

The Athenian Mercury:

Saturday, June 18. 1692.

Quest. 1. A Man married, and after one months Cohabitation resolved to forsake his Wife, and that she might be Married to another Husband, occasioned several Letters to be sent to her and her Relations of her Death; which the Woman believing, and hearing nothing to the contrary for 4 years, married another man. The first Husband is returned, rejoicing that she hath another Husband, that he may marry another Wife: *Qu.* Whether the Woman continuing with the second Husband, lives in Adultery? There came several persons to the Woman, who asked that they were the Bearers who carried her Husband to the Grave.

Ans. By the Law she may choose either of these Husbands to live with, but if she leave her second, he has a Good Action against the first, who by a false Token, viz. procuring men to personate Bearers in Affirmation of his Death, and thereby did ensnare and damage him, the second Husband: However, the Woman being right in her Intention in marrying her second Husband, because it was grounded upon the Death of her first, therefore she being innocent there is no appearance of Adultery; and for the first Husband, the nocent Person, his Fraud deserves not a new Wife as a Reward, but a Celibacy during her Life, which is the Punishment of his own preparing.

Quest. 2. Whether its possible to love as well after marriage as before, and if it be, can you give any directions for the preserving so great a happiness?

Ans. 'T would seem a preposterous Answer, should we affirm, That 'tis impossible to love as well, but not to love better after Marriage than before: But yet with a grain or two 'twill hold well enough; for, if by loving as well, be meant loving with such a Gust, such a Satisfaction, such a sensible pleasure, we believe it impossible, there being much more of the perturbation in that Passion before Marriage, than there is afterward; opposites illustrate each other, and Doubt and Fear in this case let an Edge on Love: As one that's cold feels more pleasure, and yet more pain too, when he comes immediately out of the Air to the Fire-side, than one who has late hovering over the Grates for an hour together. But tho' in this Sense there are hardly any Love so well, (unless now and then perhaps, after a long Voyage or Journey) yet undoubtedly there are many who Love far better in another, we mean as to that part of Love which has less of the Sense and more of the Soul in't, this Love like Wine, and other noble Liquors, grows fiercer and more spiritous by Age — It more resembles Friendship, if 'tis not rather the same with it. Wherever such persons meet as are possess'd of many noble Qualities, the more they are acquainted, 'tis impossible but the better still they must love, if they have but Discretion to manage it. For Directions how to preserve so great a happiness, we think we can produce such as are infallible. First, to Love those who have something to recommend 'em besides Beauty or Fortune, or even Wit itself, either of which alone are but melancholly Companions, when we are to have no other Society all our Lives: To all these let good Humour be added, and Discretion, Virtue and Piety, if you know where to find 'em. When thus met, let nothing but Death part you, never be angry together, but if you must sometimes fall out, be so wise to take your turns; and when 'tis over, learn the excellent Art of Forgetfulness; or if you remember any thing, let it be each for your selves, not as is common for one another. And as the Crown of all, let your Love be in one Sense truly spiritual; not only Love the Mind, but the Soul, that you may never part, either while here or hereafter.

Quest. 3. A Gentleman, who has the Repute of a very sober and judicious Person, came to me lately as if he had newly arose from the Grave, his Countenance extremely chang'd and alter'd, which did not a little surprize me, and on my enquiring the Reason, he told me that the Night before as he was sitting upright in his Bed, no way sleepy, between the hours of 12 and One, he did then see my Apparition, all in white coming into the Chamber thro' the Door; tho' it were fast shut, and continu'd so till next morning, which by degrees came up to his Bedside, and his Eye being fix'd on it to see what 't would do, it stooped down to take up the Bed-Cloaths, after which it immediately disappeared; the next Night it appeared as before, and then ceased. Pray let me know the meaning of this: The same Person tells me he has this faculty when he desires to know any Transaction of mine, he ponders on it very seriously before he goes to Sleep, and 'tis reveal'd to him in a Dream: Pray let me know whether you think this is true, or possible to be done?

Ans. Had the first part of this Story only been mention'd, it might have puzzled us to have given an account on't, but the latter has pretty well clear'd the business. Its plain enough, Madam, that this sober and judicious Person has a design to impose upon you, if not something worse, (as indeed the taking up the Bed-cloaths was a little waggish, and the she-sprite hardly so modest as became her Sex:) His pretending to know what he desires as to any Transactions of yours, by pondering on't very seriously before he goes to Bed, spoils all the rest, for how should he know 'em so as to ponder upon 'em, and what must this be but a wheedle to get it out of you; or if he really knows 'em, as you say he does in some cases, he either does it by guess, or by corrupting some of your People, whatever they or he may perswade you to the contrary. We have heard indeed of some pleasant Fellows who pretend to find any mans thoughts by a kind of Reflection from his Soul, by putting their Bodies exactly into the same posture with the others: But this Gentleman goes far beyond those in the present Experiment, and could he be perswaded to Dream thus of any thing else but you, Madam, he would make the rarest Spy in Christendom.

Quest. 4. A young Gent. loves and courts a Lady in all probability of a good Fortune, the advantages of whose person, &c. and the prospect of a fair Estate, to which he was Heir, so recommended him, that in a short time he had gain'd so far on her Affections, that there pass'd a mutual Contract between 'em. The old Gent. her Father observing them far advanc'd in their Affections, and that the Spark was noos'd fast enough, declares that if his Daughter ever marry'd him, he'd not give her a Farthing: On this the Gent. desists from his Courtship, and some time after finding himself in such circumstances at home as did not please him, and from which he could disengage himself no way so well as by marrying, without any leave ask'd of his melancholly Mistress, profess'dly addresses himself to another, which coming to his old Mistresses Ears, the resentment of the affront made her listen to the Importunities of her Mother-in-law, and entertain the pretences of her Kinsman, so notorious a Block-head, and in all sober mens Opinions so every way undervaluing her, that her Indignation at her first Servants base Treatment is lookt upon as the greatest Inducement to her compliance with this Squires Courtship. Her first Lover not succeeding in his 2d. Amour, has attempted a Reconciliation with his former Mistress, but to no purpose. Now how far will this Gent. be accountable in Honour or Conscience for the Ladies misfortune, if upon the motives alledg'd she throws her self away on this Intolerable Fool?

Ans.

Ans. There's more difficulties than the last in this Question: 'Twas not likely the Amour shou'd be very happy, which it seems was begun without the Consent of Parents first obtain'd, especially when they proceeded in't to the very last step but one, we mean a Contract: Nor is such a way of procedure either prudent or honest; not honest, because they dispos'd of themselves without any regard to their Parents Consent, who no doubt have some Propriety in them; nor prudent, for tho' the Old Gentleman wink'd at it, 'till he thought him fast enough, tho' this Permission might have been sufficient to make his first Addresses lawfull, 'twas not so to proceed so far as a Contract, nor is't any wonder that the Old Man shou'd thus Angle with his fine Daughter, and hook in the young Gentleman, and afterwards fly off, and express his Anger; for that's now grown a common way of putting off Children, when their Parents have no mind to pay their Portions. Besides, there may be something of the Mother-in-law in't, who may have work'd the Breach between 'em, on purpose to bring on her own Fool of a Kinsman. For the young Gentleman's flying off at the dreadful Denunciation of the Old one, he did like a wife, tho' not like an honest and generous Man, (if 'tis possible to be properly one and not the other.) The World is now got out of the Humour either of hanging or starving for their Mistresses; and if they find much ado to Love their Wives after Marriage, when they have both Ceres and Bacchus to assist 'em, how will they be able to do so, when they have neither? nay, when perhaps --- Sylvia grows old, and Venus too forsakes her? 'Tis true, in the days of Amadis de Gaul, and reign of Knight Errantry, when 'twas all the Fashion to break their Lances and Necks for their ungentle Caterwauling Damsels, this wou'd have shown very well; and for a Man to have gone a Begging with his Wife and Children, or what's almost as bad, smother out an uncomfortable snuff of Life in some little dirty Hole, wou'd then have pass'd for a pretty Adventure, and made a Man as famous in Ballads and Romances as Don Quixot's Discipline in the Wilderness did him for his dear Dulcinea --- But so much for that, after we have told the Reader this, to wit, that the Lovers Fashion is now to have two Strings to their Bow, (if not two Mistresses) and they are all of Hudibras's mind, "To burn for Love and Money too, and he that does otherwise, must prepare to be boot'd, and arm himself with all sorts of passive Valour. For the Lady, she has but done as thousand others have before her; nay, as the wisest Men in the World that look so gruff upon Love, and scowl at the very Name on't; by shunning one extrem, run into another, and because she has mis'd the Fire, resolv'd to leap into the Water --- But if her Resentments wou'd but give her leave to think, she'd first look before she Lov'd, or what's worse, Married --- If Poverty wou'd make her miserable, much more wou'd a disagreeable Match, since one may be mended; but a Fool never mends 'till he's dress'd in Woollen. Should such a sudden Passion sling her into his Arms (though Death's perhaps wou'd be more welcome) she'd hereby not only make her self extremly miserable, but even oblige those Persons, which it's very probable by a Trick have endeavour'd to make her so. And whether or no she again entertains her former Lover, (who is more to be blam'd in strictness of Justice and Point of Honour, than according to the common sense of the World) which yet she were best do, if there were any Hopes of Bending her Father, she ought not to throw her self away, upon one that will every moment of her Life make her repent it.

Quest. 5. About four Years since I Court'd a young Lady, to whom I Promised Marriage, and receiv'd the same Promise from her, on which I wish'd if I ever Married any other I might never Prosper, and be made an Example for my Perjury --- But tho' she had thus Promised me, yet she'd not Marry without her Fathers Consent, which I cou'd by no means obtain; on which I left the place, and have not seen her since nor heard from her, tho' I've writ several Letters to her, to none of which I have receiv'd any Answer, notwithstanding her

solemn Promise to continue a Correspondence, and I am certain she receiv'd those which I sent her. I'm now acquainted with another young Lady, whom I might Marry if I pleas'd: Pray give me your Judgment, whether I may Lawfully or safely do it, the Lady being not yet marry'd, nor her Father dead?

Ans. If Lovers were but capable of Counsel, we shou'd desire all who come under that predicament by these and twenty other Unlucky Stories, to have a Care of these fatal Promises and Contracts, especially when without or against the Consent of those who are at least to have some hand in the disposal of 'em when in the World, as well as bringing 'em into it --- But we must confess we don't expect these who are concern'd shou'd give much regard to our Advice, since none believes an Enemy, and such Lovers will reckon all those who attempt to make 'em love less, or which is much the same, Love more wisely. Now to the Text --- The Lovers here did ill to make a Contract without calling in their Friends to witness, or so much as saying By your leave to their Father and Mother. The Lover did worse to bind it with an Imprecation, which we think of so much force, that unless his Constitution absolutely forbids it, he ought to live all his Life unmarried, unless he has her to whom he is thus oblig'd, or is freed by her death. It's true, were it only a simple Promise without an Oath, nay, a formal Imprecation, she might if she pleas'd release him --- but we think she can't do it here, because he has Vow'd it to God as well as her, and confirm'd that Vow with such heavy Sanctions, that the least Inconvenience he cou'd expect from breaking it, wou'd be the making his Life uncomfortable, and his Conscience always disturb'd at the remembrance of his broken Vow, and the heavy weight of his own Curses hanging over him, especially if he should happen to prove Unfortunate in the World.

The Question concerning The Sin against the Holy Ghost, shall be further Answer'd next Saturday.

THE COMPLEAT LIBRARY, or News for the Ingenious, (is now Publisht) containing an Original Piece concerning the Integrity and Purity of the Hebrew Bible, an Historical Account of the choicest Books printed in England and in the Forreign Journals, as also the State of Learning in the World. To be Published Monthly. By a London Divine. Printed for J. Dunton at the Raven in the Poultry.

Advertisements.

A Poem upon the late Victory over the French Fleet at Sea. By Mat. Morgan, L. D. London, Printed, and are to be Sold by the Booksellers of London and Westminster, 1692.

Taxila: Or, Love prefer'd before Duty. A Novel. By D. W. Gent. London, Printed for Th. Salusbury at the Kings-Arms, near Cliffords-Inn-Lane, by St. Dunstan's Church in Fleetstreet, 1692. Price Bound 1 s.

IN Grays-Inn-lane in Plow-yard, the third Door, lives Dr. Thomas Kirleus, a Collegiate Physician, and Sworn Physician in Ordinary to King Charles the Second, until his death; who with a Drink and Pill (hindring no Business) undertakes to Cure any Ulcers, Sores, Swellings in the Nose, Face, or other parts; Scabs, Itch, Scurfs, Leprosies, and Venereal Disease, expecting nothing until the Cure be finished: Of the last he hath cured many hundreds in this City, many of them after fluxing, which carries the evil from the Lower Parts to the Head, and so destroys many. The Drink is 3 s. the Quart, the Pill 1 s. a Box, with Directions; a better Purger than which was never given, for they cleanse the Body of all Impurities, which are the causes of Dropsies, Gouts, Scurvy, Stone or Gravel, Pains in the Head, and other parts. With another Drink at 1 s. 6 d. a Quart. He cures all Fevers and hot Distempers without Bleeding, except in few Bodies. He gives his Opinion to all that writes or comes for nothing.

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