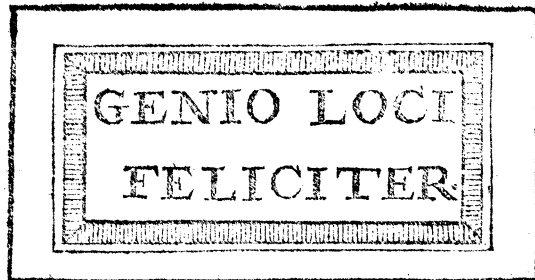


VIII. *A Letter from Mr Ralph Thoresby, F. R. S. concerning a Roman Inscription lately found at York, &c.*

THE Roman Monument lately discovered at York (which you desire an account of) was found in digging a Cellar in *Coning-street*, not far from the *Roman Wall* and *Multangular Tower*, that Dr *Lister* has given so curious and particular a Description of. This Monument, Dedicated to the *Genius*, or Tutelar Deity of the Place, is not of that coarse Rag, that the generality of the *Roman Monuments* are, but of the finer Gritt, like the Altar at the Lord *Fairfax's* House in *York*: 'Tis 21 inches long, Phil. Transf. No 149. and 11 broad, and is inscribed GENIO LOCI FELICITER. There was a larger Stone found with it, but without any Inscription; nor is there upon either of them the representation of a Serpent, or a young Visage, by both which the Ancients sometimes described these *Dij Topici*; if the Name had been added, it would have gratified the Curiosity of the *Neoteric Antiquaries*; but they must yet acquiesce (for ought I know) in the old DVI, who is said to be the Tutelar Deity of the City of Camdens Brito N. E. p. 708. the *Brigantes*; from which *Div*, as the *Britains* call'd him, *Dewsbury*, or *Duisburg* in this Neighbourhood, seems to have receiv'd its name; a place now chiefly noted for a sort of coarse Cloath there made, and thence called *Dub-rians*. The Monument is of this form.

The



The Author of this *Votive* Monument seems to have had the same Superstitious Veneration for the *Genius* of *York*, as those at *Rome* had for theirs, whose Name they were prohibited to utter, or enquire after; hence it is upon their Coins the Name of this Deity is never expressed, but in a more general manner by *Genius P. R.* or *Pop. Rom.* Such a one I have of *Constantinus*, minted at *London*, as appears by the Exurg *L O N.* under the Effigies of that Deity, with a *Patra* in the Right Hand, and *Cornucopia* in the Left, inscribed *GENIO POPULI ROMANI.* I rather instance in that of this Emperor (the Father of *Constantine* the Great) because he made *York* his Imperial Seat, and was here Deified; the Medal of whose *Apotheosis* I also have, minted at the same place and inscribed *MEMORIA FELIX.* which I mention (tho nothing relating to the *Genius*) because of the expression of a noted Antiquary, "That *Rome* in the height of its "greatness, had not a more glorious and gallant show "to exhibit, than what this poor piece of Copper would "express. As the *Genius* of the *City of Rome* was expressed by *G. P. R.* so that of the *Commonwealth*, in a most sordid Flattery, by that of the *Emperor*, who they pretended to be their *Happy Genius.* I have one even of *Nero*, and not only after his *Quinquennium*, but the year

Burton's *Conv.*
upon *Antiq.*
is in. p. 78.

year after he had laid most of the City in Ashes, yet by the express order of the Senate, inscribed GENIO AUGUSTI S. C. Some of the Fathers have therefore justly reproach'd the *Romans*, for paying a greater Veneration to the *Genii* of their Emperors, than to *Jupiter* their supream God. This Custom of Deitying the *Genii*, and that of assigning *Gods* for defence of particular Cities, is very ancient, as appears by what the Prophet *Jeremiah* saith of revolting *Judah*, According to the number of thy Cities are thy Gods; after the manner of the Heathen, who, according to *Varro*, had above * thirty thousand; and yet notwithstanding this prodigious number, it is evident from their Medals, that several Cities were sometimes assigned to the same Tutelar Deity; thus the *Greeks* (from whom the *Romans* receiv'd this and several other of their Superstitions) committed both *Magnesia* and *Smyrna* to the protection of *Cybele*. Medals of the former are more common, of the latter more rare. His Excellency Baron *Spanheim* has writ a most Learned Discourse upon them, which makes me more to value one in my poor *Museum*, which has the Effigies of that *Mother of the Gods* with her Towered Head, and C M Y P N A; upon the Reverse is a Lyon Passant with C M Y P N A I Ω N. I have also a large curious Medal of *Julius Philippus*, that would tempt us to believe that *Antioch* also was devoted to the same *Cybele*, for it has round her Head with the Turreted Crown A N T I O K E Ω N M H T P O K O Λ Ω N. with Δ (or rather Λ) E and S C on each side the Head. I must own my self somewhat at a loss about the latter word, except the *Greek* and *Roman* Tongues began then to admit of a sort of Mongril Mixture, so that from M H T E P and *Colonus*, might proceed M H T P O K O Λ Ω N Ω N, and so the *Antiochians* have the Title of the Men of the Mother-Colony,

Jer. 2. 28.
and 11. 13.

* *Pool's Synopse*
Critic. in loc.

Colony, the A E which are Greek, the S C in Latin Characters, the former signifying *Lustrum Quintum*, the other *Senatus Consulto*, seem to countenance this Conjecture, the Roman S being different from that in * I A I Π Π O C and C E Bas' ⊙ upon the same Coin.

This Curiosity of the City of *Antioch* is not so valuable as it was the Metropolis of all *Syria*, and highly applauded by *Ammianus Marcellinus* (who lived within a hundred years of this time, as it is because here the name of *Christians* was first taken up, and that St Paul both preached and kept a Synod here, as *Eusebius* tells us, and so another I have of *Antoninus Pius*, inscribed B E P O I A I Ω N, which is more valuable in my Fancy for that passage *Acts XVII. 2.* than if it could be certainly ascribed to the noblest of the four Cities that bore the same Name.