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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

Dryden

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

'Twas then plain *DONNE* in honest vengeance rose,
 His Wit harmonious, tho' his Rhyme was prose:
 He 'midst an Age of Puns and Pedants wrote
 With genuine sense, and *Roman* strength of thought.

Yet scarce had *SATIRE* well relum'd her flame,
 (With grief the Muse records her Country's shame)
 Ere *Britain* saw the foul revolt commence,
 And treach'rous Wit began her war with Sense.
 Then rose a shameless mercenary train,
 Whom latest Time shall view with just disdain:
 A race fantastick, in whose gaudy line 421
 Untutor'd thought, and tinsel beauty shine;
 Wit's shatter'd Mirror lies in fragments bright,
 Reflects not Nature, but confounds the sight.
 Dry Morals the Court-Poet blush'd to sing: 425
 'Twas all his praise to say, "*the oddest thing.*"
 Proud for a jest obscene, a Patron's nod,
 To martyr Virtue, or blaspheme his God.

Ill-fated *DRYDEN*! who unmov'd can see 429
 Th' extremes of wit and meanness join'd in Thee!

Flames that could mount, and gain their kindred
 skies,
 Low-creeping in the putrid sink of vice :
 A Muse whom Wisdom woo'd, but woo'd in vain,
 The Pimp of Pow'r, the Prostitute to Gain : 434
 Wreaths, that should deck fair Virtue's form alone,
 To Strumpets, Traitors, Tyrants, vilely thrown :
 Unrival'd Parts, the scorn of honest fame ;
 And Genius rise, a Monument of shame !

More happy *France* : immortal BOILEAU there
 Supported Genius with a Sage's care : 440
 Him with her love propitious SATIRE blest,
 And breath'd her airs divine into his breast :
 Fancy and Sense to form his line conspire,
 And faultless Judgment guides the purest Fire.

But see, at length, the *British* Genius smile, 445
 And show'r her bounties o'er her favour'd Isle :
 Behold for POPE she twines the laurel crown,
 And centers ev'ry Poet's pow'r in *one* :
 Each *Roman's* force adorns his various page ;
 Gay smiles, collected strength, and manly rage.