



An Essay on Man: In Four Epistles to H. St. John, Lord Bolingbroke (Classic Reprint)

Alexander Pope

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Excerpt from An Essay on Man: In Four Epistles to H. St. John, Lord Bolingbroke

Of Man, in the abstract - That we can judge only with regard to our own system, being ignorant of the relations of systems and things, 17-66. That man is not to be deemed imperfect, but a being suited to his place and rank in the creation, agreeable to the general order of things, and conformable to ends and relations to him unknown, 69, &c. That it is partly upon his ignorance of future events, and partly upon the hope of a future state, that all his happiness in the present depends, 77, &c. The pride of aiming at more knowledge, and pretending to more perfection, the cause of man's error and misery. The impiety of putting himself in the place of God, and judging of the fitness or unfitness, perfection or imperfection, justice or injustice, of his dispensations, 113-122. The absurdity of conceiving himself the final cause of the creation, or expecting that perfection in the moral world which is not in the natural, 123-172. The unreasonableness of his complaints against providence, while on the one hand he demands the perfections of the angels, on the other the bodily qualifications of the brutes, 173. That to possess any of the sensitive faculties in a higher degree, would render him miserable, 179-206. That throughout the whole visible world, an universal order and gradation in the sensual and mental faculties is observed, which causes a subordination of creature to creature, and of all creatures to man. The gradations of our sense, instinct, thought, reflection, reason; that reason alone countervails all the other faculties, 207-232. How much farther this order and subordination of living creatures may extend above and below us; were any part of which broken, not that part only, but the whole connected creation must be destroyed. The extravagance, madness, and pride, of such a desire, 236-258. The consequence of all, the absolute submission due to providence, both as to our present and future state, 281.

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