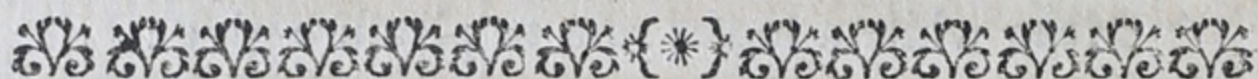


“ Go then, brave youth, where'er the Fates may call ;
 “ Live with design, and fearless wait thy fall,
 “ Whatever space of life the gods decree,
 “ Thy name is still immortal ; for I see
 “ More than another Peleus rise in thee. }
 “ Thy fame the ^a prince of sacred bards shall fire,
 “ Thy deeds the ^b conquest of the world inspire.



Γ Ν Ω Θ Ι Σ Ε Α Τ Ο Ν .

KNOW YOUR SELF.

By the late Dr. ARBUTHNOT.

WHAT am I ? how produc'd ? and for what end ?
 Whence drew I being ? to what period tend ?
 Am I th' abandon'd orphan of blind chance,
 Drop'd by wild atoms in disorder'd dance ?
 Or from an endless chain of causes wrought,
 And of unthinking substance, born with thought ?
 By motion which began without a cause,
 Supremely wise, without design or laws ?
 Am I but what I seem, mere flesh and blood ;
 A branching channel, with a mazy flood ?

^a Homer.

^b By Alexander, who had Homer's Iliad always with him, proposing Achilles for his example.

The purple stream that through my vessels glides,
 Dull and unconscious flows, like common tides :
 The pipes through which the circling juices stray,
 Are not that thinking I, no more than they :
 This frame compacted with transcendent skill,
 Of moving joints obedient to my will,
 Nurs'd from the fruitful glebe, like yonder tree,
 Waxes and waxes ; I call it mine, not me.
 New matter still the mould'ring mass sustains,
 The mansion chang'd, the tenant still remains ;
 And from the fleeting stream, repair'd by food,
 Distinct, as is the swimmer from the flood.
 What am I then, sure, of a nobler birth.
 By parents right, I own as mother, earth ;
 But claim superior lineage by my SIRE,
 Who warm'd th' unthinking clod with heavenly fire :
 Essence divine, with lifeless clay allay'd,
 By double nature, double instinct sway'd ;
 With look erect, I dart my longing eye,
 Seem wing'd to part, and gain my native sky ;
 I strive to mount, but strive, alas ! in vain,
 Ty'd to this massy globe with magick chain.
 Now with swift thought I range from pole to pole,
 View worlds around their flaming centers roll :
 What steady powers their endless motions guide,
 Thro' the same trackless paths of boundless void !
 I trace the blazing comet's fiery trail,
 And weigh the whirling planets in a scale :

These godlike thoughts, while eager I pursue
 Some glittering trifle offer'd to my view,
 A gnat, an insect, of the meanest kind,
 Erase the new-born image from my mind ;
 Some beastly want, craving, importunate,
 Vile as the grinning mastiff at my gate,
 Calls off from heav'nly truth this reas'ning me,
 And tells me, I'm a brute as much as he.
 If on sublimer wings of love and praise,
 My soul above the starry vault I raise,
 Lur'd by some vain conceit, or shameful lust,
 I flag, I drop, and flutter in the dust.
 The tow'ring lark thus from her lofty strain,
 Stoops to an emmet, or a barley grain.
 By adverse gusts of jarring instincts tost,
 I rove to one, now to the other coast ;
 To bliss unknown my lofty soul aspires,
 My lot unequal to my vast desires.
 As 'mongst the hinds a child of royal birth
 Finds his high pedigree by conscious worth ;
 So man, amongst his fellow brutes expos'd,
 See's he's a king, but 'tis a king depos'd.
 Pity him, beasts ! you by no law confin'd,
 Are barr'd from devious paths by being blind ;
 Whilst man, through op'ning views of various ways
 Confounded, by the aid of knowledge strays ;
 Too weak to choose, yet choosing still in haste,
 One moment gives the pleasure and distaste ;

Bilk'd

Bilk'd by past minutes, while the present cloy,
 The flatt'ring future still must give the joy :
 Not happy, but amus'd upon the road,
 And (like you) thoughtless of his last abode,
 Whether next fun his being shall restrain
 To endless nothing, happiness or pain.

Around me, lo, the thinking thoughtless crew,
 (Bewilder'd each) their diff'rent paths pursue ;
 Of them I ask the way ; the first replies,
 Thou art a god ; and sends me to the skies :
 Down on the turf the next, thou two-legg'd beast,
 There fix thy lot, thy bliss and endless rest :
 Between these wide extremes the length is such,
 I find I know too little or too much.

“ Almighty Power, by whose most wise command,
 “ Helpless, forlorn, uncertain here I stand ;
 “ Take this faint glimmering of thyself away,
 “ Or break into my soul with perfect day !”
 This said, expanded lay the sacred text,
 The balm, the light, the guide of souls perplex'd.
 Thus the benighted traveller that strays
 Through doubtful paths, enjoys the morning rays ;
 The nightly mist, and thick descending dew,
 Parting, unfold the fields, and vaulted blue.
 “ O Truth divine ! enlighten'd by thy ray,
 “ I grope and guess no more, but see my way ;
 “ Thou clear'dst the secret of my high descent,
 “ And told me what those mystick tokens meant ;

“ Marks of my birth, which I had worn in vain,
 “ Too hard for worldly sages to explain.
 “ Zeno’s were vain, vain Epicurus’ schemes,
 “ Their systems false, delusive were their dreams :
 “ Unskill’d my two-fold nature to divide,
 “ One nurs’d my pleasure, and one nurs’d my pride :
 “ Those jarring truths which human art beguile,
 “ Thy sacred page thus bids me reconcile.”

Offspring of God, no less thy pedigree,
 What thou once wert, art now, and still may be, }
 Thy God alone can tell, alone decree ;
 Faultless thou drop’st from his unerring skill,
 With the bare power to sin, since free of will :
 Yet charge not with thy guilt his bounteous love,
 For who has power to walk, has power to rove :
 Who acts by force impell’d, can nought deserve ;
 And wisdom short of infinite may swerve.
 Borne on thy new-imp’d wings, thou took’st thy flight,
 Left thy Creator, and the realms of light ;
 Disdain’d his gentle precept to fulfil ;
 And thought to grow a god by doing ill :
 Though by foul guilt thy heavenly form defac’d,
 In nature chang’d, from happy mansions chas’d,
 Thou still retain’st some sparks of heav’nly fire,
 Too faint to mount, yet restless to aspire ;
 Angel enough to seek thy bliss again,
 And brute enough to make thy search in vain.

The

The creatures now withdraw their kindly use,
 Some fly thee, some torment, and some seduce ;
 Repast ill suited to such diff'rent guests,
 For what thy sense desires, thy soul distastes ;
 Thy lust, thy curiosity, thy pride,
 Curb'd, or deferr'd, or balk'd, or gratify'd,
 Rage on, and make thee equally unblest'd,
 In what thou want'st, and what thou hast possess'd.
 In vain thou hop'st for bliss on this poor clod,
 Return and seek thy Father, and thy God :
 Yet think not to regain thy native sky,
 Borne on the wings of vain philosophy ;
 Mysterious passage ! hid from human eyes ;
 Soaring you'll sink, and sinking you will rise :
 Let humble thoughts thy wary footsteps guide,
 Repair by meekness what you lost by pride.



LONDON: