A PIECE OF LEGAL ADVICE.

Rennes, the ancient capital of Brittany, is a famous place for law. People come there from the extremities of the country to get information and ask advice. To visit Rennes without getting advice appears impossible to a Breton. This was true at the latter end of the last century, just as it is at present and especially among the country people; who are a timid and cautious race.

Now it happened one day that a farmer named Bernard, having come to Rennes on business, bethought himself that as he had a few hours to spare, it would be well to employ them in getting the advice of a good lawyer. He had often heard of Monsieur Potier de la Germondaie, who was in such high repute, that people believed a lawsuit gained when he undertook their cause. The countryman inquired for his address, and proceeded to his house in Rue St. Georges. The clients were numerous, and Bernard had to wait some time. At length his turn arrived, and he was introduced. M. Potier de la Germondaie signed to him to be seated, then taking off his spectacles, and placing them on his desk, he requested to know his business.

"Why, Mr. Lawyer." said the farmer, twirling his hat, "I have heard so much about you, that, as I have come to Rennes, I wish to take the opportunity of consulting you."

"I thank you for your confidence, my friend; you wish to bring an action, perhaps?"

"An action! O, I hold that in abhorrence! Never has Pierre Bernard had a word with any one."

"Then is it a settlement—a division of property?"

"Excuse me Mr. Lawyer, my family and I have never made a division seeing that we all draw from the same well, as they say."

"Well, is it to negotiate a purchase or a sale?"

"O, no. I am neither rich enough to purchase nor poor enough to sell!"

"Will you tell me, then, what you do want of me?" said the lawyer, in surprise.

"Why, I have already told you, Mr. Lawyer, replied Bernard. "I want your advice—for payment of course, as I am well able to give it to you, and I don't wish to lose this opportunity."

M. Potier took a pen and paper, and asked the countryman his name.

"Pierre Bernard," replied the latter, quite happy that he was at length understoood.

"Your age?"

"Thirty years, or very near it."

Your vocation?"

"My vocation! O, that means what I do. I am a farmer."

The lawyer wrote two lines, folded the paper, and handed it to his stranger client.

"Is it finished already? Well and good, what is the price of that advice, Mr. Lawyer!"

"Three francs!"

Bernard paid the money, and took his leave, delighted that he had taken, advantage of his opportunity.

When he reched home, it was four o'clock; the journey had fatigued him, and he determined to rest himself the remainder of the day. In the mean time the hay had been two days cut, and was completely saved. One of the workingmen came to ask if it should be drawn in.

"What, this evening!" exclaimed the farmer's wife who had come in to meet her husband. "It would be a pity to commence the work so late, since it can be done to-morrow without any inconvenience." The man objected that the weather might change; that the horses were all ready and the hands idle. But the farmer's wife replied that the wind was in a good quarter, and that night would set in before their work could be completed. Bernard, who had been listening to the argument was uncertain which way to decide, when he suddenly recollected that he had the lawyer's advice in his pocket.

"Wait a minute," he exclaimed; "I have an advice—and a famous one too—that I paid three francs for; it ought to tell us what to do. Here, Theresa, see what it says; you can read written hand better than I,"

The woman took the paper, and read these lines—

"NEVER PUT OFF TILL TO-MORROW WHAT YOU CAN DO TO-DAY!"

"That's it!" exclaimed Bernard, struck with a sudden ray of light. "Come, be quick; get the carts and away; boys and girls, all to the hay-field!"

His wife ventured a few more objections, but he declared that he had not bought a three francs opinion to make no use of it, and that he would follow the lawyer's advice. He himself set the example by taking the lead in the work; and not returning till all the hay was brought in. The event seemed to prove the wisdom of his conduct, for the weather changed during the night; an unexpected storm burst over the valley, and the next morning it was found that the river had overflowed, and carried away the hay that had been left in the field. The crops of the neighbouring farmers were completely destroyed: Bernard alone had not suffered.

The success of this first experiment gave him such faith in the advice of the lawyer, that from that day forth he adopted it as the rule of his conduct, and became, by his order and diligence, one of the richest farmers in the country. He never forgot the service done by M. Potier de la Germondaie, to whom he ever afterwards carried a couple of his finest fowls every year, as a token of gratitude.

FILING NEWSPAPERS.

ONE of the many things which I have to regret, when I review my past life, is, that I did not from my earliest youth, at least, as soon as I was able to do it, take and preserve—I believe the technical word is "file"—some good newspaper. How interesting would it be now to a sexagenarian to look into the paper which he read when he was twelve or sixteen, or twenty years old! How many events would this call to mind which he has entirely forgotten! How many interesting associations and feelings would it revive! What a view would it give one of past years! What knowledge would it preserve by assisting the memory. And how many valuable purposes of a literary kind even, might it be rendered subservient to! How much do I wish I could look into such a record, while composing this short article! But newspapers are quite different things to what they were sixty or even seventy years ago. They are unspeakably more interesting and valuable; in that respect, at least, (I believe in many others,) these times are better than the former. Formerly, the editors of newspapers were obliged to strain their wits and exhaust their means in order to obtain matter to fill their pages. Now, the great difficulty is, to insert all the valuable interesting materials poured upon them from every part of the world, and from every grade and place of society.

Now, newspapers contain many of the best thoughts of the most highly-gifted men on the most momentous subjects, and their reports and statements are far more accurate than they formerly were or could be. They have repudiated the character for lying, they once had, and have become records of truth.—*Correspondent of the British Banner.*

From the New Orleans Pricayune.

FORENSIC FUN.

We have heard of legal quibbles in our day, and we have heard some—but if a Philadelphia lawyer can beat the following (lately urged to a jury in this city) he can take our hat, aye, and our coroneys. The prisoner is on his trial for entering a house in the night time with intent to steal. The testimony was clear that he had made an opening sufficiently large to admit the upper part of his body, and through which he protruded himself about half way and stretching out his arm committed the thefts;

Mr. Obfusticate Brief addresses the jury:—

"What an outrage," (looking horrified, and with outstretched and trembling arms,) "I repeat what an outrage upon your intelligence and your common sense, is it for the State's Attorney to ask at your hands the conviction of my client on such testimony! The law is against entering a house—and can a man be said to enter a house, when only one-half of his body is in and the other half out! Gentlemen look to the Divine Law on this point—God commanded Adam and Eve not to eat the apple—i. e. the whole of the apple. And all the commentators agree that if they had only eaten one-half, they would never have been expelled from the blooming Garden of Eden." The jury brought in a verdict of "guilty" as to one-half of his body from the waist up, and "not guilty" as to the other half.

The Judge sentenced the guilty half to one year's imprisonment, leaving it to the prisoner's option to have the innocent half cut off or take it along with him.

N. B. (We mean the jury and Judge ought to have done so.)

Legal Anecdote.

A NOVEL WAY OF DECIDING A PERPLEXING CASE.—We are quite sure the case we are about to report never found its way into any of "the books." It occured in this city about thirty years ago.

A gentleman, fond of sporting having broken a part of the lock of his fowling piece, sent it to a gunsmith to undergo the requisite repairs. The gunsmith mended it as ordered and sent it back to the owner, with the message that his charge was one dollar. Shortly afterwards the sporting gentleman went a hunting, and upon the first discharge the gun broke in the identical place where it had been mended.

It may be imagined that he returned to town not in the most amiable humor; and upon repairing to the gunsmith's an altercation ensued between them, the result of which was, that the gentleman refused to pay the bill, and the gunsmith swore he would sue, which he accoringly did forthwith. The suit happened to be brought before Mr. N ——, who was then a Justice of the Peace, and who is now living in retirement at the Bay Biloxi. The sporting gentlemen upon receiving the citation, hastened in great wrath to lawyer H——, (who is still practising in our city, and familiar with the affairs of the Atchafalaya R. R. & B. Co.) and stated his case.

"Pooh, Pooh!" said lawyer H., "don't pester me with your one dollars case; go and pay the claim." The sporting gentleman reiterated his determination not to pay the claim unless "in due course of law," and declared that he would defend the suit, cost what it would. "Well," said lawyer H., "if you insist upon my appearing for you, I shall charge you twenty dollars for my services." The sportsman intimated his willingness to pay the fee. "But" said lawyer H., "I must have my fee in advance, for when the suit is finished I am afraid you will *demur* to pay me twenty dollars in a one dollar suit."

The twenty dollar bill instantly passed from the sportman's pocket into the lawyer's hand, and the necessary answer was soon filed. The case came on for trial; the plaintiff and defendant were present with their counsel, and as usually happens, the parties worried their lawyers, lawyers the witnesses and court. For four mortal hours the wordy altercation was kept up, until the patience of the worthy Justice being completely exhausted, and his mind sorely perplexed by the conflicting arguments of the advocates, he abruptly put an end to the case in the following novel manner.

With despair and vexation pictured on his countenance, he exclaimed with terrific vehemence: *Mr. Gun-smith!—here is your dollar!*" at the same time throwing him the coin; and turning to the lawyer, "*Gentlemen,*" said he, "*there are NO costs in this case!*"—Thereupon the Court adjourned.

Both parties afterwards expressed themselves satisfied with the decision: the gun-smith because he had received his claim, and the sportsman because he had not paid the debt.—*N. O. Delta.*

LONG SPEECHES.

The editor of the Richmond Whig finds it necessary to deal a little with the members of the Legislature now in session in that city.—This hint will apply as well to some speech makers in Liberia.

"From mensuration, it is certain that Demosthenes never spoke longer than about three quarters of an hour. Cicero's orations, any one of them can be delivered in even less time. Mirabeau condensed his thunders into a space of fifteen or twenty minutes. The great men of the Lord Parliament and the Commonwealth, Lord Somarhe, even Lord Bolingbroke, the most diffuse of British orators prior to the trial of Warren Hastings Walpole, the elder Pitt, and the elder Fox, brief and powerfully condensed—in other words, they were satisfied to present powerful thoughts, in a few simple (and the simplest) words, instead of pouring out words, as peas are poured out of a boot—*voxet preterea nihil.* Theirs was the eloquence of reason, of profound sense, high knowledge, and lofty thought—not ragged and disjointed declamation".

"The taste of this country in public speaking is most injurious to the public interests.—The Courts are stopped from doing the business of the people, by the horrible garrulity of the Bar—legislation is sorely impeded by it.

"Let us hope, for the sake of Virginia, that in view of the immense business it has to do, if it do the people justice, the Legislature will go to work seriously before Xmas: that done, and long spoutings abolished, the public work can be easier completed, arduous as it is.

NOTICE.

The undersigned having formed themselves into a co-partnership, under the title of "HARRISS & HENRY." will conduct the dry goods and grocery business under the above named title, at their store, corner of Broadway and Gurley Streets.

Having purchased the remainder of the stock of goods of the late "J. V. HENRY & Co." they are prepared to offer them to the public at *reduced prices for cash.* They intend to keep constantly on hand, a general assortment of goods, which they will sell as *cheap* as any *other.* Please give us a call before purchasing elsewhere.

DESERLINE TIPPON HARRISS.
PATRICK HENRY.

August 1st 1850. 3t.

The under signed tenders his thanks to his friends and the public generally, & begs to say that he continues to furnish dinners, breakfasts, lodging &c at his "Hotel" which was opened 8 years ago at the solicitations of Naval Officers, and many others who are in the habit of visiting Monrovia. And all who have been accommodated left satisfied; our charges being as reasonable as any one else.

Monrovia Augt 18th, 1850.

N. M. HICKS

JOB PRINTING, neatly and promptly executed at this Office. A single copy of the Liberia Herald, twelve & a half cents.

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

XII. Newspapers
B. Liberia Herald

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