

The Athenian Mercury.

Quest. 1. **I** Have seen your Resolution about the Case of the Rational Soul's Infusion, but shall be much dis-satisfied about it, till I receive your Answer to the following Queries.—

(Q. 1.) Whether when God created Man in the State of Innocency, he gave him power by his general Blessing (*Be fruitful, and multiply*) to generate his whole Kind, that is to say, a Reasonable Creature; which he cannot be said to do, if he had power only to beget a Body, with no more than an Animal Soul? Whence is the Man, if the Rational Habit be wanting; or in his Generation, wherein doth he differ from a Brute? (Q. 2.) How shall we understand that Text, Gen. 5. 3. That Adam (after his Apostacy) begat a Son in his own Likeness, and his Image? If it be not of his whole Nature, viz. a compleat Man corrupted, and this from Infancy, before the Members or Faculties of the Body could actually exercise any Operations to sin; which seems strongly to militate against your Opinion, that the infused Soul receives Taint from the Senses of the Body? (Q. 3.) Whether, in contradiction to this Opinion, doth not our Saviour expressly tell us that Nothing coming out of the Mouth (and consequently from the other Bodily Faculties) defiles the Man, but that which proceeds out of the Heart, as the first Principle? This therefore being an undeniable Truth from Christ's own Words, (connected with what is aforesaid of Adam's corrupted Issue in very Infancy,) how comes Man to be so corrupted, (as sad Experience tells us,) if the Soul of Man be infused by the holy God, out of whose Hand nothing unclean proceeds? (Q. 4.) Whether doth not this Opinion of the Soul's Infusion contradict that Scripture, where 'tis said That after the Sixth Day, God ceased from all his Works that he had made? (That is to say, of Creation.) For if Souls are infused, out of the way of common Generation, into all that are born into the World, then a continued Creation of Spiritual Substances out of Non-pre-existent Matter must necessarily be supposed; and by consequence, it will be a puzzling Consideration, how Adam's Guilt should become ours, comparing one thing with another, notwithstanding I am not of Opinion that the Soul is mortal, which is the great Stumbling-block in the way of its Generative Production.

Ans. The first Question supposeth Man to get the whole Man, Body, Soul and Spirit; or else that his Generation differs not from Brutes. To which we answer, That which comes immediately from God, is not begot by Man; but the Soul or Spirit comes immediately from God, therefore it is not begot by Man: The Major Proposition is indisputable, the Minor is proved from this Text, Eccles. 12. 7. Then shall the Dust return to the Earth as it was, and the Spirit to God that gave it. As also from that, Gen. 2. 7. He breathed into his Nostrils the Breath of Life, and he became a liv-

ing Soul: Which is full enough. And at the same time the preceding part of the Verse shews, that the Body of Man was made before his Soul. As to the Parity of Generation betwixt Men and Brutes, read Eccles. 3. 19. for that which befalleth the Sons of Men befalleth Beasts, even one thing befalleth them: As the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one Breath: So that a Man hath no Pre-eminence above a Beast, for all is Vanity. Speaking as all Interpreters conclude, about the Animal Life.

Answer to the 2d Q. Which supposeth that this Text, Adam begat a Son in his own Likeness intimates that Adam begat Body and Soul; and if so, the Senses could not taint the Soul with Sin, or be the Means of Attaindure, as has been formerly insinuated.—To this we answer, that we have already proved that Adam begat not the Soul: So that the Text of Adam's begetting one in his own Likeness, means, that he begat a Man, not a Lyon, Eagle, or Whale. As to that Philosophical Maxim of every thing begetting his Like, we answer Man begat something so like a Man, as to distinguish him from other Creatures; and as to the Soul receiving its Attaindure from the Body, or by means of the Body, we see no Philosophical Reason to disbelieve it; nor do we yet meet with one Text, which infers a Necessity of the Soul's Self-Corruption, or that it was corrupted before it was joyned to the Body.

Ans. to the 3d. Quest. Which supposeth that those Words of our Saviour, viz. That which cometh out of the Man, defiles a Man; as Murders, &c. do infer, that it is the wickedness of the Internal Parts, or the Soul, that defiles the Man, and not the Senses. To which we answer, We don't say that the Senses defile the Soul, but that the Soul is defiled by means of the Senses; as, by the Eye it is tempted to Lust, &c. So that such Texts as these, We are by Nature the Children of Wrath,— must be explained by such as these, From whence come Wars and Fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your Lusts that war in your Members?— And then we shall find, the Medium of such an Unhappiness always was, and yet is effected by our Members or Senses. Consider but any Sin, and you will find the Original not to be in your Soul, but the Senses. As for Instance, Murder: The Person murdered abused you, your Ear was the first Receptacle of the Affront: Or perhaps a Blow, which the Sense of Feeling first resented, and conveyed the Injury to the Passions; which, by a natural Defect through Adam's Fall, does erroneously represent this Affront to the Understanding, which is the Seat of the Soul; and the Soul wills the Act, as guided by the Understanding. 'Tis not

not foreign to the *Question* to add, that perhaps it is a little too generally deliver'd, that all the Faculties of the Soul and Body are corrupted by *Adam's Fall*: It will be found hard to be proved, that it has essentially weakned any more of us, than is common to Beasts; that is to say, our Animal Life, and all the constitutive Faculties and Parts thereof; for our Souls shall yet live for ever: We can number certainly yet, and make certain Demonstrations in the *Mathematicks*; but we are at a loss when we come to use our Senses, to love, fear, chuse, refuse, &c. which are common to Brutes. *Adam's Fall* has brought our Bodies into an inevitable State of Mortality, and has disorder'd not only his own, but the whole State and Frame of Nature; so that when a pure Soul comes to act in *irregular Bodies*, it errs not by its own Defect, but by Accident, or Resultance; as a good Musician plays ill upon an Instrument out of Tune.

Ans. to the 4th Quest. That God finished all his Works upon the Sixth Day.— We answer, that, according to the *Schools*, Rest is oppos'd to Motion, and consequently to Labour: And Motion, in respect to Spiritual Beings, as *God, Angels, Souls*, is twofold: 1. By Operation of any thing.— 2. By designing some new Action. And hence Rest is taken two ways; one, by *Cessation* from Labour; and the other, by *Fulfilling* of the Desire: after both which Ways, God is said to have rested the *Seventh Day*, because he ceased to make any new Species or Kinds of Creatures, that he had not made before, for the Souls of Men are no new Creation; I mean, what is different from the Summ of the *Six Days* Labour, no more than Lyons, Horses, &c. that he daily makes by the Series and Chain of Nature, which cannot be denied to be his daily *Workmanship*: As also particular Instances of unaccountable Deliverances or Judgments, which he effects not by the Order of Second Causes.

Quest. 2. Why a Pump may not be made to draw Water an hundred Feet deep as well as twenty four, &c?

Ans. There are two more Questions, which came along with the same Letter, viz. *Who was the first that drew Water out of the Earth by a Pump.*— And, *Why there may not be an Invention of Air to do it, as well as continual Labour of Man, Horse, &c.* The first of these Questions deserves an Answer, the two last we think not worth the taking notice of; one of them being a *Secret*, in it self, not worth a *Minute's Study*; and the other being too profitable an Invention to let go out of our Hands, if we knew it: However, the first makes amends, and we are willing to oblige the Gentleman in it; and if he sends again, we desire him not to be so very angry in being not answered till his Turn comes again. We have not yet been assured of the Matter of Fact, but take it for granted, as seeing very plausible Reasons for it.

(1.) There is a certain *intrinsic Vertue and Power* in all the Elements, whereby they do (as much as the Subject can be passive) change any part of the other Elements into their own

Nature: Thus the *Air draws up and rarifies little Lakes of Water into it self*: Thus Wood, Stones, &c. being put into Fire, are overcome by it, and imbibe its hot Quality. And so of the rest.

(2.) By this Innate Power and Virtue in the Elements, each one will *struggle and fight with the other*, and the stronger (as in other Natural Beings) will always overcome. Thus Water and Fire mix'd together, will never leave fighting, till the Water is evaporated, and divides its Nature betwixt Earth and Air; or until the Fire is extinguished, (that is,) driven from its proper Aliment, or that which it feeds upon, as Wood, Coals, Sulphur, &c. and its more subtle part condens'd into Air; for it is impossible that any thing should be annihilated, though it may be changed.

From this last ('tis hoped) we have reasonably concluded, how a Bottle, stopp'd with a strong Cork, and let down so many Fathoms into the Sea, was forcibly driven into the Bottle; for that little quantity of Air having gone too far in a contrary Element, and finding it self oppress'd by the others opposite Power, and being beyond a possibility of farther Relief from its own, began to gather its Strength, as all other Natures do, by *Contraction and Union*, till the general Frame of Nature was forced either to suffer a Vacuum in the rest of the Bottle, or else to send in the Water into it, to supply its place, by driving in the Cork to come at it. And this is evident from this Experiment: Take two Bottles, one larger than other, equally cork'd, and of the like wideness at the Mouth, and you will find that the greater quantity of Air will drive farther into its Enemies Quarters before it is repuls'd, than the lesser. That *Elasticity*, that natural buoying quality of the Air cannot assimilate it self to the declining Centre of Gravity:— From which Reason, an Answer is inferr'd to the present Question, viz. *The Air, when it is loose, and expanded upon the Surface of the Earth or Waters, has a great deal more power, than when it is confined within the narrow Limits of a Well*; and doubtless, a Bottle cork'd, and let down into a very deep Well, would have the above-mentioned Effect many Fathoms Ebber than at the Sea. Now there being no Pumping without the Assistance of Air, it cannot reasonably be supposed to be aiding so deep in its Enemy's Bounds, where it has enough to do to defend it self from its Assault, or that Innate Virtue and Power mentioned before, wherewith the other Elements are also furnished, to conquer their opposite Aggressor, when too weak for them.

Quest. 3. Whether, in any Sciences, the Practick or Theory is most preferable?

Ans. The Gentleman that sent this Question pretends a *Dis-satisfaction*, from what Grounds I know not.— The End of Thinking and Knowing, is Action; therefore these being subservient to Action, must necessarily be less noble. If the Gentleman please to make his Objections, or give us the Occasions and Grounds of his Unquietness, we shall endeavour a particular Satisfaction to him.