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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

Causes of the Decay of Literature, particularly of Satire

[urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-55032](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-55032)

But lo! the fatal Victor of Mankind,
 Swoln *Luxury!*—pale *Ruin* stalks behind! 390
 As countless Insects from the north-east pour,
 To blast the Spring, and ravage ev'ry flow'r:
 So barb'rous Millions spread contagious death:
 The sick'ning Laurel wither'd at their breath.
 Deep Superstition's night the skies o'erhung, 395
 Beneath whose baleful dews the Poppy sprung.
 No longer Genius woo'd the Nine to love,
 But Dulness nodded in the Muse's grove:
 Wit, Spirit, Freedom, were the sole offence,
 Nor aught was held so dangerous as Sense. 400

At length, again fair Science shot her ray,
 Dawn'd in the skies, and spoke returning day.
 Now, SATIRE, triumph o'er thy flying foe,
 Now load thy quiver, string thy slacken'd bow!
 'Tis done—See, great ERASMUS breaks the spell,
 And wounds triumphant Folly in her Cell! 406
 (In vain the solemn Cowl surrounds her face,
 Vain all her bigot cant, her sour grimace)
 With shame compell'd her leaden throne to quit,
 And own the force of Reason urg'd by Wit. 410