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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

The Dignity of true Satire

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xx ESSAY ON SATIRE.

Beholds, where WIDCOMBE's happy hills ascend,
Each orphan'd Art and Virtue find a friend: 326
To HAGLEY's honour'd Shade directs her view;
And culls each flow'r, to form a Wreath for You.

But tread with cautious step this dang'rous ground,
Beset with faithless precipices round: 330
Truth be your guide: disdain Ambition's call;
And if you fall with Truth, you greatly fall.
'Tis Virtue's *native lustre* that must *shine*;
The Poet can but *set it* in his line:
And who unmov'd with laughter can behold 335
A *sordid pebble* meanly grac'd with *gold*?
Let *real* Merit then adorn your lays,
For Shame attends on prostituted praise:
And all your wit, your most distinguish'd art 339
But makes us grieve you want an honest heart.

Nor think the Muse by SATIRE's Law confin'd:
She yields description of the noblest kind.
Inferior art the Landskip may design,
And paint the purple ev'ning in the line:
Her daring thought essays a higher plan; 345
Her hand delineates Passion, pictures Man.

And great the toil, the latent soul to trace,
 To paint the heart, and catch internal grace ;
 By turns bid Vice or Virtue strike our eyes,
 Now bid a *Wolfey* or a *Cromwel* rise ; 350
 Now with a touch more sacred and refin'd,
 Call forth a *CHESTERFIELD*'S or *LONSDALE*'S mind,
 Here sweet or strong may ev'ry Colour flow :
 Here let the pencil warm, the canvass glow :
 Of light and shade provoke the noble strife, 355
 And wake each striking feature into life.