

POPE ESSAY ON MAN CAN BEST BE READ AS A POEM OF

An Essay on Man is a poem published by Alexander Pope in 1719. It is an effort to imitate the style of Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Restless Genius. Houghton Mifflin Company. ^ In the first edition, this line reads "The only Science of Mankind is Man."

Wits, just like fools, at war about a name, Have full as oft no meaning, or the same. I wake no more I hear, no more I view, The phantom flies me, as unkind as you. Line 3. Learn of the little nautilus to sail, Spread the thin oar, and catch the driving gale. On life's vast ocean diversely we sail, Reason the card, but passion is the gale. Feels at each thread, and lives along the line. The enormous faith of many made for one. In lazy apathy let stoics boast Their virtue fix'd: 'tis fix'd as in a frost; Contracted all, retiring to the breast; But strength of mind is exercise, not rest. Or ask of yonder argent fields above, Why Jove's satellites are less than Jove? Here is a section-by-section explanation of the first epistle: Introduction : The introduction begins with an address to Henry St. Dear fatal name! Provoking Daemons all restraint remove, And stir within me every source of love. That we can judge only with regard to our own system, being ignorant of the relation of systems and things. Who sees with equal eye, as God of all, A hero perish or a sparrow fall, Atoms or systems into ruin hurled, And now a bubble burst, and now a world. Go, teach Eternal Wisdom how to rule Then drop into thyself, and be a fool! Dim and remote the joys of saints I see; Nor envy them, that heav'n I lose for thee. Pope reveals in his introductory statement, "The Design," that An Essay on Man was originally conceived as part of a longer philosophical poem which would have been expanded on through four separate books. Good, pleasure, ease, content! Because the universe is so highly ordered, chance, as man understands it, does not exist. No, fly me, fly me, far as pole from pole; Rise Alps between us! Of all affliction taught a lover yet, 'Tis sure the hardest science to forget! If white and black blend, soften, and unite A thousand ways, is there no black or white? In the above example, Pope's thesis is that man has learnt about nature and God's creation through science; consequently, science has given man power, but having become intoxicated by this power, man has begun to think that he is "imitating God". Section II : Section II states that man is imperfect but perfectly suited to his place within the hierarchy of creation according to the general order of things. O happiness! Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze, Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees. In parts superior what advantage lies? Around, how wide!