

# The Athenian Mercury.

Quest. 1. **A** Woman near Newgate, was delivered about three Weeks ago with a fine Child, the Child was often heard to Cry eight Weeks before. Pray the meaning of it.

Ans. The possibility of such a thing is unquestionable, and there is no doubt, but it has often happen'd, as *Weinrichius*, Dr. *Needham*, *Barthol.* and many others give Relations of this Nature: Some fifteen days, some two Months, and some longer before the Birth; but no uncommon event was ever observ'd to happen upon it; Persons that have been surprized with it have expected Monsters, or something distinct from natural Births, but at the delivery they've found their Mistake in attributing that to an extraordinary Cause which was really no more than the effect of a natural One. And it being a general observation, that we may hear some Children Cough, crying cannot be so incredible, since the sound is much Shriller, and the Ear sooner sensible of it. The Air is the Medium of conveyance, and all Bodies have Air in 'em, as Mr. *Boyle* has learnedly discours'd in his *Porosity of Bodies*.

Quest. 2. Whether it is not the Duty of the English that inhabit in America, to endeavour to Convert and Baptize their Negro-slaves, and likewise the Poor Indians, their Neighbours amongst whom they dwell.

Quest. 3. What is the genuine meaning of the last verse of the 20th of the Proverbs, The blueness of a Wound cleanseth away evil, so do Stripes the inward parts of the Belly.

Ans. 1. Many Treatises have been wrote to prove it their Duty.

Ans. 2. This has been a place Objected to render *Solomon* a trifling Author. This relates not to a simple Wound made by Incision, but a Contused or Poysonous Wound (common in other Countreys;) this Lividness or Blueness made by Blow or Venom, when it begins to separate, then the Wound is discharged from all ill Symptoms, being brought to Cleanse or Digest. — So Correction by Stripes from Magistrates or Parents is the proper Remedy to cleanse out some particular inward Vice: A Rod for the back of a Fool will not only soften the hide, but soften the Heart of an otherwise incorrigible Sinner, and it is yet the Custom among *Turks*, &c. to give blows upon Soles of Feet and Belly. For Punishments to particular offences.

Quest. 4. Why can a seventh Son by Touching or Stroaking, cure the Evil before Medicines? And whether is the Cure thus performed a Lawful or an Unlawful Gift? Whether Natural or Supernatural, Diabolical, or Divine?

Ans. This is already Answered, as well

as five hundred more, that we are continually dunn'd for.

Quest. 5. Whether may a Man preserve his Life to extream old Age, without diminishing of his Senses, or Interruption of Health either by Pains or Sicknes?

Ans. It's lawful no doubt. If he mean whether it's possible, or whether it may by Medicines be effected, we Answer, that it's reasonable in the Theory, but difficult in the Practick part, to obtain such an immortalizing Quintessence, or Elixir to preserve or renovate all sorts of Persons. Some propose the *Statics* to eat by weight, and drink by measure, and to have ones Chair so poised that it shall put him in Mind, when he has the prescribed Commons. Others propose Calculating the Nativity, that a Man by that, and his Almanack may to a Minute see, when it's best to take Physick or the Air: Or remove his Lodging, and what to Eat. Others prescribe Flesh, others Roots; and advise reading *Chrysippus* of *Coleworts*, *Marchion* of *Radishes*, or consult the Herbal; some propose Milk extracted from the Rays of the Moon, and a Golden Elixir from the Rays of the Sun, or Lilph Broath made of the influence of the Stars: But *hic Labor, hoc opus est*, to procure these Medicines; however — That there are such Medicines that contribute to the prolonging of Life, without Gout or Stone, that a Man may go off with a Gentle Decay, is out of Controversie true.

The other Question sent with this is already Answer'd.

Quest. 6. I desire to be Resolved in this Query, if a Man gives his Wife the P—, whether she may not Lawfully for ever refrain his Bed: Or be parted from him?

Ans. Yes certainly the Doctors Commons, will help you at that list.

Quest. 7. These are only to desire you to give as speedy an Answer to this following Question as you can, which is, Whether Fishes can hear or have Ears, or no?

Ans. No indeed, they neither have Ears, nor do they hear; the last has been try'd, which answers the first.

Quest. 8. A Person that has been in Love this five Years, and never discovered his Mind to the Gentlewoman, because he fears a denial: She's something the eldest, their fortunes much alike; but he can't lawfully Marry in less than a Year, and fears his Love's so violent he can't live so long without her; he being bashful desires your direction, how to discover his Passion.

Ans. Lovers are ungovernable Creatures, and I'll warrant ye, he'll think it very hard if we say he can't in Honour tell the Lady he Loves her, till he may do it in earnest. For 'twill be a very Impolitick thing to be too



too hasty and ruine the Lady and himself too, tho' that will be the ready way for her to deny his Addresses, if he makes 'em too soon; but let him be satisfied with her Acquaintance, and endeavour to deserve a particular share in her esteem without mentioning his Love, till 'twill be no injury to her to receive it. And we suppose a Person, that has sence enough to be in Love, and so Constant, has made a Choice something agreeable to himself, consequently he need not so much fear a refusal.

Quest. 9. September the fifth last, A Person of my Acquaintance sent you some queries about the Elements, the colour of Ink, the Nexus or bond of the parts of Lead, Mensuration of a Spherical globe, &c. He desires your Answer again.

Quest. 10. *Cogito ergo sum*, is a Proposition you remember doubtless very well. When I look upon a Picture, the Image of that (by means of my Eye) is conveyed to my perceptive faculty, and having made an Impression there, (1.) I perceive that such an Impression is somewhere made in me, (2.) I observe, that I perceive this, (3.) I remark that I observe that I perceive this, (4.) I consider, that I remark, that I observe, that I perceive this. Query, How are these Actions, and Reactions, Perceptions and Reflections performed. What is it that Perceiveth, what after Perception doth relate the story of that Perception, and to what or whom doth it relate it, and how farther proceed all these reduplicated Acts and Reflections of the Mind. I am puzzled with these things, and having obscure Notions, perhaps may not express my thoughts adequately, but I hope you will shape your answer to my meaning.

Ans. 1. We ne're saw these Questions, but if the Gentleman please to send 'em again, they shall be answer'd forthwith, the Nexus or Continuation of Bodies has indeed been thought a very great Mystery in Philosophy, as may be seen by a late Ingenious Author, Dr. Lock of *Humane Understanding*: But we hope we have remov'd the Difficulty, and shall soon give such an Account thereof, as mayn't be unwelcome to our modern Virtuosi.

Ans. 2. Malbranch in his *Metaphysicks*, besides several others, has been pretty large upon this Subject, as has also Mr. Regis to prove the Existence of God, tho' perhaps they all borrow'd it from Descartes, but to the Question, a Chain of Perceptions, such as mention'd in the Query, are easily resolv'd, when we consider the Method that the Mind makes use of in Number, for Instance, suppose I wou'd add four Numbers. A, B, C, D, together, for so far your Chain of Perceptions runs: By the same Method, that I add A and B together, I add C to them, and afterwards D, so that there's no more difficulty in this, I consider, that I remark, that I observe, that I

perceive this, than in this, I perceive, that I think. The difference betwixt simple and compound Ideas, is very learnedly and judiciously treated on by the aforementioned Author, Dr. Lock.

Quest. 11. I am mightily addicted to the Study of Anatomy, I have dissected many Dogs and other Animals alive, not out of any design of cruelty; but, I protest, purely out of a design to be perfect in that excellent Study: I never open'd any Creature in my Life, without some extraordinary Elevations of mind toward it's Creator, for I believe it impossible for an Anatomist to be an Atheist. I desire to know, whether it is a Sin to put those Creatures to such Tortures, as they must needs suffer in live Dissections, only out of a design (as I have before said) to further my own Knowledge in particular, and the good of Mankind in general, my Study being Physick.

I shall be Impatient till I hear your Answer to this Question, which however Inconsiderable it may seem to you, has made so deep an Impression on my Thoughts, that I am grown very Melancholy about it. Let me therefore earnestly entreat you to let it have its Answer on the nineteenth day of this Month, and in so doing you'll much oblige, your Admirer, &c.

Ans. Descartes wou'd have Beasts to be nothing else, but Machines insensible of either Pain or Pleasure, and wrote a particular Treatise to this effect; but by his leave, we are so far from believing Animals to be meer Machines, that we dare undertake to prove that Trees, Herbs, &c. are in their principal parts sensible of most exquisite Pain, by Bruising, Cutting, &c. but more of this very shortly, in the mean time to the Querists business; tho' we are thus perswaded, we can't but believe the Practice doubted on in the Question to be very Lawful and Useful, of which, (when we speak of the rest) we just now promis'd, we shall also treat more largely.

Quest. 12. Whether there was, is, and will be difference in the Worship of Saints and Angels in Heaven in respect to Christ, before his Incarnation, in his Mediatorial Kingdom, and after the finishing of it.

Ans. We can't be Positive in such a nice Question, in which there can be no proof made, till we have undergone these Changes. The Negative appears more reasonable to us. Since the matter of Praise is different, the Angels had not the same Dispensations, as Men have, tho' we are not certain that Christ died not for the Angels, and that such as repented were retained in their first Station, contrary to the common receiv'd Opinion, Colos. 1. 19. To reconcile all things to himself, whether they be things in Earth or things in Heaven. But this we leave to the Learned to decide, we shou'd be glad to hear from this Querist about the Wire.