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## NOT A HABIT.

When one's own church is closed and some other house of worship is open, one may attend the latter and listen to its doctrines as expounded by the stated parson, without the necessity of his joining the church holding service on that particular day and without renunciation and denunciation of dogmas held by the church which has been closed.

When there is no political ticket in the field which represents a man's views on the money and other questions, the proper solution of which is vital to the welfare of the country, he must, as a good citizen, choose between the least of the two evils which confront him. The gold democrats, among whom the editor of THE CONSERVATIVE is quite justly counted, took this view of affairs during the late campaign in this state, and consequently, as a rule, voted the republican ticket. This ticket to be sure was, in many respects, a very bitter bolus; but, when sugar-coated with loyalty to country and love of home, was contortively gulped down without dangerous chokings and with comparatively little nausea as an immediate result.

But it may as well be understood now as at some time later on that the taking of this sort of political blue mass, partisan asafetida and civic quinine has not become and will never become a habit with any of the aforesaid gold democrats who under duress swallowed it this year. Sick people take medicine, but when they get well do not continue it as food and they never habitually eat it. A diet of asafetida or a beverage of castor oil has never become a necessity to anybody up to date and the gold democrats will not institute such a menu.

## WHEN DOES THE NEXT CENTURY BEGIN?

From the Norfolk (Virginia) Herald appears the following advertisement, by a person, who pretends to be really interested in the decision of the question, and who therefore merits my attention.

PRINCESS ANNE, December 18, 1798.

Messrs. WILLETT & O'CONNOR—

Sirs. I am a poor widow woman, whose great uncle by her father's son died lately, and by his will he has left me a legacy of £100, to be paid me in the 19th century; that is, he says, "Item, I give to my niece, Deborah Violet £100, to be paid to her in the 19th century." Now, sirs, as I am a poor woman, and I am told you have a great many law gentlemen in Norfolk, you will render a great service if you will get their opinion when, and at what time, I have really a right to demand the same. In so doing you will oblige,

Yours at command,

DEBORAH VIOLET.

P. PORCUPINE TO MRS. VIOLET.

DEAR MADAM: Having a singular affection for widows of the Violet race (especially those who are in full bloom) and observing you in some little distress for advice, you will not be surprised, that, without further ceremony, I proceed to offer you the best, which it is in my power to bestow.

And, first, my sweet Violet, I think you have applied to the wrong source; for one principal part of a lawyer's professional skill consists in knowing how to procure delay; and, I assure you, that all the gentlemen of the bench and the bar, whose opinions I have heard on the subject, have decided the point against you. I resided, some time ago, near a small village, which was honored by being the summer's retreat of a lawyer and a judge. The former of these might not, indeed, have been much accustomed to the Christian calendar; but be that as it may, they both said (and I believe they swore) that the eighteenth century should not end 'till 1801. Preposterous as this assertion certainly is, you may be assured that they were prepared to maintain it, even against one who should have risen from the dead to convince them of the contrary.

You may look upon it as a settled point, that whoever has got your £100 will keep it as long as they can. You will find it difficult, even twenty years hence, to persuade them that the 19th century is arrived. Sued they therefore must be for the money, and, according

to an established maxim in the law, the sooner you begin, the sooner you will have done.

I would advise you to plead your own cause; no eloquence is so convincing as that which flows from female lips. Your adversary, conscious of the badness of his cause, will have plenty of lawyers to oppose you. They will insist that the 18th century cannot be ended 'till the year 1800 is ended; they will tell you that this is the 1798th, and not the 1799th year, and so forth, and so forth, to the end of the chapter. In return to all which, you will say, "pray, what century are we now in?" They will answer, the "18th to be sure." You will then ask them, how it happens that we have continued to date 17 hundred during all the eighteenth century? If there should be a man of sense amongst them, he will laugh in his sleeve; but you will see the young babblers stare like so many stuck pigs. Before they have had time to recover, you must follow up your blow, and put to them the following questions:

"When did we begin to date 17 hundred, at the beginning or the end of the seventeenth century?"

They will immediately answer: "At the end of the seventeenth century."

"Well then," say you, "did we not also begin to date 1798 at the end of the 1798th year? If we began (as you say we did) to date 1798 at the beginning of the 1798th year, why did we not begin to date 18 hundred at the beginning of the 18th century?"

At this they will stand as mute as fishes. You will get no answer from them. They will, however, find their tongues after a time, and then they'll go on again with their saids and soforths and again insist that 1800 years must expire before 1800 years are expired; and that ninety-nine cannot make a hundred, and consequently, and of course, 1799 cannot make 1800, and hence and from thence they will draw a conclusion as clear as daylight that, to attain 1800 years we must arrive at 1800. With about nine-tenths of the jury the force of this reasoning will be irresistible; but, if there be amongst them any man of a sound understanding and a clear conscience, he will remain locked up 'till he has gnawed off his hands, before he will give a verdict against you.

With the best wishes for the success of your cause, I remain, my dear Violet, Your most obedient and most humble servant,

P. PORCUPINE.