

The Athenian Mercury:

Tuesday, October 25. 1692 Licens'd, E. B.

Quest. 1. **W**Here's King WILLIAM?

Ans. This Question came a little too soon, tho' we hope 'tis not too late to Answer it. We Reply, that he was lately at *Brussels*, by a good Token, that the very fright of him made the *French* run away from *Charleroy*. He was afterwards at *Sea*, where the same Providence that still watches over good Kings, preserv'd him. He is now, God be prais'd, safe at his own *Palace*, to the inexpressible Joy of all good Subjects, and the as great Confusion of *Jacobites*, *Traytors* and *Rebels*: — And so much good may't do 'em with their late *Bells* and *Bonfires* in memory of their departed Friend.

Quest. 2. All things considered, and prejudices laid aside, don't you think the King of France the greatest Man in the World?

Ans. We think him, what all the World know him, not only as to those who now are, but of all that ever were, the greatest of Tyrants, as *Oliver* was the greatest Rebel, and *Lucifer* the greatest Devil.

Quest. 3. What's become of the late so much talk'd of Reformation?

Ans. This Question would more properly be proposed to the Consciences of those Persons who are in publick Trust, and have so great a tenderness for Vice, that they'll rather perjure and Damn themselves, than put those wholesome Laws in Execution, which are in force against it, in order to suppress it. 'Twas an Observation which deserves not to be forgotten, that about the same time when the Endeavours for a Reformation were carry'd on with the greatest vigour, God bless'd our Arms with some of the most remarkable Successes which they have had since the beginning of the War; and we wish Reflections of another Nature were not too obvious, since that glorious Design has fallen so far short of what at first it seem'd to promise, and of the Expectations and Hopes of all good Men. There are none sure who love the Government, but think they shou'd be very angry with any who are Enemies to it, and actually betray it, cou'd they but discover who they were. But let them who are concern'd laugh at it as much as they will, and call all this dull preaching, its certainly an unhappy Truth, that the vicious Man is in effect a Traytor to Man as well as God, and the worst of Enemies to that Commonwealth of which he's a Member: And while we have so many Achans amongst us, and all the ill natur'd Piety we have left, seems to consist in railing at one anothers Vices, and not reforming our own, 'tis rather a wonder that more of us han't fall'n in the Battel, than that God shou'd refuse to go out with our Armies. Our very Thanksgivings are so criminal, that they need new Fasts to atone for 'em, and he that did but observe how we express'd our just Joy a few days since at his Majesty's happy and desired Return, what Intemperance, what Oaths, and Extravagance 'twas accompany'd with, wou'd either hardly believe that we had such a King and Queen on the Throne as might be Patterns to all other Princes, as well as their own Subjects; or wou'd at least be forc'd to deny the Truth of that generally receiv'd Opinion, That such as the Prince is, such will his People be. Not but that there's still some hope as well as possibility, that this glorious Work may be again reviv'd by the auspicious Examples and Encouragement of the best of Princes, and the generous Industry, and Religious Care of those great Men who first attempted it, and who sure when they set about it, cou'd not but expect all the opposition that Earth and Hell cou'd make against 'em. But 'tis a Cause well worth struggling, against 'em. But 'tis a Cause well worth struggling, may worth Dying for, and therefore certainly they'll ne-

ver let it fall, while they have breath to manage it. We for our parts, in our low Sphere, shall think our selves very happy if our Mire may find any acceptance, which as we have already done, so we shall still continue to throw it into this Sacred Treasury: And accordingly, tho' we'd be justly tender of the Fame of any Man, yet shall not be afraid to venture the exposing notorious Vices, Impieties and Perjuries. In the mean while let those who are concern'd laugh and welcome, (tho' they have but little reason) and think, if they can, more meanly of our performance, than we our selves do: But this let 'em know, that we'll never leave 'em, nor drop this Design while our Paper continues in the World; and if by Fancy we can't divert 'em, or by Reason can't convince 'em, we shall yet obtain our End if by meer dint of dulness we can but tire 'em into better Manners.

Quest. 4. Private Families being the Original of much Good or Evil, and the constituent parts of all Civil Societies: Query, Whether it beent the indispensable Duty of all such as profess the Christian Religion, to set up the Worship of God in their Families, and carefully to instruct all such as are under their Charge, in the necessary Principles of Good Faith and Life?

Ans. Here are two Questions — 1st, Whether 'tis not a necessary Duty to worship God in Families, and 2dly, Carefully to instruct Children in the Principles of Religion; either of which are so plain, that Arguments rather seem wanting to enforce their practice, than to convince mens Judgments of their Duty concerning 'em, tho' it may't be amiss to do both, as we believe that Good Man, whoever he is, that sent us this and the following Questions, desires of us, it being not impossible, as he observes in his Letter, that this may fall into the Hands of some Persons who may give it a Reading in the Coffee-house, tho' they either never come near enough a Church to hear it there, or else go thither for worse Ends than to remember or practise what is told 'em. And first, for Worshipping God in Families, which sure none can deny to be the Duty of a Christian, who is himself so, any more than in Name, or because he was born in a Christian Countrey, and scarce knows how to help it. God himself, the greatest Father and Master, whose Family is all the World, has expressly threatn'd to pour out his Wrath on those Families which call not on his Name, which he ranks in no better company than the meer Heathen. And if Families were then larger than they are now, we can't imagine how that shou'd weaken the Obligation to this Duty; which seems clear both from the Examples of Good men, and the very Light of Nature — Not to make a Sermon instead of a Mercury, nor to give Instances in Adams teaching his Children to Sacrifice, (how else shou'd they learn it) Abrahams instructing his in the Fear of God, and several others, which indeed also reach the other Question, to let this alone, if we come to Reason, has not the Master of every Family a Trust reposed upon him both by God and his Countrey? and has he not indeed himself something still left of the Natural Patriarchal Power? Is he not to teach as well as to govern his Family, and to offer Prayer and Praise to God for 'em as well as both the other? Publick Prayers are not sufficient; not those on Sundays, because so seldom; not those daily at Morning and Evening, (wherein this City especially is so very happy) because all can't be present at 'em; Aye, It keeps up a Face of Piety and Religion in a Family, and it decently, gravely and devoutly perform'd, both Conciliates Respect and Reverence to the Head of it; and besides, may instill something that's Good into those present, as well as obtain Gods Protection

on to the House, his prospering their Affairs, and the Guard of his Holy Angels. This for *Worshipping God in Families*, under which we include Reading God's Word, constant and devout Prayer, Morning and evening, and that Angelical Duty of Singing Hymns to our Creator and Redeemer, which is almost quite lost in the World. — For the second, *Instructing Children*, 'tis as plain, if not more, and is a clear Case, unless we believe they have no Souls, and that both they and we are like the *Beast that perishes*. We shou'd think it hard to deny 'em Bread, or turn 'em out to the wide World, and expose 'em without any further Care — yet if we are Men, and can think, this is infinitely worse, more inhumane and unnatural, nay, worse than the most savage of Beasts, who do all they can to Educate their Young, (in their way) and make 'em as happy as will consist with their Natures. The truth is, we for the most part make the poor Creatures miserable enough by giving 'em Beings, entailing on 'em incurable Diseases, not rarely of the Body, always of the Mind, infinitely more dangerous; all our Care then will be little enough to make 'em tolerably happy, considering the present state of things in the World — We ought however at least to do what we can to render 'em less miserable — that true Piety can only do, which whoe're has try'd it, knows to be a noble and infallible Remedy for all the Evils of Life: This Fortune we may leave 'em, if nothing else, and they can ne're be poor while they have it; if we do not, but instead on't either by our negligence or ill Example, they take bad Courses, and come to ruine, 't had been incomparably a less piece of barbarity and inhumanity to have made an End on 'em as soon as they saw the Light, as those miserable Wretches do whom we see Condemn'd for't almost every Sessions; when yet there's so much difference betwixt their Case and ours, that they for avoiding shame, send the Souls of the poor Infants to Heaven, (as we may charitably hope of 'em) these out of meer negligence and stupid carelessness or downright impiety, send theirs headlong to Hell, and 'tis to be fear'd, either go before or follow after 'em to the same place of Torment. And thus more largely than usual on these two Questions, because of the high Importance of the Subject, and general Use it may be to the World.

Quest. 5. *Whether we mayn't rationally conclude that the Omission of these two forementioned Duties, is the chief Cause of that Inundation of Atheism, Profaneness, and all kind of Villany that reigns amongst us?*

Ans. 'Tis a clear Case that it must be so — 'tis an Error in the first Concoction — 'tis what all know, and what is at least supposed, if not in Terms asserted in the foregoing Question, that Communities are made up of Families, as those of single Persons. Now if a Child learns no good within, how should he Practise it when without? if he lives without the Fear of God, Swears, Lyes, Steals, &c. at home, how shou'd he do otherwise when he comes abroad? If many, most, are thus educated, when young, what probability they shou'd be better when old, or make conjunctly a truly reformed Church, or truly happy Nation?

Quest. 6. *Whether we can with any Reason or Modesty expect God's Judgment shou'd be diverted from our Nation, or Blessings bestow'd upon it, while we live in the almost general Neglect of these two such Important Duties, without which there can be no true Reformation?*

Ans. We have formerly declar'd our Opinion against hastily denouncing Judgments, which is too common among all Parties; who call all such as Interest makes them, God's Enemies — but alas, here we are almost all guilty, and if God be just, National Sins, persisted in impenitently, call for National Punishments. All our Hopes then must be in Penitence and Amendment, that God may turn away his Anger from us, that we may not perish; and while the Witty Fools of the World make it their business to laugh at and ridicule 'em, joyn our Prayers with those Holy Men who Weep between the Temple and the Altar, and say as our Church most piously directs us, "Spare us good Lord, spare thy People, whom thou

"hast redeem'd by thy most Precious Blood, and let not
"thine Heritage be brought to Confusion!"

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