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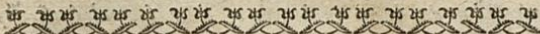
A Collection Of Poems In Six Volumes. By Several Hands

Dodsley, Robert

London, 1758

Hymn to the Naiada. By Dr. Akenside. MDCCXLVI.

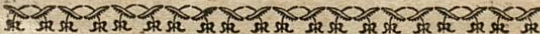
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H Y M N
T O T H E
N A I A D S.

By Dr. A K E N S I D E.

MDCC XLVI.



Vol. VI.

A

AR-



A R G U M E N T.

The Nymphs who preside over Springs and rivulets are addressed at day-break in honour of their several functions, and of the relations which they bear to the natural and to the moral world. Their origin is deduced from the first allegorical deities, or powers of nature; according to the doctrine of the old mythological poets, concerning the generation of the Gods and the rise of things. They are then successively considered, as giving motion to the air and exciting summer-breezes; as nourishing and beautifying the vegetable world; as contributing to the fulness of navigable rivers, and consequently to the maintenance of commerce; and by that means, to the maritime part of military power. Next is represented their favourable influence upon health, when assisted by rural exercise: which introduces their connection with the art of physic, and the happy effects of mineral, medicinal springs. Lastly, they are celebrated for the friendship which the Muses bear them, and for the true inspiration which temperance only can receive; in opposition to the enthusiasm of the more licentious poets.

H Y M N





H Y M N
T O T H E
N A I A D S.

O'ER yonder eastern hill the twilight throws
Her dusky mantle ; and the God of day,
With bright Afræa seated by his side,
Waits yet to leave the ocean. Tarry, Nymphs.
Ye Nymphs, ye blue-ey'd progeny of Thames,
Who now the mazes of this rugged heath
Trace with your fleeting steps ; who all night long
Repeat, amid the cool and tranquil air,
Your lonely murmurs, tarry ; and receive
My offer'd lay. To pay you homage due,
I leave the gates of sleep ; nor shall my lyre

A 2

Too

Too far into the splendid hours of morn
 Engage your audience : my observant hand
 Shall close the strain ere any sultry beam
 Approach you. To your subterranean haunts
 Ye then may timely steal ; to pace with care
 The humid sands ; to loosen from the soil
 The bubbling sources ; to direct the rills
 To meet in wider channels ; or beneath
 Some grotto's dripping arch, at height of noon
 To slumber, shelter'd from the burning heaven.

Where shall my song begin, ye Nymphs ? or end ?
 Wide is your praise and copious——First of things,
 First of the lonely powers, ere Time arose,
 Were Love and Chaos : Love, the fire of Fate ;
 Elder than Chaos. Born of Fate was Time,
 Who many sons and many comely births
 Devour'd, relentless father : till the child
 Of Rhea drove him from the upper sky,
 And quell'd his deadly might. Then social reign'd
 The kindred powers, Tethys, and reverend Ops,
 And spotless Vesta ; while supreme of sway
 Remain'd the cloud-compeller. From the couch
 Of Tethys sprang the sedgy-crowned race,
 Who from a thousand urns, o'er every clime,
 Send tribute to their parent ; and from them
 Are ye, O Naiads : Arethusa fair,
 And tuneful Aganippe ; that sweet name,
 Bandusia ; that soft family which dwelt

With

With Syrian Daphne; and the honour'd tribes
Belov'd of Pæon. Listen to my strain,
Daughters of Tethys: listen to your praise.

You, Nymphs, the winged offspring, which of old
Aurora to divine Astræus bore,
Owns; and your aid beseecheth. When the might
Of Hyperion, from his noontide throne,
Unbends their languid pinions, aid from you
They ask: Favonius and the mild South-west
From you relief implore. Your falling streams
Fresh vigour to their weary wings impart.
Again they fly, disporting; from the mead
Half-ripen'd and the tender blades of corn,
To sweep the noxious mildew; or dispel
Contagious steams, which oft the parched earth
Breathes on her fainting sons. From noon to eve,
Along the river and the paved brook,
Ascend the chearful breezes; hail'd of bards
Who, fast by learned Cam, the Mantuan lyre
Sollicit; nor unwelcome to the youth
Who on the heights of Tibur, all inclin'd
O'er rushing Anio, with a pious hand
The reverend scene delineates, broken fanes,
Or tombs, or pillar'd aqueducts, the pomp
Of ancient time; and haply, while he scans
The ruins, with a silent tear revolves
The fame and fortune of imperious Rome.

You too, O Nymphs, and your unenvious aid

VOL. VI.

A 3

The



The rural powers confess; and still prepare
 For you their grateful treasures. Pan commands,
 Oft as the Delian king with Sirius holds
 The central heavens, the father of the grove
 Commands his Dryads over your abodes
 To spread their deepest umbrage. well the God
 Remembereth how indulgent ye supplied
 Your genial dews to nurse them in their prime.

Pales, the pasture's queen, where'er ye stray,
 Pursues your steps, delighted; and the path
 With living verdure clothes: Around your haunts
 The laughing Chloris, with profusest hand,
 Throws wide her blooms, her odours. Still with you
 Pomona seeks to dwell: and o'er the lawns,
 And o'er the vale of Richmond, where with Thames
 Ye love to wander, Amalthea pours
 Well-pleas'd the wealth of that Ammonian horn,
 Her dower; unmindful of the fragrant isles
 Nyssaean or Atlantic. Nor can'st thou,
 (Albeit oft, ungrateful, thou dost mock
 The beverage of the sober Naiad's urn,
 O Bromius, O Lenæan) nor can'st thou
 Disown the powers whose bounty, ill-repaid,
 With nectar feeds thy tendrils. Yet from me,
 Yet, blameless Nymphs, from my delighted lyre,
 Accept the rites your bounty well may claim;
 Nor heed the scoffings of the Edonian band.
 For better praise awaits you. Thames, your sire,

As down the verdant slope your duteous rills,
 Descend, the tribute stately Thames receives,
 Delighted ; and your piety applauds ;
 And bids his copious tide roll on secure,
 For faithful are his daughters ; and with words
 Auspicious gratulates the bark which, now
 His banks forsaking, her adventurous wings
 Yields to the breeze, with Albion's happy gifts
 Extremest isles to bless. and oft at morn,
 When Hermes, from Olympus bent o'er earth
 To bear the words of Jove, on yonder hill
 Stoops lightly-failing ; oft intent your springs
 He views : and waving o'er some new-born stream
 His blest pacific wand, " And yet," he cries,
 " Yet," cries the son of Maia, " though recluse
 " And silent be your stores, from you, fair Nymphs,
 " Flows wealth and kind society to men.
 " By you my function and my honour'd name
 " Do I possess ; while o'er the Bætic vale,
 " Or through the towers of Memphis, or the palms
 " By sacred Ganges water'd, I conduct
 " The English merchant : with the buxom fleece
 " Of fertile Ariconium while I clothe
 " Sarmatian kings ; or to the household Gods
 " Of Syria, from the bleak Cornubian shore,
 " Dispense the mineral treasure which of old
 " Sidonian pilots fought, when this fair land
 " Was yet unconscious of those generous arts



“ Which wife Phœnicia from their native clime
 “ Transplanted to a more indulgent heaven.”

Such are the words of Hermes : such the praise,
 O Naiads, which from tongues celestial waits
 Your bounteous deeds. From bounty issueth power :
 And those who, sedulous in prudent works,
 Relieve the wants of nature, Jove repays
 With generous wealth and his own seat on earth,
 Fit judgments to pronounce, and curb the might
 Of wicked men. Your kind unfailing urns
 Not vainly to the hospitable arts
 Of Hermes yield their store. For, O ye Nymphs,
 Hath he not won the unconquerable queen
 Of arms to court your friendship ? You she owns
 The fair associates who extend her sway
 Wide o'er the mighty deep ; and grateful things
 Of you she uttereth, oft as from the shore
 Of Thames, or Medway's vale, or the green banks
 Of Vecta, she her thundering navy leads
 To Calpe's foaming channel, or the rough
 Cantabrian coast ; her auspices divine
 Imparting to the senate and the prince
 Of Albion, to dismay barbaric kings,
 The Iberian, or the Celt. The pride of kings
 Was ever scorn'd by Pallas : and of old
 Rejoic'd the virgin, from the brazen prow
 Of Athens o'er Ægina's gloomy surge,
 To drive her clouds and storms ; o'erwhelming all

The

The Persian's promis'd glory, when the realms
 Of Indus and the soft Ionian clime,
 When Lybia's torrid champain and the rocks
 Of cold Imaüs join'd their servile bands,
 To sweep the sons of liberty from earth.

In vain : Minerva on the brazen prow
 Of Athens stood, and with the thunder's voice
 Denounc'd her terrours on their impious heads,
 And shook her burning Ægis. Xerxes saw :
 From Heracleum, on the mountain's height
 Thron'd in his golden car, he knew the sign
 Cæstrial ; felt unrighteous hope forsake
 His faltering heart, and turn'd his face with shame.

Hail, ye who share the stern Minerva's power ;
 Who arm the hand of liberty for war ;
 And give, in secret, the Britannic name
 To awe contending monarchs : yet benign,
 Yet mild of nature ; to the works of peace
 More prone, and lenient of the many ills
 Which wait on human life. Your gentle aid
 Hygeia well can witness ; she who saves,
 From poisonous cates and cups of pleasing bane,
 The wretch devoted to the entangling snares
 Of Bacchus and of Comus. Him she leads
 To Cynthia's lonely haunts. To spread the toils,
 To beat the coverts, with the jovial horn
 At dawn of day to summon the loud hounds,
 She calls the lingering sluggard from his dreams :

And

And where his breast may drink the mountain-breeze,
 And where the fervour of the sunny vale
 May beat upon his brow, through devious paths
 Beckons his rapid courser. Nor when ease,
 Cool ease and welcome slumbers have becalm'd
 His eager bosom, does the queen of health
 Her pleasing care withhold. His decent board
 She guards, presiding; and the frugal powers
 With joy sedate leads in: and while the brown
 Ennæan dame with Pan presents her stores;
 While changing still, and comely in the change,
 Vertumnus and the Hours before him spread
 The garden's banquet; you to crown his feast,
 To crown his feast, O Naiads, you the fair
 Hygeia calls: and from your shelving seats,
 And groves of poplar, plenteous cups ye bring,
 To slake his veins: till soon a purer tide
 Flows down those loaded channels; washeth off
 The dregs of luxury, the lurking seeds
 Of crude disease; and through the abodes of life
 Sends vigour, sends repose. Hail, Naiads: hail,
 Who give, to labour, health; to sloping age,
 The joys which youth had squander'd. Oft your urns
 Will I invoke; and, frequent in your praise,
 Abash the frantic Thyrsus with my song.

For not estrang'd from your benignant arts
 Is he, the God, to whose mysterious shrine
 My youth was sacred, and my votive cares

Arc

Are due ; the learned Pæon. Oft when all
 His cordial treasures he hath search'd in vain ;
 When herbs, and potent trees, and drops of balm
 Rich with the genial influence of the sun,
 (To rouse dark fancy from her plaintive dreams,
 To brace the nerveless arm, with food to win
 Sick appetite, or hush the unquiet breast
 Which pines with silent passion) he in vain
 Hath prov'd ; to your deep mansions he descends.
 Your gates of humid rock, your dim arcades,
 He entereth ; where impurpled veins of ore
 Gleam on the roof ; where through the rigid mine
 Your trickling rills insinuate. There the God
 From your indulgent hands the steaming bowl
 Wafts to his pale-ey'd suppliants ; wafts the seeds
 Metallic and the elemental salts
 Waft'd from the pregnant glebe. They drink : and soon
 Flies pain ; flies inauspicious care : and soon
 The social haunt or unfrequented shade
 Hears Io, Io Pæan ; as of old,
 When Python fell. And, O propitious Nymphs,
 Oft as for hapless mortals I implore
 Your salutary springs, thro' every urn
 O shed selected atoms, and with all
 Your healing powers inform the recent wave.
 My lyre shall pay your bounty. Nor disdain
 That humble tribute. Though a mortal hand
 Excite the strings to utterance, yet for themes

Not



Not unregarded of cœlestial powers,
 I frame their language ; and the Muses deign
 To guide the pious tenour of my lay.
 The Muses (sacred be their gifts divine)
 In early days did to my wondering sense
 Their secrets oft reveal : oft my rais'd ear
 In slumber felt their music : oft at noon
 Or hour of sunset, by some lonely stream,
 In field or shady grove, they taught me words
 Of power from death and envy to preserve
 The good man's name. whence yet with grateful mind,
 And offerings unprofan'd by ruder eye,
 My vows I send, my homage, to the seats
 Of rocky Cirrha, where with you they dwell :
 Where you their chaste companions they admit
 Through all the hallow'd scene : where oft intent,
 And leaning o'er Castalia's mossy verge,
 They mark the cadence of your confluent urns,
 How tuneful yielding gratefulest repose
 To their consofited measure : till again,
 With emulation all the founding choir,
 And bright Apollo, leader of the song,
 Their voices through the liquid air exalt,
 And sweep their lofty strings : those awful strings,
 That charm the mind of Gods : that fill the courts
 Of wide Olympus with oblivion sweet
 Of evils, with immortal rest from cares ;
 Assuage the terrours of the throne of Jove ;

And

And quench the formidable thunderbolt
 Of unrelenting fire. With slacken'd wings,
 While now the solemn concert breathes around,
 Incumbent o'er the sceptre of his lord
 Sleeps the stern eagle; by the number'd notes,
 Possess'd; and satiate with the melting tone:
 Sovereign of birds. The furious God of war,
 His darts forgetting and the rapid wheels
 That bear him vengeful o'er the embattled plain,
 Relents, and sooths his own fierce heart to ease,
 Unwonted ease. The fire of Gods and men,
 In that great moment of divine delight,
 Looks down on all that live; and whatsoever
 He loves not, o'er the peopled earth and o'er
 The interminated ocean, he beholds
 Curs'd with abhorrence by his doom severe,
 And troubled at the sound. Ye, Naiads, ye
 With ravish'd ears the melody attend
 Worthy of sacred silence. But the slaves
 Of Bacchus with tempestuous clamours strive
 To drown the heavenly strains; of highest Jove,
 Irreverent; and by mad presumption fir'd
 Their own discordant raptures to advance
 With hostile emulation. Down they rush
 From Nyssa's vine-impurpled cliff, the dames
 Of Thrace, the Satyrs, and the unruly Fauns,
 With old Silenus, through the midnight gloom
 Tossing the torch impure, and high in air

The



The brandish'd Thyrsus, to the Phrygian pipe's
 Shrill voice, and to the clashing cymbals, mix'd
 With shrieks and frantic uproar. May the Gods
 From every unpolluted ear avert
 Their orgies ! If within the seats of men,
 Within the seats of men, the walls, the gates
 Which Pallas rules, if haply there be found
 Who loves to mingle with the revel-band
 And hearken to their accents ; who aspires
 From such instructors to inform his breast
 With verse ; let him, fit votarist, implore
 Their inspiration. He perchance the gifts
 Of young Lyæus, and the dread exploits,
 May sing in aptest numbers : he the fate
 Of sober Pentheus, he the Paphian rites,
 And naked Mars with Cytheræa chain'd,
 And strong Alcides in the spinster's robe,
 May celebrate, applauded. But with you,
 O Naiads, far from that unhallow'd rout,
 Must dwell the man whoe'er to praised themes
 Invokes the immortal Muse. the immortal Muse
 To your calm habitations, to the cave
 Corycian or the Delphic mount, will guide
 His footsteps ; and with your unfullied streams
 His lips will bathe : whether the eternal lore
 Of Themis, or the majesty of Jove,
 To mortals he reveal ; or teach his lyre
 The unenvied guerdon of the patriot's toils,

In