



Letters on Familiar Matters (*Rerum Familiarium Libri*): Vol. 3: Books XVII-XXIV

Francesco Petrarch, Aldo S. Bernardo

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This translation makes available for the first time to English-speaking readers Petrarch's earliest and perhaps most important collection of prose letters. They were written for the most part between 1325 and 1366, and were organized into the present collection of twenty-four books between 1345 and 1366. The collection represents a portrait of the artist as a young man seen through the eyes of the mature artist. Whether in the writing of poetry, or being crowned poet laureate, or in confessing his faults, describing the dissolution of the kingdom of Naples, summoning up the grandeur of ancient Rome, or in writing to pope or emperor, Petrarch was always the consummate artist, deeply concerned with creating a desired effect by means of a dignified gracefulness, and always conscious that his private life and thoughts could be the object of high art and public interest. As early as 1436 Leonardo Bruni wrote in his *Life of Petrarch*: "Petrarch was the first man to have had a sufficiently fine mind to recognize the gracefulness of the lost ancient style and to bring it back to life." It was indeed the very style or manner in which Petrarch consciously sought to create the impression of continuity with the past that was responsible for the enormous impact he made on subsequent generations. This complete translation by Aldo S. Bernardo has long been out of print and is reproduced here in its entirety in three volumes. Introduction, notes, bibliography. Vol. 3 includes Books XVII-XXIV.

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