 Bless me! a Packet.—'Tis a stranger sues,
 A Virgin Tragedy, an Orphan Muse,
 If I dislike it, 'Furies, death and rage!
 If I approve, 'Commend it to the Stage.'
 There (thank my Stars) my whole Commission ends,
 The Plays and I are, luckily, no friends.

40. *Keep . . . nine years*] the famous counsel of Horace, *Art Poetica* 388, nonumque prematur in annum, Membranis intus positus.
 41. *high*] i.e. in a garret.
 43. *before Term ends*] i.e. the legal terms, with which the publishing characters.
 49. *Pitholeon*] The name taken from a foolish Poet at *Rhodes*, who pretended much to *Greek*. Schol. in Horat. lib. i. Dr. Bentley pretends, that this *Pitholeon* libell'd Caesar also. See notes on Hor. Sat. x l. i (v. 22) [P]. The MS shows that Leonard Welsted was intended, a poet and critic of ability; for his quarrel with P, see l. 375n. But 'Pitholeon' also fits Thomas Cooke, the translator of Hesiod (1728), who had written to P. in apology for 'libelling' him.
 53. Edmund Curll, a bookseller of infamous reputation, who specialized in publishing scandalous biographies and private papers not meant for the press. P had suffered from his attentions since 1714, and had revenged himself by administering an emetic. He also manoeuvred Curll into publishing an unauthorized edition of his *Letters*.

Fir'd that the House reject him, 'Sdeath I'll print it
And shame the Fools—your Int'rest, Sir, with *Lintot*,
Lintot, dull rogue! will think your price too much.
'Not Sir, if you revise it, and retouch.'

All my demurs but double his attacks,
At last he whispers 'Do, and we go snacks.'

Glad of a quarrel, strait I clap the door,
Sir, let me see your works and you no more.

'Tis sung, when *Midas*' Ears began to spring,
His very Minister who spy'd them first,

(Some say his Queen) was forc'd to speak, or burst.
And is not mine, my Friend, a sorer case,

When ev'ry Coxcomb perks them in my face?
'Good friend forbear! you deal in dang'rous things,

I'd never name Queens, Ministers, or Kings;
Keep close to Ears, and those let Asses prick,

'Tis nothing'—Nothing? if they bite and kick?
Out with it, *Dunciad*! let the secret pass,

That Secret to each Fool, that he's an Ass:
The truth once told, (and wherefore shou'd we lie?)

The Queen of *Midas* slept, and so may I.
You think this cruel? take it for a rule,

No creature smarts so little as a Fool.
Let Peals of Laughter, *Codrus*! round thee break,

Thou unconcern'd canst hear the mighty Crack.
Pit, Box and Gall'ry in convulsions hurl'd,

Thou stand'st unshook amidst a bursting World.

62. Bernard Lintot, the bookseller who had published P's *Homer*.
72. *his Queen* The Story is told by some (*Ovid Met.* xi. 146 and
Persius *Sat.* i. 121) of his Barber, but by *Chaucer* of his Queen. See *Wife*
of Bath's Tale in *Dryden's Fables* (ll. 157-200). [P]

76. A reflection upon the political alliance of Walpole and Queen
Caroline.
80. I.e. that his ears (his marks of folly) are visible.

85. *Codrus* The name of a poet ridiculed by Virgil and Juvenal.
86-8. Alluding to Horace (*Ode* iii. iii. 7, 8)

Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Impavidum ferient ruinae. [P]

But P alludes more particularly to Addison's rendering:
Should the whole frame of nature round him break,
In ruin and confusion hurl'd,
He, unconcern'd, would hear the mighty crack,
And stand secure amidst a falling world.

P had quoted the first and third lines in Ch. xii of *Peri Bathous* to show
how 'Sometimes a single Word [crack] will vulgarize a poetical idea.'

Who shames a Scribler? break one cobweb thro',
He spins the slight, self-pleasing thread anew;

Destroy his Fib, or Sophistry; in vain,
The Creature's at his dirty work again;

Thron'd in the Centre of his thin designs;
Proud of a vast Extent of flimzy lines.

Whom have I hurt? has Poet yet, or Peer,
Lost the arch'd eye-brow, or *Parnassian* sneer?

And has not *Colly* still his Lord, and Whore?
His Butchers *Henley*, his Free-masons *Moor*?

Does not one Table *Bavius* still admit?
Still to one Bishop *Philips* seem a Wit?

No Names—be calm—learn Prudence of a Friend:
I too could write, and I am twice as tall,

But Foes like these!—One Flat'ner's worse than all;
Of all mad Creatures, if the Learn'd are right,

It is the Slaver kills, and not the Bite.
A Fool quite angry is quite innocent;

Alas! 'tis ten times worse when they repent.

One dedicates, in high Heroic prose,
And ridicules beyond a hundred foes;

One from all *Grubstreet* will my fame defend,
And, more abusive, calls himself my friend.

This prints my Letters, that expects a Bribe,
And others roar aloud, 'Subscribe, subscribe.'

There are, who to my Person pay their court,
I cough like *Horace*, and tho' lean, am short,

110
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96. *Parnassian sneer* Cf. *Dunciad* A ii 5 p. 371.

97. *Colly* Cibber, comic actor, dramatist, and since 1730, poet laureate. He had aroused P's animosity by his treatment of P and his friends in plays and as actor-manager; but the quarrel did not grow acute until C attacked P in *A Letter . . . to Mr. Pope* (1742) and P retaliated by displacing Theobald with C in *The Dunciad* (1743).

98. *His Butchers Henley* A mountebank preacher in government pay who had frequently attacked P. See p. 414n. On Easter Day, 1729, he delivered a sermon purporting to display the religious History and Use of the Butchers' Calling.

99. *Bavius* Moore-Smythe (l. 23n).

100. *to one Bishop* Ambrose Philips, P's rival in pastoral poetry, had gone to Ireland as secretary to Archbishop Boulter.

113. *Letters* Some of P's letters had been surreptitiously printed by Curll in 1726.

Ammon's great Son one shoulder had too high,
Such *Ovid's* nose, and 'Sir! you have an Eye—'
Go on, obliging Creatures, make me see
All that disgrac'd my Betters, met in me:
Say for my comfort, languishing in bed,
'Just so immortal *Maro* held his head.'
And when I die, be sure you let me know
Great *Homer* dy'd three thousand years ago.

Why did I write? what sin to me unknown
Dipt me in Ink, my Parents', or my own?
As yet a Child, nor yet a Fool to Fame,
I lisp'd in Numbers, for the Numbers came.
I left no Calling for this idle trade,
No Duty broke, no Father dis-obey'd.
The Muse but serv'd to ease some Friend, not Wife,
To help me thro' this long Disease, my Life,
To second, ARBUTHNOT! thy Art and Care,
And teach, the Being you preserv'd, to bear.

But why then publish? *Granville* the polite,
And knowing *Walsh*, would tell me I could write;
Well-natur'd *Garth* inflam'd with early praise,
And *Congreve* lov'd, and *Swift* endur'd my Lays;
The Courtly *Talbot*, *Somers*, *Sheffield* read,
Ev'n mitred *Rochester* would nod the head,
And *St. John's* self (great *Dryden's* friends before)
With open arms receiv'd one Poet more.

117. *Ammon's great Son* Alexander the Great; see *Temple of Fame*, 152n (p. 178).

130. no *Father dis-obey'd* a reference to Moore-Smythe; see l. 23.

141. *Dryden's friends* All these were Patrons or Admirers of Mr. *Dryden*, tho' a scandalous Libel against him, entitled, *Dryden's Satyr to his Muse*, has been printed in the Name of the Lord *Somers*, of which he was wholly ignorant.

These are the persons to whose account the Author charges the publication of his first pieces: Persons with whom he was conversant (and he adds below'd) at 16 or 17 years of age; an early period for such acquaintance! The catalogue might be made yet more illustrious, had he not confined it to that time when he writ the *Pastorals* and *Windsor Forest*, on which he passes a sort of Censure in the lines following.

While pure Description held the place of Sense, &c.

[P]

135-41. *Granville*, *Walsh*, and *Garth* were poets; *Talbot*, Duke of Shrewsbury, Lord *Somers*, and *Sheffield*, Duke of Buckingham were statesmen and patrons. *Sheffield's* poems were edited by Pope.

Happy my Studies, when by these approv'd!
Happier their Author, when by these below'd!
From these the world will judge of Men and Books,
Not from the *Burnets*, *Oldmixons*, and *Cooks*.

Soft were my Numbers, who could take offence
While pure Description held the place of Sense?
Like gentle *Fanny's* was my flow'ry Theme,
A painted Mistress, or a purling Stream.

Yet then did *Gildon* draw his venal quill;
I wish'd the man a dinner, and sate still:
Yet then did *Dennis* rave in furious fret;
I never answer'd, I was not in debt:

If want provok'd, or madness made them print,
I wag'd no war with *Bedlam* or the *Mint*.
Did some more sober Critic come abroad?
If wrong, I smil'd; if right, I kiss'd the rod.

Pains, reading, study, are their just pretence,
And all they want is spirit, taste, and sense.
Comma's and points they set exactly right,
And 'twere a sin to rob them of their Mite.

Yet ne'r one sprig of Laurel grac'd these ribalds,
From slashing *Bentley* down to piddling *Tibalds*.
Each Wight who reads not, and but scans and spells,
Each Word-catcher that lives on syllables,

Ev'n such small Critics some regard may claim,
Preserv'd in *Milton's* or in *Shakespeare's* name.
Pretty! in Amber to observe the forms
Of hairs, or straws, or dirt, or grubs, or worms;

The things, we know, are neither rich nor rare,
But wonder how the Devil they got there?

146. Authors of secret and scandalous History [P]. Thomas Burnet is believed to have written *Pope Alexander's Supremacy* (1729), a severe attack upon P. John Oldmixon had criticized his work in the *Arts of Logic and Rhetoric* (1728). For Cooke, see l. 40n.

150. A painted Meadow, or a purling stream is a Verse of Mr. Addison [P]. A Letter from Italy II. 165-6.

151-92. A version of these lines originally introduced the character of Addison (Atticus), see p. 490. Gildon had *The Rape of the Lock* censured in *A New Rehearsal* (1714) and Dennis in *The Progress of Dulness* (1728).

156. the *Mint* see Sat. II i 99n.

157-72. These lines first appeared in *Miscellanies* (1727) as an expansion of the character of Addison. See p. 490.

164. slashing *Bentley* Bentley had attempted to restore the true text of *Par. Lost* (1732) on the assumption that the blind Milton was at the mercy of an amanuensis.

Were others angry? I excus'd them too;
Well might they rage; I gave them but their due.

A man's true merit 'tis not hard to find,
But each man's secret standard in his mind,
That Casting-weight Pride adds to Emptiness,

This, who can gratify? for who can guess?

The Bard whom pilf'ring Pastors renown,

Who turns a *Persian* Tale for half a crown,

Just writes to make his barrenness appear,

And strains from hard-bound brains eight lines a-year:

He, who still wanting tho' he lives on theft,

Steals much, spends little, yet has nothing left:

And he, who now to sense, now nonsense leaning,

Means not, but blunders round about a meaning:

And he, whose Fustian's so sublimely bad,

It is not Poetry, but Prose run mad:

All these, my modest Satire bad *translate*,

And own'd, that nine such Poets made a *Tate*.

How did they fume, and stamp, and roar, and chafe?

And swear, not *Addison* himself was safe.

Peace to all such! but were there One whose fires

True Genius kindles, and fair Fame inspires,

Blest with each Talent and each Art to please,

And born to write, converse, and live with ease:

Shou'd such a man, too fond to rule alone,

Bear, like the *Turk*, no brother near the throne,

View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,

And hate for Arts that caus'd himself to rise;

Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,

And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer;

Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,

Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike;

Alike reserv'd to blame, or to commend,

A tim'rous foe, and a suspicious friend,

Dreading ev'n fools, by Flatterers besieg'd,

And so obliging that he ne'er oblig'd;

Like *Cato*, give his little Senate laws,

And sit attentive to his own applause;

180. *a Persian tale* Amb. Philips translated a Book called the *Persian*

Tales. [P] Half a crown was the prostitute's customary charge.

193-214. For earlier versions of the character of Atticus (Addison), see

pp. 293, 490.

205. The ideal critic, like Walsh (*E. on C.* 730), 'justly knew to blame

or to commend.'

209. Cf. P's prologue to Addison's *Cato* (1713) l. 23, p. 211.

While Wits and Templers ev'ry sentence raise,
And wonder with a foolish face of praise.

Who but must laugh, if such a man there be?

Who would not weep, if *Atticus* were he!

What tho' my Name stood rubric on the walls? 215

Or plaister'd posts, with Claps in capitals?

Or smoaking forth, a hundred Hawkers load,

On Wings of Winds came flying all abroad?

I sought no homage from the Race that write;

I kept, like *Asian* Monarchs, from their sight: 220

Poems I heeded (now be-rym'd so long)

No more than Thou, great *GEORGE*! a Birth-day Song.

I ne'r with Wits or Witlings past my days,

To spread about the Itch of Verse and Praise;

Nor like a Puppy daggled thro' the Town, 225

To fetch and carry Sing-song up and down;

Nor at Rehearsals sweat, and mouth'd, and cry'd,

With Handkerchief and Orange at my side:

But sick of Fops, and Poetry, and Prate,

To *Bufo* left the whole *Castalian* State. 230

Proud, as *Apollo* on his forked hill,

Sate full-blown *Bufo*, puff'd by ev'ry quill;

Fed with soft Dedication all day long,

Horace and he went hand in hand in song.

His Library, (where Busts of Poets dead 235

And a true *Pindar* stood without a head)

Receiv'd of Wits an undistinguish'd race,

Who first his Judgment ask'd, and then a Place:

Much they extoll'd his Pictures, much his Seat,

And flatter'd ev'ry day, and some days eat: 240

214. *Atticus* It was a great Falshood which some of the Libels reported, that this Character was written after the Gentleman's (<Addison's>) death, which see refuted in the Testimonies prefix'd to the Dunciad. But the occasion of writing it was such, as he would not make publick in regard to his memory; and all that could further be done was to omit the Name, in the Editions of his Works. [P]

215-16. *stood rubric* Books were advertised by 'clapping' copies of title-pages to boards or posts in front of booksellers' shops. Pope's former publisher Lintot, was especially fond of red-letter title pages.

218. Hopkins, in the 104th Psalm [P].

232. *Bufo* A Theophrastan character of a Patron, composed of certain traits, which Pope had observed in Bubb Dodgington (l. 280n.) and the Earl of Halifax.

236. *Pindar* ridicules the affectation of Antiquaries, who frequently exhibit the headless *Trunks* and *Terms* of Statues, for Plato, Homer, *Pindar*, &c. Vide *Fabo*, *Ursin*, &c. [P]

Till grown more frugal in his riper days,
 He pay'd some Bards with Port, and some with Praise,
 To some a dry Rehearsal was assign'd,
 And others (harder still) he pay'd in kind.
 Dryden alone (what wonder?) came not nigh,
 Dryden alone escap'd this judging eye:
 But still the Great have kindness in reserve,
 He help'd to bury whom he help'd to starve.
 May some choice Patron bless each gray goose quill!
 May ev'ry *Bacchus* have his *Buffo* still!
 So, when a Statesman wants a Day's defence,
 Or Envy holds a whole Week's war with Sense,
 Or simple Pride for Flatt'ry makes demands;
 May Dunces by Dunces be whistled off my hands!
 Blest be the Great! for those they take away,
 And those they left me—For they left me GAY,
 Left me to see neglected Genius bloom,
 Neglected die! and tell it on his Tomb;
 Of all thy blameless Life the sole Return
 My Verse, and QUEENSB'RY weeping o'er thy Urn!
 Oh let me live my own! and die so too!
 ('To live and die is all I have to do:')
 Maintain a Poet's Dignity and Ease,
 And see what friends, and read what books I please.
 Above a Patron, tho' I condescend
 Sometimes to call a Minister my Friend:
 I was not born for Courts or great Affairs,
 I pay my Debts, believe, and say my Pray'rs,
 Can sleep without a Poem in my head,
 Nor know, if *Dennis* be alive or dead.
 Why am I ask'd, what next shall see the light?
 Heav'ns! was I born for nothing but to write?
 Has Life no Joys for me? or (to be grave)
 Have I no Friend to serve, no Soul to save?
 'I found him close with *Swift*!—'Indeed? no doubt'
 (Cries prating *Balbus*) 'something will come out.'
 'Tis all in vain, deny it as I will.

248. *help'd to bury*] Mr. Dryden, after having liv'd in Exigencies, had a magnificent Funeral bestow'd upon him by the contribution of several Persons of Quality [P].
 260. *Queensb'ry*] During Gay's last years, he was taken under the protection of the Duke and Duchess of Queensberry, who erected his monument in Westminster Abbey.
 262. From Denham's *Of Prudence*, ll. 93, 4.

'No, such a Genius never can lye still,
 And then for mine obligingly mistakes
 The first Lampoon Sir *Will.* or *Bubo* makes.
 Poor guiltless I! and can I chuse but smile,
 When ev'ry Coxcomb knows me by my *Style*?
 Curs'd be the Verse, how well soe'er it flow,
 That tends to make one worthy Man my foe,
 Give Virtue scandal, Innocence a fear,
 Or from the soft-ey'd Virgin steal a tear!
 But he, who hurts a harmless neighbour's peace,
 Insults fal'n Worth, or Beauty in distress,
 Who loves a Lye, lame slander helps about,
 Who writes a Libel, or who copies out:
 That Fop whose pride affects a Patron's name,
 Yet absent, wounds an Author's honest fame;
 Who can your Merit selfishly approve,
 And show the Sense of it, without the Love;
 Who has the Vanity to call you Friend,
 Yet wants the Honour injur'd to defend;
 Who tells whate'er you think, whate'er you say,
 And, if he lye not, must at least betray:
 Who to the *Dean* and *sister Bell* can swear,
 And sees at *Canons* what was never there:
 Who reads but with a Lust to mis-apply,
 Make Satire a Lampoon, and Fiction, Lye.
 A Lash like mine no honest man shall dread,
 But all such babbling blockheads in his stead.
 Let *Sporus* tremble—'What? that Thing of silk,

270 ff. Boileau had suffered in the same way (*Ep.* vi 60 ff.).
 286. Easily recognizable type figures. Sir William Yonge was a parliamentary tool of Walpole's, ready to speak agreeably by the hour on nothing. Bubb Dodington was an obvious mark for satire owing to his political improbity, tactless extravagance, and affectation of patronage. See also p. 589, l. 204.
 282. *Style*] There is nothing more foolish than to pretend to be sure of knowing a great writer by his style. Pope recorded by Spence.
 289-304. An abbreviated version of these lines had appeared in a newspaper in January 1732 as a paraphrase of Horace, *Sat.* 4. *Lib.* 1 p. 814.
 299. *Dean*] See the Epistle to the Earl of Burlington [P]. *Moral Et.* iv 141-50, p. 593.
 305. *Sporus*] It was originally *Paris*, but that Name having been, as we conceive, the only reason that so contemptible a Character could be applied to a Noble and Beautiful Person, the Author changed it to this of *Sporus*, as a Name which has never yet been so mis-applied [P].
 A passage in Suetonius (*Nero*, xxviii i) accounts for the change. This is a character of Lord Hervey, who had been collaborating with Lady M. W. Montagu in attacks upon Pope.

Sporus, that mere white Curd of Ass's milk?
 Satire or Sense alas! can *Sporus* feel?
 Who breaks a Butterfly upon a Wheel?
 Yet let me flap this Bug with gilded wings,
 This painted Child of Dirt that stinks and stings;
 Whose Buzz the Witty and the Fair annoys,
 Yet Wit ne'er tastes, and Beauty ne'er enjoys,
 So well-bred Spaniels civilly delight
 In muzzling of the Game they dare not bite.
 Eternal Smiles his Emptiness betray,
 As shallow streams run dimpling all the way.
 Whether in florid Impotence he speaks,
 And, as the Prompter breathes, the Puppet squeaks;
 Or at the Ear of *Eve*, familiar Toad,
 Half Froth, half Venom, spits himself abroad,
 In Puns, or Politicks, or Tales, or Lyes,
 Or Spite, or Smut, or Rymes, or Blasphemies.
 His Wit all see-saw between *that* and *this*,
 Now high, now low, now Master up, now Miss,
 And he himself one vile Antithesis.
 Amphibious Thing! that acting either Part,
 The trifling Head, or the corrupted Heart!
 Fop at the Toilet, Flatt'ner at the Board,
 Now trips a Lady, and now struts a Lord.
Eve's Tempter thus the Rabbits have exprest,
 A Cherub's face, a Reptile all the rest;
 Beauty that shocks you, Parts that none will trust,
 Wit that can creep, and Pride that licks the dust.
 Not Fortune's Worshipper, nor Fashion's Fool,
 Not Lucre's Madman, nor Ambition's Tool,
 Not proud, nor servile, be one Poet's praise
 That, if he pleas'd, he pleas'd by manly ways;
 That Flatt'ry, ev'n to Kings, he held a shame,
 And thought a Lye in Verse or Prose the same:
 That not in Fancy's Maze he wander'd long,
 But stoop'd to Truth, and moraliz'd his song:

306. *Ass's milk* Ass's milk was commonly prescribed as a tonic 'in all weakly Constitutions as being more thin, light, and easier of Digestion' than cow's milk.

319. In the fourth Book of *Milton* (l. 800), the Devil is represented in this Posture. It is but justice to own that the Hint of *Eve* and the *Serpent* was taken from the *Verses on the Imitator of Horace*. [P] *Eve* is Queen Caroline.

341. *stoop'd to Truth* The poet 'stoops' to Truth as a falcon to its lure,

That not for Fame, but Virtue's better end,
 He stood the furious Foe, the timid Friend,
 The damning Critic, half-approving Wit,
 The Coxcomb hit, or fearing to be hit;
 Laugh'd at the loss of Friends he never had,
 The dull, the proud, the wicked, and the mad;
 The distant Threats of Vengeance on his head,
 The Blow unfelt, the Tear he never shed;
 The Tale reviv'd, the Lye so oft o'erthrown;
 Th' impur'd Trash, and Dulness not his own;
 The Morals blacken'd when the Writings scape;
 The libel'd Person, and the pictur'd Shape;
 Abuse on all he lov'd, or lov'd him, spread;
 A Friend in Exile, or a Father, dead;
 The Whisper that to Greatness still too near,
 Perhaps, yet vibrates on his SOVEREIGN'S Ear—
 Welcome for thee, fair Virtue! all the past:
 For thee, fair Virtue! welcome ev'n the last!
 'But why insult the Poor, affront the Great?'
 A Knave's a Knave, to me, in ev'ry State,
 Alike my scorn, if he succeed or fail,
Sporus at Court, or *Japhet* in a Jayl,

or Browne's 'haggard and unreclaimed Reason' to 'the lure of Faith' (*Rel. Med.* l. x).

moraliz'd his song] cf. *E. on Man* iv 391-3, p. 547. The phrase is found in *Faerie Queene*, I invoc. l. 9.

349. *The Blow unfelt* Alluding to a fictitious account of an assault committed on Pope in 1728.

350. *Lye* That he set his Name to Mr. Broom's Verses, that he receiv'd Subscriptions for *Shakespeare*, &c. which tho' publicly disprov'd were nevertheless shamelessly repeated in the Libels, and even in the Paper call'd, *The Nobleman's Epistle* [P]. Hervey's *Nobleman's Epistle* mentions only that he 'sold Broom's Labours printed with P—pe's Name.'

351. *Trash* Profane *Psalms*, *Court Poems*, and many Libellous Things in his Name, printed by *Curl*, &c. [P].

His version of the first psalm (see p. 300) and *Court Poems*, the work of Gay and Lady Mary, were printed in 1716.

353. *the pictur'd Shape* An illustration in *Pope Alexander's Supremacy and Infallibility Examined* (1729) represents Pope as a hunchbacked ape squatting on a pedestal and leaning on a pile of books.

354. *Abuse* Namely on the Duke of Buckingham, Earl of Burlington, Lord Bathurst, Lord Bolingbroke, Bishop Atterbury, Dr. Swift, Mr. Gay, Dr. Arbuthnot, his Friends, his Parents, and his very Nurse, aspers'd in Printed Papers by James Moore and G. Duckett, Esquires, Welsted, Tho. Brailey, and other obscure persons. [P]

355. *Friend in Exile* Atterbury.

356. *The Whisper* I.e. from Hervey (cf. l. 319). *Japhet* Japhet Crook, the forger. See *Moral Ez.* iii 88n, p. 575.

Yet why? that Father held it for a rule
It was a Sin to call our Neighbour Fool,
That harmless Mother thought no Wife a Whore,—
Hear this! and spare his Family, *James More!* 385
Unspotted Names! and memorable long,
If there be Force in Virtue, or in Song.
Of gentle Blood (part shed in Honour's Cause,
While yet in *Britain* Honour had Applause)
Each Parent sprung—'What Fortune, pray?'—
Their own, 390
And better got than *Bestia's* from the Throne.
Born to no Pride, inheriting no Strife,
Nor marrying Discord in a Noble Wife,
Stranger to Civil and Religious Rage,
The good Man walk'd innoxious thro' his Age. 395
No Courts he saw, no Suits would ever try,
Nor dar'd an Oath, nor hazarded a Lye:
Un-learn'd, he knew no Schoolman's subtle Art,
No Language, but the Language of the Heart.
By Nature honest, by Experience wise,
Healthy by Temperance and by Exercise: 400

come from a Nobleman) has dropt an Allusion to this pitiful Untruth, in his *Epistle to a Doctor of Divinity*: And the following line,

Hard as thy Heart, and as thy Birth Obscure,
had fallen from a like Courty pen, in the *Verses to the Imitator of Horace*. Mr. Pope's Father was of a Gentleman's Family in *Oxfordshire*, the Head of which was the Earl of *Downe*, whose sole Heiress married the Earl of *Lindsey*.—His Mother was the Daughter of *William Turner*, Esq; of *York*: She had three Brothers, one of whom was kill'd, another died in the Service of King *Charles*, the eldest following his Fortunes, and becoming a General Officer in *Spain*, left her what Estate remain'd after the Sequestrations and Forfeitures of her Family.—Mr. Pope died in 1717, aged 75: She in 1733, aged 93, a very few Weeks after this Poem was finished. The following Inscription was placed by their Son on their Monument, in the Parish of *Twickenham*, in *Middlesex*.

D.O.M.

ALEXANDRO POPE, VIRO INNOCUO,
PROBO, PIO, QUI VIXIT ANNOS LXXV, OB. MDCCXVII.
ET EDITHÆ CONJUGI INCULPABILI, PIENTISSIMÆ,
QUÆ VIXIT ANNOS XCIII, OB. MDCCXXXIII.
PARENTIBUS BENEMERENTIBUS FILIUS FECIT, ET SIBI.
[P]

391. *Bestia* L. Calpurnius *Bestia*, who here seems to signify *Marlborough* was a Roman Consul, bribed by *Jugurtha* into a dishonourable peace.

P.A.P.—X

A hiring Scribler, or a hiring Peer,
Knight of the Post corrupt, or of the Shire,
If on a Pillory, or near a Throne,
He gain his Prince's Ear, or lose his own.
Yet soft by Nature, more a Dupe than Wit,
Sapho can tell you how this Man was bit
This dreaded Sat'rist *Dennis* will confess 365
Foe to his Pride, but Friend to his Distress:
So humble, he has knock'd at *Tibbald's* door,
Has drunk with *Gibber*, nay has rym'd for *Moor*.
Full ten years slander'd, did he once reply?
Three thousand Suns went down on *Welsted's* Lye: 370
To please a *Mistress*, One aspers'd his life;
He lash'd him not, but let her be his *Wife*:
Let *Budgel* charge low *Grubstreet* on his quill,
And write whate'er he pleas'd, except his *Will*;
Let the *Two Curls* of Town and Court, abuse 380
His Father, Mother, Body, Soul, and Muse.

365. *Knight of the Post* One who got his living by giving false evidence.
366. *Pillory . . . lose his own* Pope writes with *Japhet Crook's* fate in mind.

371. *Friend to his Distress* Pope had tried to promote (1731) a subscription edition of some of *Dennis's* Works.

374. *Ten years* It was so long, after many libels, before the Author of the *Dunciad* published that Poem, till when, he never writ a word in answer to the many Scurrilities and Falsehoods concerning him. [P]
375. *Welsted's Lye* This Man had the Impudence to tell in print, that Mr. P. had occasion'd a *Lady's* death, and to name a person he never heard of. He also publish'd that he had libell'd the Duke of *Chandos*; with whom (it was added) that he had liv'd in familiarity, and receiv'd from him a Present of five hundred pounds: The Falsehood of which is known to his Grace. Mr. P. never receiv'd any Present farther than the Subscription for *Homer*, from him, or from Any Great Man whatsoever. [P]

376. William Windham is believed to have collaborated with Lady Mary and Hervey in *Verses to an Imitator of Horace*. His mistress was the Countess of *Deloraine*, the 'Delia' of *Sat.* ii i 81, p. 616.

378. *Budgel* *Budgel* in a Weekly Pamphlet call'd the *Bee*, bestow'd much abuse on him, in the imagination that he writ some things about the *Last Will* of Dr. *Tindal*, in the *Grubstreet Journal*; a Paper wherein he never had the least Hand, Direction, or Supervision, nor the least knowledge of its author. [P] Pope's connection with the *Journal* is still a matter of conjecture. *Budgel* (see p. 285) almost certainly forged *Tindal's* will, by means of which he excluded the next heir and obtained the greater part of the estate.

380. The Court *Curll* was Hervey.

381. In some of *Curll's* and other Pamphlets, Mr. Pope's Father was said to be a Mechanic, a Hatter, a Farmer, nay a Bankrupt. But, what is stranger, a Nobleman (<Hervey> (if such a Reflection can be thought to

His Life, tho' long, to sickness past unknown,
His Death was instant, and without a groan.

Oh grant me thus to live, and thus to die!

Who sprung from Kings shall know less joy than I.
O Friend! may each Domestick Bliss be thine!

Be no unpleasing Melancholy mine:

Me, let the tender Office long engage

To rock the Cradle of reposing Age,

With lenient Arts extend a Mother's breath,

Make Languor smile, and smooth the Bed of Death,

Explore the Thought, explain the asking Eye,

And keep a while one Parent from the Sky!

On Cares like these if Length of days attend,

May Heav'n, to bless those days, preserve my Friend,

Preserve him social, cheerful, and serene,

And just as rich as when he serv'd a QUEEN!

Whether that Blessing be deny'd, or giv'n,

Thus far was right, the rest belongs to Heav'n.

405. cf. Hor., *Sat.* i iii 142: *Privatusque magis vivam te rege beatus.*
406-19. Pope sent a version of these lines to Aaron Hill on Sept. 3,
1731, informing him of Mrs. Pope's illness. See p. 812.

Imitations of Horace

The First Satire of the Second Book of Horace Imitated

[written 1733; published 1733]

ADVERTISEMENT

The Occasion of publishing these Imitations was the Glamour raised on some of my Epistles. An Answer from Horace was both more full, and of more Dignity, than any I could have made in my own person; and the Example of much greater Freedom in so eminent a Divine as Dr. Donne, seem'd a proof with what Indignation and Contempt a Christian may treat Vice or Folly, in ever so low, or ever so high, a Station. Both these Authors were acceptable to the Princes and Ministers under whom they lived: The Satires of Dr. Donne I versify'd at the Desire of the Earl of Oxford while he was Lord Treasurer, and of the Duke of Shrewsbury who had been Secretary of State; neither of whom look'd upon a Satire on Vicious Courts as any Reflection on those they serv'd in. And indeed there is not in the world a greater Error, than that which Fools are so apt to fall into, and Knaves with good reason to encourage, the mistaking a Satyrst for a Libeller; whereas to a true Satyrst nothing is so odious as a Libeller, for the same reason as to a man truly Virtuous nothing is so hateful as a Hypocrite.

—Uni aequus Virtuti atque ejus Amicis. [P]

P. There are (I scarce can think it, but am told)

There are to whom my Satire seems too bold,

Scarce to wise *Peter* complaisant enough,

And something said of *Charities* much too rough.

The Lines are weak, another's pleas'd to say,

Lord *Fanny* spins a thousand such a Day.

Tim'rous by Nature, of the Rich in awe,

I come to Council learned in the Law.

3, 4. Referring to *Moral Es.* iii 125, 20, 88; pp. 571, 577.
6. *Lord Fanny* Pope first used this *soubriquet*, presumably for Hervey,
in *The Master Key to Popery* (1732).

8. His friend, William Fortescue, later Master of the Rolls.