

The Athenian Mercury:

Saturday, July 2. 1692.

Quest. 1. *O*ne who hath been married to a Gentlewoman one and twenty years, and hath had eight Children by her, she got leave of him to live from him a twelve month, which hath bin eleven years; he being something in years, and lame, would fain perswade her to live with him again, but cannot: Your Opinion is desired how he should govern himself in this condition?

Ans. He ought to apply himself to some Lawyer, who will direct him how to make a legal perswasion, since no other will do, and his being in years, and lame, are Arguments that he has need of his Wife at home, this is supposing the Case to be just as its stated in the Question.

Quest. 2. If Solomon had 1000 Wives and Concubines, yet found not one wise Woman, and but one wise Man, ought not then a wife man to conceal a fault, if he be excellent (or Princely) and rather judge himself, than rashly judge and condemn another falsely: The Question is, Whether Socrates did wisely when hearing the loud Clamours of his Consort, left her as he used to do, she being the more angry, hasted and flung a Chamber-pot on his Head, he saying only Ha! Ha! I thought after all this Thunder there would come Rain: Or whether by his Patience he purchased to himself these Inquietudes?

Ans. If he had not done wisely at this time, it had not eclipsed him, for no Man is wise at all times; but Socrates raised his Fame more by this curs'd Wife, than if she had been better temper'd; he gave her provocations enough, but her Passion cover'd his Faults, and his Politick Silence past for Patience, and it was a pleasure to him to have the opportunity to vent some witty reflection, or Saying, whereby his Memory would be registred in the roll of everlasting Fame, this Story in the Question is one of them; therefore this sort of Wife was a foil to his Glory, and as reputable to him, and as useful as the Tub to that Tub-Monk Diogenes, and therefore at all times, but especially at this time Socrates did wisely in converting her Clamour into an useful Observation.

Quest. 3. A gets B with Child, when discovered they confes'd they were married, but could not prove it so, however they lived together as Man and Wife the space of two years: A's Affairs requiring his personal Attendance in a place remote from his Abode, takes leave of his Wife, and went his Journey, first assuring her of his return as soon as his Affair would permit, but in the mean time D gets B with Child, and confes'd he had Carnal Knowledge of her. A returns in a years time, and finding his wife had betray'd his Bed, disowned the Marriage, that is, declared he was never married to her, leaves her and married another woman: whether or no D in point of Conscience is under any Obligation to make her any satisfaction, and if so, in what. This is matter of fact, and the persons yet living in, or about London, the Child dyed in a short time after: Pray Gent. give your Opinion in this matter?

Ans. How many years it is since, and other Circumstances are omitted, but D ought to make her amends for reproaching her, if it was voluntary, for perhaps he could no way prove he had that Knowledge of her, and therefore as she lost a good Husband in effect, by condescending to D, he ought to help her to a good Husband to make her satisfaction.

Quest. 4. There is a considerable wager depending between two Gentlemen, viz. Whether England and Scotland are not originally termed Great Britain, without the Kingdom of Ireland. Your speedy Answer is earnestly desired, because the persons are going into the Countrey: The other party presumes the 3 Kingdoms are under the same denomination of Great Britain?

Ans. Brittane had its name from the Phœnecians, who imposed the Name Bretannæ upon it, from the

Tin-mines they found in Cornwall, but Britannia major is England, and Britannia minor is Scotland, vid. Sams Britannia.

Quest. 5. Whether it be not a Sin to cheat the King of his Custom or Excise: I pray give your Opinion of this also: I mean by a Cheat, that the Owners do conceal the Goods from the Kings Officers, so that it may not be lyable to pay the Duty of them as by Law established?

Ans. It is a Sin against the Government, and they pay for it when they are taken, and that's the Damnation of the Law which they are to receive, for their Sin in this Case, and to prevent this Sin, are maintain'd many Officers, as the Querist alledges, which is a good Employment and Livelihood.

Quest. 6. Sirs, Please to resolve me, what Knowledge and Concern the Dead have for their surviving Friends and Relations, whom they loved passionately when alive, and if it be in their power to appear to them again?

Ans. That they are under Laws and restraints, is evident from that History of Dives, which represents the Condition of one of the Damned, whose Brethren were then under the dispensation of Moses, who was then alive to be heard: And if his Brethren would not regard the Miracles of Moses and the Prophets, (who could raise the Dead when it was expedient;) neither would they credit one sent from the dead, as many did not believe the Resurrection, tho' attested and seen by hundreds, they are swallowed up with the Capacities they are in, and unless in extraordinary Cases, make no appearance in these lower Regions.

Quest. 7. Gentlemen, A Young Man a friend of mine desires your Opinion in this Case: He formerly Courts a young Woman, when he had got her Consent, and was really ensur'd to her, upon some words fell out with her, goes into the Countrey and marries with another, after he was married kept Company with his old Sweet-heart, insomuch that his Wife was jealous of her: When his Wife came to ly in, she died; when she was on her Death-bed, she sent for her Husband, and told him, If he Married his Old Sweet-heart, she would come and pull him out of his Bed from her; he promised her that he would not marry her, nor be concern'd with her, as he hop'd to have mercy of Almighty God: But he has gone contrary to his promises, courted her, and has gain'd her good will, and the Wedding Day was appointed, which was on Sunday the 15th. of June, when the Day came he was taken lame of all his Limbs, so it was put by: He got well of this, and appointed another day which was on the 19th. of June last, when he was a going to Croydon, in order to perform his Ceremony. When he had got on his Horse, he was taken with the Gripping of the Guts, so that he could not sit on his Horse, but was forc'd to be brought home by 2 men, and no body thought he would have lived: So, Worthy Gentlemen, I would desire you to tell in your Saturdays Mercury, Whether it may be Lawful for him to marry her by the Law of God, or Man, since he has vow'd so sincerely to the contrary, he having got well again?

Ans. He may Marry, having repeated his Promise unto her, there being no Law that takes Cognizance of his promise unto his dying Wife, which might proceed from the surprizing apprehensions of her appearing again, altho' in all Equity and Gratitude he ought to endeavour to atone for the former disservice by now marrying his Quondam Sweetheart, if he could make her amends; unless he had lessened that Obligation by an unlawful intimacy during his Wives Life, a fault not to be deleted by formal Repentance, or the Opus Operatum of Marriage; neither by the force he has laid upon his Promise, (viz. not to marry, as he hoped to find mercy for his former Sins) can it be supposable that God has warned him by two Judgments

ments not to Marry, therefore a farther Tryal to pursue the intended Marriage, will soon determine whether it be in his Wifes Power to return again, her Threat being to take effect after Marriage, which will very much contribute to satisfy the World, which longs very much in these particulars.

Quest. 8. *The Turkish Spy in his 2d. Vol. p. 189. makes mention of a Spanish Astrologer that Calculated the French King's Nativity, as that he shall make the Crown of France Imperial, having subdued Spain, Italy, and Germany, that he shall shake the Ottoman Empire, but in the end shall be Deposed by his own Subjects: I desire your Sentiments of it, whether there's not a great probability that our design'd Descent may not cause the Accomplishment of the latter part, seeing the former is in some measure come to pass?*

Ans. There's a glut of Arguments every where tending to this effect. Some from the Calculation of his Nativity do Predict, that the Great Bastard shall not long Protect the Little One; others from the Perjuries and Inhumanities he has Committed, expect some signal Judgment upon him, and his Priests would persuade all Mankind to take their Farewell of Christian Religion; for if God must stand in need of such Diabolical Men and Means to fill Heaven with New Converts, they must have a stronger Patent from Heaven for Murder, beyond what ever Christ had, who Commanded his Disciples to Preach Remission of sins, first to those of Jerusalem, who had Crucified him, and not to Kill them, or Compell them to Come in by Halts and Dragoons. And in probability as his Strength is in his Frontiers, which keeps out the Confederates as well as keeps in his Subjects, that being broken by an Army in his Countrey, it may succeed as the Spanish Astrologer is said to Predict, or as Partridge's Almanack has it:

Let all the Plagues of Murther now be flung
On that Curs'd Babe from whence those Mischiefs sprung.
There's ruffling work above, and hence must flow
Mutations here, some Tyrants overthrow:
Tho' at this distance, yet methinks I hear
Some pleasant News, some Abdication near.

Quest. 9. *Gentlemen, It is some time since I sent you this Question — What is the Reason that the same Number of People spends more Bread when Corn is dear, than they do when it is cheap? I say, more in quantity, not in value: That the thing is true as to matter of Fact, I appeal to any Baker of thirty Years standing: Pray your Answer in your next?*

Ans. The Turks say the World is founded upon an Ox-horn, and we say it moves upon its own Axis, which without explaining looks equally extravagant; but they mean, where the Ox thrives, there Grass is plenty, and all things on the Earth correspond: So when Bread is dear, all other edible things are proportionably dear, and therefore Bread and Water will do; *Natura paucis Contenta*; and therefore more Bread is Consumed, because it answers most of the other in some degree.

Quest. 10. *My Son, about fifteen Years of Age, on Wednesday the 1st. of last June, about Nine a Clock at Night, went to his Bed, no sooner laid down, but he heard as it were a Hand sweeping on the Wall, then it came with a rushing Noise on his Beds-head, then it stroaked him over the Face twice very gently, and as soon as the Hand was off he felt a cold wind blow on his Face, which made it very cold, but his Body was warm; he opening his Eyes, saw an Apparition of a Woman cloathed in Black Apparel, which went over the Bolster with a rushing Noise, he saw the Curtain to gather up together as it went out, and the Curtain to have a shaking for some time after; then being affrighted, he rose out of the Bed and came down stairs. Another Son and Daughter of mine, a few Years since, have seen the like Apparition of a Woman in the same room with a lighted Candle, but when spoke to, it vanished. Several sorts of unusual Noises are often heard in the House by my self, and most of the Family: I favourably desire to know of you (having a Civiliz'd Family) what should be the Occasion of this disturbance, or whether it be advisable to ask the Question of the Apparition?*

Ans. What manner of metaphysical Matters our Souls are, we cannot tell, yet we know they really exist, and

act our Bodies, altho' they are not subject to sense; yet this doth not hinder, but that a spiritual Substance may be separated from our Body, and may be again cloathed with a Body or Vehicle that may be airy, fiery, or cloudy, and be visible to our senses, altho' the existence or essence of the Spirit we cannot see, but its outward cloathing: And that such Appearances have been in all Ages, the learned as well as the unlearned affirm, from real Matters of Fact; such are these following: At *Puddle-Dock* was a House so disturbed, that several Tenants could not thrive therein; after the Fire Alderman L— purchasing the ground, caused a Cellar to be dug lower, and there was the Body of a Man taken up, which had a great Nail driven into the Skull; the Alderman ordered the Labourers to carry the Body and bury it in *St. Gregorys Church-yard, London*, and no disturbance has been since. The other is at the *Grange in Lancashire*, where very many Years was an Apparition in the Garden, and in one Chamber of the House, it was in the shape of a Grey-hound, the precurrent Noise was like a Man hissing to call a Dog; this Apparition did no hurt, only pull the Cloaths, in so much that they made wooden Preis-beds for that room, which were rock'd, and more disturbant by the Noise than before; when it pass'd by, it was felt as a Cold Wind; at last digging a high Bank, to carry off Soil to other ground; after some Loads dug away, there was found the Skeleton of a Man, which was seen by the Minister, and among the rest by Mr. Moss, a very intelligent Gentleman, who now lives in *Islington*; the Skeleton was covered again, and from that time the Apparition and Disturbances has ceased. And no doubt the Apparition in the Question, if true, (because we were imposed upon by the Relation of the two Brothers that Vanished) has some Cause and significancy, tho' beyond our Sphere to assign it; however we cannot be against the speaking to it, or endeavouring to find out its place, times and places of Vanishing; and perhaps if it were not a Civiliz'd Family, it might be more disturbant.

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