

The Athenian Mercury.

Quest. 1. **W**Hether a Man ought to neglect his Children by a first Wife, to please a Second, when nothing else will do it?

Ans. That Wife is not worth pleasing, that stands upon such wicked unreasonable Terms. I ought not to do a certain ill action, in expectation of an uncertain good coming on't.

Quest. 2. Whether there ever was such a thing as Change of Sexes?

Ans. We are not without several Affirmative Instances; I will only recite Two, which are Authentick. *Parvus, lib. 4. ch. 5.* Some years since (saith *Parvus*) when I was in the retinue of *Charles the Ninth at Vitriac in France*, there was shewed me a Man called *Germanus Garnierus*, by some *Germanus Maria*; he was of an Indifferent Stature, a Square Habit of Body, with a thick and red Beard. He was taken for a Virgin unto the 15th Year of his Age; at which time, running after the Hogs, he kept (which had gotten into the Corn,) and leaping over a Ditch with great Violence, it happened that the Membranes being broke, the hidden Evidences of a Man suddenly descended, and discovered themselves, not without Pain; returning to her Cottage with Tears, she complained to her Mother that her Bowels fell out; at which Spectacle, her Mother astonished, consulting with the Physicians and Doctors, was informed that her Daughter was become a Man; the whole matter therefore being represented to the Cardinal of *Lenuncurium*, he called an Assembly, where she received the Name and Habit of a Man.

Usher, in his *Annals*, in *An. Mundi*, 3858. says, in *Abbas*, a City of *Arabia*, there was a certain Woman called *Herasis*, she was the Daughter of one *Diophantus* a *Macedonian*, and begotten by him of an *Arabian Woman*; she was Married to one *Samaides*, after which she changed her Sex, and became a Man, taking upon her her Fathers Name *Diophantus*.

I shall add one other of the other Sexes Change; *Schenk*, p. 503. And *Donat. ibidem* p. 298. tells of a Boy at *Beneventum*, who suddenly became a Girl, and hath it in these Words,

*Nec satis antiquum quod Campano in Benevento,
Tenus Epheborum Virgo repente fuit.*

Thus Englished,

At Benevent (nor is it long ago,)
A Youngster did into a Virgin grow.

Quest. 3. What is the reason of Marking, Longing, and Sounding at a Cat, &c?

Ans. *Plutarch de sera Numinis Vind.* says *Chal.* The resemblance of the Natural Properties or Corporal Marks of some Parents are continued in their Families for many descents; yea, and sometimes not appearing in the Second and Third Generation, do nevertheless shew themselves in the Fourth or Fifth; whereof he brings an Example of one in his time called *Python*, who being descended of the *Spartiate the Founders of Thebes*; and being the last of that Race, was born with the Figure of a *Launce* upon his Body, which had been in former Ages a natural mark of that Family, and discontinued in them for many Years. I have mentioned this Instance, to shew the power of the *Vegetative Soul*, on *Hereditary Productions* amongst *Rational Creatures*; and it's also true amongst the Animal, who have as great a part of the *Vegetative Soul*, as the *Rational* have. We want not Instances of *Imagination* acting beyond its Subject; as *Estriges* and *Tortoises* are said to hatch their Eggs with their Eyes, and that *Hens Hatch Chickens* of the Colour of such Cloths as are laid before them, whilst they are sitting. So some People fall sick, and recover again by Fancy. In Generation, the Spirits of all the parts of the Body accure to the place where the Seed is received, there to form the Characters of the Places from whence they flow; so the Mothers Spirits keep the same Course towards the Embryo, and when she touches her self in the strength of that Imagination, the Spirits run thither from the Brain, and fix

the Figure upon the Analogous part of the fetus. As to Longing, which Physicians call *Pica*, or an unreasonable Appetite or Longing for Coals, Ashes, Pitch, Clay, &c. is caused by the suppression and stagnation of the *Menses* in the *Uterine Vessels*, from whence ensues a *Cachexia* or an ill Habit of Body; and a depravation of the Faculties, which affects the parts with an unnatural disposition not to be qualified without such unaccountable or fantastick Diet. As to sounding at the sight of a Cat, &c. it proceeds chiefly from the same Cause as Marking; for the rational Soul is not at all concern'd in the Action, because it is against Reason, but 'tis the Operation of the Sensitive Soul: We shant fly to the old subterfuge of Hereditariness, since the first of the Family had some other cause. Thus then, as Plants, &c. are bent and turned into any shape or figure, which they never divest when they are Trees; so the prejudice of Education by Nurses who are used to threaten the Infant with *Bugbears*, *Lions*, *Cats*, &c. may impress such a resentment and fear, as age can never get off; if a Cat had been the only Object of this habitual terror, we might have supposed those *Effluvijs* and *Glarings* which are proper to that Species, might be the Efficient Cause. But we have Instances of other Creatures that emit no such *Effluvijs*, &c.

Quest. 4. Whether Coffee and Tobacco are not prejudicial to the Seminal Vertues, especially in the Female Sex?

Ans. Coffee (as all Bitters) is *Stomachick*; Tobacco a *Masticatory*; both Moderately taken, are beneficial, and discharge the redundant Serocities by the *Salival Glands*; But however Coffee to excess, is very prejudicial to the Seminal Vertue; for I knew a Gentlewoman that drank much Coffee, and her Children were imperfect, weak and ill-shap'd, nature by the aforementioned excess, as Physicians believed, being thereby too much weakened for a perfect formation.

Quest. 5. Why a Horse with a round Fundament emits a square Excrement?

Ans. The Cells of the Colon form the faces into Oblong Cakes, and protrude them into the Rectum, from whence they are exonerated by *Sphincter ani*, which does not form them in the Extrusion, the Orifice being big enough to exonerate several of them at once. They are formed quadrangularly in the Rectum, by Protension and Compression upon one another, as any other round or oblong Substances which are soft would be, if they were thrust together: But yet some of them are not Square on all sides, from this Reason, they being discharged several of them at once, through a round Fundament, the whole Lump is round, the extremity and outward parts of it receiving their form agreeable to the thing forming, when at the same time the middle parts must needs be Square, from the Reason above.—A Wide Purse will admit several sorts of Coin at the same time.

Quest. 6. By what Mechanism Nutrition is regularly ordered, and how by the Stomachs heat, it is effected into Chyle?

Ans. Mastication, Deglusion, Extension and Corrugation of the Ventricle, are Successive Motions, partly by the pondus of the aliment, partly by the Tone of the Tunicles, in order to Concoction. The Pylorus constringes not so compleatly as the superior Orifice. The Colon and other Circumambient Viscera contribute to the Heat to digest the aliment macerated with the Saliva in Mastication, whose Saline Particles (with the Saline and Acid particles of the Esculents and Potulents) mix together; which assisted by the power of the Ventricle it self, is disposed to Chylify the Mass, and a Fermentacious power accrues, rendring it more fluid, and giving it a more white or Creamy form, called Chyle. The Spirituous and fine Particles first free themselves, and are transmitted into the more lax pylorous, and are intruded into the Intestines, where by the mixture of Bile and Pancreatick Juice, it obtains a new fermentative Power and Separation. Those parts of the Aliment unchylified, remain (for that which is first Eaten, is not first Chylified,) as Fat Meats, &c. which clog the fermentarious force, and therefore lye heavy, and dispose to Vomiting; although the power of ferment is more sharp and dissolvent in some than others

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The Chyle from the Intestines is propell'd into the *Lacteals*, thence to the *Ductus Chyliferus* or *Lymphaticus*, and distributes to some Glands; and so conveys the Chyle and Lympha into the *Subclavian Vein* (where it mixes and gives new life to the Blood,) so to the Heart (the Vital Pump,) and thence into the *Arteries* for Nourishment; and what surplusage remains, returns again by the Veins and *Lymphatics* to the Heart for a new Circulation. Thus it is *transmuted, transmitted and Circulated* by several Vessels into the form of Chyle, Lympha, Venous, and Arterious Blood, Milk, Sperm, Saliva, Serum, Pancreatick Juice, &c. and thus each part has its proper Juice and Nourishment, and the most Volatile and Spirituous Particles supply the Animal Spirits and Nervous Juice.

Quest. 7. Why Chickens hatch'd in Ovens, want Rumps?

Ans. The Question ought not to be in general Terms, for all Chickens hatch'd in Ovens don't want Rumps: This manner of Hatching is a very great Trade in Egypt, particularly in Grand Cairo, and the Levant; and 'tis very common, that they want sometimes a Rump, Wing or Leg. The Reason for all, can be nothing else but the unevenness of that Heat by which they are hatch'd; a Hen affords an equal Temperament of Heat because Natural, but 'tis almost Impossible an Artificial Heat should have the same Effect, being not always equally supplied, or at least not so placed, but that some part should by reason of too much Heat impregnate sooner than another, or should sooner cool than another, and consequently not so soon perfect some parts as it does others.

Quest. 8. What's the reason of Motion to Urine in the Water, more than out of that Element.

Ans. Swimming or other Motion or Labour in the Water would cause a perspiration of Air, Steams and Sweat, through the Pores, as well as Motion or Labour upon the Land; but that Element being Cold, and all Coldness naturally binding up and closing the Pores, the perspiration is hindered; so that whatever Nature would eject after its usual Method, is hindered by the closeness of the Pores, and Steams inwardly discharging by Urine instead of Sweat.

Quest. 9. Whether there be such a Bird as a Phoenix, and why but one in the World, and where that is?

Ans. The Antients say, this Bird lives many Ages, according to *Ælian* 500 Years; after which time it repairs to *Heliopolis* in Egypt, and builds its Nest (or rather Funeral Pile) of Aromatick Wood, which by reason of its high Situation, is fired by the Sunbeams with the Phoenix in it, and out of her Ashes another immediately arises; this Young one no sooner attains its just bigness, (which is equal to that of an Eagle, having its Head crested with diverse Colours, the Neck Gold Colour, the rest of the Feathers Purple, saving that the Tail, is mix'd of Scarlet and Sky Colour,) but it prepares it self to pay its last Duties to the Reliques of its Deceased Parent, which it lays upon its Back, and carries them into Arabia, placing them upon an Altar dedicated to the Sun, (for 'tis a Bird of the Sun,) after which, it flies up towards Heaven, feeding upon Dew, and the Fumes of Incense and Amomum, and instead of Drink, makes use of the Vapours which arise from the Sea; abhorring all kinds of Grain and Food common to other Birds. 'Tis said, the first was seen under *Sesostris* and *Amasis* Kings of Egypt; next under *Ptolemy*, who reigned the Third of the Macedonians: *Orus Apollo* in his Hieroglyphicks, mentions it, as do *Manilius*, *Pliny*, *Ovid*, *Athenaus*, *Albertus Magnus*, *Tacitus* and *Belonius*; the last of which, confounds it with the Bird called *Manucodraus*. But the Impossibility of the Existence of such a Bird is evident; for according to *Lucretius*, no single Animal can Generate. Nor is any thing more abhorred by Nature than a Voluntary Death: Nor can any thing be more contrary to the Generation of Animals, than Ashes which are dry; Driness being altogether opposite to Life, and to the Corruption which is antecedent to every Generation. So that it must necessarily be a Fiction, and only a Speech by way of Comparison, or by which the Antients would signify something rare and singular in its Species; according to another much of the same Nature, *Rara Avis in Terris, nigroque simillima Cigno*. All Authors that have spoke of it, have borrowed from *Pliny*, who affirms almost any thing, as *Herodotus* saw almost every thing however strange and unheard of.

Quest. 10. What kind of Matter our Bodies shall have in the other Life?

Ans. 'Tis in the power of Microscopes to represent a Hair glittering and curious beyond Expression; much more can a real Infinite Power effectively make it so: Matter is all one to the Maker. We have some light of

our Resurrection, by the first Fruits of it, our Saviour, who with that very same Body he was Crucified, rose again, and descended into Heaven; but was changed before he got there, it being not a receptacle for Common Flesh and Blood; the Appearance our Bodies will have there will be shining and Bright, as may be gathered by *Moses* his Face shining when he had seen the Glory of God, as also the manner of *Moses*, *Enoch* and *Elias* their Appearance to our Saviour in his Transfiguration; the Description that *St. John* gives of our Saviour in the Revelations, with many more Places in Sacred Writ: But to be express in our Definitions of this matter, 'tis impossible, since all revealed, are only such Terms as are adapted, to express whatever appears most glorious and dazzling here, not being yet capable to entertain greater manifestations, and such as we shall really be fitted for hereafter.

Quest. 11. Whence arises the Difference of Colours in Flowers?

Ans. 'Tis very pleasant and diverting to observe the difference of Colours throughout all the Regions of the Vegetable Kingdom; the Roots being almost all White, the Trunks generally Green, and the Flowers almost infinitely variegated. 'Tis the Reason of that curious Diversity, we are at present to enquire, and it must undoubtedly depend on the Principles of which they are Composed: Now all Chymists know the first seat of Colours lies in the Sulphur, from whose different degrees of Maturity arises the difference of Colours. The native Colour is a Golden, the next a bright flaming Yellow, which may be accounted the first Declension on the one side from its Original and Primitive Perfection, as the Red or Ruby is the collateral Degree in the Opposite. The first arises from the Temper of the Δ by the admission of it with an

Aqueous, the other with an Igneous Matter, or rather an Alteration in the Texture and Configuration, arising from its too great Adustion, whence all Colours are nothing else but the sundry mixture of the Tinging Sulphurs. Now whenever a Plant arrives at the maturity of Flowering, its Sulphur is in perfection, which by its various mixture with the Specifick Juice, is conveyed through its proper ducts into the Sineity of the Plant, where by the fineness and tenuity of the Vessels, its exposed to the kind and benign warmth of the Sun, whence the matter attenuated and sublimed, is yet further concocted, till at last it receives its ultimate perfection after full Digestion. In Poppies and other Plants of that kind, the Sulphur is more adust and fetid, whence they are heavy and stupify. In Carnations, &c. it more approaches to a benign and Balsamick Quality by one degree of Heat, whence they are friendly and amicable in the highest Degree to our Natures. This is general; those who would enquire as to the particular Colours of Flowers, The Marvail of Peru, &c. must not expect it in a thing of this nature, but may consult Mr. Boyle of Colours, where they'll come nearest an entire satisfaction.

Quest. 12. How does Antimony emit a Virtue, and not abate of its Quantity?

Ans. We have Thousands of Instances more in Bodies which must continually emit Virtues; nor can we give any rational account of those Virtues, but as inhering in Particles, which convey them hither and thither without any sensible Diminution of the Substance. The most famous is in Loadstones, which 'twere to be wish'd might be tryed with some exquisite Microscopes, *Lewentrovers*, or others, whether there could be any irradiation discovered in their acting on the Steel. This we think certain, that matter can't act upon matter, but by matter; nor can this be done without continual expence, though in the cases mentioned, by Particles so fine, that we can't sensibly perceive their Operation; though we do not much doubt, but if frequently used, it might in process of time abate of its Weight or Power.

Quest. 13. Whether he that Swears Allegiance to the present Government, and does not believe it to be de Jure, is not an Hypocrite?

Ans. An Hypocrite is in the common acception of the word, one who does only personate an Honest Man, who carries two Faces under one Hood, thinking one thing and acting another. Now whoever he be that thinks in his Heart he may not de Jure or lawfully swear Allegiance to their present Majesties, King William and Queen Mary, and yet actually does it, none can better deserve the name of an Hypocrite; as does he that Swears to them as de Jure King and Queen, if he really believes they are otherwise.