

The Athenian Mercury:

Tuesday, September 27. 1692. Licens'd, E. B.

Quest. 1. I've been just reading Dr. Heylins' History of the Sabbath, wherein he justifies publick Sports and Pastimes on Sundays. I desire your Judgment whether Plays, &c. be equally allowable on that and other days? Whether the Lords Day which we now celebrate be of Divine Institution, and obliging semper & ad semper?

Ans. All the World know Dr. Heylin was a warm man, and his Temper might often carry him too far, which was the most moderate thing that can be said of him, who hardly ever spake moderately of any Man. For Sports and Plays on Sundays, we think it expressly contrary to our Acts of Parliament and Homilies, and are sure they must be very inconvenient, if not absolutely unlawful, by the Christian Doctrine; for if it's so easy to be diverted from that Piety and Devotion with which we ought to fill up that Day, so difficult to remember and consider what we have heard, and to perform all the Christian Offices then required of us, tho' we endeavour it never so strongly, much more may we expect the same if we immediately run into such Recreations and Diversions as must necessarily unfit the mind for things of that Nature; tho' on the other side, as we dare not rashly condemn those many Learned Persons in the Forreign Churches, of a different Opinion, much less wou'd we those of our own. For the morality of the Christian Sabbath, its too large and difficult a Controversie to be decided in a few Lines. Suffice it at present, that we think it at least of Apostolical, and therefore of Divine Institution.

Quest. 2. Who was Job's Father?

Ans. Jacob or Israel had six Sons, 1 Chron. 2. 1. Issachar was one of them. Issachar had four Sons, Gen. 46. 13. Tola, Phuvab, and Job, and Shimron; therefore this Issachar was Job's Father. Job afterwards was eminent in the Land of Uz, which when the Earth was divided among the Sons of Noah, it received its Name then from Uz, one of the Family of Aran a Son of Shem, Gen. 10. 23, 31, 32. and not from Uz of the Family of Esau, Gen. 36. 28. 1 Chron. 1. 42.

Quest. 3. Birds of Prey are very numerous, and few destroyed, and yet we seldom find any of their Carcasses, what may be thought the Reason of it?

Ans. It's a Question whether they are so numerous as others of the same bulk; however, we see no reason to question but there would be as many Pheasants as Kites, were not the first always pursu'd for Game, the others generally let alone, because they are not worth the Powder and Shot that must be used in killing 'em. Again, the Kites, &c. may seem more numerous, because more frequently seen than the other, being almost always upon the Wing in the high and open Air to search their Prey. But tamer Fowls keep more to the Woods and Coverts, or at least make low and short flights, to seek their meat, and avoid their Enemies. That we don't often find the Bodies of these ravenous Birds, 'tis we think, no great wonder, at least no uncommon thing; for what becomes of the Bodies of thousands, perhaps millions of Sparrows, Larks, Linnets, and other little Birds, the thousandth part of whose number can't be supposed to come to our Tables. For the Carcasses of these that are carnivorous, they generally dye in wild and desert places, where their haunts or retreats are, and either hang on the Trees and Bushes till they drop away piece-meal, or else are devour'd by Foxes, or other Vermin, who may make as good a Feast on them, as they have before upon others.

Quest. 4. In some of your Mercuries, in answer to a Question concerning a Man who had like to have sold himself to the Devil, you bid him heartily beg God Almighty to pardon such a Sin, to praise him for such a Deliverance; and lastly,

to let so great goodness produce in him the effects of a better Life, adding that in so doing he may assure himself of Heaven, having such Promises as cannot deceive him. On these Assertions I desire to know of you:

1st. Whether by the Works of Righteousness which we do, we may assure our selves of Heaven and Eternal Happiness?

2dly, What undeceivable Promise is there to assure us of any such thing?

Ans. If there were any thing besides Fancy or Melancholly in the fore-mentioned Instance, we know not what other Advice cou'd be given to the Party concern'd; for either he must repent and amend, or else go on with his Bargain. We suppose the Querist wou'd hardly advise to the first, unless he's of the same side with the Chapman before mention'd, there's then no Remedy but the last. To the first of his Queries, Whether we may assure our selves of Salvation by the Works of Righteousness which we can do: We answer, If he takes by for the proper, independant, meritorious Cause of our Salvation, we are not sav'd by them, nor do any Protestants think so. If he understands being sav'd by them, so as not to be sav'd without them, take 'em either as the *causa sine qua non*; or if that does not please, the essential inseparable Fruits and Evidences of Faith, then we are saved by them. Our Sins are blotted out, which we think implies Salvation by Faith and Repentance, without which, the Merits of our Saviour, which are the only true proper Cause both of those Good works and our Salvation, shall never be apply'd to us, nor shall we ever attain to Eternal happiness.

To the second Query, What undeceivable Promise is there to assure us of any such thing? We answer, All the Gospel is such a Promise, for what's the meaning and purport both of word and thing, if it be not glad tidings of Salvation on Repentance, Faith and Obedience; without which none shall be sav'd, with which none shall be Damn'd, if God be true: And Christ himself can't deceive us, who says, He that believes, and is baptiz'd, shall be saved; which in his last words to his Disciples, he makes the very Substance of the Gospel, and that which he bids 'em go and teach to all Nations.

Quest. 5. Since continuing the Species of Mankind, is from the Laws of Nature, whether any just restraint can be laid upon it by Laws meerly Political and Humane?

Ans. No Law cou'd be valid, the direct tendency whereof wou'd be to destroy all Society, nay all Humanity: and such wou'd any Law do, which shou'd absolutely restrain or forbid the propagation of Mankind. But on the regulation of this depends also very much of our Happiness, by preventing the mischiefs and inconveniencies of promiscuous mixtures, which are justly restrain'd or forbidden by all humane and Political Laws, as well as by the Laws of God.

Quest. 6. There being such variety of Shells (both for Colour and Form) found upon the Sea-side, especially the Indian Coasts: I desire to know the true Origin of those Shells, and that in a clear Philosophical manner? In particular, I demand, whether or no the Shell be the excrementitious part of the Animal lodging within? Or whether its produc'd by the searching heat of the Sun-beams reflecting from the Rocks without?

Ans. *Omnia ab Ovo* — These Animals in their proper Seasons deposite the Spawn in particular Creeks, Rocks, Weeds, and Sub-marine Meadows and Receptacles, and the extern Velament of the Spawn, is a series of saline Filaments effigiated from the first in that shape, (tho' imperceptible to the bare Eye, which afterwards becomes apparently to be the Testaceous Corps Du Guard of the Animal, which by successive Appositions daily encreases with the Animal to its destined extent. The Indian Shells, which

which is their white *Wampamteage*, a sort of Money, is bred at the bottom of the Sea-bays; while they are small they are recondited in Concave Matrices, many of them fastned by a Spawn-skin subtended from one Spawn-bag to another, other of these Testaceous Animals stick to Rocks. True, those Marine Worms which pierce the Planks of Ships like a Honey-comb, some of them grow half a yard in length, and larger than the bowl of a Tobacco-pipe; the exterior Coat of this Worm grows Testaceous, yet cannot these Shells be accounted purely excrementitious, because they are conducive directly to the life of the Animal. Those heaps of Shells of all sizes are such Fish as have dyed for want of Water, being by the Variation of Tides driven from shoar to shoar: More to this purpose read in *Steno's Prodromus*.

Quest. 7. Why a Cat thrown down any place always lights upon her legs, sooner than any other Creature?

Ans. Every Body is pois'd by the heaviest part of it self, as an Arrow shot upwards will light again upon the Pile, that end being heavier than the other; there's nothing can break this Rule, or destroy this Principle, altho' it may be hindered for a while by some accidental motion, as a Stick thrown topsie turvy from a high Steeple, Tower, &c. will whirl over and over for some time, 'till that accidental Motion is spent, (which it will, if the place be high enough) and then it will fix the heaviest part downward, and so terminate its fall. This being premis'd, we further assert, that it must be some external accident that must alter this gravitated Posture, (for it can't alter it self) as to hit upon the side of an House, the Bough of a Tree, &c. in falling, and this rub may give it a new accidental Motion for a while, but it would settle again if length of fall would give it opportunity, as we said before: This is the Nature of inanimate Bodies, the same Principle is also inseparable from Bodies animate, as a Man, a Horse, a Cat, &c. which can't alter the heaviest parts of their Bodies from falling lowermost in any descent, otherwise than as they act with their legs or arms, as Creatures do in flying and swimming, those Parts being serviceable for the turning their Bodies in a proper Element, as a Kite turns her self in the Air by her Tail, and a Fish in the Water uses her Tail and Fins for the same purpose, as also a Horse, a Dog, &c. turn themselves by their legs, and a Man by his arms in swimming, the Element being gross enough to lay so much hold on it as to create a new Motion; but 'tis not so in the Air, for a Man's hand or a Horse's leg is not broad and light enough to fix upon it, nor is there so much presence of mind in such a quick motion to use the most probable means to fall with the Feet downwards: But there may two very good Reasons be given for a Cat's falling with her Feet downward. First, A heighth is no terror to a Cat, as may be gathered from their common sitting upon the Tops of Houses, running up into Trees, as a Squirrel does; and such Creatures may perhaps with some reason be called amphibious, as living in the Air and on the Earth, as Frogs, Toads, Otters, &c. are, for using both Land and Water, the last not being their Element, but us'd by 'em more than by other Creatures; hence a fall is no such a terror to a Cat, a Squirrel, a Jack-call, &c. as other Creatures that are not accusom'd to climbing, and therefore they can better prepare for it than others, for all such Creatures always light upon their Feet. But besides their accusom'dness to the dangers of Climbing, they have a strange activity of Body, being able to turn and wind it any way, so that 'tis not only their legs but the body it self which they can make use of to strike the Air, and turn themselves thereby; a Rabbit or a Hare will fall upon their legs from any little height, altho' the hind parts of their back fall lowermost, their fore-feet and their head shall nevertheless fall downward, as may at any time be try'd by laying any of those Creatures upon part of their back at either end, and the other part of their back shall wrest it self 'till it be turn'd upward.

Quest. 8. Gentlemen, We have sent to you several times, to desire the Reason why a hundred pounds weight of live Fish being put into a Tub of Water, the same Tub, Water

and Fish all together, should weigh no more than the Tub and Water did before?

Ans. 'Tis a vulgar Error, and taken upon trust, without any Experiment, and grounded upon the old dull Peripateticks, *Nil gravitat in suo loco*. To demand Reasons for that which has no Being in Nature, is what we often meet with, and because we have pass'd a great many such things over, we are often accus'd for neglect, when 'tis the Querists own Fault.

Quest. 9. When a rational Number is given for the Hypothensal of a right Angled Triangle to find the other sides?

Ans. Forasmuch as by Proposition 47. Elem. Euclid. when a Square is equal to two Squares, the sides of those three sides will constitute a Rightangled Triangle, then we have no more to do than to find two Squares equal to a given Square, which according to Diophaulus his Method of feigning new sides, this may be the Canon.

Take any two unequal Numbers, multiply severally the double of the Product of their Multiplication, and the difference of their Squares by the side of the Given Square, then divide those Products severally by the Sum of the Squares of the two Numbers first taken; and the Quotients shall be the sides of the two Squares sought, equal to the given Square: Which the Querist may work at his leisure, and if 16 be given for the Hypothensal, he will find the two other sides to be $\frac{4}{3}$ and $\frac{2}{3}$.

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