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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 His Moral Essays

Pope, Alexander

London, 1751

Justice and Truth its chief and essential Property

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P A R T II.

DARE nobly then: But conscious of your
trust,

As ever warm and bold be ever just: 170

Nor court applause in these degen'rate days:

The Villain's censure is extorted praise.

But chief, be steady in a noble end,

And shew Mankind that Truth has yet a friend.

'Tis mean for empty praise of wit to write, 175

As Foplings grin to show their teeth are white:

To brand a doubtful folly with a smile,

Or madly blaze unknown defects, is vile:

'Tis doubly vile, when, but to prove your art,

You fix an arrow in a blameless heart. 180

O lost to honour's voice, O doom'd to shame,

Thou Fiend accurs'd, thou Murderer of Fame!

Fell Ravisher, from Innocence to tear

That name, than liberty, than life more dear!

Where shall thy baseness meet its just return, 185

Or what repay thy guilt, but endless scorn!

And know, immortal Truth shall mock thy toil:

Immortal Truth shall bid the shaft recoil;

With rage retorted, wing the deadly dart;
And empty all its poyson in thy heart. 190

With caution next, the dang'rous pow'r apply;
An eagle's talon asks an eagle's eye:
Let SATIRE then her proper object know,
And ere she strike, be sure she strike a foe.
Nor fondly deem the real fool confest, 195
Because blind *Ridicule* conceives a jest:
Before whose altar Virtue oft hath bled,
And oft a destin'd Victim shall be led:
Lo, *Shaft/b'ry* rears her high on Reason's throne,
And loads the Slave with honours not her own:
Big-swoln with folly, as her smiles provoke, 201
Prophaneness spawns, pert Dunces nurse the joke!
Come, let us join a while this tittering crew,
And own the *Idiot Guide* for once is true;
Deride our weak forefather's musty rule, 205
Who *therefore* smil'd, *because* they saw a Fool;
Sublimier logic now adorns our isle,
We *therefore* see a Fool, *because* we smile.
Truth in her gloomy Cave why fondly seek?
Lo, gay she sits in Laughter's dimpled cheek:
Contemns each surly Academic foe, 211
And courts the spruce Freethinker and the Beau.