

# The Athenian Mercury:

Tuesday, November 22. 1692. Licens'd, E. B.

Quest. 1. **A** Young Lady that loves Plays mightily, desires your Opinion, if it be not better to go in a Mask, than to expose her Face to all the Company?

Ans. Does she do any thing she's ashamed of in going thither? If she is not, she well may, as most of the Plays, and we think very near all the Comedies now are; for we can't imagine how it can be a very agreeable Entertainment to a Vertuous Person, to sit still for two or three hours, and see *Vice* either dress'd as handsomely as possible, or mollifi'd by some gentler Name; or o'ther side *Vertue*, shown with a Fools Coat on, or represented as an old unfashionable unpracticable business. But to the Question, If she goes there often, she knows how the Masks are treated, and what they are reputed. Upon the whole, since 'tis ill to go either with a Mask, or without one, 'tis e'ne better never go at all, unless the Stage were reform'd, which if it once were, there's no doubt to be made but 'twould be as useful as now 'tis mischievous to the World.

Quest. 2. A Young Lady that is contracted to a Person as far as Oaths and Vows can bind, is importun'd by her Relations to marry another, and one for whom she has an extream Aversion: She desires to know how far her Duty obliges her to obey them in this matter?

Ans. This has been often enough answer'd in effect, tho' not in Terms. If those Vows and Oaths were made without, or against the Consent of her Relations, she's to repent of 'em, but cannot break 'em; but ought not however to marry against their Inclinations, as they ought not to force her contrary to her own.

Quest. 3. A Person some time since address'd himself to a young Lady, and gain'd her Affections, but since finds his Parents against the prosecution of the Amour: He desires therefore your plain Advice, how he may manage Affairs, without being Disobedient to his Parents, or wronging the Lady?

Ans. Still we say things of that Nature ought not to be set about by those who are under the Direction of Superiours, without their Approbation and leave. And even when the Amour is begun, as in the present Case, if there is no Promise or Obligation, either formal or virtual, (in effect, or in plain words) the young Persons would do very well to disengage their Hearts as fast as they can from each other: Tho' if any such thing be pass'd, as in Question 2d. 'twill be now too late to attempt any thing of that Nature; all therefore he has to do is, if his Parents can by no means be mollifi'd, to marry no other Person till their Deaths, tho' they do not do well to put him under such a Temptation, of wishing it before the time.

Quest. 4. A Gentleman of the Temple having had some 20 years since, a Criminal Familiarity with a Cousin German of his, who is now upon her Marriage to a Gentleman of Fortune; he desires your Advice, whether or no he's bound in Conscience to declare it to her intended Husband?

Ans. He's oblig'd to marry her himself, if their Circumstances will permit; if not, they ought both to live single, either of which if the Woman refuse, we think he ought to acquaint the Gentleman with it, if there's no other way to break the Match, nor out of a mistaken point of Generosity, let an honest Gentleman marry such a Woman.

Quest. 5. What's the Reason that well accomplish'd Gentlemen that have good Estates, and no Encumbrances, and consequently might have choice enough, do yet frequently take such Wives as have neither Wit, Fortune or Beauty?

Ans. We won't be so unjust as to ask — Where is the Gentleman that's well Accomplish'd, and has a good Estate; but we must needs put two Questions

more: — The first, Where is any such whose Estate has no Encumbrances? And secondly, If such can be found, where can Instances be given of their playing the Romantick Lovers at that inexcusable rate, as the Querist supposes: And when we are satisfy'd in these matters, 'twill be time enough to give our Querist a fuller Answer.

Quest. 6. I have above a Year Courted a Vertuous young Gentlewoman, of equal Birth and Fortune to my own, to whom I might have been some time since marry'd, had not my Friends hinder'd it. I did indeed make my Addresses to her, without acquainting them with it, but at the same time I had no intention of marrying without their Consent, and I had reason to hope I should obtain it: Since my Courtship of her, something has happen'd that makes her Expectation of a further Fortune not so likely as before, but after having engaged her Affections to retract upon such a Motive, I look upon as dishonest, as well as 'tis against my Inclinations. She is of Age, and without Parents, and her present Fortune, such as I believe sufficient to maintain us till my Employment will bring us in a better Subsistence: I have made my Application to my Friends, to obtain their Consent, tho' without success; whereas at the same time I find a necessity of Marrying either her or some other: I therefore desire to be resolv'd, Whether as the Case is, I may do it against my Parents consent without Sin?

Ans. If that necessity you talk of be real, and absolute, we think you ought to marry, tho' first to get some Friend to acquaint your Relations with your Circumstances, to try if 'tis possible to prevail for their Consent.

Quest. 7. A young Lady having the misfortune to fall in Love with a Person above her Quality, desires your Advice how she may most prudently manage her self in this Concern?

Ans. Manage your self so as to forget him, or take off your Affections from him, if there's no probability of having him, the days of Knight-Errantry are over, (except a very rare dropping on't now and then) and Persons are not often in the Humour to marry those of an Inferiour Quality. As for the manner how to perform this difficult task, which you'll find much easier now, than 'twill be if it takes deeper root: First, resolve as much as possible never to think of him; or when the Importunate Thought will take no denial, out with't agen as fast as it presses in, till you turn the Stream, or make it weary; as you never think of him, so never see him, or Converse with him; keep much in Company and Diversion; and use your Reason to curb your Passion, the very end for which Nature gave it: Think how Indigestible a repulse would be, and how cheaply our ungenerous Sex for the most part esteem those who fall in Love with 'em. But above all, if you can possibly, Madam, persuade some Body else of more equal Fortunes to fall passionately in Love with you, and if that don't cure ye, Nothing but Marriage ever will.

Quest. 8. Some years since I marry'd a Wife with a good Fortune, who I am satisfy'd has since prov'd false to me: The Question is, Whether I may, without any sin against God, turn her out of Doors, and leave her to shift for her self?

Ans. A Man ought to be very certain in things of that Nature, before he takes violent Resolutions. But if you are so your self, unless you can make legal proof on't, our Laws are so kind, that she'll recover Alimony: If therefore you can have any Security of her Amendment, you'd do a great Act if you cou'd forgive her, and which, if she has any thing of Ingenuity, will make her a better Wife than ever. And however, you ought to restore her Fortune to her; if you do otherwise, that is the true Case, and the other the Pretence only.

Quest.

Quest. 9. *A Lady who was lately a Celebrated Beauty having had the Small Pox, is thereby extreamly disfigur'd and alter'd — which has struck her into so desperate a Melancholly that her Friends are afraid she should do her self some Violence; to prevent which if possible, pray be so kind to Answer these two Questions — 1. If there's any thing to be used which will take out the Pitts or Scarrs left by this Disease? — 2. If this can't be done, What Means may be used to quiet her Mind under this Condition?*

Ans. To the first, there are a thousand Remedies to make the Pitts much less visible, tho' perhaps none to take 'em quite away. The better Method would be for the Lady to endeavour to satisfy her self with her Condition, which one would think should not be difficult, at least not impossible to be done, if she considers that she is a Christian, and ought to submit to God's Providence — That Beauty is such a Toy, 'tis scarce worth being concern'd for the loss on't, that when 'tis Eminent 'tis dangerous, and that a few Years out of the Grave, or a few Moments in it, would spoil the best Face in the World.

Quest. 10. *A certain Person of Honour upon her Death-Bed desired to receive the Sacrament, and upon receiving she declares her self to dye in perfect Charity with all the World, unless with the Woman who was marry'd to her Son; the Divine reply'd he could not blame her as to the Exception against her Daughter in Law, because he understood she was of a different Perswasion, and thereupon Administr'd accordingly: Your Opinion is earnestly desired as to the Salvable Estate of the dying Person, and how far the Doctor's Behaviour in the Matter may be Censur'd?*

Ans. The Story is so odd we can hardly think it probable, and desire the Querist to send the Name of the Divine, that we may be satisfy'd in the Truth on't. In the mean time on supposition that the Fact is true, our Answer is, that we think both the Persons concern'd did very ill — But as for the Gentlewoman's Eternal Condition, we desire to be excus'd from giving our Judgment, 'till we are taken into the Cabinet-Council of Heaven?

Quest. 11. *There's a certain young Gentlewoman is so taken with your Respect and Civility to the Fair Sex, that she's passionately in Love with your Society, and would gladly be one of yours for Life — The Query is, Whether having prais'd her Sex so much, you are not oblig'd in Honour to accept of this longing Lady?*

Ans. Would she have all or some of us? or must we part her among us? or supposing we are already provided, must we have two Wives, and be Hang'd to have her longing? All we can do for her we will, and if any should chance to be in as much want of a Wife as she is of a Husband, if she'll let's know her Marks, we Promise to put her into our next Advertisement.

Quest. 12. *You were (Gentlemen) lately pleas'd to gratifie a Lady with a Receipt to prevent her growing Fat, which having your Probatum to it, I know several do intend to try it; but I have a near Relation that requests the contrary Receipt from you; he has a Wife he loves extreamly, and who has all the Qualities are to be desired to recommend her to his Affection, only she is very Lean, and he begs of you, if you know any thing that will really make her grow Fat, you would favour them with the knowledge of it? it being a thing that would make her so much more Amiable in his Eyes, and he will for ever acknowledge his Obligation for so great a Benefit.*

Ans. First Purge the Lady two or three times with those Popular-Pills prescribed to the Lady to obtain Leanness, then to alter the Lady's Habit farther, let her indulge Ease, Sleep and Appetite, by Drinking what is sweet and strong, as Ale, Mum, Malago, Tent, Sack, Caudles, New Eggs, Broths, Gellies, and what her Appetite pleases, and not to rise for a few Dayes but to have her Bed made, but Eat and Drink her fill, and often in Bed or in a very gentle Bath, and her Flesh will plump: And her Morals will grow worse in the same proportion as she grows plumper, if ever she doth so. Probatum est.

Quest. 13. *The Question that I have to trouble you with is this, Why a Man that of all things in the World hates*

*his Wife, should be jealous of her, for him whom he pretends a great deal of Friendship to, and at the same time declares his mind to? your speedy Answer in this will be very acceptable to your Humble Servant, &c.*

Ans. He may be ashamed to own he Loves her for some remarkable reason, as he may think, and having by his Actions and Speeches seem'd to declare he hates her, yet it's not so really by the Effect mention'd in the Question; and perhaps his Love is so strong to his Friend, that he is Jealous lest she whom he hates should love him whom he loves; or he hates also the Character of a Cuckold, that may make him jealous.

Quest. 14. *Why Hair upon a Man or Woman's Head alters its Colour, and grows white? and also why two or more Hairs standing together, one shall grow white, the other continue its natural or first Colour? and likewise why the Hairs of Horses, Cows, Dogs, and other Beasts are spotted, some white, some red, and some black, all upon one Beast?*

Ans. This Question has been Answer'd in the extraordinary Cases of those that turned grey in one Night, and what is done by degrees, as Men ordinarily grow grey, is there also discuss'd: As for the Colours of Beasts, 'tis probable they were the same at the first Creation, and Varied by the Idea's and Alterations procur'd by promiscuous Copulation, as Dog with Foxes, and Wolves, &c.

☞ If the Lady who formerly Oblig'd us and the Publick with the Question of the Patches, will please to send in the rest which came at the same time, they shall be Answer'd in the next Love-Paper, since we doubt not but they'll be well worth it.

## Advertisements.

☞ **T**HE First Volume of *THE PACQUET BROKE OPEN* having met with a very kind Reception, (the Second Volume will be Printed on an Extraordinary good Paper, and Publish'd about February next) this is therefore to give Notice that the Publisher of the said First Volume has receiv'd from a Young Lady all the Letters sent her during a long Courtship, which shall be inserted in the Second Volume aforementioned, with the Ladies Ingenious Answers to all his Letters. Further this is to Advertise, that if any other Gentlemen or Ladies have any LETTERS, sent 'em either from their Lovers or Ingenious Friends, a Publication of which (with Remarks thereon) will either satisfy them or gratify the Publick, if they please to Direct 'em For Mr. CHAPPEL, to be left at Smith's Coffee-house in Stock-market, they shall be Printed, together with those Letters design'd for *The said Second Volume*: And those Letters sent in according to this Advertisement, shall be mark'd with an Asterisk, to distinguish 'em from those taken from the Post — Whoever have any Ingenious Letters to send, they are desired to send 'em speedily, the *SECOND VOLUME* being just going to the Press.

☞ **A** Mourning Ring in Memory of your Departed Friend, containing, The House of Weeping; The Sick-man's Passing-Bell; The Author's Tears, or Meditations on his own Sickness, Death and Funeral; The History of those that have dyed suddenly. Observations on the Bills of Mortality: With a comprehensive Discourse of Monuments, Epitaphs, and other Funeral Honours. *The Second Edition*. Proper to be given at Funerals. Printed for John Dunton at the Raven in the Poultry.

☞ **I**N 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, Scurvis, 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 Diltempers without Bleeding, except in few Bodies. He gives his Opinion to all that writes or comes for nothing.