



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 The First of his Letters

Pope, Alexander

London, 1751

IV. On the Emperor Adrian's verses on his death-bed.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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L E T T E R I V.

T O M r. S T E E L E.

Nov. 7, 1712.

I Was the other day in company with five or six men of some learning; where chancing to mention the famous verses which the Emperor Adrian spoke on his death-bed, they were all agreed that 'twas a piece of gaiety unworthy of that prince in those circumstances. I could not but differ from this opinion: methinks it was by no means a gay, but a very serious soliloquy to his soul at the point of its departure; in which sense I naturally took the verses at my first reading them, when I was very young, and before I knew what interpretation the world generally put upon them.

*Animula vagula, blandula,
Hospes comesque corporis,
Quæ nunc abibis in loca?
Pallidula, rigida, nudula,
Nec (ut soles) dabis joca!*

“ Alas, my soul! thou pleasing companion of
“ this body, thou fleeting thing that art now
“ deserting it! whither art thou flying? to
“ what unknown scene? all trembling, fear-
“ ful,

Whither, ah whither art thou flying!
 To what dark, undiscover'd shore?
 Thou seem'st all trembling, shiv'ring, dying,
 And Wit and Humour are no more!

L E T T E R V.

Mr. S T E E L E to Mr. P O P E.

Nov. 12, 1712.

I Have read over your Temple of Fame twice,
 and cannot find any thing amiss, of weight
 enough to call a fault, but see in it a thousand
 thousand beauties. Mr. Addison shall see it
 to-morrow: after his perusal of it, I will let
 you know his thoughts. I desire you would
 let me know whether you are at leisure or not?
 I have a design which I shall open a month or
 two hence, with the assistance of the few like
 yourself. If your thoughts are unengaged, I
 shall explain myself further. I am

Your, &c.

L E T T E R VI.

The Answer.

Nov. 16, 1712.

Y O U oblige me by the indulgence you
 have shewn to the poem I sent you, but
 will