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Human Temperaments

By Chas. Mercier

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From the PREFACE: Know then thyself, presume not God to scan; The proper study of Mankind is Man. Especially Woman, as a witty commentator has added. As Pope stole the whole of the shallow philosophy of his most celebrated essay from Bolingbroke, so he stole three-quarters of this, its most often quoted couplet, from others half his first line from Pythagoras, and all the second from Warburton. From such a pilferer one would not expect much that is original, but the Essay contains one doctrine that is undoubtedly original with Pope, and it is also undoubtedly erroneous: the doctrine, once universally accepted and now almost forgotten, of the ruling passion. On different senses different passions strike; Hence different passions more or less inflame. As strong or weak, the organs of the frame; And hence one Master Passion in the breast. Like Aarons serpent, swallows up the rest. As Man, perhaps, the moment of his breath, Receives the lurking principle of death: So, cast and mingled with his very frame. The Minds disease, its Ruling Passion came. It needs...



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