

The Athenian Mercury:

Saturday, May 14. 1692.

Quest. 1. *A Book has lately visited the World with this Title, The History of the ATHE-
NIAN SOCIETY, by a Gentleman who
gives secret Intelligence of their whole Proceedings, &c: pray
give me your Opinion of it?*

Ans. As we have already publicly disown'd our Consent to any such History, or so much as our Knowledge of it till 'twas almost printed, so we are not at all oblig'd to concern our selves further about it; but since by reason of this History, and some other passages whereby we have oppos'd the impious and Atheistical Assertions of some persons, we are styl'd malicious, ignorant, impudent Blockheads, that we know nothing of the Tongues but what we steal, That we are Sons of Whores, if &c. and such like scandalous Treatment; we hear that the Author of the said History will next week fully consider these things.

Quest. 2. *Adam before his Fall being in a State of Immortality (as most hold) and sleep being an Emblem of Death, how could he, being in that State, sleep; and so sound, as that a Rib could be taken from him, without his being sensible of it?*

Ans. Sleep is properly call'd an Emblem of Death in some limited Sences, but the want of a proper distinction might probably be the occasion of the Querists Error, for no one ever pretended that Sleep and Death had any resemblance in their full and proper Effects, viz. Corruption, and refreshment, for these are quite contrary, and 'tis to the first of these that Adams Immortality is oppos'd, and not to the last, which is rather Emblematical of it. As to the latter part, How could Adam be so sound asleep, that a Rib could be taken from him without his being sensible of it? We answer, the Scripture is express that it was so; and we may very reasonably believe it was no hard task for him to effect, that could make a Man out of Dust, nay, that could make the World out of Nothing. And now to examine the Atheists Answer to this Question, whose advancements must be very fine, or themselves very immoral, to condemn every body else; first, they will have this *Act to be a Drama (a comical Vision) and nothing real; which besides the incongruity of a deep sleep (as in the Text) puts a Nonsense upon the Context, for Adam said when he was awake, This is Bone of my Bone, and Flesh of my Flesh; and a little after, For this Cause shall a Man leave his Father, &c. from which places 'tis plain that Adam was in the same Vision (if a Vision) both asleep and awake: So that if these mens Consequence is good, we shall have the whole History of the Creation, nay the whole Bible it self to be Visionary, or a Drama, and consequently a despicable silly thing, and to render it so, many of their Papers bid very fair.*

Quest. 3. *Whether there is such a particular Period set to the Life of every particular man, as that he cannot in the course of Nature go beyond such a number of years, months, or days; and that he shall fulfill such a number, notwithstanding any dangers of Casualties he may engage withal?*

Ans. There has been many Authors which have controverted this Case. The two principal Texts brought by such as hold the Affirmative, are that of Job, *Thou hast appointed his bounds, beyond which he cannot pass;* and the other is that passage of our Saviour, *My hour is not yet come.* The meaning of the first appears to us, That God has sentenc'd Mankind to Mortality for the disobedience of Adam, and has so laid the Chain of Causes, that Man shall not outlive the bounds (ordinarily) of 70 years, or a few more, because of the convenience of the World, and the succession of Generations. As for the second, our Saviour being both God and Man, very well knew the Conspiracy, time and

manner of his Death, with every preceding Circumstance that would concur therewith, and therefore he might properly say *his hour was not yet come*, before that time. Common Experience shows that the Temperate live long and healthful, when the intemperate dye quickly; now for a Man to say that God ordains the means and the end, is to say that God is the Author of Sin; if so, Murders, Rapine, Violence, Cheats, and all wickedness whatever, have a safe retreat, to wit, a Necessity, that it could not be avoided, and if so, farewell Rewards and Punishments, Heaven and Hell, nay the very Existence of a Divine Being.

Quest. 4. *Pray what may be the occasion of many supposititious writings attributed to the Apostles and Fathers, so often mention'd by Du-pin, and Dr. Cave?*

Ans. We need not go any further than the three last Reigns, to find Jesuites in every Dress and Religion, which had been brought up at St. Omers, and had us'd themselves to dispute for such particular Sects: we say we need go no further to find many enthusiastical and strange Notions introduc'd amongst, otherwise very honest and well meaning Christians, which can't properly be said to belong to any originally but the Jesuits, who had other ends in it too long to mention here: Thus these *Pie fraudes*, these holy Cheats, introduc'd in the Christian Religion in the Primitive Ages, were brought to pass by persons of a contrary interest and perswasion, who under pretence of serving Christianity, us'd these diabolical Stratagems as the most secure and secret method to bring Christianity into contempt, and Custom amongst the weaker sort, soon authoriz'd 'em, and stamp'd Divinity upon 'em by an unwary Zeal.

Quest. 5. *Having sent several Questions to a Friend, and receiving no Answer, I desire to know whether I'd not ev'n as well superscrib'd another Letter $\epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\ \tau\omicron\ \tau\omicron\ \kappa\alpha\upsilon\omicron\tau\omicron\tau\omicron\upsilon\omicron\upsilon$, as to the Author of de ventre inspiciendo, and his Spanish Dedicator?*

Ans. If you ask'd for Reason, Honour, or Religion, you miss your Man, but try again, and choose a fit Subject, as *Jacobitism, Atheism, Buffoonerism, Witticism, or Grinnism*, you'll be remember'd with a Latin Encomium, and your Health drank into the bargain in humming *Fus Nigrum*.

Quest. 6. *The Diameter of a Circle and Area of a Segment being given, to find the Versed Sign.*

Quest. 7. *The Area of an Oblique angled plain Triangle, difference of the sides and the difference of the Segments of the Base being given, a Theorem is required to find the Base.*

Ans. We design this day fortnight to Answer these 2 Questions with about 10 more by us altogether, which for their Curiosity we hope won't be a little satisfactory to all real Lovers of the Mathematick Art.

Quest. 8. *In the 1 Cor. 7. 36, 37, 38. St. Paul says, if any man think that he behaves himself uncomely towards his Virgin, if she pass the Flower of her Age, and need so require, let him do what he will he sinneth not; let them marry: Nevertheless he that standeth stedfast in his Heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own Will, and hath so decreed in his Heart, that he will keep his Virgin, doth well: So then he that gives her in Marriage doth well, but he that gives her not in Marriage doth better: I desire you to inform me, what you think was St. Paul's true intent and meaning by these words, and likewise an Explanation of them?*

Ans. The Custom of betrothing and putting away continued to the Apostles days; the Parties lived together a long interval before Marriage, which sometimes ended in a great Belly, or sometimes no Marriage at all, vid. Fox 20. 8, 9, 10, 11. it was subject to Rules and Time; which if the Man thought it too strict upon his Tryal, or too long for him and his Virgin to con-

me in that condition of Contract; or if she thought it disreputable, because she was past the Years then in Vogue; (for Virginity was a Reproach to that Nation upon many accounts, being bewail'd by them) or if any other urgent occasion on his side did press him, he might put her away to avoid scandal, or marry her, or she might continue with him longer, he sinn'd not do which way he pleas'd, rather than burn let them marry, be the Times never so perillous. But if the Man can keep his Resolution, command his Passion, and will be firm to his Promise or Contract with his Virgin, tho' he do not marry her till the Times mended; and if she his Virgin, be likewise content to remain with him, this Man doth better considering the Circumstances of the Times, the Apostle was speaking of. There are two other Interpretations much to the same purpose: The first is of the Greek Scholiasts, and others; if any Father hath, because of the perillous times kept his Virgin, *i. e.* his Daughter unmarried, till she be past the Flower of her Age, *i. e.* till she be well stricken in years, and thinks it a dishonour to her to keep her any longer in that Virgin State, let him marry her to a Husband, he doth not sin in so doing; but he who keeps his Resolution not to involve his Family in the troubles of the World in such difficult Times, and is under no necessity, it being in the Fathers power to dispose, or not dispose of his Daughter in Marriage as he pleases, such an one the Apostle thinks does better. The other Interpretation is of our excellent Dr. Hammond, of a Man betrothed, but not married to a Virgin, that is well grown in years, and it is look'd on as unseemly, inexpedient, and undecent to continue in that state any longer, and need so require; or as the Kings Manuscript reads it, &c. it behoves that this be done, let him Marry: but if the Mans Resolutions continue firm, and his betrothed Virgin be not content to abide single till the Times of Persecution be over, this is the more commendable Resolution.

Quest. 9. *If the Dutch, our Friends had so considerable a Sum for their Charge in bringing over the Prince of Orange, our present Gracious King, what may we expect the French King, our Enemy, will demand if he should settle King James on the Throne of England again, considering the maintaining him and the War upon his Account these 3 or 4 years last past, and whether the Nation will ever be able to pay the Interest of such a Sum; and if not, what must we expect from the French King?*

Ans. The French King would quit all his Charge he has been at, if he could procure a peace with the Confederates, but he is not so senceless as the Jacobites, to think of re-inthroning the late King James. He perhaps may be at some Charge to send some over with him to be rid of him: But 'tis not a few discontented persons can alter a Government, where a Government has not disobliged the whole Nation: If the Laws had been dispensed with, Free-hold Colledges seized, Judges contrary to Law placed over us, our Enemies made our Military and Naval Commanders, who were advanced because they would Draggon us: If there was no Liberty or Property but what was dispensible at the Will and Pleasure of an Arbitrary Tyrant, then People would be disposed to run to a Deliverer, but never to a Man as never knew how to keep his Speeches, Proclamations, Promises, or Oath: And since he has been under the Tutorage of the French King, he can hardly learn the Art of keeping his word. 'Tis not to be taught in the French Court, therefore its the ill usage a People find from a Government, not the discontents of a few, tho' Great Men, that are crossed in their pretensions, that disposes a People against a Government: — And if so, there's no English man in his Wits can either fear or hope for such an Expensive and dangerous Revolution, or in the least contribute towards it.

Quest. 10. *Gentlemen, Very lately I was told of a strange Fancy, which upon observation I find true; that is, The Jacobites have agreed, for a distinguishing Mark to wear their Hats*

dented in on the side of the Crown, which seems to me, as if their Heads were beaten in on the same place by some violent blow, which makes them wear their Hats according to the Form of their Heads: Now my Question is, Whether you think they did not receive this Dent from a Knock in the Cradle, seeing all their Actions do declare a great Weakness of the Head?

Ans. Some think it was used as the best way to take off a fashionable low-prized French Hat, when it begins to be weak in the Brims: Others affirm, That the French King has Vowed never to put off his Hat, until he has restored his Allies, the Turk, &c. and to shew his unwearied diligence in this thing, he sleeps in his Hat, which is thereby dented with his Pillow; *Regis ad Exemplum*, the French take off their Hats to cause a dent in the Crown like their Kings, as also their brother Jacobites here: but the more serious Coxcombs of that Kidney quote Scripture for this Metaphorical Discrimination, out of the Lamentations of Jeremiah, *The Crown is fallen from our Head, and woe to us that we sinned*; and therefore in imitation of their Masters fallen Crown they fall or dent their Hats.

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.

¶ This is to acquaint that Gentleman who writ the History of the Athenian Society, that his Letter which so well characterizes those persons who misrepresented him, shall according to his desire be inserted in our next Mercury.

* * The Poetical Mercury will be publish'd Tuesday May 24th.

Advertisements.

||| The Double Descent, a Poem, Price 6. d.

¶ The Good Old Cause: Or the Divine Captain Characteriz'd. In a Sermon not preach'd, nor needful to be preach'd in any place so properly as in a Camp. By Edmund Hickerlingill Rector of the Rectory of All Saints in Colchester, Both Printed for J. Dunton at the Raven in the Poultry.

¶ Having bought of the late Undertaker of the Works of the Learned his right to a Monthly Journal of Books, the said Journal will be now carried on by a London Divine, (under the Title of *The compleat Library, or News for the Ingenious, &c.*) who will continue it monthly, beginning with this present May. — This Journal is to consist of 9 Sheets, 3 whereof will be allotted for Original Pieces, the other 4 for Historical Accounts of the choicest Books printed in England, and in the Foreign Journals, and the remaining 2 are to contain Notes on the memorable passages happening monthly, as also the State of Learning in the World; this will be the Authors constant method, which he is obliged to prosecute for several just and weighty reasons, &c. — At the end of every six months there will be added to this New Journal 2 Alphabetical Tables, one of the Books, and the other of the Matters. — In the first JOURNAL will be inserted an Original Piece concerning the integrity and purity of the Hebrew Bible.

L O N D O N, Printed for John Dunton at the Raven in the Poultry, 1692.