

# The Athenian Mercury:

Saturday, March 26. 1692.

Quest. 1. **L**illy, towards the end of his *As in pre-*  
*sent*, has these following Lines :

*Furo juravi & juratus, Potoque potavi  
Et potus, Titubo titubavi vel titubatus,  
Venio pro vendor venivi venditus & sum,  
Sic careo carui & cassus sum* —

Which words several persons imagine to have been designedly joined together, because there seems to be so natural a connexion between Drinking and Swearing, and Stumbling, and Selling and Wanting. Half a piece has been laid about it, and we have agreed to stand by your determination of the thing?

Ans. An Answer to this would be twenty years beyond Childish, and we had past it over, if it was not for the sake of a Modern Author, (whom for distinctions sake we'll call Mr. — because this Paper may have occasion to mention him more than once.) He tells us the whole Rule is capable of a very pretty sort of an Interpretation. What this whole Rule means, unless Instances of a Rule, is above our Capacity, and so indeed is the Wit on't. But now for the pretty Interpretation, *Cano* (says he) they fall to Supper, *Furo*, then they begin to Swear, *Poto* brings up the Reason, which is about their Drink, &c. Softly Sir. — a pretty Interpretation! it had been enough for themselves to have given the Reason for Swearing after they'd been Drunk. But to proceed, after drinking, *Titubo*, they break their Shins; and then *Careo*, they want, yet *Prandeo*, they sharp one other Dinner, *Pateo*, but they lye horridly open to Scandal, *Placeo*, yet they are pleas'd with't, *Suesco*, because they are accusom'd to it, and so on. We can follow the Author no longer, since he has been so unjust in his Wit, as to put a *they* instead of *I*, to all these words, which are of the first person, and therefore naturally applicable to the Author of the Interpretation.

Quest. 2. What do you think of a Frize-Coat in July?

Ans. Its as warm work as Tossing ones Master in a Blanket?

Quest. 3. How long has Brimstone been prescrib'd for the Itch?

Ans. This will have its Answer in the Postscript Letter.

Quest. 4. Who is the best Player now living? and which is best, a Tragedy or a Comedy?

Ans. For the first part, 'tis a Riddle, 'till we know how much o'th' World is included in the Question, tho' let it be where it will, we may say in General, every one is the best, for so they'll tell you, if they speak as they think: As to the latter part of the Question, we are as much in the dark as the former, till we know the Persons Temper that has a mind to make a Tryal, lest we shou'd prescribe that for a Sanguine Temper which is proper for a Melancholly.

Quest. 5. Whether is it not a sure sign that David Jones is a good Preacher, since the People follow him so?

Ans. We had not answer'd this, if upon starting this Question there had not been this publick Answer, "Not at all, for in the late Frost we have seen a Football in the Streets attended by a more numerous Mob. Which witty Noniense is expos'd by another irrelevant parallel, thus, Yes certainly, because the Sun has the most Spectators: We cannot justifie Mr. Jones in every thing, but there's a greater parallel betwixt the Use of his Preaching, and seeing the Sun, than there is betwixt it and a Football.

Quest. 6. In Scotland they have abolished Prelacy, because of its Oppression, and have set up Presbytery in the room: Quere, Whether the Remedy is not worse than the Disease?

Ans. This will also have its answer in the Postscript Letter.

Quest. 7. *An Deus amat Angelum possibilem plus quam formicam actu existentem?*

Ans. We desire the honest Gentleman to take back this Question again, and propose things in *potentia* to us, when we have resolv'd every thing that is already in *actu*.

Quest. 8. There is a Liquor, of which a certain quantity weighs 2 Ounces; and another, of which an equal quantity weighs 4 Ounces; and a solid, of which the same quantity weighs 3 Ounces. The solid immersed in the first Liquor weighs 1 Ounce, what will it weigh in the second Liquor?

Ans. We have already told the World, that every Body will sink or swim, weigh more or less in Water, according as its weight is in proportion to that of an equal Bulk of such Water. Therefore 'tis a Scandal only fit for Mr. — to suggest to the World, that we shou'd say a Rule Inverse was the only method for resolving such Questions, viz. that we answer'd before; we only shou'd, that after a single Subtraction made, one single Rule Inverse wou'd answer that Question, much sooner than the long tedious Algebraic Canon which his Friend helpt him to. The Answer of this Question is also resolvable without Algebra, viz. it weighs as much as Mr. —'s Ingenuity, that is, it wants considerably to weigh any thing.

Quest. 9. Whether is it more difficult to write Greek or Latin Verse, or English Verse?

Ans. There's more liberty by far in the two first, because of Transpositions, and yet less in making new words. Boys at School do the two first tolerably well, before they can arrive to any thing but sad Doggrel in the last. If we speak of it as to perfection, perhaps *Homers Iliads* (tho' we won't be positive) will argue strongly for the Greek Poetry, when we consider that he has writ so very fine, notwithstanding there were so very few Poets, and by consequence very little refining and borrowing of one another: if Homer had had those advantages in his days as a Young English or Latin Poet may have now in ours, we can't believe but that Greek Poetry had arrived to a greater perfection than either Latin or English.

Quest. 10. Unde Derivatur Punch?

Ans. Punch quasi Paunch, the shape of the Bowl being round and Belly'd, and not from Water, Sugar, &c. for the first makers of Punch, viz. the Indians, made it of the Spirits of Rum, Rice, &c. and we have the shape of our Bowles from theirs, it not the Bowls themselves, or perhaps the Articulate sound Punch, is expressive of such a thumping bellyed Figure; hence 'tis we call a big-belly'd Mimick a Punchanello.

Quest. 11. Several Books you know come out that are said to be writ by a Person of Quality, would you advise us to buy 'em?

Ans. The quality of the Books is the best Recommendation; not but that where two persons write upon one Subject 'tis odds, but he that has the best Education has the happiest Thoughts, and the handsomest way of expressing 'em. My Lord Roscommon's Works are full of Noble and great Conceptions, every way becoming the greatness of his Quality and Education.

Quest. 12. What is your Opinion of Marriages without License?

Ans. Just what the Law provides: We are not to censure the just determinations of a lawful Magistrate, without incurring the penalty due to such follies.

Quest. 13. Why do we call a single week a Sennight, and two weeks a Fortnight, that is, why do we reckon by the Night, and not by the Day?

Ans. As for the words Sennight and Fortnight, they come from the words Seven-nights and Fourteen-nights, which short way of speaking, custom has abbreviated into Sennight and Fortnight, why Seven-nights and



not Seven days? we answer, that the Jews, *Italians, Athenians, Silefians* and *Bohemians* reckon their day from Evening, because the darkness in Nature was before the Light; and this Account is the oldest of all Accounts. The *Arabians, Umbrians, and Astronomers* reckon from noon to noon as the fittest time to make Observations on the Sun. The *Babylonians, Persians, Norimbergians, &c.* begin at Sun-rising and Sun-setting: The *Myssians* and *Romans*, part of *Germany*, the sixteen Provinces, and *England* account from Midnight to Midday, because the Shepherds were keeping Flocks about that time Christ was Born, and also arose from the Dead, according to the first, which is the oldest account, come the words Sennight and Fortnight, which answers the Question.

Quest. 14. To what purpose, and why was the Ceremony used at the Baptism for the Dead?

Ans. This Text was read in the *English Translation* in King *Edward the VI.* days, *Why are they then Baptized over the Dead?* and by the Centuriators of *Magdenburg*, Cent. 1.1.2. c. 6. But this is to bring the Text to some History of the practice of baptizing over the Tombs of the Dead, if ever there was such a practice. The next Reading was the Bibles in *Queen Elizabeth*, viz. *Why are they then Baptized for the Dead?* which was the practice, but was about 400 Years after Christ, of baptizing those on their Death-Beds, that they might not sin after Baptism: And thus the Emperours *Constantine*, and his Son *Constantius*, deferr'd Baptism till the point of Death, and *Valentinian* purposing the same delay, was prevented by Death. But this Custom cannot be proved to be in the Apostles times, neither that they were Baptized as Dead, and for the State of the Dead, or for the Dead; neither can it be meant by *St. Paul*, the Dead, only to be Martyrs, by way of Eminency, since if the word *the* had been out, it had been Non-sence; but it was a Custom Common to all Persons, these are Toyles inextricable. The present *English Bibles* are for the Dead, and this Proxy-Baptizing the Living for the Dead, was the practice of some Converts to Christianity then; they deferr'd Baptism unto *Easter* or *Whitsontide*, (*Adi. f. f. Scal. in Locum.*) or to the 6th. of *January*, or Feast of *Epiphany*, on which day they suppos'd Christ was Baptized. This Custom is still in the *Ethiopic Churches*; so that if any of these Converts were seized with Death before this time appointed for Baptism, then a living man undertook Baptism for the dead man, and the words could not be better framed than this Text to express this Custom, which *Tertullian de Resurrectione Carnis* mentions often, and he was near the Age of the Apostles: And it is *Cerinthus* the Enemy of all Truth, contemporary with the Apostles, who brought in this doctrine, and not *Marcion*: see *Tertul. adver. Mar. 5.* Therefore the Apostle uses this Text as an Argument *ad hominem*, suited to those superstitious *Cerinthian Corinthians* he had to deal withal; for what means your superstitious substituting a living man to be baptized for a dead man, if both perished equally, and there were no Resurrection?

Quest. 15. Whether the Lords day be not of Divine Institution, obliging all Christians Semper & ad semper, and whether Bull-baitings, &c. be allowable on the Lords day as on any other days of the week, as *Dr. Heylin* saith?

Ans. *St. Paul* abrogated days, as Jewish superstitious Holy-days, yet he did institute the first day to the Churches of *Galatia*, 1 *Cor. 16. 1, 2.* and to the Churches of *Corinth*, the practice of the Church of *Troas* was publick Meeting, Sacrament. *Paul* preached his Farewell Sermon, not on the last day, but on the first day, which he had order'd for Collections, thereby to be the greater, when all on that day were to meet: So he staid with them till that Day, which was not left to the Church in aftertimes as indifferent, but ordered by him, and the practice of *Troas, Galatia, Corinth*, not for Bull-baiting, but other Religious Duties.

Qu. 16. I was playing at Cards this last Christmas at a Tradesmans Shop, &c.

Qu. 17. Which is the best Instrument to pare Corns with, &c.

Qu. 18. About 15 months ago I married a Tripewomans Daughter, &c.

Qu. 19. Gentlemen, it is my misfortune to have a penurious old Hunk to my Father, &c.

Ans. These mighty Questions are not to be so quickly resolv'd. The Querist must tarry a considerable time before we can find an Answer to 'em, that will be useful to the publick.

A Letter sent to us by way of Postscript, March 22.

Gentlemen,

IN Reading a late Scurrilous Pamphlet, I find these Questions with the answers to each, viz. "How long Brimstone hath been prescribed for the Itch? The Answer given is, several hundreds of Years before the Conquest, Sir. — 'Tis the oldest Receipt in the Dispensatory, and it is as ancient as *Sodom*; for the inhabitants of that City were extremely troubled with the Itch, and Brimstone effectually cured them of it. And a late Author, in his Vindication of *Wales*, is pleased to say, that no prescription in the World can pretend to be *Fure Divino*, but only Brimstone. The 2d. Quest. is, In *Scotland* they have abolished Episcopacy, because of its Oppression, and have set up *Presbytery* in the room: Qu. Whether the Remedy is not worse than the Disease? The Answer given is, viz. We'll only tell you a short Story Sir, and then leave you to make the Application: A knot of Merry Fellows were drinking a Glass of Wine at a Gentlemans Chamber which faced a Conventicle, where the people were devoutly Serenading their Maker at the expence of *Hopkins and Sternhold*. The Chimney happening to Smoke, one of 'em opens the Casement, crys the Gentleman, What a Pox do ye mean to open the Casement there? Nothing says the other, but only to let out the Smoke, Ay but, replies he, you let in that which is ten times more troublesome, you let in the Psalm. The 4th. Quest. is, Whether Religion may not be said to be like Cheese, since every Man is his own Cook? The Answer given is, Ay verily Sir that it may, and for another profound Reason which you have not nam'd, viz. because there is one Letters difference between a Casuist and Caseist.

Now tho' I am not desirous to engage you in so scurrilous a Paper, yet waving the 4 Quest. above mention'd in relation to this Authors manner of answering them, I request your Resolution of these 4 Queries.

Quest. 1. Whether such ridiculing of the most dreadful effects of Divine displeasure, that was ever manifested in the World, on the one hand, and of the solemn Ordinances of God on the other, be not a very high Affront to the Divine Majesty?

Qu. 2. Whether it be not a great contempt of, and diametrically opposite to the late Proclamation of the King and Queens against Prophaneness?

Qu. 3. Whether in a Christian state, it be not (with submission) an Iniquity to be punished by the Judge?

Qu. 4. Since no sober Man nor Friend either to our Religion as settled by Law, or to the Government it self, can encourage such Pamphlets: Question, Whether the Author concern'd in it has not a private Pension from the late King and Lewis the 14th. to make up his losses, as a recompense to serve that Interest?

Ans. These Questions are fitter for the Magistrates Inspection than our Resolution.

The Questions concerning 3 Merchants Contract, the Man who curs'd his Wife and Children, Cock-fighting, Bull-baiting, torturing of Brute Creatures, Equivocal Generation, Sepulchral Lamps of the Ancients, 175th. Verse in *Juvenal*, shall be all answer'd next Saturday.

We have in this Paper, according to our Promise, answer'd all the Questions mention'd in our two last Mercuries, and resolve to continue answering all Questions whatever, that so we may render our Undertaking perfect. Continue sending in your Questions to *Smiths Coffee-house* in *Stocks Market*, or to the *Roterdam Coffee-house* in *Finch-lane*, till we give notice to the contrary.

## Advertisement.

THE Good Old Cause: Or the Divine Captain Characteriz'd. By *Edmund Hickeringill*, Rector of the Rectory of *All Saints* in *Colchester*. Printed for *J. Dunton* at the *Raven* in the *Poultry*.

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