ESSAY ON
IRISH BULLS.

BY
RICHARD LOVEL EDGEWORTH,
AND
Maria Edgeworth,

AUTHOR OF CASTLE RACKRENT, &c.

Summos posse viros, & magna exempla datusos,
Vervecum in patria, crassoque sub aere nasci!

JUVENAL.

NEW YORK:
PRINTED BY J. SWAINE, NO. 49, PEARL-STREET.
1803.
ESSAY ON IRISH BULLS.

CHAPTER I.

VULGAR ERRORS.

It is much to be regretted, that the learned and judicious author* of "An Enquiry into Vulgar Errors" omitted to notice that propensity to blunder, which is commonly supposed to be characteristic of the Irish nation. An essay on the nature and origin of Irish bulls would, perhaps, have been almost as well worthy the attention of the public as some of the questions, which this celebrated antiquarian, and natural

*Sir Thomas Browne, fl. 1660.
ESSAY ON
philosopher, has discussed; such as, Whether turkeys can live only in republics? Whether peacocks are ashamed when they look at their ugly eggs? Why we are taught, from our childhood, to break an egg-shell after we have eaten the egg? Why candles burn blue before the apparition of a spirit, or how their wicks foretell the approach of strangers?

We have the more reason to lament Sir Thomas Browne's omitting to treat of Irish bulls, because, in speaking of one of the English popular notions with respect to Ireland, he evinces that admirable degree of philosophical scepticism which is necessary in judging a national cause with impartiality.

"Most men," says he, "affirm, and few here will believe the contrary; that there be no spiders in Ireland; but we have seen some in that country; and, though but few, some cobwebs we behold in Irish wood* in England. Thus the crocodile from an egg growing up to an exceeding magnitude, common conceit, and divers writers deliver, it hath no period of increase, but groweth as long as it liveth; and thus, in brief,

* The person who shows Westminster Abbey assures the public, at this day, that there are no cobwebs in the oak there, because it is Irish.
in most apprehensions the conceits of men extend the considerations of things, and dilate their notions beyond the propriety of their natures."

The received opinion, that there exists amongst the natives of Ireland an innate and irresistible propensity to blunder, cannot, however, be one of those notions which have been dilated by common conceit, because we have argument and evidence sufficient to establish our belief. English readers may smile at this grave preparation to prove what nobody doubts: but these apparent truisms are always suspicious in the eyes of accurate philosophers. In the first place it must be observed, that nobody is a word of very uncertain signification, varying according to time, place, and circumstances. Nobody in a physical and nobody in a fashionable sense, nobody in a moral and nobody in a political view, are obviously as different as possible; nobody at court may be somebody in the country; nobody in England may be somebody in Ireland. In short, nobody in argument usually implies, nobody of my nation, acquaintance, party, or way of thinking: hence the extreme difficulty of ascertaining what is meant by the phrase. Unless we know the style of life, connections, birth, pa-
ESSAY ON
rentage, education, and understanding of the
person who makes such an assertion, it is often
impossible to perceive its full force or weakness.
Hence the necessity of proving what nobody
doubts: therefore let us soberly proceed with the
proof; that the Irish nation is prone to make
those blunders, which are usually called bulls.

According to the common custom of able log-
icians, we must begin with an argument a pri-
ori. It seems but reasonable to suppose, that
Irishmen were designed by providence to make
bulls, because, in the universal distribution of
things in this world, good is ever balanced by
evil. Each country upon the face of this earth
has peculiar advantages and disadvantages.
Look round the globe:—here you find a mild
climate with an oppressive government; there
you see a profusion of the necessaries and luxu-
ries of life, with an indolent, inept race of inha-
itants: even the sparkling mines and fragrant
spices of the east are blessings fully balanced by
hurricanes and pestilence. Thus equality is pre-
served amongst nations as amongst individuals,
and Hibernia cannot be exempted from this
equitable law of nature. Amongst her various
advantages, we must recollect one by which the
IRISH BULLS.

is peculiarly distinguished:—as Alba and Gyraldus have left upon ancient record, and as a modern farce, called "The Genius of Ireland" sufficiently confirms, no venomous animal can exist on the soil or in the air of Ireland. This enviable national immunity, although bestowed by the special favour of St. Patrick, must, according to the system that we have just established, be counterbalanced by some evil; probably by that vernacular defect in their mode of speech, for which the Irish are so justly ridiculed and reviled. As there are no toads, or serpents, or vipers in this favoured island, it must necessarily abound with irish bulls.

A priori arguments, though their use be justified by the highest authority, do not suit all tastes, or carry conviction to all understandings. Now, according to the prudent practice, avowed by an experienced orator*, we should employ, not only the strongest, but the weakest arguments possible, that we may captivate both the nice judging few, and the numerous, and consequently, respectable vulgar. Without relying entirely upon this one a priori argument to prove

* Charles Fox.
that Irishmen ought to make bulls, I shall aduce another of an inferior species, drawn simply from existing circumstances.

English is not the mother tongue of the natives of Ireland; to them it is a foreign language, and consequently, it is scarcely within the limits of probability, that they should avoid making blunders both in speaking and writing. We most of us are aware of the difficulty of acquiring that accurate grammatical knowledge, that practical fluency, and all the idiomatic niceties of a foreign language, which could put us on a par with the natives themselves. It was not till after a seven years apprenticeship at Lausanne, that the great Gibbon thought himself able to speak French like a Frenchman; and his writing a manifesto in elegant French was a matter of pride to him, and of admiration to the rest of the world. How then can it be expected, that the illiterate Irish should instinctively possess that command of a foreign language, which is only to be acquired after long labour by the brightest, and most cultivated genius, assisted by all the advantages of books and society? Such an expectation would be extravagant.
IRISH BULLS.

...or, we are compelled to the same conclusion, that the Irish must be blunderers. Indeed, so perfectly persuaded are Englishmen of the truth of this proposition, that the moment an unfortunate Hibernian opens his lips they expect a bull, and listen with that well known look of sober contempt and snug self-satisfaction, which sufficiently testifies their sense of safety and superiority. Not the half animated Bond-street lounger, not the bawling native of Billingsgate, no inveterate cockney of high or low degree, between the vast extremes of St. James’s and St. Mary Axe, no guttural man of Cumberland, or Somersetshire Zim, or ultimate Northumbrian, can forbear to join in the liberal laugh against the wild Irishman, or refrain from raising in their multifarious dialects the national hue and cry after an irish bull. Whether this cry be ever raised by mistake, when no irish bull has broken loose, may, perhaps, be questioned by those, who have observed, that every dog is not mad which falls a victim to the ignorance or malice of the populace: but let us avoid this inquiry; it might prove troublesome; for it would drive us at last to describe and define what we mean by an irish bull. Definitions are as much the bane of easy writing as of easy conversation.
CHAPTER II.

ETYMOLGY OF AN IRISH BULL UNCERTAIN.

Let us fly from crabbed Logic to convenient Etymology—Never shall her proteus art fail her votaries so long as any two letters of the greek, hebrew, english, saxon, phœnician, or ogham character can be interchanged.

The intelligent reader, however unskilled he may be in subjects of this nature, will immediately suggest two analogies of sound, which may lead the unweary astray—We have a papal bull, and John Bull, the representative of the majesty of the people of England. It is a curious coincident, that the name of that species of blunder, which is peculiar to the Irish, should be, to a letter, the same as the distinguishing appellation of the english nation. Yet our utmost ingenuity is at a fault when we attempt to account for this coincidence, or to make any use of it in the present inquiry. It would be absurd to suppose, that John Bull could ever have been subject to blunder; although there is a passage in a letter of Swift's, obscurely hinting at some such idea:—“I have it in contemplation,” says Swift,
IRISH BULLS.

"to write an essay on english bulls and blunders."

Now the doctor could not write an essay on english bulls and blunders, if no such things actually existed. We must either infer from this passage, that the dean of St. Patrick's, a man every way qualified to decide this matter, believed that bulls were of english origin, and therefore should properly be called english bulls: or else we must conclude, that Swift (which is highly probable, as he was an Irishman) was guilty of a barbarism in language; at least that he inadvertently applied the specific name of bull to the whole species of blunders, and then, as people do often go on from one error and absurdity to another, confounded all together, and talked of english bulls and blunders as synonymous terms.

We proceed to—papal bull.—Every well-informed person knows, that this is the name of the pope's letter, edict, or diploma. As etymologies make it a principle, to feast or surfeit their friends with all they catch in the drag-net with which they sweep the ocean of antiquity, we, in humble imitation, cannot omit to add, under the head bullæ, that the roman nobility
used to hang round their necks certain hollow golden balls, in which were enclosed amulets against envy: these afterwards were hung to the diplomas of emperors and popes.—Bulla; the seal, is further derived from bulla, a drop or bubble; or, according to others, from the Greek council. According to Pezron, from the Celtic, bull, or bul—a bubble. The popes' bulls were certainly not of this sort: their bullæ are usually of lead, appended by a filken string when the bull is a bull of grace, and by a hempen string when it is a bull of justice.

What the Irish bull has in common with the golden, leaden, or papal bull, we leave to the judgment of the sagacious reader, having done our duty by warning him of that treacherous analogy of sound, which might put him upon a wrong scent. We shall now beg or take leave to suggest a few queries, with all the diffidence the occasion requires:

Query 1st.— Might not the Irish bull be derived from the miller's thumb, or bull head, an odd fish, of no very pleasing shape, with a head too large for its body, and a very wide mouth*

* Walton.
IRISH BULLS.

ufually gaping; whence the term bull-head, a stupid fellow, or blockhead?

Query 2d.—Might not the irish bull have some affinity to the famous bos in lingua, which, literally translated, means an ox upon the tongue. Both phrases, relating to the tongue, must have some connexion between themselves. We find also another point of resemblance; they have both puzzled commentators.

"Some have been startled at the proverb bos in lingua," says a learned writer, "confusedly apprehending how a man should be said to have an ox in his tongue that would not speak his mind; which was no more than that a piece of money had silenced him; for by the ox was only implied a piece of coin stamped with that figure, first current amongst the Romans."

Heaven forbid we should insinuate that Irishmen could ever have the bos in lingua. It never was a parliamentary expression; and we abandon the proverb as premature.

We shall hazard only one more conjecture; for the apparent puerility of which we can best apologise by reminding the fastidious, that truth is often found in the lowest source, after having been in vain sought for in the highest.
ESSAY ON

Might not the expression "An irish bull," originally derive from the trivial saying, "Your father's cows are all bulls?" as we say, "All his geese are swans;" or as the Italian proverb,

"Il suo soldo val tre deci danari;"
His shilling is worth thirteen-pence.

Submitting all these conjectures to the better judgement of the candid critic, we confess that none are in our own opinion absolutely satisfactory: yet, comparatively, they are not to be despised; for etymologists committing the dignity of the greatest nations and cities are involved in some obscurity. For instance, in the Dublin almanack, which is allowed to be the best almanack in the world, we read,

"A. D. 140.—Dublin anciently called Aschled, according to Ptolemy built.

"A. D. 155.—Took it's present name from Alpinus, whose daughter Auliana being drowned in the Liffey, he changed the name of Aschled to Auliana, afterwards corrupted into Dublana, that she might be bad in remembrance."
IRISH BULLS.

"That stranger comes from E,
"I've heard the wise ones say;
"But simple folks may see,
"Tis strangely altered by the way."

In these difficult cases we recommend it to etymologists, to follow the admirable practice of some of the ancient provincial parliaments of France, who admitted what they called half proofs, quarter proofs, an eighth, and a sixteenth of a proof. Now by the addition of these fractions whole proofs could be made out, in any cause whatever, by an able arithmetical advocate.—What a happy *hocus pocus* of law and algebra!

* E. ex. extra. extranius—estranger—from estranger—stranger.

Alphania vient d'Equus, sans doute;
Mais il faut avouer aussi,
Qu'en venant de la jusqu'ici,
Il a bien changé sur la route.

B a
CHAPTER III.

"ORIGINALITY OF IRISH BULLS DISPUTED.

That species of monopolizing pride, which inspires one nation with the belief that all the rest of the world are barbarians, and speak barbarisms, is evidently a very useful prejudice, which the English, with their usual good sense, have condescended to adopt from the Greeks and Romans. They have applied it judiciously in their treatment of France and Ireland. The maxim, that one Englishman can beat ten Frenchmen, has undoubtedly gained many a battle both by sea and land; it forms a sort of succedaneum for the belief in predestination, which operates on the imagination of Mahometan soldiers, as opium does on their physical powers, creating supernatural strength and courage. But it is a refinement of this sort of policy, to instill into a nation the belief, that they are superior in intellectual abilities to their neighbours. Impute a peculiar incurable mental disease to a given people, show that it incapacitates
them from speaking or acting with common sense, expose their infirmities continually to public ridicule, and in time probably this people, let their constitutional boldness be ever so great, may be subjugated to that sense of inferiority, and to that acquiescence in a state of dependance, which is the necessary consequence of the conviction of imbecility. We are too much attached to England, our native country, not to wish that she may succeed in establishing the belief in her own superiority, and in depreciating and subjugating the minds of her rivals—Like true patriots and partisans, we shall endeavour to strengthen her self-opinion; and with this view we shall endeavour to show, that even the bulls of her hibernian neighbours, wherever they have inherent wit or humour, are not of irish, but of foreign extraction.

Lord Orford, better known perhaps in the literary world by the name of Horace Walpole, records in his Walpoliana an irish bull, which he pronounces to be the best he had ever heard—"I hate that woman," said a gentleman, looking at a person who had been his nurse, "I hate that woman; for she changed me at nurse."
In this speech such is the confusion of ideas; that, as his lordship observes, even personal identity is confounded—Philosophers perhaps will not be so ready as his lordship has been to call this a blunder of the first magnitude, merely because it confounds personal identity—Whoever reads Locke's chapter on diversity and identity, with or without attention, will acknowledge, that the subject is involved in some obscurity, and the learned will probably be less inclined to laugh at our Hibernian. Those who have never been initiated into the mysteries of metaphysics may have the presumptuous ignorance to fancy, that they understand what is meant by the common words I or me; but the able metaphysician well knows how to prove to our satisfaction, that we know nothing of the matter. According to Locke, personal identity depends on consciousness—it is but doing justice to his authority to quote his very words.

"Personal identity consists not in the identity of substance, but, as I have said, in the identity of consciousness, wherein Socrates and the present mayor of Quinborough agree, they are the same person; if the same Socrates, sleeping and waking, do not partake of the same consciousness, Socrates waking and sleeping is not the same
person, and to punish Socrates waking for what sleeping Socrates thought, and waking Socrates was never conscious of, would be no more of right than to punish one twin for what his brother twin did, whereof he knew nothing, because their outsides are so like that they could not be distinguished: for such twins have been seen*.

We may presume that our Hibernian who was changed at nurse, was so like his foster brother, that the identity of substance could not easily be ascertained by his parents during his infancy; and when he arrived at man's estate, his own consciousness could not reach to the time when the act of changing at nurse was performed; consequently there was no continuity of identity between the infant who was changed at nurse, and the man who hated the nurse for perpetrating the change; ergo, the Irishman could not confound that which did not exist as to him, viz. identity.

Far be it from us to apologise for the grossness of his bull; we simply meant to assert, that it is not the best of bulls, and that it is even destitute of originality.—The confusion of identity, which

ESSAY ON

so much excited lord Orford's admiration in our Hibernian, is by no means unprecedented in France, England, or ancient Greece; and consequently it cannot be an instance of national idiosyncracy, or an irish bull. We find a similar blunder in Spain, in the time of Cervantes:—

"Pray tell me, squire," says the duchess in Don Quixote, "is not your master the person whose history is printed under the name of the sage Hidalgo Don Quixote de la Mancha, who professes himself the admirer of one Dulcinea del Toboso?"

"The very same, my lady," answered Sancho; "and I myself am that very squire of his who is mentioned, or ought to be mentioned, in that history, unless they have changed me in the cradle."

In Moliere's Amphitrition there is a dialogue between Mercure and Socie, evidently taken from the attic Lucian. Socie being completely puzzled out of his personal identity, if not out of his senses, literally. "Of my being myself I begin to doubt in good earnest; yet when I feel myself, and when I recollect myself, it seems to me that I am I."

* "De moi je commence à douter tout de bon; Pourtant quand je me tâte, & quand je me rappelle, Il me semble que je suis moi."
IRISH BULLS.

An example still nearer home might be produced to illustrate this subject; we allude to the well known case of an English woman, in whom all idea of personal identity was absolutely confounded by a simple shortening of her dress during sleep. Her exclamation when she wakens is full in the recollection of every child in England, and is beautifully apposite.

"Oh," says the little woman, "this is of I."

The difficulty of selecting from the vulgar herd of Irish bulls one, that shall be entitled to the prize, from the united merits of preeminent absurdity, and indubitable originality, is greater than hasty judges may imagine. Many bulls, reputed to be bred and born in Ireland, are of foreign extraction; and many more, supposed to be unrivalled in their kind, may be matched in all their capital points: for instance, there is not a more celebrated bull than Paddy Blake’s. When Paddy heard an English gentleman speaking of the fine echo at the lake of Killarney, which repeats the sound forty times, he very promptly observed,—"Faith that’s nothing at all to the echo in my father’s garden, in the county of Galway; if you say to it—’ How do
you do, Paddy Blake?" it will answer, "Pretty well I thank you, sir."

Now this echo of Paddy Blake's, which has long been the admiration of the world, is not a prodigy unique in its kind; it can be matched by one recorded in the immortal works of the great lord Verulam.*

"I remember well," says this father of philosophy, "that when I went to the echo at port Charenton, there was an old parisiain that took it to be the work of spirits, and of good spirits; for," said he, "call Satan, and the echo will not deliver back the devil's name, but will say 'Va t'en.'"

The parisiain is surely superior to the hibernian! Paddy Blake's simply understand and practised the common rules of good breeding; but port Charenton echo is "instinct with spirit," and endowed with a nice moral sense. It is really edifying to observe how those things, which have long been objects of popular admiration, shrink and fade when exposed to the light of

* Natural History, century 111, p. 191.—Bacon produces it to show, that echoes will not readily return the letter S.
IRISH BULLS.

strict examination: A celebrated critic proposed, that a work should be written to inquire into the pretensions of modern writers, to original invention, to trace their thefts, and to restore the property to the ancient writers. Such a work would require powers and erudition beyond what can be expected from any ordinary individual; the labour must be shared among several, and we shall be proud to assist in affording the rightful property even of bulls and orders; though without pretending, like some literary blood-hounds, to follow up a plagiarism, where common sagacity is at a fault.

Amongst the famous bulls recorded by the illustrious Joe Miller, there is one, which is continually quoted as an example of original Irish genius:—An English gentleman was writing a letter in a coffee-house, and perceiving, that an Irishman stationed behind him was taking that liberty which Parmenio used with his friend Alexander; instead of putting his seal upon the line of the curious impertinent, the English gentleman thought proper to reprove the Hibernian, if not with delicacy, at least with poetical justice; he concluded writing his letter in these words: "I would say more, but a damned tall Irish-
ESSAY ON

man is reading over my shoulder every word I write."

"You lie, you scoundrel," said the self-convinced Hibernian.

This blunder is unquestionably excusable, but it is not originally from it comes with other riches from the east, as the reader may find by looking into a book by M. Galland entitled

"Remarkable Sayings of the Eastern Nations; translated from their works in the Arabic, Persian and Turkish languages, (according to the copy printed at Paris) to be had at the Hague, at Lewis and Henry Vandrele's, booksellers, in the Pooten, at the sign of the Port Royal, M. DCC. XCV."

For the convenience of those whose curiosity may not be sufficiently active to hunt for this treasure of oriental wisdom, we subjoin the passage in question:

"A learned man was writing to a friend; troublesome fellow was beside him, who was looking over his shoulder at what he was writing. The learned man, who perceived this, continued writing in these words, 'If an impertinent chap, who stands beside me, were not looking at what I write, I would write many other things to you, which should be known only to you and to me.'
IRISH BULLS.

"The troublesome fellow, who was reading on, now thought it incumbent on him to speak; and said, 'I swear to you, that I have not read what you are writing.'

Ed. man replied, 'Blockhead as you do, you talk to me what you are now saying.'*

* "Un savant écrivait à un ami, & un porteun estoit à côté de lui qui regardoit par dessus l'épaule de ce qu'il écrivoit.

"Le savant qui s'en apperçut écrivit ceci a la place : Si un impertinent qui est à mon coté ne regardoit pas ce que j'écris, je vous écrirais encore plusieurs choses qui ne doivent être suées que de vous & demoi.

"L'importun qui lisoit toujours prit la parole et dit :

Je vous jure que je n'ai regardé ni lu ce que vous écrivois.

"Le savant repartit, 'Ignorant que vous dites, pourquoi me dites vous donc ce que vous dites?'

* Les Paroles remarquables des Orientaux—traduction de leurs ouvrages en Arabe, en Persan, & en Turc, (suivant la copie imprimée a Paris) a la Haye, chez Louis & Henry Varden, marchand libraires, dans le Pooten, a l'enseigne du Port Royal,

M. DO. M. CIV.
ESSAY ON

Making allowance for the difference of manners in eastern and northern nations, there is certainly, such a similarity between this oriental anecdote and Miller's story, that the latter is stolen from the former. Now, an Irish bull must be called bulls by the ignorant vulgar, have no right, title, or claim to such a distinction. We should invariably exclude from that class all blunders, which can be found in another country. For instance, a speech of the celebrated Irish beauty, Lady C——, has been called a bull; but as a parallel can be produced in a speech of an English nobleman, it tells for nothing.

When her ladyship was presented at court, his Majesty, George the Second, politely hoped, that, since her arrival in England, she had been entertained with the gayeties of London.

"O yes, please your majesty, I have seen every fight in London, worth seeing, except a coronation."

This naïveté is certainly not equal to that of the English earl marshal, who, when his king found fault with some arrangement at his coro-
IRISH BULLS.

nation, said—"Please your majesty, I hope it will be better next time."

A naïveté of the same species entailed a heavy upon the inhabitants of Beaune, in France. Beaune is famous for burgundy; and Henry the Fourth, passing through his kingdom, stopped there, and was well entertained by his loyal subjects. His majesty praised the burgundy which they; fat before him—"It was excellent! it was admirable!"

"O, fire!" cried they, "do you think this excellent? we have much finer burgundy than this."

"Have you so? then you can afford to pay for it," replied Harry the Fourth; and he laid a double tax thenceforward upon the burgundy of Beaune.

Of the same class of blunders is the following speech, which we heard not long ago from an Irishman:

"Please your worship he sent me to the devil, and I came straight to your honour."

We thought this an original Irish blunder, till we recollected it's prototype in Marmontel's Annette and Lubin. Lubin concludes his harangue with: "The bailiff sent us to the devil,
ESSAY ON

and we came to put ourselves under your protection, my lord.

The French, at least in former times, were celebrated for politeness; yet we meet with a naive compliment of a Frenchman, which would have been accounted a bull if it had been found in Ireland.

A gentleman was complimenting madame Denis on the manner in which she had just acted at Zara.

"To act that part," said she. "a person should be young and handsome."

"Ah, madam!" replied the complimenter naïvement; "you are a complete proof of the contrary."

We know not any original Irish bull equal to this.

—"Le bailli nous donne au dîner, et nous nous recommandons à vous, monseigneur."

† "On fairoit compliment à madame Denis de la façon dont elle venoit de jouer Zaire.

"Il faudroit," dit elle, 'être belle et jeune.'

"Ah, madame!" reprit le complimenter naïvement; "vous êtes bien la preuve du contraire."
CHAPTER IV.

IRISH NEWSPAPERS.

We presume that we have successfully disputed the claims imposed upon the public, in behalf of certain spurious, alien blunders, pretending to be native, original Irish bulls; and we shall now with pleasure proceed to examine those which have better titles to notice. Even nonsense ceases to be worthy of attention and public favour, unless it be original.

"Dear lady Emily," says Miss Allscip, in the exquisite comedy of the Heiress—"Dear lady Emily, don't you deat upon folly?"

"To ecstasy!" replies her ladyship, "I only despair of seeing it well kept up."

We flatter ourselves 'there is no danger of that,' for we have the Irish newspapers before us, where, no doubt, we shall find a fresh harvest of indigenous absurdity ripe for the sickle.

The first advertisement that meets our eye is promising.
ESSAY ON

It is the late proclamation of an irish mayor, in which we are informed, that certain busines is to be transacted in this city 'every Monday, (Easter Sunday only excepted).' This seems rather an unnecessary exception; but it is not an inadvertency, caused by any hurry of business in his worship, it is deliberately copied from a precedent set in England, by a baronet formerly well known in parliament, who, in the preamble to a bill, proposed, that certain regulations should take place 'on every Monday (Tuesday excepted).’ We fear also, that an english mayor has been known to blunder.—Some years ago the mayor of a capital english city published a proclamation and advertisement, previous to the races, 'that no gentleman will be allowed to ride on the course, but the horses that are to run.' A mayor's blundering proclamation is not, however, worth half so much in the eye of ridicule, as a lord lieutenant's.

'A faint in crape is twice a faint in lawn,'

A bull on the throne is worth twice as much as a bull in the chair.
IRISH BULLS.

"By the lord lieutenant and council of Ireland.

"A PROCLAMATION.

****,

"Whereas the greatest economy is necessary in the consumption of all species of grain, and, especially, in the consumption of potatoes, &c.

"Given at the council chamber in Dublin."

This is the first time we have been informed, by authority, that potatoes are a species of grain; but we must accede to this new botanical arrangement, when published under such splendid auspices. The assertion, certainly, is not made in distinct terms, but all who understand the construction of language must imply the conclusion, that we draw from these premises. A general position is in the first member of the sentence laid down, 'that the greatest economy is necessary in the consumption of all species of grain.' A particular exemplification of the principle is made in the next clause—'especially in the consumption of potatoes.'

The inference is as plain as can be made.

The next article in our newspapers is an advertisement of lands to be let to an improving.
A few miles from Cork, in a most sporting country, bounded by an uncommon fine turf bog, on the verge of which there are a number of fine lime kilns, where that manure may be had on very moderate terms, the distance for carriage not being many hundred yards. The whole lands being now in great heart, and completely laid down, entirely surrounded and divided by impenetrable furze ditches, made of quarried stone, laid edgeways.

It will be a matter of difficulty to the untravelled English reader, to comprehend how furze ditches can be made of quarried stone laid edgeways, or any way; and we fear that we should only puzzle his intellects still more, if we should attempt to explain to him the mysteries of Irish ditching in the technical terms of the country.

With the face of a ditch he may be acquainted, but to the back, and gripe, and bottom of the gripe, and top of the back of a ditch, we fear he is still to be introduced.

We can never sufficiently admire these furze ditches made of quarried stones, they can, indeed, be found only in Ireland: but we have heard in England of things almost as extraordinary. Dr. Grey, in his erudite and entertaining notes on
IRISH BULLS.

Hudibras records the deposition of a lawyer, who in an action of battery told the judge, 'that the defendant beat his client with a certain wooden instrument called an iron pestle.' Nay to go farther still, a wise annotator on the Pentateuch, named Peter Harrison, observed of Moyses's two tables of stone, that they were made of shittim wood. The stone furze ditches are scarcely bolder instances of the catachresis, than the stone tables of shittim wood. This bold figure of rhetoric in an Irish advertisement of an estate may lead us to expect, that hibernian advertisers may, in time, emulate the fame of Christie, the prince of auctioneers, whose fine descriptive powers can make more of an estate on paper, than ever was made of it in any other shape, except in the form of an ejectment. The fictitious of law, indeed, surpass even the auctioneer's imagination; and a man may be said never to know the extent of his own possessions, until he is served with an ejectment. He then finds himself required to give up the possession of a multitude of barns, orchards, fish-ponds, horse-ponds, dwelling-houses, pigeon-houses, dove-cotes, out-houses, and appurtenances, which he never saw nor heard of, and which are na
ESSAY ON

where to be found upon the surface of the habitable globe: so that we cannot really express this English legal transaction, without being guilty of an Irish bull, and saying, that the person ejected is ousted from places which he never entered.

To proceed with our newspapers.—The next advertisement is from a school-master; but we shall not descant upon it's grammatical errors, because they are not blunders peculiar to Irish school-masters. We have frequently observed, that the advertisements of school-masters, even in England, are seldom free from solecisms: too much care in writing, it seems, is almost as bad as too little. In the preface of the dictionary of the French academy, there are, as it is computed by an able French critic, no less than sixteen faults; and in Harris, the celebrated grammarian's dedication of his Harmes, there is one bull, and almost as many faults as lines. It appears as if the most precise and learned writers sometimes, like the ladies in one of Congreve's plays, 'run into the danger to avoid the apprehension.'

After a careful scrutiny of the Hibernian advertisements, we are compelled to confess, that
IRISH BULLS.

we have not met with any blunders that more
nearly resembles our notion of an irish bull than
one, which some years ago appeared in our
english papers. It was the title to an advertise-
ment of a washing machine, in these words—
"Every man his own washerwoman!" To come
down to the present times; an eye witness af-
fires us, that last summer he saw an advertise-
ment in the following terms, stuck up on the
wall of an english coffee-house—"This coffee-
house removed up stairs!"

A roman emperor used to draw his stairs up
after him every night into his bed-chamber, but
drawing a whole house up into itself is new.

How can we account for such a blunder in an
english advertisement, except by supposing that
it was penned by some irish waiter? If that
were the case it would be an admirable example
of an irish bull; and, therefore, we had best take
it for granted.

Let not any conscientious person be startled
at the mode of reasoning, by which we have
convicted an imaginary irish waiter of a real
bull; it is at least as good, if not better logic,
than that which was successfully employed in
the time of the popish plot, to convict an irish
physician of forgery. The matter is thus recorded by l'Estrange. The Irish physician was charged with writing a treasonable libel, but denied the thing, and appealed to the unlikeness of the characters. It was agreed, they said, that there was no resemblance at all in the hands; but they asserted that the doctor had two hands, his physic hand and his plot hand, and the one not a jot like the other. Now this was the doctor's plot hand, and they insisted upon it, that because it was not one of his hands, it must be like the other.

By this convenient mode of reasoning an Irishman may at any time be convicted of any crime, or of any absurdity.

But what have we next in our newspaper—'Murder, Robbery, and Reward.'—This seems a strange connexion of things, according to our vulgar notions of distributive justice; but we are told that the wicked shall have their reward even in this world, and we suppose it is upon this principle that over the stocks in a town in Ireland there appears this inscription—'A reward for vagabonds.'

Upon proceeding further in our advertisement, which begins with, 'Murder, Robbery, and
IRISH BULLS.

Reward, we find, however, that, contrary to the just expectations raised by the title, the reward is promised not to the robbers and murderers, but to those who shall discover and prosecute them to conviction. Here we were led into error by that hasty mode of elision, which sometimes obtains in the titles of our English law process; as, scia-fa, ti-fa, qui-tam, &c.; names which to preserve the glorious uncertainty of the law, never refer to the sense, but to the first words of the writs.

In our newspaper a formidable list of unanimous resolutions of various committees and corps succeeds to the advertisement of murder, robbery, and reward, and we have, at the close of each day's business, thanksgiving in various formulas for the very proper, upright, or spirited behaviour of our worthy, gallant, or respected chairman. Now that a man may behave properly, or sit uprightly in a chair, we can readily comprehend; but what are we to understand by a spirited behaviour in a chair? Perhaps it alludes to the famous duel fought by a gouty Irish gentleman in his arm chair. As the gallant chairman actually in that position...
ESSAY ON

shot his adversary, it behoves us to understand
the meaning of spirited behaviour in the chair.

We may, however, venture to hint, fas est et
ab hoste doceri, that, in the publications of corps
and committees, this formula should be omitted
—'Resolved unanimously, (with only one dissen-
tient voice.)' Here the obloquy meant to rest
on the one dissentient voice unfortunately falls
upon the publishers of the disgrace, exposing
them to the ridicule of resolving an Irish bull.
If this be a bull however, we are concerned to
find, it is matched by that of the government of
Munich, who published a catalogue of forbidden
books, and afterwards, under heavy penalties
forbade the reading of the catalogue. But this
might be done in the hurry, occasioned by the
just dread of revolutionary principles.

What shall we say for the blunder of a French
academician, in a time of profound peace, who
gave it as his opinion, that nothing should be
read in the public sittings of the academy 'par
dela ce qui est imposé par les statuts: il motivait
son avis en disant—En fait d'inutilités il ne faut
que le nécessaire.'

If this speech had been made by a member of
the Royal Irish Academy, it would have had the
IRISH BULLS.

honour to be noticed all over England as a bull. *The honour to be noticed* we say, in imitation of the exquisitely polite expression of a correspondent of the English Royal Society, who talks of "the earthquake that had the honour to be noticed by the Royal Society."

It will we fear be long before the Irish emerge so far from barbarism as to write in this style.

The Irish are, however, we are happy to observe, making some little approaches to a refined and courtly style; kings, and, in imitation of them, great men, and all who think themselves great—a numerous class—speak and write as much as possible in the plural number, instead of the singular. Instead of *I* they always say *we*; instead of *my*—*our*, according to the Italian idiom, which flatters this humour so far as to make it a point of indispensable politeness. It is, doubtless, in humble imitation of such illustrious examples, that an Irishman, of the lowest class, when he means to express that he is a member of a committee, says *I am a Committee*. Thus consolidating the power, wisdom, and virtue of a whole committee in his own person. Superior even to the Indian, who believes that he shall
inherit the powers and virtues of his enemies after he has destroyed them*; this committee-man takes possession of the faculties of his living friends and associates. When some of the united men, as they call themselves, were examined, they frequently answered to the questions, who, or what are you? I am a committee.

However extraordinary it may at first sound to hear one man assert that he is a whole committee, it is not more wonderful than that the whole parliament of Bourdeaux should be found in a one horse chair†.

We forbear to descant farther upon Irish committee-men, lest we should call to mind, merely the similarity of name, the times when England had her committee-men, who were not perfectly free from all tinge of absurdity. It is remarkable that in times of popular ferment, a variety of new terms are coined to serve the purposes and passions of the moment. In the days

* "So indian murderers hope to gain
   "The powers and virtues of the flain,
   "Of wretches they destroy."

† Vide Mémoires du Cardinal de Retz.
of the English committee-men this practice had risen to such a height, that it was fair gain for ridicule. Accordingly Sir John Birkenhead about that time found it necessary to publish "The Children's Dictionary; an exact Collection of all New Words born since Nov. 3, 1640, in Speeches, Prayers, and Sermons, as well those that signify something, as nothing." We observe that it has likewise been found necessary to publish in France une Dictionnaire neologique, a dictionary of the new terms adopted since the revolution.

It must be supposed, that during the late disturbances in Ireland many cant terms have been brought into use, which are not yet to be reckoned amongst the acknowledged terms of the country. However absurd these may be, they are not for our purpose proper subjects of animadversion. Some countries have their birds of passage, and some their follies of passage, which it is scarcely worth while to shoot as they fly. It has often been said, that the language of a people is a just criterion of their progress in civilization; but we must not take a specimen of their vocabulary during the immediate prevalence of
any transient passion or prejudice. It is to be hoped, that all party barbarisms in language will now be dispersed and forgotten; for some time has elapsed since we read the following article of country intelligence in a Dublin paper:

"General —— scoured the country yesterday, but had not the good fortune to meet with a single rebel."

The author of this paragraph seems to have been a keen sportsman: he regrets the not meeting with a single rebel, as he would the not meeting with a single hare, or partridge; and he justly considers the human biped as fair game, to be hunted down by all who are properly qualified and licensed by government. To the English it may seem a strange subject of lamentation, that a gentleman could not meet with a single rebel in the county of Wicklow, when they have so lately been informed from the high authority of a noble lord, that Ireland was so disturbed, that whenever he went out, he called as regularly for his pistols as for his hat and gloves. Possibly, however, this was only a figure of speech, like that of bishop Wilkins, who prophesied that the time would come when gentlemen, when they were to go a journey, would call for their
IRISH BULLS.

wings as regularly as they call for their boots.
—We believe that the hyperboles of the privy counsellor and the bishop are of equal magnitude.

CHAPTER V.

THE CRIMINAL LAW OF BULLS AND BLUNDES.

Madame de Sevigné observes, that there are few people sufficiently candid, or sufficiently enlightened, to distinguish, in their judgements of others, between those faults and mistakes which proceed from manque d'esprit, and those which arise merely from manque d'usage. We cannot appreciate the talents or characters of foreigners, without making allowance for their ignorance of our manners, of the idiom of our language, and the multifarious signification of some of our words. A French gentleman, who dined in London in company with the celebrated author of the Rambler, wishing to show him a mark of peculiar respect, drank Dr. Johnson's health in these words:

"Your health, Mr. Vagabond."
Assuredly no well-judging Englishman would undervalue the Frenchman's abilities, because he mistook the meaning of the words Vagabond and Rambler; nor would any wellbred gentleman put a foreigner out of countenance by openly laughing at such a mistake: he would imitate the politeness of a Frenchman, who, when Dr. Moore said, "I am afraid the word I have just used is not French," replied, "Non, monsieur—Mais il mérite bien de l'etre." It would, indeed, be a great stretch of politeness to extend this to our Irish neighbours; for no Irishman can ever deserve to be anglicised, though so many Gallicisms have of late not only been naturalised in England, but even adopted by the most fashionable speakers and writers. The mistaking a feminine for a masculine noun, or a masculine for a feminine, must in all probability, have happened to every Englishman, that ever opened his lips in Paris; yet without losing his reputation for common sense. But when a poor Irish haymaker, who had but just learned a few phrases of the English language by rote, mistook a feminine for a masculine noun, and began his speech in a court of justice with these words—"My lord, I am a poor widow," instead of,
IRISH BULLS.

"My lord I am a poor widower," it was sufficient to throw a grave judge and jury into convulsions of laughter. It was formerly in law no murder to kill a *merus Hibernicus*; and it is to this day no offence against good manners to laugh at any of this species. It is of a thousand times more consequence to have the laugh than the argument on our side, as all those know full well, who have any experience in the management of the great or little vulgar. By the common custom and courtesy of England we have the laugh on our side: let us keep it by all means: All means are justifiable to obtain a great end, as all great men maintain in practice, if not in theory. We need not in imitating them have any scruples of conscience; we need not apprehend, that to ridicule our hibernian neighbours unmercifully is unfriendly or ungenerous. Nations, it has been well observed, are never generous in their conduct towards each other. We must follow the common *custom* of nations, where we have no *law* to guide our proceedings.

We must therefore carefully continue the laudable practice of ridiculing the blunders, whether real or imaginary, of Irishmen.

In conversation, Englishmen are permitted
sometimes to blunder, but without ever being called blunderers. It would indeed be an intolerable restraint upon social intercourse, if every man were subject to be taxed for each inaccuracy of language—if he were compelled to talk, upon all occasions, as if he were amenable to a star-chamber of criticism, and surrounded by informers.

Much must be allowed for the licence of conversation; but by no means must this conversation-license be extended to the Irish. If, for instance, at the convivial hour of dinner, when men are not usually intent upon grammatical or mathematical niceties, an Irish gentleman desires him, who 'rules his roast,' to cut the suilloin of beef horizontally downwards, let the mistake immediately be set down in our note-books, and conned over, and got by heart; and let it be repeated to all eternity as a bull. But if an English lady observe, when the candles have long stood unsnuffed, that 'those odious long wicks will soon grow up to the ceiling,' she can be accused only of an error of vision. We conjure our readers to attend to these distinctions in their intercourse with their hibernian neighbours: it must be done habitually and technically; and
IRISH BULLS.

we must not listen to what is called reason; we must not enter into any argument, pro or con, but silence every Irish opponent—if we can—with a laugh.

The abbé Girard, in his accurate work, 'Synonymes François,' makes a plausible distinction between un âne et un ignorant: he says, 'On est âne par disposition; on est ignorant par défaut d'instruction.'—An ignorant person may certainly, even in the very circumstance which betray his ignorance, evince considerable ability. For instance, the native Indian, who for the first time saw a bottle of porter uncorked, and who expressed great astonishment at the quantity of froth, which burst from the bottle, and much curiosity to know whether it could all be put in again, showed even in his ignorance a degree of capacity, which in different situations might have saved his life, or have made his fortune. In the situation of the poor fisherman, and the great giant of smoke, who issued from the small vessel, well known to all versed in the Arabian Tales, such acuteness would have saved his life; and a similar spirit of inquiry, applied to chemistry, might, in modern times, have made his fortune. Even where no positive abilities are
displayed at the time by those who manifest ignorance, we should not (except the culprits are natives of Ireland) hastily give them up. Ignorance of the most common objects is not only incident to certain situations, but absolutely unavoidable; and the individuals placed in those situations are no more blamable, than they would be for becoming blind in the snows of Lapland, or for having goitres, amongst the Cretins of le Vallais. Would you blame the ignorant nuns, who, insensible of the danger of an eruption of Mount Vesuvius*, warmed themselves at the burning lava which flowed up to the windows of their cells? or would you think the French canoness an idiot, who, at the age of fifty, was permitted on account of her health to go out of her convent, and asked, when she met a cow for the first time, what strange animal that was?—or would you think that those poor children deserve to be stigmatised as fools, who after being confined for a couple of years in an English workhouse, actually at eight years old had for-

* Vide Sir W. Hamilton's Account of an Eruption of Mount Vesuvius.
IRISH BULLS. 47

gotten the names of a pig and a calf*; their ignorance was surely more deplorable than ridiculous. When the London young lady kept a collection of chicken-bones on her plate at dinner, as a bonne-bouche for her brother's horse†, Dr. Johnson would not suffer her to be called an idiot, but very judiciously defended her by maintaining, that her action merely demonstrated her ignorant of points of natural history, on which a London miss had no immediate opportunity of obtaining information. Had the world always judged upon such subjects with similar candour, the reproachful cant term of cockney would never have been disgracefully naturalised in the English language. This word, as we are informed by a learned philologist, originated from a mistake of a London citizen's son, who, having been bred up entirely in the metropolis, was so gloriously ignorant of country life and country animals; that the first time he heard a cock crow, he

* This fact, we believe, is mentioned in a letter of Mrs. Cappe's on parish schools.

† Vide Mrs. Piozzi's English Synonymy.
ESSAY ON
called it neighing.—If such a mistake had been
made by an Irishman, it would surely have been
called a bull: it has at least as good pretensions
to the title as many mistakes made by ignorant
Hibernians; for instance, the well-known blunder relative to the sphinx:—An uninformed
Irishman, hearing the sphinx alluded to in company, whispered to a friend, "The sphinx!
who is that now?"

"A monster, man."

"Oh, a Munster-man: I thought he was from
Connaught," replied the Irishman, determined
not to seem totally unacquainted with the family.
Grofs and ridiculous as this blunder appears, we
are compelled by courtesy to allow, that the af-
fection of showing knowledge has betrayed to
shame men far superior to our Hibernian, both
in reputation and in the means of acquiring
knowledge.

Cardinal Richelieu, the Mecenas—or would
be Mecenas of France, once mistook the name
of a noted grammarian, Maurus Terentianus,
for a play of Terence's. This is called by the
French writer who records it, "une bevue bien
grossière." However gross, a mistake can never
be made into a bull. We find bevues french,
IRISH BULLS.

english, italian, german, latin, and greek, of theologians, historians, antiquarians, poets, critics and translators without end. The learned Budeus takes Sir Thomas More's Utopia for a true history, and purposes sending missionaries to work the conversion of so wise a people as the Utopians. An English antiquarian* mistakes a tomb in a gothic cathedral for the tomb of Hector. Pope, our great poet and prince of translators, mistakes Decade the 8th, Novel the 5th, of Cinthio, for Dec. 8th, Nov. 5th; and Warburton, his learned critic, improves upon the blunder by afterwards writing the words December and November at full length. Better still, because more comic, is the blunder of a Frenchman, who, puzzled by the title of one of Cibber's plays, "Love's Last Shift," translates it, "La dernière chemise de l'amour." We laugh at these mistakes and forget them; but who can forget the blunder of the Cork almanack maker, who informs the world, that the principal republics in Europe are Venice, Holland, and America?

* John Lydgate.

E 2
ESSAY ON

The blunders of men of all countries, except Ireland, do not affix an indelible stigma upon individual or national character. A free pardon is, and ought to be, granted by every Englishman to the vernacular and literary errors of those, who have the happiness to be born subjects of Great Britain. What enviable privileges are annexed to the birth of an Englishman! and what a misfortune it is, to be a native of Ireland.

CHAPTER VI.

LITTLE DOMINICK.

We have laid down the general law of bulls and blunders; but as there is no rule without an exception, we may perhaps allow an exception in favour of little Dominick.

Little Dominick was born at Fort-Reilly, in Ireland, and bread no where until his tenth year, when he was sent to Wales to learn manners and grammar at the school of Mr. Owen ap Davies ap Jenkins ap Jones. This gentleman had reason to think himself the greatest of
IRISH BULLS.

men; for he had over his chimney-piece a well-smoaked genealogy, duly attested, tracing his ancestry in a direct line up to Noah; and moreover he was nearly related to the learned etymologist, who in the time of Queen Elizabeth wrote a folio to prove that the language of Adam and Eve in paradise was pure Welsh.—With such causes to be proud, Mr. Owen ap Davies ap Jenkins ap Jones was excusable for sometimes seeming to forget that a schoolmaster is but a man. He however sometimes entirely forgot that a boy is but a boy; and this happened most frequently with respect to little Dominick.

This unlucky wight was flogged every morning by his master, not for his vices, but for his vicious conductions, and laughed at by his companions every evening for his idiomatic absurdities. They would probably have been inclined to sympathize in his misfortunes, but that he was the only Irish boy at school; and as he was at a distance from all his relations, and without a friend to take his part, he was a just object of obloquy and derision: Every sentence he spoke was a bull; every two words he put together proved a false concord; and every sound he ar-
ESAY ON

ticulated betrayed the brogue. But as he pos-
tessed some of the characteristic boldness of those
who have been dipped in the Shannon, though
he was only little Dominick, he showed himself
able and willing to fight his own battles with the
host of foes by whom he was encompassed:
Some of these, it was said, were of nearly twice
his stature. This may be exaggerated; but it
is certain that our hero sometimes ventured with
fly Irish humour to revenge himself upon his
most powerful tyrant by mimicking the Welsh
accent, in which Mr. Owen ap Jones said to
him, "Cot plefs me, you plockit, and shall I
never learn you enclith crammer?"

It was whispered in the ear of his Dionysius,
that our little hero was a mimick; and he was
treated with increased severity.

The midsummer holydays approached; but
he feared that they would shine no holydays for
him. He had written to his mother to tell her,
that school would break up the next, and to beg
an answer, without fail, by return of post: but
no answer came.

It was now nearly two months since he had
heard from his dear mother or any of his friends.
IRISH BULLS.

in Ireland. His spirits began to sink under the pressure of these accumulated misfortunes; he slept little, ate less, and played not at all; indeed nobody would play with him upon equal terms, because he was nobody's equal: his schoolfellows continued to consider him as a being, if not of a different species, at least of a different cast from themselves.

Mr. Owen ap Jones's triumph over the little Irish plowit was nearly complete, for the boy's heart was almost broken, when there came to the school a new scholar—O, how unlike the others!—His name was Edwards; he was the son of a neighbouring Welsh gentleman. When he saw how poor Dominick was persecuted, he took him under his protection, fought his battles with Welsh boys, and, instead of laughing at him for speaking Irish, he endeavoured to teach him to speak English. In his answers to the first questions Edwards ever asked him, little Dominick made two blunders, which set all his other companions in a roar; yet Edwards would not allow them to be genuine bulls.

In answer to the question, "Who is your father?" Dominick said, with a deep sigh, "I
ESSAY ON

have no father—I am an orphan—I have only a mother."

'Have you any brothers and sisters?'

'No; I wish I had; for perhaps they would love me, and not laugh at me,' said Dominick with tears in his eyes; 'but I have no brothers but myself.'

One day Mr. Jones came into the school-room with an open letter in his hand, saying, 'here, you little irish blockhead; here's a letter from your mother.'

The little irish blockhead started from his form, and, throwing his grammar on the floor, leaped up higher than he or any boy in the school had ever been seen to leap before; and, clapping his hands, he exclaimed, 'A letter from my mother!—And will I hear the letter?—And will I see her once more?—And will I go home these holydays?—O, then I will be too happy!'

'There's no danger of that,' said Mr. Owen ap Jones; 'for your mother, like a wife ooman,

* Iliad, 6th Book, 1. 432, Andromache says to Hector, 'you will make your son an orphan, and your wife a widow.'
writes me here, that, by the advice of your cardian, to oom she is going to be married, she will not bring you home to Ireland till I send her word you are perfect in your English grammar at least.'

'I have my lesson perfect, sir,' said Dominick, taking his grammar up from the floor: will I say it now?'

'No, you plockit, you will not; and I will write your mother word, you have proke Priscian's head four times this tay, since her letter came?'

Little Dominick, for the first time, was seen to burst into tears—'Will I hear the letter?—Will I see my mother?—Will I go home?'

'You Irish plockit!' continued the relentless grammarian; 'you Irish plockit, will you never learn the difference between shall and will?'

The Welsh boys all grinned, except Edwards, who hummed loud enough to be heard,

'And will I see him once again?'

'And will I hear him speak?'

Many of the boys were fortunately too ignorant to feel the force of the quotation; but Mr.
Owen ap Jones understood it, turned upon his heel, and walked off.

Soon afterwards he summoned Dominick to his awful desk; and pointing with his ruler to the following page in Harris’s Harmes, bade him ‘read it, and understand it, if he could.’

Little Dominick read, but could not understand.

‘Then read it loud, you blockit.’

Dominick read aloud—

’T here is nothing appears so clearly an object of the mind or intellect only as the future does; since we can find no place for it’s existence anywhere else; not but the same, if we consider, is equally true of the past—.’

‘Well, co on—What stops the blockit?—Can’t you read English now?’

‘Yes, sir; but I was trying to understand it—I was considering, that this is like what they would call an Irish bull, if I had said it.’

Little Dominick could not explain what he meant in English, that Mr. Owen ap Jones would understand: and, to punish him for his impertinent observation, the boy was doomed to learn all that Harris and Lowth have written to explain the nature of shall and will.—The reader, if he
be desirous of knowing the full extent of the penance enjoined, may consult Lowth's Grammar, p. 52, ed. 1799, and Harris's Hermes, p. 10, 11, and 12, 4th edition.

Undismayed at the length of his task, little Dominick only said, 'I hope, if I say it all without missing a word, you will not give my mother a bad account of me and my grammar studies, sir.'

'Say it all first, without missing a word, and then I shall see what I shall say,' replied Mr. Owen ap Jones.

Even the encouragement of this oracular answer excited the boy's fond hopes so keenly, that he lent his little soul to the task, learned it perfectly, said it at night, without missing one word, to his friend Edwards, and said it the next morning, without missing one word, to his master.

'And now, sir,' said the boy, looking up, 'Will you write to my mother? And shall I go home?'

'Tell me first, whether you understand all this that you have learnt so cliply,' said Mr. Owen ap Jones.

That was more than his bond. Our hero's
countenance fell; and he acknowledged, that he did not understand it perfectly.

'Then I cannot write a cot account of you and your crammer studies to your mother; my conscience coes against it,' said the conscientious Mr. Owen ap Jones.

No intreaties could move him. Dominick never saw the letter that was written to his mother; but he felt the consequence. She wrote word this time punctually by return of the post, that she was sorry she could not send for him home these holydays, as she had heard so bad an account from Mr. Jones, &c., and as she thought it her duty not to interrupt the course of his education, especially his grammar studies.

Little Dominick heaved many a sigh when he saw the packings up of all his schoolfellows, and dropped a few tears as he looked out of the window, and saw them, one after another, get on their welsh ponies, and gallop off towards their homes.

'I have no home to go to,' said he.

'Yes, you have,' cried Edwards; and our horses are at the door to carry us there.'

'To Ireland? me! the horses!' said the poor boy, quite bewildered.
IRISH BULLS.

'No; the horses cannot carry you to Ireland,' said Edwards, laughing good-naturedly, 'but you have a home now in England. I asked my father to let me bring you home with me: and he says 'Yes,' like a dear good father, and has sent the horses—Come, let's away.'

'But will Mr. Jones let me go?'

'Yes; he dare not refuse; for my father has a living in his gift, that Jones wants, and which he will not have, if he do not change his tune to you.'

Little Dominick could not speak one word, his heart was so full.—No boy could be happier than he was, during these holidays: 'the genial current of his soul,' which had been frozen by unkindness, flowed with all its natural freedom and force.

Whatever his reason might be, Mr. Owen ap Jones from this time forward was observed to change his manners towards his Irish pupil. He never more complained unjustly of his speaking Priscian's head, seldom called him Irish plockite, and once would have flogged a Welsh boy for taking up this cast expression of the master's, but that the Irish blockhead begged the culprit off.
ESSAY ON

Little Dominick sprang forward rapidly in his studies: he soon surpassed every boy in the school, his friend Edwards only excepted. In process of time his guardian removed him to a higher seminary of education. Edwards had a tutor at home. The friends separated. Afterward they followed different professions in distant parts of the world; and they neither saw nor heard any more of each other for many years.

Dominick, now no longer little Dominick, went over to India as private secretary to one of our commanders in chief. How he has got into this situation, or by what gradations he rose in the world, we are not exactly informed: we know only, that he was the reputed author of a much admired pamphlet on India affairs, that the dispatches of the general to whom he was secretary were remarkably well written, and that Dominick O'Reilly, esq., returned to England, after several years absence, not miraculously rich, but with a fortune equal to his wishes. His wishes were not extravagant: his utmost ambition was to return to his native country with a fortune that would enable him to live independently of all the world, especially of some of his
relations, who had not used him well. His mother was no more.

Upon his arrival in London, one of the first things he did was to read the Irish newspapers. To his inexpressible joy, he saw the estate of Fort-Reilly advertised to be sold—the very estate which had formerly belonged to his own family. Away he posted directly to an attorney's in Cecil-street, who was empowered to dispose of the land.

When this attorney produced a map of the well-known demesne, and an elevation of that house, in which he had spent the happiest hours of his infancy, his heart was so touched, that he was on the point of paying down more for an old ruin than a good new house would cost. The attorney acted honestly by his client, and seized this moment to exhibit a plan of the stabling and offices, which, as sometimes is the case in Ireland, were in a style far superior to the dwelling-house. Our hero surveyed these with Transport. He rapidly planned various improvements in imagination, and planted certain spots in the demesne.—During this time the attorney was giving directions to a clerk about some other bu-
nesse, suddenly the name of Owen ap Jones struck his ear—He started.

"Let him wait in the front parlour: his money is not forthcoming," said the attorney; "and if he keeps Edwards in jail till he rots—."

"Edwards! Good heavens!—in jail!—What Edwards?" exclaimed our hero.

It was his friend Edwards.

The attorney told him that Mr. Edwards had been involved in great distress by taking upon himself his father's debts, which had been incurred in exploring a mine in Wales; that of all the creditors none had refused to compound, except a Welsh parson, who had been presented to his living by old Edwards; that this Mr. Owen ap Jones had thrown young Mr. Edwards into jail for the debt.

"What is the rascal's demand? He shall be paid off this instant," cried Dominick, throwing down the plan of Fort-Reilly; "send for him up, and let me pay him off upon the spot."

"Had not we best finish our business first, about the O'Reilly estate, sir," said the attorney:

"No, sir; damn the O'Reilly estate," cried he, huddling the map together on the desk, and, taking up the bank notes, which he had begun
IRISH BULLS.

recon for the purchase money—‘I beg your pardon, sir—If you knew the facts, you would excuse me—Why does not this rascal come up to be paid?’

The attorney, thunderstruck by this hibernian impetuosity, had not yet found time to take his pen out of his mouth. As he sat transfixed in his arm-chair, O'Reilly ran to the head of the flairs, and called out, in a stentorian voice, ‘Here, you Mr. Owen ap Jones; come up and be paid off this instant, or you shall never be paid at all.’

Up stairs hobbled the old schoolmaster, as fast as the gout and welsh ale would let him—‘Cot ples me, that voice,’ he began.—

‘Where’s your bond, sir?’ said the attorney.

‘Safe here, Cot be praised,’ said the terrified Owen ap Jones, pulling out of his bosom, first a blue pocket-handkerchief, and then a tattered welsh grammar, which O'Reilly kicked to the farther end of the room.

‘Here is my pond,’ said he, ‘in the crammer,’ which he gathered from the ground; there, rumbling over the leaves, he at length unfolded the precious deposit.
ESSAY ON

O'Reilly saw the bond, seized it, looked at the sum, paid it into the attorney's hands, tore the seal from the bond; then, without looking at old Jones, whom he dared not trust himself to speak to, he clapped his hat upon his head, and rushed out of the room. He was however, obliged to come back again, to ask where Edwards was to be found.

'In the King's Bench prison, sir,' said the attorney: 'but am I to understand,' cried he, holding up the map of the O'Reilly estate, 'am I to understand, that you have no further wish for this bargain?'

'Yes—No—I mean you are to understand that I am off,' replied our hero, without looking back—'I'm off—That's plain English.'

Arrived at the King's Bench prison, he hurried to the apartment, where Edwards was confined. The bolt flew back; for even the turnkeys seemed to catch our hero's enthusiasm.

'Edwards, my dear boy! how do you do?—Here's a bond debt, justly due to you for my education—O, never mind asking any unnecessary questions; only just make haste out of this undeserved abode—Our old rascal is paid off—Owen ap Jones, you know—Well, how the
man flares!—Why now will you have the assurance to pretend to forget who I am? and must I spake,' continued he, assuming the tone of his childhood—'and must I spake to you again in my old Irish brogue, before you will recollect your own little Dominick?'

When his friend Edwards was out of prison, and when our hero had leisure to look into business, he returned to the attorney, to see that Mr. Owen ap Jones had been legally satisfied.

'Sir,' said the attorney, 'I have paid the plaintiff in this suit; and he is satisfied; but I must say,' added he with a contemptuous smile, 'that you Irish gentlemen are rather in too great a hurry in doing business: business, sir, is a thing that must be done slowly, to be well done.'

'I am ready now to do business as slowly as you please; but when my friend was in prison, I thought the quicker I did his business the better—Now tell me what mistake I have made, and I will rectify it instantly.'

'Instantly!'—'Tis well, sir, with your promptitude, that you have to deal with what prejudice thinks uncommon—an honest attorney.—

Here are some bank notes of yours, sir, amounting to a pretty round sum—You made a
ESSAY ON

little blunder in this business: you left me the
penalty, instead of the principal, of the bond—
just twice as much as you should have done.

'Just twice as much as was in the bond, but
not twice as much as I should have done, nor
half as much as I should have done, in my opi-
nion,' said O'Reilly; 'but whatever I did, was
with my eyes open: I was persuaded you were
an honest man; in which you see I was not
mistaken; and as a man of business, I knew
you would pay Jones only his due. The re-
mainder of the money I meant, and mean,
should lie in your hands for my friend Edwards's
use. I feared he would not have taken it from
my hands: I therefore left it in yours. To
have taken my friend out of prison merely to let
him go back again today, for want of money to
keep himself clear with the world, would have
been a blunder indeed, but not an Irish blunder;
our Irish blunders are never blunders of the
heart.'
CHAPTER VII.

THE BLISS OF IGNORANCE.

No well-informed Englishman would laugh at the blunders of such a character as little Dominick; but there are people who justify the assertion, that laughter arises from a sense of real or imaginary superiority. Now if it be true, that laughter has it's source in vanity, as the most ignorant are generally the most vain, they must enjoy this pleasure in it's highest perfection. Unconscious of their own deficiencies, and consequently fearless of becoming in their turn the objects of ridicule, they enjoy in full security the delight of humbling their superiors. How much are they to be admired for the courage with which they apply, on all occasions, their test of truth! Wise men may be struck with admiration, respect, doubt, or humility; but the ignorant, happily unconscious that they know nothing, can be checked in their merriment by no consideration, human or divine.—Theirs is the fly sneer, the dry joke, and the horfe laugh:
theirs the comprehensive range of ridicule, which takes "every creature in, of every kind." No fastidious delicacy spoils their sports of fancy; though ten times told, the tale to them can never be tedious; though dull "as the fat weed that grows on Lethe's bank," the jest for them has all the poignancy of satire: on the very effals, the garbage of wit, they can feed and batten. For them the jokes of Joe Miller have that infinite variety, which custom cannot stale. Happy they who can find in every jesler the wit of Sterne or Swift; who else can wade through hundreds of thickly printed pages to obtain for their reward, such witticisms as the following*?

"Two Irishmen having travelled on foot from Chester to Barnet, were confoundedly tired and fatigued by their journey; and the more so when they were told, that they had still about ten

*The eldest partner in the firm of this book actually read the whole of Old Joe Miller, containing all the good things in above fifty jest books, published from 1558 to 1801, to obtain a competent knowledge of the treasures of English wit; he never felt so much tired even with Coke upon Littleton.
IRISH BULLS

69

miles to go—'By my shoul and St. Patrick,'
eries one of them, 'it is but five miles a piece.'

Here, notwithstanding the promise of a jest
held forth by the words,—'By my shoul and St.
Patrick,' we are ultimately cheated of our hopes.
To the ignorant, indeed, the word of promise is
kept to the mind as well as the ear; but others
perceived, that instead of a bull, they have only
a piece of sentimental arithmetic, founded up
on the elegant theorem, that friendship doubles
all our pleasures, and divides all our pains.

We must not, from false delicacy to our coun-
trymen, here omit a piece of advice to English
retailers or inventors of Irish blunders. Let
them beware of such prefatory exclamations as
—'By my shoul and St. Patrick! By Jasus!
Arrah Honey! My dear Joy! &c.;' because all
such phrases, besides being absolutely out of date
and fashion in Ireland, raises too high an ex-
pectation in the minds of his British audience,
operating as much to the disadvantage of the
story-teller as the dangerous exordium of—'I'll
tell you an excellent story,' an exordium ever
to be avoided by all prudent wits.

Another caution should be given to well-
meaning ignorance. Never produce that as an
ESSAY ON

Irish bull, for which any person of common literature can immediately supply a precedent from our best authors. Never be at the pains, for instance, of telling, from Joe Miller, a good story of an Irish sailor, who travelled with captain Cook round the world, and afterwards swore to his companions, that it was as flat as a table. This anecdote, however excellent, immediately finds a parallel in Pope.

"Mad Matheus alone was unconfin'd,
Too mad for mere material chains to bind;
Now to pure space lifts her extatic stare,
Now running round the circle finds it square."

Pope was led into the blunder of representing mad Matheus running round the circle and finding it square, by a confused notion, that mathematicians had considered the circle as composed of straight lines. His mathematical friends could have told him, that though it was talked of as a polygon, it was not supposed to be a square; but polygon would not have rhymed to stare; and poets, when they launch into the ocean of words, must have an eye to the helm: at all events a poet, who is not supposed to be a
IRISH BULLS.

A student of the exact sciences, may be forgiven for a mathematical blunder. This affair of squaring the circle seems to be peculiarly liable to error; for even an accurate mathematician cannot speak of it without committing something like a bull.

Dr. Hutton, in his treatise on mensuration, p. 119, says, "As the famous quadrature of the late Mr. John Machin, professor of astronomy in Gresham College, is extremely expeditious and but little known, I shall take this opportunity of explaining it."

It is to be presumed that the doctor here used the word famous in that acceptation, in which it is daily and hourly employed by our Bond-street loungers, by city apprentices, and men of the ton—'That was a famous good joke,'—'He is a famous whip,'—'We had a famous hop, &c.' Now it cannot be supposed, that any of these things are in themselves entitled to fame; but they may, indeed, by the courtesy of England, be at once famous and but little known.

It is unnecessary to enter into the defence either of Dr. Hutton or of Pope, for they were not born in Ireland, therefore they cannot make.
bulls; and assuredly their mistakes will not, in the opinion of any person of common sense or candour, derogate from their reputation. 'Never strike till you are sure to wound,' is a maxim well known to the polite* and politick part of the world. 'Never laugh when the laugh can be turned against you,' should be the maxim of those, who find their chief pleasure in making others ridiculous. This principle, if applied to our subject, would lead, however, to a very extensive and troublesome system of mutual forbearance; troublesome in proportion to the good or ill humour of the parties concerned, extensive in proportion to their knowledge and acquirements. A man of cultivated parts will foresee the possibility of the retort courteous, where an ignorant man will enjoy the fearless bliss of ignorance. For example, an illiterate person may enjoy a hearty laugh at the common story of an old Irish beggar-man, who, pretending to be dumb, was thrown off his guard by the question, 'How many years have you been dumb?' and answered, 'Five years last St. John's Eve, please you honour.'

* Lord Chesterfield.
IRISH BULLS.

But our triumph over the Irishman abates, when we recollect in the History of England, and in Shakespeare, the case of Saunder Simcox, who pretended to be miraculously and instantaneously cured of blindness at St. Alban's shrine.

Since we have bestowed so much criticism on the blunder of a beggar-man, a word or two must be permitted on the blunder of a thief. It is natural for ignorant people to laugh at the Hibernian, who said, that he had stolen a pound of chocolate to make tea of. But philosophers are disposed to abstain from the laugh of superiority, when they recollect, that the Irishman could probably make as good tea from chocolate, as the chemist could make butter, sugar, and cream, from antimony, sulphur, and tartar. The absurdities in the ancient chemical nomenclature could not be surpassed by any in the hibernian catalogue. If the reader should think this a rash and unwarrantable assertion, we refer him to an essay*

* Essay on Chemical Nomenclature, by S. Dickson, M. D.; in which are comprised observations on the same subject, by R. Kirwan, Pres. R. I. A.—Vide pages 21, 22, 23, &c.
in which the flagrant abuses of speech in the old language of chemistry are admirably exposed and ridiculed.—Could an Irishman confer a more appropriate appellation upon a white powder, than that of *beautiful black*?

It is really provoking to perceive, that as our knowledge of science or literature extends, we are in more danger of finding, in our own and foreign languages, parallels and precedents for Irish blunders; so that a very well informed man can scarcely with any grace or conscience smile, where a booby squire might enjoy a long and loud laugh of contempt.

What crowds were collected to see the Irish* bottle conjurer get into a quart bottle; but Dr. Desaguliers had prepared the English to think, such a condensation of animal particles not impossible. He says, Vol. I, p. 5, of his Lectures on Natural Philosophy, 'that the nature of things should last and their natural course continue the same; all the changes made in bodies, must

* This conjuror, whose name was Broad-

street, was a native of the county of Longford, in Ireland: he by this bit pocketed 200l. and proved himself to be more knave than fool.
IRISH BULLS.

arise only from the various separations, new conjunctions, and motions, of these original particles. These must be imagined of an inconceivable smallness, but by the union of them there are made bigger lumps, &c.

Indeed things are now come to such a lamentable pass, that without either literary or scientific acquirements, mere local knowledge, such as can be obtained from a finger-post, may sometimes prevent us from the full enjoyment of the boetian absurdity of our neighbours. What can, at first view, appear a grosser blunder, than that of the irishman, who begged a friend to look over his library, to find for him the history of the world before the creation? Yet this anachronism of ideas is not unparallelled; it is matched, though on a more contracted scale, by and inscription of a british finger-post—

"Had you seen these roads before they were made,
"You'd lift up your eyes, and bless marshal Wade."

There is, however, a rabbi, mentioned by Bayle, who far exceeds both the irishman and
ESSAY ON
the finger-post. He asserts, that Providence questioned Adam, concerning the creation, before he was born; and that Adam knew more of the matter than the angels who had laughed at him.

Those who see things in a philosophical light, must have observed more frequently than others, that there is in this world a continual recurrence or rotation of ideas, events; and blunders. With his utmost ingenuity or his utmost absurdity, a man, in modern days, cannot contrive to produce a system for which there is no prototype in antiquity, or to commit a blunder, for which there is no precedent. For example, during the late rebellion in Ireland, at the military execution of some wretched rebel, the cord broke, and the criminal, who had been only half hanged, fell to the ground. The major, who was superintending the execution, exclaimed, 'You rascal, if you do that again, I'll kill you, as sure as you breathe.'

Now this is by no means an original idea. In an old French book, called 'La Charlatanerie des Savans,' is the following note—'D'autres ont proposé et résolu en même temps des questions ridicules: par exemple celle-ci. Devroit
IRISH BULLS.

en faire souffrir une seconde fois le même genre de mort à un criminel, qui après avoir eu la tête coupée viendroit à ressusciter?"—Finkelth. Præf. ad Observationes praef. num. 12.

The passionate major, instead of being a mere Irish blunderer, was, without knowing it, a learned casuist; for he was capable of deciding, in one word, a question, which it seems had puzzled the understandings of the ablest lawyers of France, or which had appalled their conscientious sensibility.

Alas, there is nothing new under the sun!

"Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise."

CHAPTER VIII.

"THOUGHTS THAT BREATHE, AND WORDS THAT BURN."

We lamented in our last chapter, that there is nothing new under the sun, yet, perhaps, the thoughts and phraseology of the following story may not be familiar to the English.

"Please your honour," says a man, whose head is bound up with a garter, in token and
ESSAY ON

commemoration of his having been at a fair the preceding night—"Please your honor, it's what I am striving since six o'clock and before, this morning, because I'd sooner trouble you honour's honour than any man in all Ireland, on account of your character, and having lived under your family, me and mine, twinty years, aye, say forty again to the back o' that, in the old gentle-man's time, as I well remember before I was born; that same time I heard tell of your own honour's riding a little horse in green with your gun before you, a grouising over our town-lands, which was the mill and abbey of Ballyna-goobogg, though 'tis now set away from me (owing to them that belied my father) to Christy Salmon, because he's an orange-man—or his wife—though he was once (let him deny it who can), to my certain knowledge, behind the hay-flack in Tullygore, sworn in a united man by captain Alick, who was hanged—Peace to the dead any how!—Well, not to be talking too much of that now, only for this Christy Salmon, I should be still living under your honour."

"Very likely; but what has all this to do with the present business. If you have any com-
plaint to make against Christy Salmon, make it —if not, let me go to dinner;"

"Oh, it would be too bad to be keeping your honour from your dinner, but I'll make your honour sensible immediately. It is not of Christy Salmon at all at all I'm talking. May be your honour is not sensible yet who I am—I am Paddy M'Doole, of the Curragh, and I've been a flax-dresser and dealer since I parted your honour's land, and was last night at the fair of Clonaghthilty, where I went just in a quiet way thinking of nothing at all, as any man might, and had my little yarn along with me, my wife's and the girl's year's spinning, and all just hoping to bring them back a few honest shillings as they deserved—none better!—Well, please your honour, my beast lost a shoe, which brought me late to the fair, but not so late but what it was as throng as ever; you could have walked over the heads of the men, women and childer, a foot and a horseback, all buying and selling, so I to be sure thought no harm of doing the like, so I makes the best bargain I could of the little hanks for my wife and the girls, and the man I sold them to was just weighing them at the crane and I standing forenent him—success to myself!
said I, looking at the shillings I was putting into my waistcoat pocket for my poor family, when up comes the inspector, whom I did not know. I'll take my oath, from Adam, nor couldn't know, because he was the deputy inspector, and had been but just made, of which I was ignorant by this book and all the books that ever were shut and opened—but no matter for that; he seizes my hanks out of the scales, that I had just fold, saying they were unlawful and forfeit, because by his watch it was past four o'clock, which I denied to be possible, please your honour, because not one, nor two, nor three, but all the town and country were selling the same as myself in broad day, only when the deputy came up they stopped, which I could not, by reason I did not know him.—'Sir,' says I (very civil), 'if I had known you it would have been another case, but any how I hope no gentleman will be making it a crime to a poor man to sell his little matter of yarn for his wife and childer after two o'clock, when he did not know it was contrary to law at all at all.

'I gave you notice that it was contrary to law at the fair of Edgerstown,' said he.—'I axe your pardon, sir,' said I, 'it was my brother, for
IRISH BULLS: 84

I was by.—With that he calls me diar, and what not, and takes a gripe* of me and I a gripe of my flax, and he had a shilala† and I had none, so he gave it me over the head, I crying 'murder! murder!' the while, and clinging to the scales to save me, and they set a swinging and I with them, please your honour, till the bame comes down a'top o'the back o'my head, and kill me as your honour sees,'

'I see that you are alive still, I think.'

'It's not his fault if I am, please your honour, for he left me for dead, and I am as good as dead still: if it be pleasing to your honour to examine my head, you'll be sensible I'm telling nothing but the truth. Your honour never seen a man kilt as I was and am—all which I'm ready (when convenient) to swear before your honour.'

* A gripe or fast hold.

† An oak flick, supposed to be cut from the famous wood of Shilala.

‡ This is nearly verbatim from a late Irish complainant.
ESSAY ON

The reiterated assurances which this hero gives us of his being killed, and the composure with which he offers to swear to his own assassination and decease, appear rather surprising and ludicrous to those, who are not aware, that kilt is here used in a metaphorical sense, and that it has not the full force of our word killed. But we have been informed by a lady of unquestionable veracity, that she very lately received a petition worded in this manner—

"To the right honourable lady E—— P——

"Humbly sheweth,

"That your poor petitioner is now lying dead in a ditch, &c."

This poor Irish petitioner's expression, however preposterous it sounds, might perhaps be justified, if we were inclined to justify an Irishman by the example, not only of poets comic and tragic, but of prose writers of various nations. The evidence in favour both of the fact and the belief, that people can speak and walk after they are dead, is attested by stout warriors and grave historians. The emperor Charles the fifth, we all know, assisted at his own funeral, said a mass, and sang a requiem over himself; but this was only "a mockery of woe." Let us
IRISH BULLS.

listen to the solemn voice of a princess, who comes sweeping in the sceptered pall of gorgeous tragedy to inform us, that half herself has buried the other half—

"Weep eyes! melt into tears these cheeks to lave, "One half myself lays t’other in the grave*.

For six such lines as these Corneille received six thousand livres, and the admiration of the French court and people during the augustan age of French literature. But an Italian is not content with killing by halves. Here is a man from Italy who goes on fighting, not like Witherington, up on his flumps, but fairly after he is dead.

Nor yet perceived the vital spirit fled, But still fought on nor knew that he was dead†.

"Pleurez, pleurez mes yeux et fondez vous en eau." "La moitié de ma vie a mis l’autre ad tum-beau." "Il pover nemo che non s’en era accorto, "Andava combattendo ed era morto."
ESSAY ON

Common sense is somewhat shocked, at the instance of an individual fighting after he is dead; but we shall doubtless be reconciled to the idea by the example of a gallant and modern commander, who has declared his opinion, that nothing is more feasible than for a garrison to fight or at least to surrender after they are dead, not after they are buried.—Witness this public document.

"LIBERTY AND EQUALITY!

May 29th, 7th Floreal, 6. 
Garrison of Ostend.

Muscar, commandant of Ostend, to the commandant in chief of his Britannic majesty.

General,

The council of war was sitting when I received the honour of your letters. We have unanimously resolved not to surrender the place until we shall have been buried in its ruins &c.

One step further in hyperbole is reserved for him, who, being buried, carries about his own sepulchre.
IRISH BULLS.

"To live a life half dead, a living death,
And buried; but oh, yet more miserable!
Myself, my sepulchre, a moving grave!"

No person, if he heard this passage for the first time from the lips of an Irishman, could hesitate to call it a series of bulls; yet these lines are part of the beautiful complaint of Samson Agonistes on his blindness. Such are the hyperboles sanctioned by the genius, or, what with some judges may have more influence, the name of Milton. The bounds which separate sublimity from bombast, and absurdity from wit, are as fugitive as the boundaries of taste. Only those, who are accustomed to examine and appraise literary goods, are sensible of the prodigious change that can be made in their apparent value, by a slight change in the manufacture. The absurdity of a man's swearing he was killed, or declaring, that he is now dead in a ditch, is revolting to common sense; yet the living death of Dapperwit in the 'Rape of the Lock' is not absurd, but witty; and representing men as dying many times before their death is in Shakespeare sublime.

H 2
ESSAY ON

"Cowards die many times before their death;
"The brave can never taste of death but once."

The most direct contradictions in words do not (in English writers) destroy the effect of irony, wit, pathos, or sublimity.

In the classic ode to adversity, the poet exclaims,—

"To each their sufferings, all are men
"Condemn'd alike to groan;
"The feeling for another's woes,
"Th' unfeeling for their own."

Who but a half-witted dunce would ask, how those that are unfeeling can have sufferings? When Milton in melodious verse inquires,

"Who shall tempt with wandering feet
"The dark unbottomed infinite abyss,
"And through the palpable obscure find out
"His uncouth way?"

What Zoilus shall dare interrupt this flow of poetry, to object to the palpable obscure, or to
IRISH BULLS: 87
ask how feet can wander upon that which has no bottom?

*It is easy, as Tully has long ago observed, to fix the brand of ridicule upon the verbum ardens of orators and poets—the ‘Thoughts that breathe and words that burn.’*

CHAPTER IX.

PRACTICAL BULLS.

As we have not hitherto been successful in finding original Irish bulls in language, we must now look for them in conduct. A person may be guilty of a solecism, without uttering a single syllable—"That man has been guilty of a solecism with his hand," an ancient critic said of an actor, who had pointed his hand upwards when invoking the infernal gods.—"You may act a lie as well as speak one," says Wallaiston. Upon the same principle, the Irish may be said to act as well as utter bulls. We shall give some instances of their practical bulls, which we hope to find unmatched by the blunders of all other

* Religion of Nature delineated.
ESSAY ON

nations. Most people, whether they be savage or civilized, can contrive to revenge themselves upon their enemies without blundering, but the Irish are exceptions. They cannot even do this without a bull. During the late Irish rebellion there was a banker to whom they had a peculiar dislike, and on whom they had vowed vengeance; accordingly they got possession of as many of his bank notes as they could, and made a bonfire of them! This might have been called a feu de joie, perhaps, but certainly not un feu d'artifice; for nothing could shew less art than burning a banker's notes, in order to destroy his credit. How much better do the English understand the art of vengeance! Captain Drinkwater* informs us, that during the siege of Gibraltar the English, being half famished, were most violently enraged against the Jews, who withheld their stores of provision, and made money of the public distress, a crime never committed except by Jews; at length the fleet relieved the besieged, and as soon as the fresh provisions were given out, the English soldiers and sailors, to revenge themselves upon the Jews,

* See his account of the siege of Gibraltar.
IRISH BULLS.

burst open their stores, and actually roasted a pig at a fire made of cinnamon. There are other persons as well as the Irish, who do not understand their own interests where their passions are concerned. The great warrior Hyder Ali, once lost a battle by a practical bull. Being encamped within sight of the British, he resolved to give them a high idea of his forces and of his artillery; for this purpose, before the engagement*, he ordered his army to march early, and conveying some large pieces of cannon to the top of a hill, he caused them to be pointed at the English camp, where they carried admirably well, and occasioned a kind of disorder and haste in striking and removing tents, &c. Hyder, delighted at having thus insulted the English, caused all his artillery, even the very smallest pieces, to be drawn up the hill for the purpose of making a vain parade, though the greater part of the ball could never reach the English; he imagined he should give the enemy a high idea of his forces, and intimidate them by showing all his artillery, and the vivacity with which it was worked; and in order that his intention

might be answered, he encouraged the soldiers himself, by giving money to the cannoniers of those pieces that appeared to be best served, all which was matter of derision and laughter to the English; and in reality answered no other purpose than that of frightening the feathered inhabitants of the underwood that grew on the hill side.

The English, presently after this farce was over, obliged Hyder to come down, from labour-in-vain hill, and to give them battle in earnest. As the historian observes, "The ridiculous cannonade at the top of the hill had exhausted his ammunition, his great guns were useless to him, and he lost the day by his premature rejoicings before the battle." A still more ancient precedent for this preposterous practical bull of rejoicing for an anticipated victory was given by Xerxes, we believe, who brought with him an immense block of marble, on which he intended to inscribe the date and manner of his victory over the Greeks. When Xerxes was defeated, the Greeks dedicated this stone to Nemesis, the goddess of vengeance. But Xerxes was in the habit of making practical bulls, such as whipping the sea, and begging
IRISH BULLS.

pardon for it afterwards; throwing setters into
the Hellepont as a token of subjugation, and
afterwards expiating his offence by an offering
of a golden cup and persian scymetar.

To such blunders can the passions betray the
most renowned heroes, although they had not
the misfortune to have been born in Ireland.

The impatience which induced Hyder Ali
to anticipate victory, is not confined to military
men and warlike operations; if we descend to
common life and vulgar business, we shall find
the same disposition even in the precincts of
Change-alley; those who bargained for South
Sea stock, that was not actually forthcoming,
were called bears, in allusion to the practice of
the hunters of bears in Canada, who were ac-
customened to bargain for the skin of the bear be-
fore it was caught; but whence the correlative
term bull is derived we are at a loss to deter-
mine, and we must also leave it to the mer-
cantile speculators of England to explain, why
gentlemen calls themselves bulls of wheat and
bulls of coals—all we can say is, that these are
not irish bulls. There is one distinguishing pe-

* Herodotus.
ESSAY ON

Eulogium of the Irish bull—it's horns are tipped with brass*.

It is generally suppos'd, that persons who have been dipped in the Shannon, are ever afterwards endued with a supernatural portion of what is call'd by enemies impudence or assurance, by friends self-possession or civil courage. These invulnerable mortals are never oppress'd with mauvais bonte, that malady, which keeps the faculties of the soul under imaginary imprisonment; as the night mare holds or seems to hold the powerless limbs of her victim. A well-dipped Irishman, on the contrary, can move, speak, think, like Demosthenes, with as much ease, when the eyes of numbers are upon him, as if the spectators were so many cabbage stocks. This virtue of civil courage is of inestimable value in the opinion of the best judges—the great lord Verulam; no one by the by could be a better judge of it's value than he, who wanted it so

* See the advice of Cleomenes to Crius.

HERODOTUS ERATO.

† It is said, that the waters of the Garonne are famed for similar virtue.
IRISH BULLS.

much—the great lord Verulam declares, that if he were asked what is the first, second, and third thing necessary to success in public business, he should answer boldness, boldness, boldness! Success to the nation which possesses it in perfection. Bacon was too acute and, candid a philosopher not to acknowledge, that like all the other goods of life this same boldness has it's countervailing disadvantages.

"Certainly," says he, "to men of great judgment, bold persons are a sport to behold; nay, and to the vulgar, boldness hath somewhat of the ridiculous, for if absurdity be the subject of laughter, doubt you not but great boldness is seldom without some absurdity; especially it is a sport to see when a bold fellow is out of countenance, for that puts his face into a most shrunk, lean and wooden posture, as needs it must."

The man, however, who possesses boldness in perfection, can never be put out of countenance, and, consequently, can never exhibit, for the sport of his enemies, a face in this wooden posture. It is the deficiency, and not the excess of this quality, that is to be feared. Civil boldness without military courage would, indeed, be somewhat ridiculous: but we cannot
accuse the Irish of any want of military courage; on the contrary, it is supposed in England, that an Irishman is always ready to give satisfaction, even where none is desired.

At the close of the American war, as a noble lord, of high naval character, was returning home to his family after various escapes from danger, he was detained a day at Holyhead by contrary winds. Reading in a summer house, he heard the well known sound of bullets whistling near him, he looked about, and found that two balls had just passed through the door close beside him; he looked out of the window, and saw two gentlemen who were just charging their pistols again, and as he guessed, that they had been shooting at a mark upon the door, he rushed out, and very civilly remonstrated with them on the imprudence of firing at the door of a house, without having previously examined whether any one was within side. One of them immediately answered, in a tone which proclaimed at once his disposition and his country—"Sir, I did not know you were within there, and I don't know who you are now; but if I've given offence, I am willing," said he, holding out the ready charged pistols, "to give you
IRISH BULLS.

"the satisfaction of a gentleman—take your choice."

With his usual presence of mind, the noble lord seized hold of both the pistols, and said to his astonished countryman—"Do me the justice, sir, to go into that summer house, shut the door, and let me have two shots at you, then we shall be upon equal terms; and I shall be quite at your service to give or receive the satisfaction of a gentleman."

There was an air of drollery and of superiority in his manner, which at once struck and pleased the Hibernian—"Upon my conscience, sir, I believe you are a very honest fellow," said he, looking him earnestly in the face, "and I've a great mind to shake hands with you.—Will you only just tell me who you are?"

The nobleman told his name—a name dear to every Briton and every Irishman!

"I beg your pardon, and that's what no man ever accused me of doing before," cried the gallant Hibernian; and had I known who you were, I would as soon have shot my own soul as have fired at the door.—But how could I tell who was within side?"

I
ESSAY ON

"That is the very thing of which I complain," said his Lordship.

His candid opponent admitted the justice of the complaint as soon as he understood it, and he promised never more to be guilty of such a practical bull.

CHAPTER X.

THE DUBLIN SHOEBLACK.

Upon looking over our last chapter on practical bulls, we were much concerned to find, that we have so few Irish and so many foreign blunders. It is with still more regret we perceive, that notwithstanding our utmost diligence, we have not yet been able to point out the distinguishing characteristic of an Irish bull. But to compensate for this disappointment we have devised a syllogism, which some people may prefer to an a priori argument, to prove irrefragably, that the Irish are blunderers.

After the instances we have produced, chapter 8th, of the verbum ardens of English and foreign poets; and after the resemblance, that
we have pointed out betwixt certain figures of rhetotick and the irish bull; we have little reason to fear, that the candid and enlightened reader should object to our major.

Major.—Those who use figurative language are disposed to make bulls.

Minor.—The Irish use figurative language.

Conclusion.—Therefore the Irish are disposed to make bulls.

We proceed to establish the truth of our minor, and the first evidence we shall call is a Dublin shoeblack. He is not in circumstances peculiarly favourable for the display of figurative language; he is in a court of justice, upon his trial for life and death. A quarrel happened between two shoeblacks, who were playing at what in England is called pitch farthing, or heads and tails, and in Ireland head and harp. One of the combatants threw a small paving stone at his opponent, who drew out the knife with which he used to scrape shoes, and plunged it up to the hilt in his companion's breast. It is necessary for our story to say, that near the hilt of this knife was stamped the name of Lamprey, an eminent cutler in Dublin. The shoeblack
was brought to trial. With a number of significant gestures, which on his audience had all the powers that Demolhenes ascribes to action, he, in a language not purely attic, gave the following account of the affair to his judge.

"Why, my lord, as I was going past the Royal Exchange I meets Billy—'Billy,' says I, 'will you fky a copper?'—'Done,' says he—'Done,' says I—and done and done's enough between two jhattlemen.—With that I ranged them fair and even with my hook-em-snivey—up they go.—'Music!' says he—'Skull!' says I—and down they come three brown mazzards. —'By the holy you fleshed 'em,' says he—'You lie,' says I.—With that he ups with a lump of a two year old and let's drive at me—I out's with my bread earner, and gives it him up to Lamprey in the bread basket."

To make this intelligible to the English some comments are necessary. Let us follow the text, step by step, and it will afford our readers, as lord Kames says of Blair's Dissertation on Ossian, a delicious morfle of criticism.

As I was going past the Royal Exchange I meets Billy.
IRISH BULLS.

In this apparently simple exordium, the scene and the meeting with Billy are brought before the eye, by the judicious use of the present tense.

Billy, says I, will you sky a copper?

A copper! genus pro specie! the generic name of copper for the base individual halfpenny.

Sky a copper.

To sky is a new verb, which none but a master hand could have coined; a more splendid metonymy could not be applied upon a more trivial occasion; the lofty idea of raising a metal to the skies, is substituted for the mean thought of toffing up a halfpenny. Our orator compresses his hyperbole into a single word. Thus the mind is prevented from dwelling long enough upon the figure to perceive its enormity. This is the perfection of the art. Let the genius of French exaggeration and of Eastern hyperbole hide their diminished heads—Virgil is scarcely more sublime.

'Ingrediturque solo et caput inter nubila condit."

'Her feet on earth, her head amidst the clouds.'
ESSAY ON

Up they go, continues our orator:

*Music!* says he—*Skull!* says I.

Metaphor continually; on one side of an Irish halfpenny there is a harp; this is expressed by the general term music, which is finally contrasted with the word skull.

*Down they come three brown mazards!*

Mazards! how the diction of our orator is enriched from the vocabulary of Shakespeare! the word head, instead of being changed from a more general term, is here brought distinctly to the eye by the term mazard, or face, which is more appropriate to his majesty’s profile than the words skull or head.

*By the holy! you fleshed ’em, says he.*

By the holy! is an oath in which more is meant than meets the ear; it is an ellipsis—an abridgement of an oath. The full formule runs thus—*By the holy poker of Hell!*—This instrument is of Irish invention or imagination. It seems a useful piece of furniture in the place for which it is intended, to stir the devouring flames, and thus to increase the torments of the damned. Great judgement is necessary to direct an orator how to suit his terms to his auditors, so as not to shock their feelings either by
what is too much above, or too much below common life. In the use of oaths, where the passions are warm, this must be particularly attended to, else they lose their effect, and seem more the result of the head than the heart. But to proceed—

_By the holy! you fleshed 'em_

_To flesh_ is another verb of Irish coinage; it means, in shoeblack dialect, to touch a half-penny, as it goes up into the air, with the fleshly part of the thumb, so as to turn it which way you please, and thus to cheat your opponent.—What an intricate explanation saved by one word?

_You lie, says I_,

_Here no periphrasis would do the business._

_With that be ups with a lump of a two year old, and lets drive at me._

_With that._—These are not unmeaning words, used like expletives by some orators, merely to gain time, for though the phrase, _with that_, varies in signification, according to circumstances, either it denotes, that one action immediately follows another as it's consequence, or else it implies, that two actions happened, or two ideas occur, actually at the same time.
ESSAY ON

Ipsi with.—A verb is here formed of two prepositions—a novelty in grammar. Conjunctions, we all know, are corrupted Anglo-Saxon verbs; but prepositions, according to Horne Tooke, derive only from Anglo-Saxon nouns.

All this time it is possible, that the mere English reader would not be able to guess what it is, that our orator umps with or takes up. He should be apprised, that a lump of a two year old is a middle sized stone. This is a metaphor, borrowed partly from the grazier's vocabulary, and partly from the arithmetician's vade-mecum. A stone, to come under the denomination of a lump of a two year old, must be to a less stone as a two year old calf is to a yearling; or it must be to a larger stone than itself, as a two year old calf is to an ox. Here the scholar sees, that there must be two statements, one in the rule of three direct, and one in the rule of three inverse, to obtain precisely the thing required; yet the untutored Irishman, without suspecting the necessity of this operose process, arrives at the solution of the problem by some short cut of his own, as he clearly evinces by the propriety of his metaphor. To be sure there seems some incongruity in his throwing this lump of a two
IRISH BULLS.

A year old calf at his adversary. No arm but that of Milo could be strong enough for such a feat. Upon recollection, however, bold this figure may seem, there are precedents for it's use.

"We read in a certain author," says Beattie, "of a giant, who, in his wrath, tore off the top of the promontory and flung it at the enemy; and so huge was the mass, that you might, says he, have seen goats browsing on it as it flew through the air." Compared with this, our orator's figure is cold and tame.

"I outs with my bread-earner," continues he.

We forbear to comment on outs with, because the intelligent critic immediately perceives, that it has the same sort of merit ascribed to ups with. What our hero dignifies with the name of his bread-earner, is the knife with which, he earned his bread.—Pope's ingenious critic, Mr. Warton, beslows judicious praise upon the art with which this poet, in the Rape of the Lock, has used many 'periphrases and uncommon expressions,' to avoid mentioning the name of scissars, which would sound too vulgar for epick dignity;—fatal engine, forsex, meeting points, &c. Though the metonymy of bread-earner for
ESSAY ON

Shoebuck's knife may not equal these in elegance; it perhaps surpasses them in ingenuity.

'The 

...gives it him up to Lamprey in the breadbasket*

Homer is happy in his description of wounds, but this surpasses him in the characteristic choice of circumstance.—*Up to Lamprey, gives us at once a complete idea of the length, breath, and thickness of the wound, without the assistance of the coroner. It reminds us of a passage in Virgil—

*Cervise orantis capulo tevus abdidit ensem.'
'Up to the hilt his shining fauision sheathed.'

Let us now compare the irish shoebuck's metaphorical language with the sober slang of an English blackguard, who, fortunately for the fairness of the comparison, was placed somewhat in similar circumstances.

Lord Mansfield, examining a man who was a witness in the court of King's Bench, asked him, what he knew of the defendant.

'O, my lord, I knew him. I was up to him.'

*The stomach.
"Up to him!" says his lordship, "what do you mean by being upon him?"

"Meant, my lord! why, I was down upon him."

"Up to him and down upon him?" says his lordship, turning to counsel Dunning, "what does the fellow mean?"

"Why, I mean, my lord, as deep as he thought himself, I staggered him."

"I cannot conceive, my friend," says his lordship, "what you mean by this sort of language, I do not understand it."

"Not understand it!" rejoined the fellow, with surprise, "Lord, what a flat you must be!"

Though he undervalued Lord Mansfield, this man does not seem to be a very bright genius. In his cant words, "up to him—down upon him—staggered him," there are no metaphors; and we confess ourselves to be as great flats as his lordship, for we do not understand this sort of language.

"True no meaning puzzles more than wit;"

"As we may see in another English example: Proverbs have been called the wisdom of nations,
therefore it is fair to have recourse to them in estimating national abilities.  Now there is an old English proverb, 'Tenterten steeple is the cause of Goodwin sands.'

'This proverb,' says Mr. Ray, 'is used, when an absurd and ridiculous reason is given of any thing in question; an account of the original whereof I find in one of bishop Latimer's sermons in these words—'Mr. Moore was once sent with commission into Kent, to try out, if it might be, what was the cause of Goodwin's sands, and the shelf which stopped up Sandwich haven. Thither cometh Mr. Moore, and calleth all the country before him, such as were thought to be men of experience, and men that could, of all likelihood, best satisfy him of the matter, concerning the floppage of Sandwich haven. Among the rest came in before him an old man with a white head, and one that was thought to be little less than an hundred years old. When Mr. Moore saw this aged man, he thought it expedient to hear him say his mind in this matter, for being so old a man, it was likely that he knew the most in that presence or company, for Mr. Moore called this aged man unto him and said, 'father, (said he) tell me,
IRISH BULLS.

If you can, what is the cause of the great arising of the sands and shelves hereabout this haven, which stops it up, so that no ships can arrive here. You are the oldest man I can espy in all the company, so that if any man can tell any cause of it, you, of all likelihood, can say most to it, or, at leastwise, more than any man here assembled.

'Yea, forsooth, good Mr. Moore,' quoth this old man, 'for I am well nigh a hundred years old, and no man here in this company anything near my age.'

'Well, then,' quoth Mr. Moore, 'how say you to this matter? What think you to be the cause of the shelves and sands, which stop the Sandwich haven?'

'Forsooth, sir,' quoth he, 'I am an old man, I think that Tenterden steeple is the cause of Goodwin's sands. For I am an old man, sir,' quoth he, 'I may remember the building of Tenterden steeple, and I may remember when there was no steeple at all there; and before that Tenterden or Totterden steeple was building, there was no manner of talking of any flats or sands that stopped up the haven; and therefore
I think, that Teneterten steeple is the cause of the decay and destroying of Sandwich haven*. Thus far the bishop.

The prolix pertinacity, with which this old aged man adheres to the opinion that he had formed without any intelligible reason, is characteristic of an English peasant; but however absurd his mode of judging may be, and however confused and incongruous his ideas, his species of absurdity surely bears no resemblance to an Hibernian blunder. We cannot even suspect it to be possible, that a man of this sound circumspect character could be in any danger of making and Irish bull; and we congratulate the English peasantery and populace as a body, upon their possessing that temper which

* Wisely rests content with sober sense,
* Nor makes to dangerous wit a vain pretence.*

* This ancient old man, we fear, was more knave than fool. History informs us, that the bishop of Rochester had directed the revenue, appropriated for keeping Goodwin harbour in repair, to the purpose of building a steeple.—Vide Fuller's Worthies of England, page 65.
IRISH BULLS.

Even the slang of English pickpockets and coiners is, as we may see in Colquhoun's View of the Metropolis, free from all seducing mixture of wit and humour. If there be, nevertheless, frequent executions for capital crimes in England, we must account for this in the words of the old chief justice Fortescue—"More men," says his lordship, "are hanged in Englonde in one year than in Fraunce in seven, because the English have better bearts; the Scotchmenne likewise never dare rob, but only commit larcenaries." At all events the phlegmatic temper of Englonde secures her from making bulls. The propensity of this species of blunder exists in minds of a totally different cast; in those who are quick and enthusiastic, who are confounded by the rapidity and force with which undisciplined multitudes of ideas crowd for utterance. Persons of such intellectual characters are apt to make ellisions in speaking, which they trust the capacities of their audience will supply: passing rapidly over a long chain of thought, they sometimes forget the intermediate links, and no one but those of equally rapid habits can follow them successfully.
ESSAY ON

We hope that the evidence of the Dublin shoeblack has, in some degree, tended to prove our minor, that the Irish are disposed to use figurative language; we shall not however rest our case upon a single evidence, however respectable; but before we summon our other witnesses, we beg to relieve the reader’s attention, which must have been fatigued by such a chapter of criticism.—They shall now have the plain ‘unvarnished tale’ of a mendicant. A specimen of city rhetoric is given in the shoeblack; the country mendicant’s eloquence is of a totally different species.

CHAPTER XI.

THE HIBERNIAN MENDICANT.

Perhaps the reader may wish to see as well as hear the petitioner. At first view you might have taken him for a Spaniard: he was tall; and if he had been a gentleman, you would have said that there was an air of dignity in his figure. He seemed very old, yet he appeared more worn by sorrow than by time. Leaning upon a thick
IRISH BULLS.

He held his hat towards us, with nothing importunate in his manner, but rather with a look of confidence in us, mixed with habitual resignation. His thanks were,—"Heaven bless you! Long life and success to you! to you and yours! and may you never want a friend as I do."

The last words were spoken low. He laid his hand upon his heart as he bowed to us, and walked slowly away. We called him back; and upon our questioning him farther, he gave the following account of himself.

"I was bred and born—but no matter where such a one as I was bred and born, no more than where I may die, and be buried. I, that have neither son nor daughter, nor kin, nor friend on the wide earth to mourn over my grave when I am laid in it, as I soon must—Well! when it pleases God to take me I shall
never be missed out of this world, so much as by
a dog—and why should I? Having never in
my time done good to any—but evil—which I
have lived to repent me of many's the long day
and night, and ever shall while I have sense
and reason left: In my youthful days, God
was too good to me: I had friends, and a little
home of my own to go to—a pretty spot of land
for a farm as you could see, with a snug cabin,
and every thing complete, and all to be mine;
for I was the only one my father and mother
had, and accordingly was made much of, too
much; for I grew headstrong upon it, and high,
and thought nothing of any man, and little of any
woman—but one. That one I surely did think
of; and well worth thinking of she was. Beau-
ty, they say, is all fancy; but she was a girl
every man might fancy. Never was one more
sought after. She was then just in her prime,
and full of life and spirits; but nothing light in
her behaviour—quite modest—yet obliging. She
was too good for me to be thinking of, no doubt;
but 'faint heart never won fair lady,' as I made
bold to speak to Rosy, for that was her name,
and after a world of pains, I began to gain upon
her good liking, but couldn't get her to say more
than that she never seen the man she could fancy so well.—This was a great deal from her, for she was coy, and proud like, as she had a good right to be; and, besides being young, loved her little innocent pleasure, and could not easy be brought to give up her fway.—No fault of hers; but all very natural.—Well! I always considered she never would have held out so long, nor have been so stiff with me, had not it been for an old aunt Honour of hers—God rest her soul! One should not be talking ill of the dead—but she was more out of my way than enough: yet the cratur had no malice in her against me, only meaning her child's good, as she called it, but mistook it, and thought to make Rose happy by some greater match than me, counting her fondness for me, which she could not but see something of, childishness, that she would soon be broke of. Now there was a party of English soldiers quartered in our town, and there was a serjeant amongst them that had money, and a pretty place, as they said, in his own country. He courted Rose, and the aunt favoured him. He and I could never relish one another at all. He was a handsome portly man, but very proud, and looked upon me as dirt un-
der his feet, because I was an Irishman; and at every word would say, 'That's an Irish bull?' or 'Do you bear Paddy's brogue?'—at which his fellow soldiers, being all English, would look greatly delighted. Now all this I could have taken in good part from any but him, for I was not an ill humoured fellow; but there was a spite in him I plainly saw against me, and I could not nor would not take a word from him against me or my country, especially while Rose was by, who did not like me the worse for having a proper spirit. She little thought what would come of it.—Whilst all this was going on, her aunt Honour found to object against me, that I was wild and given to drink, both which charges were false and malicious, and I knew could come from none other than the sergeant, which enraged me the more against him for speaking so mean behind my back—Now I knew, that though the sergeant did not drink spirits, he drank plenty of beer. Rose took it however to heart, and talked very seriously upon it, observing, she could never think to marry a man given to drink, and that the sergeant was remarkable sober and staid, therefore most like, as her aunt Honour said, to make a good hus
IRISH BULLS.

band. The words went straight to my heart, along with Rose's look. — I said not a word, but went and solving before I slept to take an oath against of all sorts for Rose's sweet sake. That evening I fell in with some boys of the neighbours, who would have had me along with them, but I renied myself and them, and all I would take was one parting glass, and then made my vow in the presence of the priest forswearing spirits for two years. Then I went straight to her house to tell her what I had done, not being sensible that I was then a little elevated with the parting glass I had taken. The first thing I noticed on going into the room was the man I least wished to see there, and least looked for at this minute; he was in high talk with the aunt, and Rose sitting on the other side of him no way strange towards him as I fancied; but that was only fancy, and effect of the liquor I had drunk, which made me see things wrong. I went up and put my head between them, asking Rose, did she know what I had been about? 'Yes—too well!' and she, drawing back from my breath. — And the aunt looked at her and she at the aunt, and the sergeant stopped his nose, saying he had not been long enough in
ESSAY ON
Ireland to love the smell of whiskey.—I observed, that was an uncivil remark in the present company, and added, that I had not a drop that night, but one glass. At which he sneered and said, that was a bull and a blunder, but no wonder as I was an Irishman. I replied in defence of myself and country.—We went on from one smart word to another; and some of his soldiers, men being of the company, he had the laugh against me still. I was vexed to see Rose bear so well what I could not bear myself. And the talk grew higher and higher; and from talking of blunders and such trifles, we got, I cannot myself tell you how, on to party matters, and politics, and religion. And I was a catholic, and he a protestant; and there he had the thing still against me. The company seeing matters not agreeable, dropped off till none were left but the sergeant, and the aunt, and Rose and myself. The aunt gave me a hint to part, but I would not take it; for I could not bear to go away worsted, and born down as it were by the English faction, and Rose by to judge. The aunt was called out by one, who wanted her to go to a funeral the next day: the Englishman then let fall something about our irish howl, and savages.
IRISH BULLS.

which Rose herself said was uncivil, she being an Irish woman, which he, thinking only of making game on me, forgot.—I knocked him down, telling him it was he that was the savage to affront a lady. As he got up he said, that he'd have the law of me if any law was to be had in Ireland.

"The law!" said I, "and you a soldier!"

"Do you mean to call me coward?" said he.

"This is what an English soldier must not bear."

With that he snatches at his arms that were beside him, asking me again, did I mean to call an Englishman coward?

"Tell me first," said I; "Did you mean to call us Irish savages?"

"That's no answer to my question," says he, "or only an Irish answer."

"It is not the worse for that, may be," says I, very coolly, despising the man now, and just took up a knife, that was on the table, to cut off a button that was hanging at my knee. As I was opening the knife he asked me, was I going to stab at him with my Irish knife, and directly draws his sword upon me; on which I seizes a musket and bayonet one of his men had left, telling him I knew the use of it as well as he
ESSAY ON

or any Englishman, and better, for that I should never have gone, as he did, to charge it against an unarmed man.

'You had your knife,' said he, drawing back. 'If I had it was not thinking of you,' said I, throwing the knife away. 'See! I'm armed like yourself now; fight me like a man and a soldier, if you dare,' says I.

'Fight me, if you dare,' says he.

Rose calls to me to stop; but we were both out of ourselves at the minute—we thrust at each other—he missed me—I hit him. Rose ran in between us to get the musket from my hand: it was loaded, and went off in the struggle, and the ball lodged in her body—she fell! and what happened next I cannot tell, for the fight left my eyes, and all sense forsook me. When I came to myself the house was full of people, going to and fro, some whispering, some crying, and till the words reached my ears—'Is she quite dead?—I could not understand where I was, or what had happened.—I wished to forget again but could not. The whole truth came upon me, and yet I could not shed a tear! but just pushed my way through the crowd into the inner room, and up to the side of the bed. There
IRISH BULLS.

She lay stretched, almost a corpse—quite still!—her sweet eyes closed, and no colour in her cheeks, that had the night before been so rosy!—I took hold of one of her hands, that hung down, and she then opens her eyes, and knew me directly, and smiles upon me, and says—"It was no fault of yours: take notice all of you, it was no fault of his if I die; but that I won't do for his sake, if I can help it!"—that was the word she spoke. I thinking, from her speaking so strong, that she was not badly hurt, knelt down to whisper her, that if my breath did smell of spirits the last night, it was the parting glass I had tasted before making the vow I done against drink for her sake; and that there was nothing I would not do for her, if it would please God to spare her to me. She just pressed my hand, to show me she was sensible. The priest came in, and they forced our hands asunder, and carried me away out of the room.—Presently there was a great cry, and I knew all was over.

Here the old man's voice failed, and he turned his face from us. When he had somewhat recovered himself, to change the course of his
thoughts, we asked, whether he were prosecuted for his assault on the English sergeant, and what became of him?

'Oh! to do him justice, as one should do to every one,' said the old man, 'he behaved very handsome to me when I was brought to trial; and told the whole truth, only blamed himself more than I would have done, and said it was all his fault for laughing at me and my nation more than a man could bear, situated as I was. They acquitted me through his means. We shook hands, and he hoped all would be right with me, he said; but nothing ever went right with me after. I took little note ever after of worldly matters: all belonging to me went to rack and ruin. The hand of God was upon me—I could not help myself, nor settle mind or body to any thing. I heard them say sometimes I was a little touched in my head: however that might be I cannot say. But at last I found it was as good for me to give all that was left to my friends, who were better able to manage, and more eager for it than I; and fancying a roving life would agree with me best, I quit the place, taking nothing with me, but resolved to walk the world, and just trust to the charity of
IRISH BULLS.

good christians, or die, as it should please God. How I have lived so long, he only knows, and his will be done: but I should not be sorry to be released, if that might be

CHAPTER XII.

IRISH WIT AND ELOQUENCE.

Let us now proceed with our business. The irish nation, from the highest to the lowest, in daily conversation about the ordinary affairs of life, employ a superfluity of wit, metaphor, and ingenuity, which would be astonishing and unintelligible to a majority of the respectable body of english yeomen. Even the cutters of turf and drawers of whiskey are orators; even the cottiers* and gossoons† speak in trope and figure. Ask an irish gassoon to go early in the morning on an errand, and to express his intention of complying with your wishes; instead of saying as an Englishman in his civil

*Cottagers. †Garçoons, boys.
ESSAY ON

humour might—‘Yes, master, I'll be up by times,’ he answers poetically,

"I'll be off at the flight of night."

If an Irish cottager would express to you, that he has, or what is much more probable, that he wishes to have a long lease of his land, he would say—‘I should be proud to live upon your honour's land, as long as grass grows or water runs.'

An English poet has nearly the same idea,

"As long as streams in silver mazes run,
"Or spring with annual green renews the grove."

It is surprising, that without the advantages of a classical education, the lower Irish should sometimes make similes which bear a near resemblance to those of the admired poets of antiquity. A loyalist, during the late rebellion, in describing to us the numbers of the rebels, which had gathered on one spot and were dispersed by the king's army, again rallied, and were again dispersed, said—"Ay, they were like swarms of flies on a summer's day, which you brush
IRISH BULLS.

away with your hand, and still they will be returning.

This is not unlike the manner of Offian; but as the pretensions of his poems to antiquity are disputable, let us compare the simile with one of Homer's; if it bear this comparison, it's excellence cannot be doubted. The simile translated literary by Pope from Homer runs thus:

"As the numerous troops of flies about
"A shepherd's cottage in the spring,
"When the milk moistens the pails,
"Such numbers of Greeks stood in
"The fields against the Trojans."

As lord Kames observes, it is certainly false taste to condemn such comparisons, for the lowness of the images introduced. In fact, great objects cannot be degraded by comparison with small ones in these similes, because the only point of resemblance is number; the mind instantly perceives this, and therefore requires no other species of similitude. Heroes and armies are like the insects of a summer's evening only as to their numbers; satisfied with the per-
ception of this resemblance, the imagination passes over the dissimilarity in all other respects. Some fastidious critic might object to the mode of expression in this sentence—'Brush them away with your hand, and still they will be returning.' But this phraseology is pure and grammatical English, though now obsolete; will be returning is accurately the tense that should be employed, and the expression is poetical, as it brings the action to our view.

When we attempt to judge of the genius of the lower classes of the people, whether in Ireland or England, we must take care, that we are not under the influence of any prejudice of an aristocratic or literary nature. But this is no easy effort of liberality.

'Agh! Dublin, sweet Jafus be wid you!' exclaimed a poor Irishman, as he stood on the deck of a vessel, which was carrying him out of the bay of Dublin. The pathos of this poor fellow, will not probably affect delicate sensibility, because he says wid instead of with, and Jafus instead of Jesus.—Adam Smith is certainly right in his theory, that the sufferings of those in exalted stations have generally most power to command our sympathy. The very same sen-
IRISH BULLS.

...timent, expressed so awkwardly by the poor Irishman, appears, to every reader of taste, exquisitely pathetic from the lips of Mary queen of Scots.

...After bidding adieu to her mourning attendants, with a sad heart and eyes bathed in tears, Mary left that kingdom, the short but only scene of her life in which fortune smiled upon her. While the French coast appeared in sight, she intently gazed upon it; and musing, in a thoughtful posture, on that height of fortune whence she had fallen, and presaging, perhaps, the disasters and calamities which embittered the remainder of her days, she sighed often and cried out—Farewell France! farewell beloved country, which I shall never more behold*!"

We feel how much elegance may increase the force of the pathetic upon cultivated minds; and it is obvious, that this species of merit cannot be ascribed to our illiterate hibernian orators: but the following remark of Longinus seems to militate against the notion, that elegance is not essential to the effect of eloquence.

...Vulgar terms," says Longinus, "are some-

*Robertson's History of Scotland.
times much more significant than the most ornamental could possibly be. They are easily understood, because borrowed from common life; and what is most familiar to us soonest engages our belief.

Shakespeare, though he might not have learned it from Longinus, seems to be perfectly of this opinion. When doubtless he had choice of fine sounding language, he makes Hamlet, in the height of indignation against his mother for her marriage, use an expression, which would certainly have offended Voltaire by its vulgarity.

A little month, or ere those shoes were old,
'With which she followed my poor father's body.'

The Irish express indignation against a widow, who marries again before 'wretched widows' ought, by a saying which surpasses even Shakespeare's in vulgarity and strength of idea—but how to bring it before the reader with due decorum is the question. The delicacy of circumlocution would not only weaken, but utterly annihilate its force; and yet it is too vul-
IRISH BULLS.

gar to be spoken in unqualified terms to 'ears polite.' Perhaps we can suggest the idea, and obtain truth by means of the rule of false. Let us suppose that we were speaking of one of those Indian's called Yogi, of whom the Sanscrit writer draws his picture.

' A little beyond that grove, where you see a pious Yogi, motionless as a pollard, holding his thick bushy hair and fixing his eyes on the solar orb—mark, his body is half covered with a white ant's edifice made of raised clay, and surrounding birds' nests almost conceal his shoulders.'

Now suppose this Yogi had, amongst his other torments, a wife—a Yogi may have a wife by supposition—suppose that this Yogi dies, and that this Indian widow does not burn herself according to the fashion of her country, but according to the fashion of ours; marries forthwith; now an Irishman, in the spirit of the proverb which we cannot utter, would express the promptness with which the widow's marriage followed the Yogi's death, by says—'Ay, she was married again before the birds' eggs in her first husband's hair were cold,'
Those who are skilled in the art of objurgation, will comprehend the full force of this sarcastic apophthegm, and will be ready to acknowledge, that it could have been invented by none but an adept in the science. When a sober Englishman is worked up to anger, he never suffers it to evaporate in idle figures of speech; it is always concentrated in a few words, which he repeats with obstinate firmness, in reply to every argument, persuasive or invective, that can be employed to irritate or assuage his wrath.

We recollect having once been present at a scene between an English gentleman and a churchwarden, whose feelings, both as a churchwarden and a man, were grievously hurt, by the disturbance that had been given to certain bones in levelling a wall, which separated the churchyard from the pleasure ground of the lord of the manor. The bones belonged, as the churchwarden believed or averred, to his great, great grandmother, though how they were identified it might be difficult to explain to an indifferent judge; yet we are to suppose, that the confirmation of the suspicion was strong and satisfactory to the party concerned. The pious great great grandson's feelings were all in armo
IRISH BULLS.

upon this occasion, but indignation did not inspire him with a single poetic idea or expression. In his eloquence, indeed, there was the principal requisite action: in reply to all that could be said, he repeatedly struck his long oak stick perpendicularly upon the floor, and reiterated these words—

"It's death, sir! death by the law!—It's sacrilege, sir! sacrilege by act of parliament!—It's death sir! death by the law! and the law I'll have of him, for it's lawful to have the law."

This was the whole range of his ideas, even when the passions had tumbled them all out of their dormitories*. With half this provocation, an Irishman would have been roused to ten times the eloquence of wrath.

A gentleman who lately canvassed a county in Ireland, relates the following anecdote—

"As I was riding through the county to canvass it, I heard a voice calling after me—'Stop! stop! sir! you have just passed one, sir!'

"One, what?"

"One who has a vote, a freethinker, sure! you must turn back a bit and I'll show him you—his name's O'Neill."

* Vide Helvetius.
ESSAY ON

"My conductor pointed to the man who had a vote; I rode towards him, he was planting willows in a little garden by the roadside; his back was towards me, and he did not turn his head, but went on with his work till I called upon him by his name, which I had just learned.

"Mr. O'Neill!"

"He turned, and I saw the pale countenance of a middle-aged upright figure dressed in black. He stuck the willow, which he had in his hand, into the ground, and came towards me with a deliberate pace. Upon a nearer view I saw, that his clothes were old and shabby.

"You have a vote, I am told, Mr. O'Neill?"

"Sir," said he, gravely, "I have a vote, and I have not a vote."

"How can that be?"

"I will tell you, sir," said he, leaning, or rather lying down slowly upon the back of the ditch facing me, so that I could only see his head and arms.

"Sir," said he, "out of this little garden, with my five acres of land and my own labour, I once had a freehold—but I have been robbed of my freehold, and who do you think has robbed me?"
IRISH BULLS.

why, that man!" pointing to his landlord’s steward, who stood beside me.—‘With my own hands I sowed my own ground with oats, and a fine crop I expected—but I never reaped that crop;—not a bushel, no, not half a bushel did I ever see; for into my little place comes this man, with I don’t know how many more, their horses and their carts, and to work they fell, and they ran a road straight through the best part of my land, turning all to heaps of rubbish, and a bad road it was, and a bad time of year to make it!—But where was I when he did this? not where I am now,’ said the orator, raising himself up and standing firm, ‘not as you see me now, but lying on my back in my bed in a fever. When I got up, I was not able to make my rent out of my land. Besides myself I had my five children to support. I sold my clothes, and have never been able to buy any since, but such as a recruit could sell who was in haste to get into regimentals—such clothes as these,’ said he, looking down at his black rags. ‘Soon I had nothing to eat—but, that’s not all.—I am a weaver, sir; for my rent they seized my two looms; then I had nothing.
to do. But all this I do not complain. There was an election some time ago in this county, and a man rode up to me in this garden as you do now, and asked me for my vote, but I refused him, for I was steady to my landlord. The gentleman observed I was a poor man, and asked if I wanted for nothing? but all did not signify, so he rode on gently, and at the corner of the road, within view of my garden, I saw him drop a purse, and I knew by his looking at me, it was on purpose for me to pick it up. After a while he came back, thinking, to be sure, I had taken up the purse and had changed my mind, but he found his purse where he left it. My landlord knew all this, and he promised to see justice done me, but he forgot. Then, as for the candidate's lady, before the election nothing was too fair-speaking for me, but afterward, in my distress, when I applied to her to get me a loom, which she could have had from the Linen Board by only asking for it, her answer to me was—'I don't know that I shall ever want a vote again in the county.'

'Now, sir,' continued she, 'when justice is done to me (and no sooner) I shall be glad to assist my landlord or his friend.'—I know who
you are, sir, very well—you bear a good character—succeeds to you! but I have no vote to give to you or any man.'

"As he spoke, Mr. O'Neill had, by degrees, became more animated, till his indignation inspiring him with new life, his action was suited to his words.'

"Mr. O'Neill," said I, "if I were to attempt to make you any amends for what you have suffered, I should do you an injury; it would be said that I bribed you; but I will repeat your story where it will meet with attention." I at the same time added, that I could not tell it so well as he had done.

"No, sir," was his answer, "for you cannot feel it as I do."

This is almost, in terms, the conclusion of Pope's epistle from Eloisa to Abelard.

"He best can paint them who shall feel them most."

Our next orator is in a different style. A thin tall woman, wrapped in a long cloak, the hood of which was drawn over her head, and
shaded her pale face, came to a gentleman to complain of the cruelty of her landlord.

'He is the most hard hearted man alive; so he is, sir,' said she, 'he has just seized all I have; which, God knows, is little enough! and has driven my cow to pound, the only cow I have, and only dependance I have for a drop of milk to drink; and the cow itself too standing there starving in the pound, for not a wisp of hay would he give to cow or christian to save their lives, if it was ever so! And the rent for which he is driving me, please your honour, has not been due but one week; and it is not for myself only I grieve or speak; let alone myself, there's five cratures, that he has there in the same way, and under the same dread and distress; he is landlord and master over six of us, and a hard master he is: but these middle men are all so, one and all. Oh! if it had but been my lot to be tenant to a gentleman born, like your honour, who is the poor man's friend, and the orphan, and the widow's—the friend of them that have none other. Long life to you! and long may you live to reign over us!—Would you but speak three words to my landlord, to let my cow out of pound and give me a fort-
night's time, that I might see and slatten her to fall against the fair, I could pay him then all honestly, and not be racked entirely, and he would be ashamed to refuse your honour, and afraid to disoblige the like of you, or get your ill will. May the blessing of Heaven be upon you, if you'll just send and speak to him three words for the poor woman and widow, that has none other to speak for her in the wide world.'

Moved by this lamentable story, the effect of which the woman's whole appearance corroborated and heightened, the gentleman sent immediately for her hard harted landlord. The landlord soon appeared; not a gentleman, not a rich man, as the term landlord might denote, he was a stout, square, stubbed, thick limbed, gray eyed man, who seemed to come from hot hard labour. The gentleman repeated the charge made against him by the widow, and mildly remonstrated on his cruelty: the man heard all that was said with a firm but not unmoved countenance.

'And now have you done?' said he, turning to the woman, who had recommenced her lamentations. 'Look at her standing there, sir.'
ESSAY ON
It's easy for her to put on her long cloak, and to
tell her long story, and to make her poor mouth
to your honour; but if you are willing to hear,
I'll tell you what she is, and what I am. She
is one that has but herself in this world to pro-
vide for; she is one that is able to afford herself
a glass of whiskey when she pleases, and she
pleases it often; she is one that never denies
herself the bit of staggering bob* when in sea-
son; she is one that has a snug house well thatch-
ed to live in all the year round, and nothing to
do or nothing that she does, and this is the way
of her life, and this is what she is.—And what
am I? I am the father of eight children, and I
have a wife and myself to provide for. I am a
man that is at hard labour of one kind or an-
other from sunrise to sunset. The straw that
thatched the house she lives in, I brought two
miles on my back; the walls of the house she
lives in I built with my own hands; I did the
fame by five other houses, and they are all sound
and dry, and good to live in summer or winter.
I let them for rent to put bread into my chil-
dren's mouth, and after all I cannot get it! And

* Slink calf.
IRISH BULLS.

To support my eight children, and my wife, and myself, what have I in this world, cried he, striding suddenly with colossal firmness upon his sturdy legs, and raising to Heaven arms which looked like foreshortenings of the limbs of Hercules—"What have I in this wide world but these four bones?"

Demosthenes could not have used more striking action. The Irish are a nation of orators.

Candour obliges us here to acknowledge a fact, that militates against this opinion, the Irish are excellent arithmeticians; now arithmetic is not allied to oratory and poetry.

A gentleman who was riding near a village in Ireland overtook a little ragged gossoon, who was running with great eagerness along the road,—"Where are you going my little fellow?"

"Place your honour, to an uncle of my owns that lives five miles off, for the Scholar's Vade Mecum."

"What! are you a scholar?"

"Yes," place your honour, "a piece of a one."

"What do you know of arithmetic?"

"Place your honour, I'm as far as tare and trett."
ESSAY ON

'Can you answer this question?' said the gentleman, giving what he thought an easy sum in the double rule of three. In a few minutes the boy, who had kept on running, panting, and calculating in his head, came up close to the gentleman's horse, and cried—'Here, please your honour, I have the answer for you!' The answer was perfectly right, and he explained the manner in which he had worked the question; so that this could not have been merely a happy hit. Bacon says, that the logical part of some men's understandings are good, but the mathematical part erroneous; we must suppose the reverse to be the case with the Irish. But to return from this candid digression; let us proceed with our proofs, that Hibernians possess that species of quickness of intellect, which necessarily leads to blunder.

An Irish boy, who perhaps knew nothing of arithmetic, and possessed only untaught ingenuity, saw a train of his companions leading their cars loaded with kishes* of turf coming towards his father's cabin; his father had no turf, and the question was how some should be obtained.

*Baskets.
IRISH BULLS.

To beg he was ashamed; to dig he was unwilling—but his head went to work directly: he took up a turf which had fallen from one of the cars the preceding day, and he flung it on the top of a pole near the cabin. When the cars were passing, he appeared throwing turf at the mark—'Boys!' cried he, 'which of ye will hit?' Each leader of the car, as he passed, could not forbear to fling a turf at the mark; the turf fell at the foot of the pole, and when all the train of cars had passed, there was a heap left sufficient to reward the ingenuity of our little Spartan.

Irish acuteness is sometimes shown in the arts of deception and chicanery; the lower class of people are almost all, partly from necessity of defence, partly from habitual inclination, fond of the law, and skilled in it. Like Lewis the twelfth of France, they can twist and bend the laws as easily as shoemakers can dress and hammer leather to fit any purpose. This is not peculiar either to the French or Irish, as whoever looks into a late English publication, called, 'The Practice and progress of a modern Attorney,' will find abundant instances, divided under the heads of 'keen practice,'—'quirking.
practice,' and 'common practice,' of even more than hibernian acuteness.

Next to our little boy we have to produce an old woman. When general V—— was quartered in a small town in Ireland, he and his lady was regularly besieged, whenever they got into their carriage, by an old beggarwoman, who kept her post at the door, assailing them daily with fresh importunities and fresh tales of distress. At last the lady's charity, and the general's patience, were nearly exhausted, but their petitioner's wit was still in its prime vigour. One morning, at the accustomed hour, when the lady was getting into her carriage, the old woman began—'Agh! my lady; success to your ladyship, and success to your honour's honour, this morning, of all the days in the year; for sure didn't I dream last night, that her ladyship gave me a pound of tea, and that your honour gave me a pound of tobacco?'

'But, my good woman,' said the general, 'do not you know, that dreams always go by the rule of contrary?'

'Do they so, palse your honour,' rejoined the old woman, 'Then it must be your honour}
that will give me the ta, and her ladyship that
will give me the tobacco.

The general being of Sterne’s opinion, that a
bon mot is always worth something, even more
than a pinch of snuff, gave the ingenious
dreamer the value of her dream.

Innumerable instances might be quoted of the
hibernian genius, not merely for repartee, but
for what the Italians call pasquinade. We shall
cite only one, which is already so well known
in Ireland, that we cannot be found guilty of
publishing a libel. Over the ostentatious front
of a nobleman’s house in Dublin, the owner
had this motto cut in stone:

"Otium cum dignitate.—Leisure and dignity.

In process of time his lordship changed his
residence, or, since we must descend to plebeian
language, was committed to Newgate, and im-
m ediately there appeared over the front of his
apartment his chosen motto, as large as the life,
in white chalk.

Otium cum dignitate.
Mixed with keen satire, the Irish often show a sort of cool good sense and dry humour, which gives not only effect but value to their impromptus. Of this class is the observation made by the Irish hackney coachman, upon seeing a man of the ton driving four in hand down Bond-street.

"That fellow," said our observer, "looks like a coachman, but drives like a gentleman."

As an instance of humour mixed with sophistry, we beg the reader to recollect the popular story of the Irishman, who was run over by a troop of horse, and miraculously escaped unhurt.

"Down upon your knees and thank God, you reprobate," said one of the spectators.

"Thank God! for what? Is it for letting a troop of horse run over me?"

In this speech there is the same sort of humour and sophistry, that appears in the Irishman's celebrated question—"What has posterity done for me, that I should do so much for posterity?"

The Irish title to humour has indeed been asserted by such a competent judge, that to dispute it would be presumption. We allude to the late Mr. Foote, who, in a prologue spoken
IRISH BULLS.

in Dublin, addressed these lines to his audience:

"Humour, the foremost of the living crew,
"Source of the comic muse she gave to you."

The same talent, which gives keenness and humour to satire, gives force and elegance to panegyric. No one has ever conveyed, by a single line, by a single word, more delicate compliment, than the severe author of the Dunciad — 'The lower Irish often excell as much in compliment as in sarcasm.'

We were once present when an author gave one of his own books to an old Irish steward, asking at the same time, in what colour he would have the book bound.

He turned to one of the company, and asked 'What is the colour that never fades?'

The same steward, upon another occasion, made a yet more sentimental answer. His master said to him—'You have lived with me so long, and served me so faithfully, that now even if you should do any thing to displease me, you shall not be the worse of my anger—I have provided for you handomely in my will.'
Instead of replying with a servile bow or mercenary thanks, he answered with a countenance that showed he spoke from his heart—'I hope there's no danger I should do anything to displease your honour.'

Innumerable fresh illustrations crowd upon our memory, but we forbear, as we have now sufficiently established our minor—'That the Irish are disposed to use figurative language.' Our conclusion is, doubtless, full in the reader's recollection.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BROGUE.

Having proved by a perfect syllogism, that the Irish must blunder, we might rest satisfied with our labours, but that there are minds of so perverse a fort, that they will not yield their understandings to the torturing power of syllogism. There are heretics in logic, who will not subscribe implicitly to it's forms; nay, who go so far as to maintain, that there is nothing so absurd, but what may be demonstrated by the
dexterous use of major, minor, and conclusion. There are foolhardy persons, who would look with an equal eye upon the inevitable horns of the ancient dilemma, and upon the Garamantuan* horns of the Irish bull.

It may be waste of time to address ourselves to persons of such a cast, but we are ambitious to make even the meanest intellects do homage to our powers of conviction. We shall therefore change our ground, and adapt our arguments to the level of vulgar capacities: we shall assert only, that the Irish, if they be not blunderers, must continue to be thought absurd and ridiculous, from the unchangeable law of the association of ideas. Much of the comic effect of Irish

* Vide Herodotus—for the Garamantes.—

"That nation, among whom is a species of oxen which walk backwards whilst they are feeding; their horns are so formed, that they cannot do otherwise, they are so long, and curved in such a manner, that if they did not recede, they would stick in the ground; in other respects, they do not differ from other animals of the same genus, unless we except the thickness of their skins."
bells, or of such speeches as are mistaken for
bells, has depended upon the tone of brogue, as
it is called, with which they are uttered. The
first Irish blunderers that we hear are made or re-
peated in this peculiar tone, and afterward,
whenever we hear the tone, we expect the blun-
der. This is according to the immutable law of
human nature. The concomitant is confound-
ed with the cause, and afterward operates as
such upon our undistinguishing minds. Now
there is little danger, that the Irish should be
cured of their brogue; and consequently there is
no great reason to apprehend, that we should
cease to think or call them blunderers.

Of the powerful effect of any peculiarity of
pronunciation to prepossess the mind against
the speaker, nay, even to excite dislike amount-
ing to antipathy, we have an instance attested
by an eye witness, or rather an ear witnesses.

‘In the year 1755,’ says James Adams, ‘I
attended a public disputation in a foreign univer-
sity, when at least 400 Frenchmen literally hiss-
ed a grave and learned English doctor, not by
way of insult, but irresistibly provoked by the
quaintness of the repetition of sb. The thesis
was the concurrence of God in actionibus viciousis.'
IRISH BULLS.

the whole hall resounded with the hissing cry of

sh, and it's continual occurrence in actio, actio-

ne, viciosa, &c.

It is curious, that Shibolet should so long
continue a criterion amongst nations!

What must have been the degree of irritation,
that could so far get the better of the politeness
of 400 Frenchmen, as to make them hiss in the
days of l'ancien regime! The dread of being
the object of that species of antipathy or ridicule,
which is excited by unfashionable peculiarity of
accent, has induced many of the misguided na-
tives of Ireland to affect, what they imagine to
be the English pronunciation. They are seldom successful in this attempt, for they gen-
erally overdo the business. We are told by Theo-
phraustus, that a barbarian, who had taken some
pains to attain the true Attic dialect with a great-
er degree of precision and purity, than was usual
amongst the Athenians themselves. To avoid
the imputation of committing barbarisms, peo-
ple sometimes run into solecisms, which are yet
more ridiculous. Affectation is always more
ridiculous than ignorance.

'Hibernia, thy still ranker brogue,' is less

N 3
offensive than the attempt to speak delicate English, which are made by some of thy sons and daughters, who, ashamed of their country, betray themselves, by mincing out their abjuration. From all persons, of whatever sex, rank, or pretensions, who call tables teables, and chairs chears, good Lord deliver us!

To such would be runegadoes we prefer the honest quixotism of a modern champion* for the scottish accent, who boldly assertinig, that 'the broad dialect rises above reproach, scorn, and laughter,' enters the lists, as he says of himself, in Tartan drees and armour, and throws down the gauntlet to the most prejudiced antagonist—'How weak is prejudice!' pursues this patriotic enthusiast, 'the sight of the highland kelp, the flowing plaid, the bussin'd leg, provokes' my antagonist to laugh!—Is this drees ridiculous in the eyes of reason and common sense? No: nor

* James Adams, S. R. E. S., author of a book entitled, 'The pronunciation of the English Language Vindicated from imputed anomaly and caprice, with an appendix on the dialects of human speech in all countries, and an analytical discussion and vindication of the dialect of Scotland.'
is the dialect of speech; both are characteristic and national distinctions.

' The arguments of general vindication,' continues he, 'rise powerful before my sight, like the highland bands in full array. A louder strain of apologetic speech swells my words. What if it should rise high as the unconquered summits of Scotia's hills, and call back with voice sweet as caledonian song, the days of ancient scottish heroes, or attempt the powerful speech of the latin orator, or his of Greece? the subject, methinks, would well accord with the attempt: Cupidum, Scotiæ optima, vires deficiunt.

leave this to the king of songs. Dunbar and Dunkeld, Douglas in virgilian strains, and later poets, Ramsay, Ferguson, and Burns, awake from your graves, you have already immortalized the scotch dialect in raptured melody! Lend me your golden target and well pointed spear, that I may victoriously pursue, to the extremity of South Britain, reproachful ignorance and scorn still lurking there:—Let impartial Candour seize their usurped throne.—Great then is the birth of this national dialect,' &c:

So far so good. We have some sympathy
with the rhapsodist, whose enthusiasm kindles at the names of Allen Ramsay and of Burns; nay, we are willing to hear (with a grain of allowance), that "the manly eloquence of the scotch bar affords a singular pleasure to the candid English hearer, and gives merit and dignity to the noble speakers, who retain so much of their own dialect and tempered propriety of English sounds, that they may be emphatically termed British orators." But we confess that we lose our patient decorum, and are almost provoked to laughter, when our philological Quixote seriously sets about to prove, that Adam and Eve spoke broad Scotch in Paradise. But let us check our laughter, for our hero will not permit us to smile at the learned etymologist, who in the time of queen Elizabeth wrote a folio to prove, that pure Welsh was the language of Adam and Eve in Paradise. How it could be both broad Scotch and pure Welsh we know not; but we must not, according to our grave scholiast, let "loose these muscles, which exhibit the impression of ignorance joined with surpris, for that is the source of the weakest passions in man—laughter, which is no confutation of errour."
IRISH BULLS.

How angry has this grave patriot reason to be with his ingenious countryman Battie*, the celebrated champion of Truth, who acknowledges, that he never could, when a boy or man, look at a certain translation of Ajax's speech into one of the vulgar Scotch dialects without laughing!

We shall now with boldness, similar to that of the Scotch champion, try the risible muscles of our English readers; we are not, indeed, inclined to go quite such lengths as he has gone: he insists, that the Scotch dialect ought to be adopted all over England; we are only going candidly to confess, that the Irish, in general, speak better English than is commonly spoken by the natives of England. To limit this proposition so as to make it appear less absurd, we should observe, that we allude to the lower classes of the people in both countries. In some counties in Ireland, many of the poorest labourers and cottagers do not understand English, they speak only Irish, as in Wales there are vast numbers who speak only Welsh; but amongst those who do speak English we find fewer vulgarisms, than amongst the same rank of persons in England.

* Vide Illustrations on Sublimity, in his essays.
ESSAY ON

The English which they speak is chiefly such as has been traditional in their families from the early settlers in the island. During the reign of Elizabeth and the reign of Shakspeare, numbers of English migrated to Ireland; and whoever attends to the phrases of the lower Irish may, at this day, hear many of the phrases and expressions used by Shakspeare. Their vocabulary has been preserved nearly in its pristine purity since that time, because they have not had intercourse with those counties in England, which have made for themselves a jargon, unlike to any language under Heaven. The Irish brogue is a great and shameful defect, but it does not render the English language unintelligible. There are but a few variations of the brogue, such as the long and the short, the thady-brogue and paddy brogue, which differ much in tone, and but little in phraseology; but in England, almost all of our fifty two counties have peculiar vulgarisms, dialects, and broges, unintelligible to their neighbours. As Herodotus tells us, that some of the nations of Greece, though they used the same language, spoke it so differently, that they could not understand each other's conversation. This is literally the case at present.
between the provincial inhabitants of remote parts of England. Indeed the language peculiar to the metropolis, or the cockney dialect, is proverbially ridiculous. The Londoners, who look down with contempt upon all, that have not been bred and born within the sound of Bow, talk with unconscious absurdity of weal and winegar, and vine and windors and idears, and ask you 'ow do you do? and 'ave ye bin taking the bair in 'yde park, and 'as your 'orfe 'ad any boats, &c. aspiring always where they should not, and never aspiring where they would.

The Zummerzetzbeer dialect full of broad oos and eternal zeds, supplies never failing laughter when brought upon the stage. Even a cockney audience relishes the broad pronunciation of John Moody, in the Journey to London, or of Sim in Wild Oats.

The cant of Suffolk, the vulgarisms of Shropshire, the uncouth phraseology of the three ridings of Yorkshire, amaze and bewilder foreigners, who perhaps imagine, that they do not understand English, when they are in company with those who cannot speak it. The patois of Languedoc and Champagne, such as 'Mein fis sest ai hai vai,' Mon fils c'est un beau veau, ex-
Essays on several subjects, it is true, the ingenuity of travellers, and renders many scenes of Molière and Marivaux difficult, if not unintelligible, to those who have never resided in the French provinces; but no French patois is more unintelligible than the following specimen of Tummas and Meary's Lancashire dialogue.

Thomas. "Whau, but I startit up to goa to th' titis, on flurr'd deawn to th' lower part o' th' heymough, on by th' malkins, lord! what dust think? boh leet hump stridd'n up o' fummot at felt meety heury, on it startit web meh on its back, deawn th' lower part o' th' mough it jumpt, crost th' leath, eawt o' th' dur wimmey it took, on into th' weturing poo, os if th' dule o' Hell had driv'n it, on there it threw meh en, br I fell off. I cannaw tell whether, for th' life o' meh, into the poo."

Mary. "Whoo-wo, whoo-wo, whoo! what, ith neme o' God! widneh say?"

Thomas. "If it wur naw Owd Nicle, he wur th' orderer on't, to be shure ***. Web mitch powlering I geet eawt o' th' poo, lieve *

* The glossary to the Lancashire dialect informs us, that lieve me from Beleemy, believe me; from Belamy, my good friend, old French.
IRISH BULLS.

meh, as to lift, I could na tell whether i'r in a fleawm or weak'n, till eh groapt ot meh een; I crope under a wough, and flode like o' gawmbling*, or o parfit meatril, till welly day; on just then Ned coom ****, on he blest, on he prey'd, on mede fitch marlocks, that if i'd naw been eh that wefo pickle †, is't o brosf'n weh leawghing ***—Coom, let's get off, sed he, &c.' Without being a Lancashire witch, the reader could hardly, at first sight, understand all this; and least it should not reward the student's pains, we present for the advantage of the whole irish nation, and of all the higher class of the English, the following literal translation. In general, we perfectly agree with the author of an ingenious 'Essay on the Principles of Translation,' in his opinion, that the best translatar is he who tranfuses the spirit of one language into another; yet, in the present instance, we hold ourselves bound to the letter, and we consequently have done the colloquy of Thomas and Mary into English with verbal precision. Here

* Gawmbling, (Anglo-Saxon gawmless), stupid.
† Dutch.
we cannot omit to return our thanks to the compiler of the very learned glossary, subjoined to the original text, in which the derivations of the words from the Dutch, Coptic, Anglo-Saxon, &c. are carefully given.

Thomas. "I started up to go for the horses, and slid down the lower part of the hay-mow; and by the maskins, lord! what dost think? I lit astride upon something that felt mighty hairy, and it started up with me on its back down the hay-mow, it jumped, crossed the barn, out of the door it took its way with me, and into the water pool it went, as if the Devil of Hell had driven it; and there it threw me in, or I fell off, I cannot tell which for the life of me."

Mary. "Whoo, whoo, whoo! what in the name of God would you say?"

Thomas. "If it were not Old Nick, he was the orderer of it to be sure **. With much pother I got out of the watering pool; and believe me or not as you like, I could not tell whether I were in a slumber or awake till I greed at my eyes; *** and I crept under a bush and stood like a fool, or a perfect natural, well nigh day; and just then Ned came he lifted up his hands, and he blessed, and
prayed, and made such grimaces, that if I
had not been in that woful pickle, I should have
burst with laughing ***.—Come, let us set off,
said he, &c." Though our hero modestly de-
clares, that he cannot say a deal about it, yet
some of our readers may be of a different opinion,
and may possibly by this time, be as weary of
Tummas and the coup, and the leith, and the
hay-mough, and the buggart, and the whole
Lancashire dialect and glossary, as Juvenal can-
didly* confesses himself to have been with Oret-
tes full of marginal notes, or with the grove of
Mars, the cave of Eolus, and the Elysian
fields.

Let us now listen to a conversation which we
hope will not be quite so unintelligible.

* 1st Satire.
CHAPTER XIV.

BATH COACH CONVERSATION.

In one of the genteel coaches, which travel between Bath and London, an Irish, a Scotch, and an English gentleman happened one day to be passengers. They were all three well informed and well bred; had seen the world, and lived in good company, and were consequently superiour to local and national prejudice. As their conversation was illustrative of our subject, we shall make no apology for relating it with all the accuracy with which it was repeated to us by one of the company. We pass the usual preliminary compliments, and the observations upon the weather and the roads. The Irish gentleman first started a more interesting subject—the Union; it's probable advantages and disadvantages were fully discussed, and, at last the Irishman said, 'Whatever our political opinions may be, there is one wish in which we shall all agree, that the union may make us better acquainted with one another.'
IRISH BULLS

'It is surprising,' said the Englishman, 'how ignorant we English in general are of Ireland: to be sure we do not now, as in the times of Bacon and Spencer, believe that Wild Irishmen have wings, nor do we all of us give credit to Mr. Twiss's assertion, that if you look at an Irish lady she answers 'nay, if you please."

Scotchman. — 'That traveller seems to be almost as liberal, as he who defined oats — food for horses in England, and for men in Scotland: such illiberal notions die away of themselves.'

Irishman. — 'Or they are contradicted by more liberal travellers. I am sure my country has great obligations to the gallant English and Scotch military, not only for so readily assisting to defend and quiet us, but for spreading in England a juster notion of Ireland. Within these few months, I suppose more real knowledge of the state and manners of that kingdom has been diffused in England, by their means, than had been obtained during a whole century.'

Scotchman. — 'Indeed, I do not recollect having read any author of note, who has given me a notion of Ireland since Spencer and Davies, except Arthur Young.'
ESSAY ON

Englishman.—' What little knowledge I have of Ireland has been drawn more from observation than from books. I remember when I first went over there, I did not expect to see twenty trees in the whole island; I imagined that I should have nothing to drink but whiskey, that I should have nothing to eat but potatoes, that I should sleep in mud walled cabins, that I should, when awake, hear nothing but the Irish howl, the Irish brogue, Irish answers and Irish bulls; and that if I smiled at any of these things, a hundred pistols would fly from their holsters to give or demand satisfaction. But experience taught me better things: I found that the stories I had heard were tales of other times. Their hospitality, indeed continues to this day,'

Scotchman.—' That they were famous for, of old, for if I remember right, in Holinshed’s Chronicle there is a curious account of one Patrick Sarsfield, mayor of Dublin, in the year 1551, who was most amazingly hospitable. I also recollect, that another Irish gentleman is mentioned in Sheridan’s Life of Swift, who kept open house all his life for a whole county. It was more like a fairy tale than a reality. Pray, sir, is there any truth in the story?'
IRISH BULLS.

Irishman.—‘It is perfectly true, I believe; but of later days, as we have been honoured with the visits of a greater number of foreigners, our hospitality has become less extravagant.’

Englishman.—‘Not less agreeable. Irish hospitality, I speak from experience, does not now consist merely in pushing the bottle briskly round: the Irish are convivial, but their conviviality is seasoned with wit and humour, they have plenty of good conversation as well as good cheer for their guests; and they not only have wit themselves but they love it in others; they can give as well as take a joke. I never lived with a more good-humoured, generous, open hearted people than the Irish.’

This panegyric upon his countrymen touch'd the Irishman to the soul, and his countenance showed his feelings. After a pause, he resumed the conversation by saying with a smile,—

‘I wish Englishmen, in general, were half as partial to poor Ireland as you are, sir.’

Englishman.—‘Or rather you wish, that they knew the country as well, and then they would do it as much justice.’

Irishman.—‘You do it something more than justice, I fear. There are little peculiarities in
my countrymen, which will long be justly the
subject of ridicule in England.

Englishman.—‘Yes, among the vulgar and
ignorant, but not amongst the higher and better
informed class of society.’

Scotchman.—‘No; for well bred and well
informed people, having seen and read of great
varieties of customs and manners, are never apt
to laugh at all that may differ from their own.
As the sensible author of the government of the
tongue says,—‘Half witted people are always
the bitterest revilers.’

Irishman.—‘You are very indulgent, gentle-
men; but in spite of all your politeness you
must allow, or, at least, I must confess, that
there are little defects in the Irish government
of the tongue, at which even whole witted peo-
ple must laugh.’

Englishman.—‘The brogue?—Yes, the Irish
brogue sounds ridiculous to our ears, but so does
our accent to foreigners; they dislike the Eng-
lish brogue as much as we dislike the Irish.’

Scotchman.—‘The well educated people, in
all countries I believe, escape the particular ac-
cent, and avoid the idiom, that are characteris-
tic of the vulgar.’
IRISH BULLS.

Irishman.—'But even when we escape Irish brogue, we cannot escape Irish bulls.'

Englishman.—'You need not say Irish bulls with such emphasis, for bulls are not peculiar to Ireland. I have been informed, by a person of unquestionable authority, that there is a town in Germany, Hirschau in the Upper Palatinate, where the inhabitants are famous for making bulls.'

Irishman.—'I am truly glad to hear we have companions in disgrace. Numbers certainly lessen the effect of ridicule as well as of shame: but after all, the Irish idiom is peculiarly unfortunate, for it leads perpetually to blunder.'

Scotchman.—'I have heard the same remark ed of the Hebrew. I am told, that the Hebrew and the Irish idiom are much alike.'

Irishman (laughing)—'That is a great comfort to us, certainly, particularly to those among us who are fond of tracing our origin up to the remotest antiquity; but still there are many who would willingly give up the honour of this high alliance, to avoid its inconveniencies; for my own part, if I could ensure myself and my countrymen from all future danger of making bulls and blunders, I would this instant give
up all hebrew roots; and even the Ogham character itself I would renounce, 'to make assurance doubly sure.'

**Englishman.**—'To make assurance doubly sure?'—Now there is an example in our great Shakspeare of what I have often observed, that we English allow our poets and ourselves a licence of speech that we deny to our hibernian neighbours. If an Irishman, instead of Shakspeare, had talked of making 'assurance doubly sure,' we should have asked how that could be. The vulgar in England are too apt to catch at every slip of the tongue made by Irishmen. I remember once being present, when an irish nobleman, of talents and literature, was actually hissed from the hustings at a Middlesex election, because in his speech he happened to say,—'We have laid the root to the axe of the tree of liberty,' instead of, we have laid the axe to the root of the tree."

**Scotchman.**—'A lapsus linguae, that might have been made by the greatest orators ancient or modern, by Cicero or Chatham, by Burke or by 'the fluent Murray.'

**Englishman.**—'Upon another occasion I have heard, that an irish orator was silenced with
IRISH BULLS.

inextinguishable laughter,' merely for saying 'I am sorry to hear my honourable friend stand mute.'

Scotchman.—'If I am not mistaken, that very same Irish orator made an allusion, at which no one could laugh. 'The protection, said he, which Britain affords to Ireland, in the day of adversity, is like that which the oak affords to the countryman, who flies to it for shelter in the storm; it draws down upon his head the lightning of Heaven: it may be I do not repeat the words exactly, but I could not forget the idea.'

Englishman.—'I would with all my heart bear the ridicule of a hundred blunders for the honour of having made such a simile; after all, his saying 'I am sorry to hear my honourable friend stand mute,' if it be a bull, is justified by Homer; one of the charms in the cestus of Venus, is,

'Silence that speaks, and eloquence of eyes.'

Scotchman.—'Silence that speaks, sir, is, I am afraid, an English not a Grecian charm: It is not in the Greek; it is one of those beautiful
ESSAY ON

liberties, which Mr. Pope has taken with his original. But silence that speaks can be found in France as well as in England. Voltaire in his chef d'œuvre, his Œdipus, makes Jocasta say,

* Tout parle contre nous jusqu'à notre silence*.

Englishman.—* And in our own Milton, Sampson Agonistes makes as good, indeed a better, bull, for he not only makes the mute speak, but speak loud.

* The deeds themselves, tho' mute, spoke loud

the doer.*

And in Paradise Lost we have, to speak in fashionable language, two famous bulls. Talking of Satan, Milton says,

* God, and his son except,

* Created thing, nought valued he nor shunn'd.*

* Every thing speaks against us, even our silence.*
IRISH BULLS.

And speaking of Adam and Eve, and their sons and daughters, he confounds them all together, in a manner, for which any Irishman would have been laughed to scorn.

'Adam, the goodliest man of men since born, 'His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.'

Yet Addison, who notices these blunders, calls them only little blemishes.

Scotchman.—'He does so; and he quotes Horace, who tells us we should impute such venal errors to a pardonable inadvertency; and as I recollect, Addison makes another very just remark, that the ancients, who were actuated by a spirit of candour, and of cavilling, invented a variety of figures of speech, on purpose to palliate little errors of this nature.'

'Really, gentlemen,' interrupted the Hibernian, who had sat all this time in silence, that spoke his grateful sense of the politeness of his companions; 'you will put the finishing stroke to my obligation to you, if you will prove that the ancient figures of speech were invented to palliate irrefragible errors.'

Englishman.—'No matter for what purpose...
they were invented, if we can make so good a use of them we shall be satisfied, especially if you are pleased. I will, however, leave the burden of the proof upon my friend here, who has detected me already in quoting from Pope's Iliad instead of Homer's. I am sure he will manage the ancient figures of rhetoric better than I should; however, if I can fight behind his shield I shall not shun the combat.

Scotchman.—'I stand corrected for quoting greek. Now I will not go to Longinus for my tropes and figures; I have just met with a little book on the subject, which I put into my pocket to-day, intending to finish it on my journey, but I have been better employed.'

He drew from his pocket a book, called 'Deinology, or the Union of Reason and Elegance.'—'Look! (said he), look at this long list of tropes and figures, amongst them we could find apologies for Irish bulls; but, in mercy, I will select, from 'the twenty chief and most moving figures of speech,' only the oxymoron, as it is a favourite with Irish orators. In the oxymoron contradictions meet: to reconcile these Irish ingenuity delights, I will further spare four out of the seven figures of less note: emphasis, enallage, and the hysteron proteron.
you must have, because emphasis graces Irish
diction, enallage unbinds it from strict grammatical
fetters, and hysteron proteron allows it
sometimes to put the cart before the horse. Of
the eleven grammatical figures, Ireland delights
chiefly in the antimeria, or changing one part
of speech for another, and in the elipsis or defect.
Of the remaining long list of figures, the Irish
are particularly disposed to the epizeuxis, as
indeed, indeed—at all, at all,' an antanaclasis
or double meaning. The tautotes, or repetition
of the same thing, is, I think, full as common
amongst the English. The hyperbole and cata-
chresis are so nearly related to a bull, that I
shall dwell upon them with pleasure. You
must listen to the definition of a catachresis—
'A catachresis is the boldest of any trope. Ne-
cessity makes it borrow and employ an expression
or term, contrary to the thing it means to express.'
Upon my word this is something like a de-
finition of an Irish bull,' interrupted the hiber-
nian.

Scotchman.—'Let us go on.'

Englishman.—'Hear him! hear him!'

Scotchman.—'For instance, it has been said,
Equirare in arundine longa—to ride on horseback.

P. 8.
ESSAY ON

on a stick. Reason condemns the contradiction, but necessity has allowed it, and use has made it, intelligible. The same trope is employed in the following metaphorical expression—the seeds of the Gospel have been watered with the blood of the martyrs.

Englishman.—' So the poor Irishman, who was laughed at so unmercifully at Buxton, for informing the company, that 'the best way of boiling potatoes was in cold water,' was not guilty of a bull, he only made use of a catachresis?

Irishman.—' And what figure of speech did my countryman use who said, that he should have writted his letter better, only that he had not time to take a copy of it before he wrote it?

Scotchman.—A catachresis. A copy is used without reference to its original senfe, in the same manner as we say a wooden tomb-stone. But we need not go to the ancient figurative speech to defend this Irishman; Pascal, you know, concluded one of his letters with saying, 'this is too long a letter,' but you must excuse it, for I have not time to make it shorter.

'Well, (said the Irishman,) my friends, I will now give you a bull that neither of you can match. An evidence, who wanted to prove an
IRISH BULLS.

alibi, said to his judge, My lord, I could not be like a bird, in two places at once.'

Englishman.—' That does seem an impossibility, I grant, but you know great orators trample on impossibilities*.'

Scotchman.—' And great poets get the better of them. You recollect Shakespeare says

'And bid me run,
'And I will strive with things impossible,
'Yea, get the better of them.'

Englishman.—' And Corneille, in the Cid, I believe, makes his hero a compliment upon his having performed impossibilities.—' Vos mains seules ont le droit de vaincre un invincible †.'

Scotchman.—' Ay, that would be a bull in an Irishman, but it is only an hyperbole in a Frenchman.'

Irishman.—' Indeed this line of Corneille's out hyperboles the hyperbole, considered in any but a prophetic light; as a prophecy, it exactly

* Lord Chatham.
† Your hands alone have a right to conquer the unconquerable.
foretells the taking of Bonaparte's invincible standard by the glorious forty-second regiment of British; 'Your hands alone have a right to vanquish the invincible.'—By the by, the phrase ont le droit cannot, I believe, be literally translated into English, but the Scotch and Irish—have a right—translates it exactly. But do not let me interrupt my country's defence, gentlemen; I am heartily glad to find, that Irish blunderers may shelter themselves in such good company in the ancient sanctuary of the hyperbole. But I am afraid you must deny admittance to the poor mason who said, 'this house will stand as long as the world does, and longer.' Scotchman.—'Why should we 'shut the gates of mercy' upon him, when we pardon his betters for more flagrant sins, for instance, Mr. Pope, who in his Essay on Criticism, makes a blunder, or rather uses an hyperbole, stronger than that of your poor Irish mason.

'When first young Maro in his noble mind
' A work 't'oulast immortal Rome designed.'

And to give you a more modern case, I lately heard an English shopkeeper say to a lady, in recommendation of his goods, 'Ma'am, it will
IRISH BULLS: 173

wear forever, and make you a petticoat afterwards.

Irishman.—'Upon my word I did not think you could have found a match for the mason; but what will you say to my countryman, who, on meeting an acquaintance, accosted him with this ambiguous compliment—'When first I saw you I thought it was you, but now I see it is your brother.'

Scottishman.—'I should, if I were not afraid you would take me for a pedant, quote a sentence from Cicero, that is not far behind this blunder.'

Irishman.—'I can take you for nothing but a friend—pray let us have the Latin.'

Scottishman.—'It is one of Cicero's compliments to Cæsar, in which there is almost as great a blunder as in your countryman's to his acquaintance.—'Qui, cum ipse imperator in toto imperio populi Romani unus esset, esse me alterum passus esset.'—Perhaps, (continued the Scotchman), my way of pronouncing Latin sounds strangely to you, gentlemen?'

*And when Cæsar was the only emperor within the dominion of Rome, he suffered me to be another.
ESSAY ON

Irishman.—'And perhaps ours would be unintelligible to Cicero himself, if he were to overhear us; I fancy we are all so far from right, that we need not dispute about degrees of wrong.'

The coach stopped at this instant, and the conversation was interrupted.

CHAPTER XV.

BATH COACH CONVERSATION.

After our travellers had dined, the conversation was renewed by the English gentleman's repeating Goldsmith's celebrated lines on Burke—

'Who too deep for his hearers, still went on refining,
And thought of convincing, whilst they thought of dining,
In short 'twas his fate unemployed or in place, sir,
'To eat mutton cold, and cut blocks with a razor.'
IRISH BULLS.

What humour and wit there are in that poem of Goldsmith's! and where is there anything equal to his 'Traveller?'

Irishman.—'Yet this is the man who used to be the butt of the company for his bulls.'

Englishman.—'No, not for his bulls, but for blurring out opinions in conversation, that could not stand the test of Dr. Johnson's critical powers. But what would become of the freedom of wit and humour, if every word that came out of our mouths were subject to the tax of a professed critic's censure, or if every sentence were to undergo a logical examination? It would be well for Englishmen, if they were a little more inclined, like your open hearted countrymen, to blurt out their opinions freely.'

Scotchman.—'I cannot forgive Dr. Johnson for calling Goldsmith an inspired idiot; I confess I see no idiosyncrasy, but much inspiration in his works.'

Irishman.—'But we must remember, that if Johnson did laugh at Goldsmith, he would let no one else laugh at him, and he was his most sincere and active friend. The world would, perhaps, never have seen the Vicar of Wakefield, if Johnson had not recommended it to a bookseller; and Goldsmith might have died in
jail, if the Doctor had not got him a hundred pounds for it, when poor Goldsmith did not know it was worth a shilling. When we recollect this, we must forgive the Doctor for calling him, in jest, an inspired idiot.'

*Scotchman.*—'Especially as Goldsmith has wit enough, to bear him up against a thousand such jests.'

*Englishman.*—'It is curious to observe how nearly wit and absurdity are allied. We may forgive the genius of Ireland if he sometimes

'Leap his light courser o'er the bounds of taste.'

Even English genius is not always to be restrained within the strict bounds of common sense. Nor instance Young is witty when he says

'How would a miser startle, to be told
'Of such a wonder as insolvent gold!'

But Johnson is, I am afraid, absurd, when he says—

'Turn from the glittering bribe your scornful eye,
'Nor fell for gold, what gold can never buy.'
IRISH BULLS.

'Where is the absurdity?' said the Irishman, who at first was so much struck at the fineness of the thought, that he did not perceive the bull in the expression, till his friend asked, how any person could sell for gold, which could never be bought for gold?—He then laughed and said,

'One case to be sure must be excepted; a patriot may sell his reputation, and the purchaser get nothing by it.'

Scotchman.—'After all we have said of irish bulls, we have never precisely settled what they are. Can you define an irish bull?'

Irishman—'I should say, that an incongruity of ideas constitutes a bull.'

Scotchman—'That supposition touches too closely upon the definition of wit; which according to the best authorities, Locke, Burke, and Stewart, consists, you know, in an unexpected assemblage of ideas, apparently discordant, but in which some point of resemblance or aptitude is suddenly discovered.'

Irishman.—'Then, perhaps, the essence of a bull lies in confusion of ideas.'

Englishman.—'That sounds plausible in theory, but it will not apply in practice, for confusion of ideas is common to both countries. What do you think of the English student, who when
ESSAY ON

he was asked what progress he had made in the study of medicine, modestly replied—'I hope I shall soon be fully qualified to be a physician, for I think I am now able to cure a child.'

'O, (said the Scotchman, laughing), confusion of ideas cannot constitute a bull, or this would be one. Another definition, if you please, sir.'

Irishman.—'To amend our bill, suppose we insert the word laughable and say, that a certain laughable confusion of ideas constitutes a bull.'

Englishman.—'Still there are English blunders of this description. Do not you remember Blackmore's famous lines in prince Arthur?

'A painted vest prince Vortigern had on,
'Which from a naked Pict his grandsire won.'

Have not we here a laughable confusion of ideas? and in another passage, where the same poet says,

'He roared so loud, and looked so wond'rous grim,
'His very shadow durst not follow him.'

Scotchman.—To many people, the most flate
and vulgar Irish would appear more laughable, merely because it was Irish; therefore we cannot make the propensity to laughter in one man the criterion of what is ridiculous in another.

Englishman.—'We have, however, a precedent for this mode of judging, in the laws of England, which are allowed to be the perfection of human reason. If a man swear, that his neighbour has put him in bodily fear, he may have him sent to jail, if the accused cannot find sureties; and thus the feelings of the plaintiff become the measure of the defendant's guilt.'

Scotchman.—'Well, sir, you seem not to have any other definition ready for us. The essence of a bull must be of the most ethereal nature, for notwithstanding our indefatigable research it has hitherto escaped us. The crucible always breaks in the long expected moment of projection.'

Irishman.—'I have not the least inclination to recommence the process.'

Englishman.—'Then you acknowledge, that there is no such thing in nature as an Irish bull?'

Irishman.—'Conscience forbid!'

Scotchman.—'But if it exists it could be defined.'

Irishman.—'Not by me; I am but a sorry Q.'
logician; but I think I can give you an example of an Irish bull, in which are all the essential requisites, incongruity, confusion, and laughable confusion, both in thought and expression. When Sir Richard Steele was asked how it happened, that his countrymen made so many bulls, he replied—'It is the effect of climate, sir; if an Englishman were born in Ireland, he would make as many.'

Scotchman. — 'This is an excellent bull, I allow, but I think I can match it.'

Englishman. — 'And if he can, you will allow yourself to be fairly vanquished?'

Irishman. — 'Most willingly.'

Scotchman. — 'Then I shall owe my victory to our friend, Dr. Johnson, the leviathan of English literature. In his celebrated preface to Shakspere he says, that 'he has not only shown human nature as it acts in real exigencies, but as it would be found in situations to which it cannot be exposed.' These are his own words, I think I remember them accurately.'

The English gentleman smiled, and our Hibernian acknowledged, that the Scotchman had fairly gained the victory. — 'My friends, (added he), as I cannot pretend to be 'convinced against my will,' I certainly am not 'of the same
opinion still.' But stay, there are such things as practical bulls. Did not you hear of the Irishman, who ordered a painter to draw his picture, and to represent him standing behind a tree?

*Englishman.*—'No; but I have heard the very same story told of an Englishman. The dealers in *good jokes* give them first to one nation and then to another, first to one celebrated character and then to another, as it suits the demand and fashion of the day; just as our print-sellers, with a few touches, change the portrait of general Washington into the head of the king of France, and a capital print of Sir John Reynolds into a striking likeness of the *Monster.*'

*Irishman.*—'But, alas, there are physiognomies so strangely marked with national peculiarity, that it is impossible to disguise them completely. On the face of certain things there are characteristic sticks, which cannot be counterfeited.—Englishmen may, perhaps, sometimes make practical bulls, but they are of a different breed from ours.'

*Englishman.*—'Give us an instance; I think if there be any essential differences, I could be taught to know one bull from another, though I
E S S A Y O N
should despair of ever rivalling the Norfolk gos-
herds, who pretend to know any one goose in a
flock by the peculiarities of countenance.'

Irishman.—'Laugh, but hear me.—Could
any one but an Irishman have made the blunder
of the boots. You probably have heard the
story twenty times. An Irish gentleman who
had the gout, ordered his shoemaker to make
him a pair of boots, but bid him be sure to make
one of them larger than the other.—The shoe-
maker made two boots, one of which fitted, the
other was too small. The shoemaker insisted
upon it, that he had executed the order which
had been given him.'

Scotchman.—'Do you rest the merit of this
blunder upon the inaccurate use of the word pair,
if you do, you are undone, for that inaccuracy
is common out of Ireland.—'Oh ill matched
pair!' is an exclamation you must have heard,
and why not an ill matched pair of boots.'

Englishman.—'And if you be not yet satisfied,
console yourself for your countryman's blun-
der about larger and less, by the practical bull
of our great mathematician Sir Isaac Newton,
who, after he had made a large hole in his study
door for his cat to creep through, made a small
hole beside it, for the kitten.'
IRISH BULLS.

Scotchman.—You will acknowledge, sir, that this is as good a practical bull as can be produced, and that none but himself can be his parallel.

Irishman.—‘Well, you must also acknowledge, gentlemen, that I have committed a practical plunder all this time, in pleading against myself and my country.’

Scotchman.—‘You have only been trying what could be said against your countrymen, on purpose to show how little could be produced; but there are many orators who plead against themselves in sober earnest without intending it, and after a world of preparation. I think it is said, that Isocrates took nineteen or twenty years to compose a panegyric on the Athenians, which he begins thus—‘The virtue and efficacy of eloquence is so great, as to be able to render great things contemptible, to dress up trifling subjects in pomp and show, to clothe what is old and obsolete in a new dress, and put off new occurrences under an air of antiquity.’

‘And is this, (says Longinus), what you are going to do? ’—You see, (continued the Scotchman, smiling), that I could not get through the day without quoting my favourite Longinus, but
give me credit for sparing you the Greek, and
match my ancient bull in the ultima Thule if
you can.'

The Irishman was trying to recollect some of
his countrymen's blunders, but the English gen-
tleman interrupted him by saying, 'I think I
have also a modern bull, that will drive you off
the field; a political bull of a jesuit's; you would
hardly suspect a jesuit of a naiveté; a naiveté,
which, perhaps, was the cause of the abolish-
ment of the jesuit college at Pekin.—When the
emperor of China expressed his surprise at the
immense power and territory of the king of Spain
in South America, the jesuit, to whom he ad-
dressed himself, replied, that the missionaries
had been previously sent to convert the people to
the Roman Catholic faith, after which their subju-
gation followed of course.'

I Irishman.—'Probably this jesuit was an Irish-
man.'

Englishman.—'Pardon me, he was a Spani-
ard.'

Irishman.—'Now we talk of jesuits, I am
afraid that there may be heavier charges made
against my countrymen, than simply that of
being blunderers and making of bulls. Did
you never hear of Irish answers and Irish
witnesses. You are too ingenuous to understand their defence.

*Englishman.*—"Ingenuously I think then, that the habit of giving indirect answers, which I certainly found to be prevalent in Ireland, is not peculiar to the Irish, but that it may be induced by certain treatment in any country, or in any climate. I am sure you recollect Brian Edwards's character of the West Indian negroes; it seems drawn for the Irish, and Ives gives a similar account of the cunning of the negroes at Madras. I particularly remember, that he says they are remarkably quick and ready accountants, but they are so very artful, they never declare their own computation first; they ask 'what does master make account come to?' if you say more than it really is, they cry out, 'Very right master,' but if you make it less, they will be sure to correct your error; and if you detect them in cheating, they plead the custom of their country, for their maxim is—'What white man forget, that God give black man;' and they cry, 'Master forgive this one time, I am poor foolish fellow, what should I know? Ah! I see master knows best, God has made good head for massa.'

*Irishman.*—'This is just the picture of a 'curas.
ESSAY ON

irish labourer settling accounts.—Your honor knows best, sure.—Is it not in the book?—Not a ha'p'orth do I know about it?

Englishman.—'But you observe, that this cunning is a defect arising necessarily from their situation, and the manner in which they have been treated, not from peculiar national character. When they find that God gives them something besides what their betters forget, the lower classes of people in Ireland will turn their ingenuity to improve their own property, instead of cheating or chicaning their neighbours.'

Irishman.—'Chicaning; ay, there's the rub; they cannot live without lawsuits, and Irish witnesses are 'damned to everlasting fame.' An Irish witness will let himself be driven over so much ground in evidence, that he is at last quite spent, and much to the amusement of the hunter-manner lawyer*, he throws himself at last, at some short unexpected turn, into the jaws of his pursuers.'

Englishman.—'But in spite of your smile, you must do your countrymen justice; their consciences are not more venal than those of their neighbours. Recollect the practices of

* The huntsman ghost.—Dryden.
IRISH BULLS.

the english witnesses during the time of Oliver Cromwell, when taking a false oath was deemed

‘A breach
‘Of nothing but a form of speech,’

And within this last month lord Kenyon told certain english attorneys, ‘that he dared not receive their affidavits, lest they should perjure themselves. One man, (said he), was perjured from head to foot,’ and his lordship bade him go down from the table and sin no more.’

Irishman.—‘But no english witness or attorney was ever guilty of the bull of swearing to an et cetera.’

Scotchman.—‘If the English were not, the Italians were, witness the italian prayer, ‘Lord deliver us from the fury of mobs, the quiproques of physicians, and the et ceteras of lawyers.’

After all it is not every honest man, who is qualified to be a good witness. I was lately looking over the grand instructions to the commissioners for framing the russian code of laws, which is said to have been composed by her imperial majesty Catherine, empress of all the Russias; but which, as I am credibly informed was drawn up by a countryman of my own,
ESSAY ON
the late lord Mansfield. Now the definition of persons qualified to be witness is very curious. 'Every man of good sense, that is, whose ideas have a connexion with each other, and whose sensations sympathise with the sensations of those who are like himself, is qualified to be a witness.' How few of any country, according to this test, would be properly qualified to give evidence!

Irishman.—'Party spirit certainly warps the best understandings, and makes men see what they do not see, and hear what they do not hear. During the french invasion of Ireland, two persons of undoubted integrity, who lived in the same house, kept journals of all that passed. When the journals were compared, scarcely a point of resemblance could be discovered. Historic doubts are not, perhaps, the least useful part of history.'

Englishman.—'So we have reason to apprehend, since the great gen. Schomberg advised an historian* to beware of giving or pretending to give precise accounts of engagements and battles, because he declared he had never been able, in time of action, to see exactly all that was passing. Such a confession could be made.

*Michel de Vassor.
only by a truly great man. In civil communica-
tions, the difficulty of seeing and hearing with
impartiality must be increased beyond the pow-
er of calculation.'

Scotchman.—' Assuredly. But people who
are disturbed neither by the dint of battle nor
party spirit, even calm philosophers are some-
times known to exaggerate a little. Were either
of you gentlemen ever electrified?'

Englishman.—' Yes, I was electrified very
lately at Walker's lectures.'

Scotchman.—' And did you find it a most tre-
mendous operation?'

Englishman (laughing).—' Tremendous! not
in the least.'

Scotchman.—' But did not you immediately
feel, as if you had a heavy stone upon your head?
—Did not you apprehend, that you were in
danger of an ardent fever, and did not you take
refrigerating draughts?'

Englishman.—' No I! I took a good dinner
of the roast beef of old England, and I felt no-
thing on my head but my hat.'

Scotchman.—' Indeed! Then you are very
unlike professor Muschenbroeck and Mr. Winck-
ler. Winckler took refrigerating medicines be-
cause he thought he was in an ardent fever.'
Muschenbroeck was two days before he recovered, and he protested, that he would not take another shock for the whole kingdom of France! Dr. Priestly may well say, that it is curious to compare the real sensation with the exaggerations of these early electricians. You see, sir, that not only Irish witnesses, but great philosophers, sometimes err in evidence. Let us not make one nation the scapegoat for all the world. Let us hear no more of Irish witnesses, Irish bulls, and Irish blunderers.

'Pardon me,' said the Hibernian, 'we have still some miles farther to go, and if you will give me leave, I will relate 'an hibernian tale,' which exemplifies some of the opinions held in this conversation.'

The Scotch and English gentlemen begged to hear the story, and he began in the following manner.
CHAPTER XVI.

THE IRISH INCOGNITO.

Sir John Bull was a native of Ireland, bred and born in the city of Cork. His real name was Phelim O'Mooney, and he was by profession a stuccbogh or walking gentleman; that is, a person who is too proud to earn his bread, and too poor to have bread without earning it. He had always been told, that none of his ancestors had ever been in trade or business of any kind, and he resolved, when a boy, never to demean himself and family, as his elder brother had done, by becoming a rich merchant. When he grew up to be a young man, he kept this spirited resolution, as long as he had a relation or friend in the world, who would let him hang upon them; but when he was shaken off by all, what could he do but go into business; he chose the most genteel, however—he became a wine merchant. I'm only a wine merchant, said he to himself, and that is next door to being nothing.
at all. His brother furnished his cellars; and Mr. Phelim O'Mooney, upon the strength of the wine that he had in his cellars, and of the money he expected to make of it, immediately married a wife, set up a gig, and gave excellent dinners to men who were ten times richer than he even ever expected to be. In return for these excellent dinners, his new friends bought all their wine from Mr. O'Mooney, and never paid for it; he lived upon credit himself, and gave all his friends credit, till he became a bankrupt. Then nobody came to dine with him, and everybody found out that he had been very imprudent; and he was obliged to sell his gig, but not before it had broken his wife's neck; so that when accounts came to be finally settled, he was not much worse than when he began the world, the loss falling upon his creditors, and he being, as he observed, 'free to begin life again with the advantage of being once more a bachelor.' He was such a good-natured, free-hearted fellow, that everybody liked him, even his creditors. His wife's relations made up the sum of five hundred pounds for him, and his brother offered to take him into his firm as partner; but O'Mooney preferred, he said, go-
ING to try, or rather to make, his fortune in England, as he did not doubt but he should by marriage, being, as he did not scruple to acknowledge, a personable, clever looking man, and a great favourite with the sex.

My last wife I married for love, my next I expect will do the same by me, and of course the money must come on her side this time, said our hero, half jesting, half in earnest. His elder and wiser brother, the merchant, whom he still held in more than sufficient contempt, ventured to hint some slight objections to this scheme of Phelim's seeking fortune in England. He observed that so many had gone upon this plan already, that there was rather a prejudice in England against Irish adventurers.

'This could not affect him any ways,' Phelim replied; 'because he did not mean to appear in England as an Irishman at all.'

'How then?'

'As an Englishman, since that is most agreeable.'

'How can that be?'

'Who should hinder it?'

His brother, hesitatingly, said—'Yourself.'
ESSAY ON

‘Myself!—What part of myself? Is it my tongue? You’ll acknowledge brother, that I do not speak with the brogue.’

It was true, that Phelim did not speak with any Irish brogue; his mother was an English woman, and he had lived much with the English officers in Cork, and he had studied and imitated their manner of speaking so successfully, that no one, merely by his accent, could have guessed that he was an Irishman.

‘Hey! brother I say!’ continued Phelim, in a triumphant English tone; ‘I never was taken for an Irishman in my life. Colonel Broadman told me the other day I spoke English better than the English themselves; that he should take me for an Englishman, in any part of the known world, the moment I opened my lips.

You must allow, that not the smallest particle of brogue is discernible on my tongue.’

His brother allowed, that not the smallest particle of brogue was to be discerned upon Phelim’s tongue, but feared that some Irish idiom might be perceived in his conversation—And then the name of O’Mooney!

‘O, as to that, I need not trouble an act of parliament, or even a king’s letter, just to
IRISH BULLS.

change my name for a season; at the worst I can travel and appear incognito.'

'Always?'

'No—only just till I'm upon good terms with the lady—MRS. Phelim O'Mooney that is to be, God willing—Never fear, nor speak your head, brother—you men of business are out of this line, and not proper judges; I beg your pardon for saying so: but as you are my own brother, and nobody by, you'll excuse me.'

His brother did excuse him, but continued silent for some minutes; he was pondering upon the means of persuading Phelim to give up this scheme.'

'I would lay you any wager, my dear Phelim, (said he), that you could not continue four days, in England, incognito.'

'Done! (cried Phelim). Done for a hundred pounds; done for a thousand pounds, and welcome.'

'But if you lose, how will you pay?'

'Faith! that's the last thing I thought of—being free of winning.'

'Then you will not object to any mode of payment I shall propose.'
'None—only remembering always, that I was a bankrupt last week, and shall be little better till I'm married; but then I'll pay you honestly, if I lose.'

'No, if you lose I must be paid before that time, my good sir, (said his brother laughing). My bet is this: I will lay you one hundred guineas, that you do not remain four days in England incognito: be upon honour with me, and promise, that, if you lose, you will, instead of laying down a hundred guineas, come back immediately and settle quietly again to business.'

The word *business* was always odious to our hero's proud ears; but he thought himself so secure of winning his wager, that he willingly bound himself in a penalty, which he believed would never become due; and his generous brother, at parting, made the bet still more favourable, by allowing that Phelim should not be deemed the loser, unless he was, in the course of the first four days after he touched English ground, detected eight times in being an Irishman.

'Eight times! (cried Phelim). Good by to a hundred guineas, brother, you may say.'

'You may say!' echoed his brother, and so they parted.
IRISH BULLS.

Mr. Phelim O'Mooney the next morning failed from Cork harbour with a prosperous gale, and with a confidence in his own success, which supplies the place of auspicious omens. He embarked at Cork to go by long sea to London, and was driven into Deal, where Julius Cæsar once landed before him, and with the same resolution to see and conquer. It was early in the morning. Having been sea sick he was impatient, as soon as he got into the inn, for his breakfast. He was shown into a room where three ladies were waiting to go by the stage: his air of easy confidence was the best possible introduction.

"Would any of the company choose eggs?" said the waiter.

"I never touch an egg for my share," said O'Mooney, carelessly; he knew that it was supposed to be an Irish custom to eat eggs at breakfast; and when the malicious waiter afterward put a plate full of eggs in salt upon the table, our hero magnanimously abstained from them; he even laughed heartily at the story told by one of the ladies of an Hibernian at Buxton, who declared, that "no English hen ever laid a fresh egg."
ESSAY ON

O'Mooney got through breakfast much to his own satisfaction, and to that of the ladies, whom he had taken a proper occasion to call the three graces, and whom he had informed, that he was an old baronet of an English family, and that his name was Sir John Bull. The youngest of the graces civilly observed, 'that whatever else he might be, she should never have taken him for an old baronet.' The lady who made this speech was pretty; but O'Mooney had penetration enough to discover, in the course of the conversation, that she and her companions were far from being divinities: his three graces were a green grocer's wife, a tallow chandler's widow, and a millioner. When he found that these ladies were likely to be his companions, if he were to travel in the coach, he changed his plan, and ordered a postchaise and four.

O'Mooney was not in danger of making any vulgar Irish blunders in paying his bill at an inn. No landlord or waiter could have suspected him, especially as he always left them to settle the matter first, and then looked over the bill and money with a careless gentility, saying—'Very right, or 'very well, sir;' wisely calculating, that it was better to lose a few shillings on the
road, than to lose a hundred pounds by the risk of hibernian miscalculation.

Whilst the chaise was getting ready, he went to the customhouse to look after his baggage. He found a red hot countryman of his own there, roaring about four and four pence, and fighting the battle of his trunks, in which, he was ready to make affidavit, there was not nor never had been any thing contraband; and when the customhouse officer replied, by pulling out of one of them a piece of irish poplin, the Hibernian fell immediately upon the Union, which he swore was Disunion, as the customhouse officers managed it. Sir John Bull appeared to much advantage all this time, maintaining a dignified silence; from his quiet appearance and deportment, the customhouse officers took it for granted, that he was an Englishman.—" He was in no hurry—he begged that gentleman's business might be settled first—he would wait the officer's leisure, and as he spoke he played so dexterously with half a guinea between his fingers, as to make it visible only where he wished. The customhouse officer was his humble servant immediately; but the Hibernian would have been his enemy, if he had not conciliated him by ob-
serving—'that even Englishmen must allow there was something very like a bull, in professing to make a complete identification of the two kingdoms, whilst, at the same time, certain regulations continued in full force to divide the countries by art, even more than the British channel does by nature.'

Sir John talked so plausibly, and, above all, so candidly and coolly on Irish and English politics, that the customhouse officer conversed with him, for a quarter of an hour, without guessing of what country he was, till in an unlucky moment Phelim's heart got the better of his head. Joining in the praisés bestowed by all parties on the conduct of a distinguished patriot of his own country, he, in the height of his enthusiasm, inadvertently called him the speaker.

'The speaker!' said the officer.

'Yes, the speaker—our speaker!' cried Phelim, with exultation. He was not aware how he had betrayed himself, till the officer smiled and said—

'Sir, I really never should have found out that you were an Irishman, but from the manner in which you named your countryman, who is as highly thought of by all parties in this...
country as in yours; your enthusiasm does honour to your heart.'

'And to my head, I'm sure, (said our hero, laughing with the best grace imaginable). 'Well! I am glad you have found me out in this manner, though I lose the eighth part of a bet of a hundred guineas by it.'

He explained the wager, and begged the customhouse officer to keep his secret, which he promised to do faithfully, and assured him, that 'he should be happy to do any thing in his power to serve him.' Whilst he was uttering these last words, there came in a snug, but soft looking Englishman, who opining from the words 'happy to do any thing in my power to serve you,' that O'Mooney was a friend of the customhouse officer's, and encouraged by something affable and good natured in our hero's countenance, crept up to him, and whispered a request—'Could you tell a body, sir, how to get out of the customhouse a very valuable box of Sévres china, that has been lying in the customhouse these three weeks, and which I was commissioned to get out if I could, and bring up to town for a lady.'

As a lady was in the café, O'Mooney's gal-
lantry instantly made his good nature effective. The box of Sèvre china was produced, and opened only as a matter of form, and only as a matter of curiosity. It's contents were examined—a beautiful set of Sèvre china and a pendule, said to have belonged to M. Egalité! These things must be intended, said Phelim, for some lady of superior taste or fortune.

As Phelim was a proficient in the socratic art of putting judicious interrogatories, he was soon master of the principle points it concerned him to know: he learnt that the lady was rich—a spinster—of full age—at her own disposal—living with a single female companion at Blackheath—furnishing a house there in a superior style—had two carriages—her Christian name Mary—her sir name Sharperson.

O'Mooney, by the blessing of God, it shall soon be, thought Phelim. He politely offered the Englishman a place in his chaise for himself and Sèvre china, as it was for a lady, and would run great hazard in the flage, which besides was full. Mr. Queasy, for that was our soft Englishman's name, was astonished by our hero's condescension and affability, especially as he heard him called sir John; he bowed sundry
IRISH BULLS.

times as low, as the fear of losing his wig would permit, and accepted the polite offer with many thanks for himself and the lady concerned.

Sir John Bull’s chaise and four was soon ready; and Queasy, seated in the corner of it and the Sévre china safely stowed between his knees—Captain Murray a Scotch officer, was standing at the inn door, whose eyes were intently fixed on the letters that were worked in nails on the top of Sir John’s trunk; the letters were P. O’M. Our hero, whose eyes were at least as quick as the Scotchman’s, was alarmed lest this should lead to a second detection. He called instantly, with his usual presence of mind, to the hostler, and desired him to uncord that trunk, as it was not to go with him, raising his voice loud enough for all the yard to hear, he added—‘It is not mine at all, it belongs to my friend Mr. O’Mooney, let it be sent after me, at leisure, by the waggon, as directed, to the care of Sir John Bull.’

Our hero was now giving his invention a prodigious quantity of superfluous trouble; and upon this occasion, as upon most others, he was
more in danger from excess than deficiency of ingenuity; he was like the man in the fairy tale, who was obliged to tie his legs lest he should outrun the object of which he was in pursuit. The Scotch officer, though his eyes were fixed on the letters P. O'M. had none of the suspicions which Phelim was countenancing, he was only considering how he could ask for the third place in sir John's chaise during the next stage, as he was in great haste to get to town upon particular business, and there were no other horses at the inn. When he heard that the heavy baggage was to go by the waggon, he took courage, and made his request. It was instantly granted by the good natured Hibernian, who showed as much hospitality about his chaise, as if it had been his house. Away they drove as fast as they could. Fresh dangers awaited at the next inn—he left his hat upon the table in the hall whilst he went into the parlour, and when he returned, he heard some person inquiring what Irish gentleman was there. Our hero was terribly alarmed, for he saw that his hat was in the inquisitor's hand, and he recollected that the name of Phelim O'Mooney was written in it. This, the inquisitive gentleman did not see,
IRISH BULLS.

for it was written in no very legible characters on
the leather within side of the front; but 'F.
Guest, Hatter, Dame-street, Dublin,' was a
printed advertisement that could not be mis-
taken, and that was pasted within the crown.
O'Mooney's presence of mind did not forfake
him upon this emergency.

'My good sir,' said he, turning to Queasy,
who, without hearing one word of what was
passing, was coming out of the parlour with his
own hat and gloves in his hand; 'My good sir,'
continued he, loading him with parcels, 'will
you have the goodness to see these put into the
carriage—I'll take care of your hat and gloves,'
added O'Mooney in a low voice. Queasy sur-
rendered his hat and gloves instantly, unknow-
ing wherefore; then squeezed forward with his
load through the crowd, crying—'Waiter! hoff-
ler! pray somebody put these into sir John Bull's
chaife.'

Sir John Bull, equipped with Queasy's hat,
Marched deliberately through the dense, bowing
with the air of at least an English country mem-
ber to this side and to that, as way was made
for him to his carriage. No one suspested, that
ESSAY ON
the hat belonged to him; no one, indeed, thought of the hat, for all eyes were fixed upon the man; seated in the carriage, he threw money to the waiter, hostler, and boot, drew up the glass, bidding the postillion drive on. By this cool self possession our hero effected his retreat with successful generalship, leaving his new Dublin beaver behind him, as bona viata, without regret. Queasy, before whose eyes things passed continually without his seeing them, thanked Sir John for the care he had taken of his hat, drew on his gloves, and calculated aloud how long they should be going to the next stage. At the first town they passed through, O'Mooney bought a new hat, and Queasy deplored the unaccountable mistake by which Sir John's hat was forgotten. No further mistakes happened upon the journey. The travellers rattled on, and neither 'flinted nor stayed,' till they arrived at Blackheath, at Miss Sharperson's. Sir John set Queasy down without having given him the least hint of his designs upon the lady; but as he helped him out with the Sévre china, he looked through the large opening double doors of the hall and slightly said—'Upon my word this seems to be a handsome house; it would
IRISH BULLS.

He worth looking at, if the family were not at home.'

'I am morally sure, sir John,' said the soft Queasy, 'that miss Sharperfon would be happy to let you see the house to night, and this minute, if she knew you were at the door, and who you were, and all your civility about me and the china.—Do pray walk in.'

'Not for the world—a gentleman could not do such a thing without an invitation from the lady of the house.'

'Oh, if that's all? I'll step up myself to the young lady—I'm certain she'll be proud—'

'Mr. Queasy by no means—I would not have the lady disturbed, for the world, at this unseasonable hour.—It is too late—quite too late.'

'Not at all, begging pardon, sir John,' said Queasy, taking out his watch: 'only just tea time by me.—Not at all unseasonable for anybody; besides, the message is of my own head—all you know if not well taken—'

Up the great staircase he made bold to go on his mission, as he thought, in defiance of sir John's better judgment. He returned in a few minutes with a face of self-complacent exultati-
ESSAY ON

On, and mifs Sharper's compliments, and beg sir John Bull will walk up and rest himself with a dish of tea, and has her thanks to him for the china.

Now Queasy, who had the highest opinion possible of sir John Bull and of mifs Sharper's, whom he thought the two people of the greatest consequence and affability, had formed the notion that they were made for each other, and that it must be a match if they could but meet. The meeting he had now happily contrived and effected; and he had done his part for his friend, sir John, with mifs Sharper's, by as many exaggerations as he could utter in five minutes, concerning his prodigious politeness, and courage, his fine person and carriage, his ancient family, and vast connections and importance wherever he appeared on the road, at inns and over all England. He had previously, during the journey, done his part for mifs Sharper's with sir John, by stating, that—she had a large fortune left her by her mother, and was to have twice as much from her grandmother; that she had thousands upon thousands in the funds, and an estate of two thousand a year, called Rascally, in Scotland, beside plate and jewels without end.
IRISH BULLS.

Thus prepared, how could this lady and gentleman meet without falling desperately in love with each other!

Though a servant, in handsome livery, appeared ready to show Sir John up the great staircase, Mr. Queasy acted as a gentleman usher, or rather as showman. He nodded to Sir John, as they passed across a long gallery and through an antichamber, threw open the doors of various apartments, as he went along, crying—'Peep in! peep in! peep in here! peep in there!—Is not this spacious? Is not this elegant? Is not that grand? Did I say too much?' continued he, rubbing his hands with delight. 'Did you ever see so magnificent, and so highly polished steel grates out of Lon'on?'

Sir John, conscious that the servant's eyes were upon him, smiled at this question, 'looked superior down,' and though with reluctant complaisance he leaned his body to this side or that, as Queasy pulled or swayed, yet he appeared totally regardless of the man's vulgar reflections. He had seen every thing as he passed; and was surprised at all he saw; but he evinced not the slightest symptom of astonishment. He was now ushered into a spacious well lighted a
department; he entered with the easy unembar-
rassed air of a man, who was perfectly accustom-
ed to such a home. His quick coup d'oeil took
in the whole at a single glance. Two magnifi-
cent candelabras stood on egyptian tables at the
farther end of the room, and the lights were re-
lected on all sides from mirrors of no common
size. Nothing seemed worthy to attract our
hero's attention but the lady of the house, whom
he approached with an air of distinguished re-
spect. She was reclining on a turkish sofa—her
companion beside her, tuning a harp. Miss
Sharpeison half rose to receive Sir John: he paid
his compliments with an easy, yet respectful air.
He was thanked for his civilities to the person,
who had been commissioned to bring the box of
Sevre china from Deal.

'Vastly sorry it should have been so trouble-
some,' miss Sharpeison said, in a voice fashion-
ably unintelligible, and with a most becoming
yet intimidating nonchalance of manner. Inti-
midating it might have been to any man but our
hero; he who had the happy talent of catching,
wherever he went the reigning manner of the
place, replied to the lady in equal strains; and
she, in her turn, seemed to look on him more as
IRISH BULLS.

her equal. Tea and coffee were served. Nothing were talked of quite easily by Sir John. He practised the art 'not to admire,' so as to give a justly high opinion of his taste, consequence, and knowledge of the world. Miss Sharperson, though her nonchalance was much diminished, continued to maintain a certain dignified reserve, whilst her companion, Miss Felicia Flat, condescended to ask Sir John, who had doubtless seen every fine house in England and on the continent, his opinion with respect to the furniture and finishing of the room, the placing of the Egyptian tables and the candelabras.

No mortal could have guessed by Sir John Bull's air when he heard this question, that he had never seen a candelabra before in his life. He was so much, and yet seemingly so little upon his guard, he dealt so dexterously in generals and evaded particulars so delicately, that he went through this dangerous conversation triumphantly. Careful not to protract his visit beyond the bounds of propriety, he soon rose to take leave, and he mingled 'intrusion, regret, late hour, happiness, and honour,' so charmingly in his parting compliment, as to leave the most favourable impression on the minds of both.
ESSAY ON

the ladies, and to procure for himself an invitation to see the house the next morning.

The first day was now ended, and our hero had been detected but once. He went to rest this night well satisfied with himself, but much more occupied with the hopes of marrying the heiress of Rascally than of winning a paltry bet.

The next day he waited upon the ladies in high spirits. Neither of them was visible, but Mr. Queasy had orders to show him the house, which he did with much exultation, dwelling particularly in his praises on the beautiful high polish of the steel grates. Queasy boasted, that it was he that recommended the ironmonger, who furnished the house in that line, and that his bill, as he was proud to state, amounted to many many hundreds. Sir John, who did not attend to one word Queasy had said, went to examine the map of the Rascally estate, which was unrolled, and he had leisure to count the number of lords and ladies visiting tickets which lay upon the chimney piece. He saw names of people of the first quality and respectability; it was plain, that Miss Sharpeston must be a lady of high family as well as large fortune, else she would not
be visited by persons of such distinction. Our hero's passion for her increased every moment. Her companion, Miss Flat, now appeared, and entered very freely into conversation with Sir John, and as he perceived that she was commissioned to sit in judgement upon him, he evaded all her leading questions, with the skill of an Irish witness; but, without giving any Hibernian answers, she was fairly at a fault. Miss Sharpeiron at length appeared, elegantly dressed, her person was genteel and her face rather pretty. Sir John, at this instant, thought her beautiful, or seemed to think so. The ladies interchanged looks, and afterward Sir John found a softness in his fair one's manner, a languishing tenderness in her eyes, in the tone of her voice, and at the same time a modest perplexity and reserve about her, which altogether persuaded him, that he was quite right, and his brother quite wrong en fait d'amour. Miss Flat appeared now to have the most self possession of the three, and Miss Sharpeiron looked at her, from time to time, as if she asked leave to be in love. Sir John's visit lasted a full half hour, before he was sensible of having been five minutes engaged in this delightful conversation.
Mifs Sharperfon's coach now came to the door; he handed her into it, and she gave him a parting look, which satisfied him all was yet safe in her heart. Mifs Flat, as he handed her into the carriage said, 'Perhaps they should meet Sir John at Tunbridge, where they were going in a few days.' She added some words as she seated herself, which he scarcely noticed at the time, but they returned afterwards disagreeably to his memory. The words were, 'I'm so glad we've a roomy coach, for of all things it annoys me to be squeezed in a carriage.'

This word squeezed, as he had not been used to it in Ireland, found him extremely vulgar, and gave him suspicions of the most painful nature. He had the precaution, before he left Blackheath, to go into several shops and inquire something more concerning his fair ladies. All he heard was much to their advantage, that is, much to the advantage of Mifs Sharperfon's fortune. All agreed that she was a rich scotch heiress. A rich scotch heiress, Sir John wisely considered, might have an humble companion, who spoke bad English. He concluded that squeezed was Scotch, blamed himself for his suspicions, and was more in love with his mistress
and with himself than ever. As he returned to town, he framed the outline of the triumphant letter to his brother on his approaching marriage. The bet was a matter, at present, totally beneath his consideration. However, we must do him the justice to say, that like a man of honour he resolved, that as soon as he had won the lady’s heart he would candidly tell her his circumstances, and then leave her the choice either to marry him or break her heart as she pleased. Just as he had formed this generous resolution, at a sudden turn of the road, he overtook miss Sharpen’s coach—he bowed and looked in as he passed, when, to his astonishment, he saw, squeezed up in the corner by miss Felicia, Mr. Queasy. He thought that this was a blunder in costume, that would never have been made in Ireland. Perhaps his mistress was of the same opinion, for she hastily pulled down the blinds as sir John passed. A cold qualm came over the lover’s heart. He lost no time in idle doubts and suspicions, but galloped on to town as fast as he could, and went immediately to call upon the Scotch officer with whom he had travelled, and whom he knew to
be keen and prudent. He recollected the map of the Rascally estate, which he saw in miss Sharperon's breakfast room; and he remembered, that the lands were said to lie in that part of Scotland from which captain Murray came; from him he resolved to inquire into the state of the premises, before he should offer himself as tenant for life. Captain Murray assured him, that there was no such place as Rascally in that part of Scotland; that he had never heard of any such person as miss Sharperon, though he was acquainted with every family and every estate in the neighbourhood where she fabled her's to be. O'Mooney drew from memory the map of the Rascally estate. Captain Murray examined the boundaries, and assured him, that his cousin, the general's lands, joined his own, at the very spot which he described, and that unless two straight lines could enclose a space, the Rascally estate could not be found.

Sir John, naturally of a warm temper, proceeded, however, with prudence. The Scotch officer admired his sagacity in detecting this adventurer. Sir John waited at his hotel for Queasy, who had promised to call to let him know when the ladies would go to Tunbridge.
IRISH BULLS.

Queasy came. Nothing could equal his astonishment and dismay when he was told the news.

"No such place as Rascally estate. Then I'm an undone man! an undone man!" cried poor Queasy, bursting into tears, "but I'm certain it's impossible, and you'll find, Sir John, you've been misinformed. I would stake my life upon it, Miss Sharpeiron's a rich heiress, and has a rich grandmother. Why, she's five hundred pounds in my debt, and I know of her being thousands and thousands in the books of as good men as myself to whom I've recommended her, which I wouldn't have done for my life, if I had not known her to be solid. You'll find she'll prove a rich heiress, sir John."

Sir John hoped so, but the proofs were not yet satisfactory. Queasy determined to inquire into her payments to certain creditors at Blackheath, and promised to give a decisive answer in the morning. O'Mooney saw, that this man was too great a fool to be a knave; his perturbation was evidently the perturbation of a dupe, not of an accomplice; Queasy was made to 'be an anvil, not a hammer.' In the midst of his
own disappointment, our good natured hibernian
really pitied this poor currier.

The next morning Sir John went early to
Blackheath. All was confusion at Miss Sharper-
son's house; the steps covered with grates and
furniture of all sorts; porters carrying out look-
ing glasses, egyptian tables, and candelabras;
the noise of workmen was heard in every apart-
ment, and louder than all the rest. O'Mooney
heard the curses, that were denounced against
his rich heiress—curses, such as are bestowed
on a swindler in the moment of detection, by the
tradesmen whom she has ruined.

Our hero, who was of a most happy temper,
congratulated himself upon having, by his own
wit and prudence, escaped making the practical
bull of marrying a female swindler.

Now that Phelim's immediate hopes of mar-
rying a rich heiress were over, his bet with his
brother appeared to him of more consequence,
and he rejoiced in the reflection, that this was
the third day he had spent in England and that
he had but once been detected—The ideas of
March were come, but not passed!

'My lads,' said he to the workmen, who were
IRISH BULLS.

daily in carrying out the furniture from miss Sharperon's house; 'all hands are at work, I see, in saving what they can from the wreck of the Sharperon. She was as well fitted out a vessel, and in as gallant trim as any ship upon the face of the earth.'

'Ship upon the face of the earth!' repeated an English porter with a sneer, 'Ship upon the face of the water, you should say, master, but I take it you be's an Irishman.'

O'Mooney had reason to be particularly vexed at being detected by this man, who spoke a miserable jargon, and who seemed not to have a very extensive range of ideas. He was one of those half-witted geniuses, who catch at the shadow of an Irish bull. In fact, Phelim had merely made a lapsus linguae, and had used an expression, justifiable by the authority of the elegant and witty lord Chesterfield, who said—no—who wrote, that the English navy is the finest navy upon the face of the earth!—But it was in vain for our hero to argue the point—he was detected—no matter how or by whom. But this was only his second detection, and three of his four days of probation were past.
He dined this day at captain Murray's. In the room in which they dined there was a picture of the captain, painted by Romney. Sir John, who happened to be seated opposite to it, observed, that it was a very fine picture—the more he looked at it the more he liked it. His admiration was at last unluckily expressed—he said, 'that's an incomparable, an inimitable picture, it is absolutely more like than the original'.

A keen Scotch lady in company smiled and repeated,—More like than the original! Sir John, if I had not been told by my relative here, that you were an Englishman, I should have set you down, from that speech, for an Irishman.

This unexpected detection brought the colour, for a moment, into Sir John's face; but immediately recovering his presence of mind, he said,—

'That was I acknowledge an excellent Irish bull; but in the course of my travels I have heard as good English bulls as Irish.'

To this captain Murray politely acceded, and he produced some laughable instances in support.

* This bull was really made.
of the affection, which gave the conversation a new turn.

O'Mooney felt extremely obliged to the captain for this, especially as he saw, by his countenance, that he also had suspicions of the truth. The first moment he found himself alone with Murray, our hero said to him—"Murray, you are too good a fellow to impose upon, even in jest! Your keen countrywoman guessed the truth—I am an Irishman, but not a swindler. You shall hear why I conceal my country and name; only keep my secret till to-morrow night, or I shall lose a hundred guineas by my frankness."

O'Mooney then explained to him the nature of his bet.—"This is only my third detection, and half of it voluntary, I might say, if I chose to diggle, which I scorn to do."

Captain Murray was so much pleased by this openess, that as he shook hands with O'Mooney, he said—"Give me leave to tell you, sir, that even if you should lose your bet by this frank behaviour, you will have gained a better thing—a friend."

In the evening our hero went with his friend and a party of gentlemen to Maidenhead, near which place a battle was to be fought the next
day, between two famous pugilists, Bourke and Belcher. At the appointed time the combatants appeared upon the stage, the whole boxing corps and the gentlemen amateurs crowded to behold the spectacle. Phelim O'Mooney's heart beat for the Irish champion Bourke; but he kept a guard upon his tongue, and even had the forbearance not to bet upon his countryman's head. How many rounds were fought, and how many minutes the fight lasted, how many blows were put in on each side, or which was the most game man of the two, we forbear to decide or relate, as all this has been settled in the newspapers of the day; where also it was remarked, that Bourke, who lost the battle,—was put into a postchaise, and left standing half an hour, while another fight took place. This was very scandalous on the part of his friends, says the humane newspaper historian, as the poor man might possibly be dying.

Our hero O'Mooney's heart again got the better of his head. Forgetful of his bet, forgetful of every thing but humanity, he made his way up to the chaise, where Bourke was left—"How are you my gay fellow?" said he. "Can you see at all with the eye that's knocked out?"
IRISH BULLS.

The brutal populace, who overheard this question, set up a roar of laughter—"A bull! a bull! an Irish bull! Did you hear the question this Irish gentleman asked his countryman?"

"O'Mooney was detected a fourth time, and this time he was not ashamed. There was one man in the crowd who did not join in the laugh: a poor Irishman, of the name of Terence M'Dermod. He had in former times gone out a grouding, near Cork, with out hero, and the moment he heard his voice, he sprang forward, and with uncouth but honest demonstrations of joy, exclaimed,—"Ah, my dear master! my dear young master! Phelim O'Mooney, esq. And have I found your honour alive again? By the blessing of God above, I'll never part you now; till I die; and I'll go to the world's end to serve you."

O'Mooney wished him at the world's end this instant, yet could not prevail upon himself to check this affectionate follower of the O'Mooneys. He, however, put half a crown into his hand, and hinted that if he wished really to serve him, it must be at some other time. The poor fellow throws down the money, saying—"He would never leave him. Bid me do any thing, barring—"
ESSAY ON

that.—No; you shall never part me. Do what you please with me, still I'll be close to your heart, like your own shadow: knock me down if you will and welcome, ten times a day, and I'll be up again like a ninepin: only let me serve your honour, I'll ask no wages, nor take none.'

There was no withstanding this; and whether our hero's good nature deceived him we shall not determine, but he thought it most prudent, as he could not get rid of Terence, to take him into his service, to let him into his secret, to make him swear that he would never utter the name of Phelim O'Mooney during the remainder of this day. Terence heard the secret of the bet with joy, entered into the jest with all the readiness of an Irishman, and with equal joy and readiness, swore by the hind leg of the holy lamb, that he would never mention, even to his own dog, the name of Phelim O'Mooney, 'esq. good or bad, ' till past twelve o'clock; and further, that he would, till the clock should strike that hour, call his master sir John Bull, and nothing else, to all men, women, and children, upon the floor of God's creation.'

Satisfied with the fulness of this oath, O'Mooney resolved to return to town, with his
IRISH BULLS.

man Terence McDermot. He however contrived, before he got there, to make a practical bull, by which he was detected a fifth time. He got into the coach, which was driving from London, instead of that which was driving to London, and he would have been carried rapidly to Oxford, had not his man Terence, after they had proceeded a mile and a half on the wrong road, put his head down from the top of the coach, crying, as he looked in at the window—'Master, sir John Bull, are you there? Do you know we're in the wrong box, going to Oxford?'

'Your master's an Irishman, I dare to say, as well as yourself,' said the coachman, as he let sir John out. He walked back to Maidenhead, and took a chaise to town.

It was six o'clock when he got to London, and he went into a coffeehouse to dine. He sat down beside a gentleman who was reading the newspaper.—'Any news to day, sir.'

The gentleman told him the news of the day, and then began to read aloud some paragraphs in a strong hibernian accent. Our hero was sorry that he had met with another countryman; but he resolved to set a guard upon his lips, and he
knew that his own accent could not betray him. The stranger read on till he came to a trial about a legacy, which an old woman had left to her cats.—O’Mooney exclaimed—‘I hate cats almost as much as old women; and if I had been the English minister, I would have laid the dog tax upon cats.’

‘If you had been the Irish minister, you mean,’ said the stranger smiling; ‘for I perceive now you are a countryman of my own.’

‘How can you think so, sir,’ said O’Mooney; ‘you have no reason to suppose so from my accent, I believe.’

‘None in life, quite the contrary; for you speak remarkable pure English—not the least note or half note of the brogue; but there’s another sort of freemason sign by which we Hibernians know one another, and are known all over the globe. Whether to call it a confusion of expression or of ideas, I can’t tell. Now an Englishman, if he had been saying what you did, sir, just now, would have taken time to separate the dog and the tax, and he would have put the tax upon cats, and let the dogs go about their business.’ Our hero, with his usual good humour, acknowledged himself to be fairly detected.
IRISH BULLS.

Well, sir, said the stranger, if I had not found you out before by the blunder, I should be sure how you were my countryman by your good humour: an Irishman can take what is said to him, provided no affront's meant, with more good humour than any man on earth.

"Ay, that he can," cried O'Modaey; he fends himself, like the whale, to be tickled even by the fellow with the harpoon, till he finds what he is about; and then he pays away, and pitches the fellow, boat and all, to the devil. "Ah, countryman! you would give me credit indeed for my good humour, if you knew what danger you have put me in by detecting me for an Irishman. I have been found out six times, and if I blunder twice more before twelve o'clock this night; I shall lose a hundred guineas by it: but I will make sure of my bet; for I will go home straight this minute, lock myself up in my room, and not say a word to any mortal till the watchman cries 'past twelve o'clock,' then the fall and long, long of my tongue will be fairly over; and if you'll meet me, my dear friend, at the King's Arms, we will have a good supper and keep caller for ever."

U
Phelim, pursuant to his resolution, returned to his hotel, and shut himself up in his room, where he remained in perfect silence and consequent safety till about nine o'clock. Suddenly, he heard a great huzzaing in the street; he looked out of the window and saw, that all the houses in the street were illuminated. His landlady came burbling into his apartment, followed by waiters with candles. His spirits instantly rose, though he did not clearly know the cause of the rejoicings.—'I give you joy, ma'am. What are you all illuminating for?' said he to his landlady.

'Thank you, sir, with all my heart.—I am not sure. It is either for a great victory or the peace.—Bob—waiter—step out and inquire for the gentleman.'

The gentleman preferred stepping out to inquire for himself. The illuminations were in honour of the peace. He totally forgot his bet, his silence, and his prudence, in his sympathy with the general joy. He walked rapidly from street to street, admiring the various elegant devices. A crowd was standing before the windows of a house, that was illuminated with extraordinary splendour. He inquired
IRISH BULLS.

The scene was, and was informed that it belonged to a contractor, who had made an immense fortune by the war.

'Then I'm sure these illuminations of his are none of the most sincere,' said O'Mooney. The mob were of his opinion; and Phelim, who was now, alas! worked up to the proper pitch for blundering, added, by way of pleasing his audience still more—'If this contractor had illuminated in character, it should have been with dark lanterns.'

'Should it? by Jafus! that would be an Irish illumination,' cried someone. 'Arrah, honey! you're an Irishman, whoever you are, and have spoke you mind in character.'

Sir John Bull was vexed that the piece of wit which he had aimed at the contractor had recoiled upon himself.—'It is always, as my countryman observed, by having too much wit that I blunder. The duce take me, if I sport a single bon mot more this night.—This is only my seventh detection, I have an eighth blunder still to the good; and if I can but keep my wit to myself, till I am out of Purgatory, then I will be in Heaven, and may sing In triumph in spite of my brother.'
Essay on

Fortunately Phelim had not made up his mind that he should not speak to himself in Irish idiom, or that he should not think a bull. Resolved to be as obstinately silent as a monk of La Trappe, he once more shut himself up in his cell and fell fast asleep—dreamed that fat bulls of Basan encompassed him round about—that he ran down a steep hill to escape them—that his foot slipped—he rolled to the bottom—felt the bull's horns in his side—heard the bull bellowing in his ears—wakened—and found Terence McDermott bellowing at his room door.

"Sir John Bull! Sir John Bull! Murder! Murder! My dear master, Sir John Bull! Murder, robbery, and reward! Let me in! For the love of the holy virgin! They are all after you!"

"Who? Are you drunk, Terence?" said Sir John, opening the door.

"No, but they are mad—all mad!"

"Who?"

The constables. They are all mad entirely, and the lord mayor, all along with your honour's making me swear I would not tell your honour I knew they were all coming armed in a body, to put you in jail for a forgery, unless I run back and tell them the truth—will I?"
IRISH BULLS.

"First tell me the truth, blunderer!"

"I'll make my affidavit, I never blundered, please your honour, but just went to the merchant's, as you ordered, with the draught, signed with the name I swore not to utter till past twelve. I presents the draught, and waits to be paid. 'Are you Mr. O'Mooney's servant?' says one of the clerks after a while.—'No, sir, not at all, sir,' said I, 'I'm sir John Bull's, at your service.'—He puzzles and puzzles and asked me, did I bring the draught, and was that your writing at the bottom of it. I told it was my master's writing, sir John Bull's, and no other. They whispered from one up to t'other, and said it was a forgery, as I overheard, and must go before the mayor. With that, while the master, who was called down to be examined as to his opinion, was putting on his glasses to spell it out, I gives them, one and all, the flip, and whips out of the street door and home to give your honour notice, and have been breaking my heart at the door this half hour to make you hear, and now you have it all.'

"I am in a worse dilemma now than when between the horns of the bull," thought Sir John.
I must now either tell my real name, avow myself an Irishman, and so lose my bet, or else go to jail. He preferred going to jail. He resolved to pretend to be dumb, and he charged Terence not to betray him. The officers of justice came to take him up—Sir John resigned himself to them, making signs that he could not speak. He was carried before a magistrate. The merchant had never seen Mr. Phelim O'Mooney, but could swear to his hand writing and signature, having many of his letters and draughts. The draught in question was produced. Sir John Bull would neither acknowledge nor deny the signature, but in dumb show made signs of innocence. No art or persuasion could make him speak—he kept his finger on his lips. One of the bailiffs offered to open Sir John’s mouth. Sir John clenched his hand in token, that if they used violence he knew his remedy. To the magistrate he was all bows and respect—but the law, in spite of civility, must take its course. Sir John Bull was committed to Newgate, upon suspicion of having forged the name of Phelim O’Mooney.

Terence McDermot beat his breast, and call-
IRISH BULLS.

ed upon all the saints in the Irish calendar; when he saw the committal actually made out, and his dear master given over to the constables. Nothing but his own oath and his master's commanding eye, which was fixed upon him at this instant, could have made him forbear to utter what he had never in his life been before so strongly tempted to tell—the truth.

Determined to win his wager, our hero braved the horrors of a prison, and when he was fairly locked in at Newgate, he persisted in keeping silence till the clock struck twelve! Then the charm was broken, and he spoke. He began talking to himself, and singing as loud as he possibly could.

The next morning Terence, who was no longer bound by his oath to conceal Phelim's name, hastened to his master's correspondent in town, told the whole story, and O'Mooney was liberated. Having won his bet by his wit and readiness, he had now the prudence to give up these adventuring schemes, to which he had so nearly become a dupe; he returned immediately to Ireland to his brother, and determined to settle quietly to business. His good brother paid him the hundred guineas most joyfully, declar-
ESSAY ON

ing, that he had never spent a hundred guineas better in his life, than in recovering a brother. Phelim had now conquered his foolish dislike to trade; his brother took him into partnership; and Phelim O'Mooney never relapsed into Sir John Bull.

CONCLUSION.

Long before this time, our readers must have discovered our real dispositions towards Ireland. It is now time to throw off the mask, which has frequently slipped aside, in spite of our awkward attempts to keep it on. Unable any longer to support the tone of irony, where we feel sincere regard, we joyfully speak in our own characters, and avow, that we have been all this time friends in disguise. Notwithstanding our affected sarcasms, we explicitly declare our opinion, that the Irish are an ingenious generous people; that the bulls and blunders, of which they are accused, are often imputable to their neighbours, or that they are justifiable by ancient precedents, or that they are produced by their habits of using figurative and witty lan-
IRISH BULLS.  

By what their good humour is produced, we know not; but that it exists, we are certain. In Ireland, the countenance and heart expand at the approach of wit and humour; the poorest labourer forgets his poverty and toil in the pleasure of enjoying a joke. Amongst all classes of the people, provided no malice is obviously meant, none is apprehended.

That such is the character of the majority of the nation, there cannot to us be a more convincing and satisfactory proof, than the manner in which a late publication* was received in Ireland. The Irish were the first to laugh at the caricature of their ancient foibles, and it was generally taken merely as good humoured raillery, not as insulting satire. If gratitude for this generosity has now betrayed us unaware into the language of panegyric, we may hope for pardon from the liberal of both nations: Those who are thoroughly acquainted with Ireland will most readily acknowledge the justice of our praises; those who are ignorant of the country will not, perhaps, be displeased, to have their knowledge of the people of Ireland extended. Many foreign pictures of Irishmen are as gro-

*Castle Rackrent.
Essay on

asque and absurd as the Chinese picture of lions; having never seen that animal, the Chinese can paint him only from the descriptions of voyagers, which are sometimes ignorantly, sometimes wantonly, sometimes maliciously exaggerated.

In M. de Voltaire's Age of Lewis the Fourteenth, we find the following passage:—"Some nations seem made to be subject to others. The English had always over the Irish the superiority of genius, wealth, and arms. The superiority which the whites have over the negroes*.”

A note in a subsequent edition informs us, that the injurious expression—"The superiority which the whites have over the negroes," was erased by M. de Voltaire, and his editor subjoins his own opinion.—"The nearly savage state in which Ireland was, when she was conquered, her superstition, the oppression exercised by the English, the religious fanaticism which divides the Irish into two hostile nations, such are the causes which held down this people in

* Il y a des nations dont l'une semble faire pour être soumise à l'autre. Les Anglois ont toujours eu sur les Irlandais la supériorité du génie, des richesses, et des armes. La supériorité qu'ont les blancs sur les noirs.
IRISH BULLES: depression and weakness. Religious hatreds are appeased, and this country has recovered her liberty. Irish no longer yield to the English, either in industry or in information.*"

The last sentence of this note might, if it had reached the eyes or ears of the incensed Irish historian, Mr. O'Halloran, have assuaged his wrath against Voltaire for the unguarded expression in the text; unless the amor patriae of the historian, like the amour propre of some individuals, instead of being gratified by congratulations on their improvement, should be intent upon demonstrating, that there never was any thing to improve. As we were neither born nor bred in Ireland, we cannot be supposed to possess this:

* "On lisait dans les premières editions, la superiorité que les bluns ont sur les negres. M. de Voltaire effaça cette expression injurieuse. L'état presque sauvage ou était l'Irlande lors qu'elle fut conquise, la superstition, l'oppression exercée par les Anglois, le fanatisme religieux qui divise les Irlandois en deux nations ennemies, telles sont les cause qui ont retenu ce peuple dans l'abaissement et dans la foiblesse. Les haines religieuses se sont assoupies, et elle a repris sa liberté, * Les Irlandois ne le cedent plus aux Anglois ni en industrie ni en lumieres.*"
amor patriae in its full force; we profess to be attached to the country, only for its merits; we acknowledge, that it is a matter of indifference to us whether the Irish derive their origin from the Spaniards, or the Milesians, or the Welsh: we are not so violently anxious as we ought to be to determine, whether or not the language spoken by the Phoenician slave, in Terence's play, was Irish; may, we should not break our hearts, if it could never be satisfactorily proved, that Albion is only another name for Ireland*. We moreover candidly confess, that we are more interested in the fate of the present race of its inhabitants, than in the historian of St. Patrick, St. Facharis, St. Cormac, the renowned Brien Boru; Tireldach, king of Connaught; M'Murrough, king of Leinster; Diarmod; Righ-Damhna; Labra-Loingseach; Tighermas; Ollamh-Foldha; the M'Giolla-Phadraigs; or even the great William of Ogham; and by this declaration we have no fear of giving offence to any but rufly antiquaries. We think it somewhat more to the honour of Ireland to enumerate the names of some of the men of

* See O'Halloran's History of Ireland.
IRISH BULLS.

The genius whom she has produced; Milton and Shakespeare stands unrivalled; but Ireland can boast of Usher; Boyle; Denham; Congreve; Molyneux; Farquhar; Sir Richard Steele; Sir Hans Sloane; Berkeley; Orrery; Parnel; Swift; T. Sheridan; Hellham; Bryan Robinson; Goldsmith; Sterne; Johnson*; Tickel; Brooke; Leland; Hales; Stock; three Hamitons; Young; Charlemont; Kirwan; Bickerstaffe; Macklin; Malone; Canning; Mrs. Sheridan†; F. Sheridan; Griffiths; Courtnay; Barré; Hussey; Sheridan; Burgh, and Burke!

We enter into no invidious comparisons; it is our sincere wish to conciliate both countries; and if in this slight essay we should succeed in diffusing a more just and enlarged idea of the Irish than has been generally entertained, we hope the English will deem it not an unacceptable service. Whatever might have been the policy of the English nation towards Ireland, whilst she was a separate kingdom, since the uni-

* Author of Chrysal, or Adventures of a Guinea.
† Author of that beautiful tale Nourjahad.
ESSAY ON

...on it can no longer be her wish to depreciate the talents, or ridicule the language of Hibernians. One of the Czars of Russia used to take the cap and bells from his fool, and place it on the head of any of his subjects whom he wished to disgrace. The idea of extending such a punishment to a whole nation was ingenious; and magnanimous; but England cannot now put it into execution towards Ireland. Would it not be a practical bull to place the cap and bells upon her own imperial head?

Procumbit humi bos.
CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.  

Gar Errors .......................... 1

CHAPTER II.  

Mology of an Irish Bull uncertain 8

CHAPTER III.  

Inality of Irish Bulls disputed 14

CHAPTER IV.  

Newspapers 27

CHAPTER V.  

Criminal Law of Bulls and Blunders 48

CHAPTER VI.  

le Dominick 50

CHAPTER VII.  

Bliss of Ignorance 67

CHAPTER VIII.  

ights that breathe, and words that burn 77
CONTENTS

CHAPTER IX.
Practical Bulls

CHAPTER X.
The Dublin Shoeblack

CHAPTER XI.
The Hibernian Mendicant

CHAPTER XII.
Irish Wit and Eloquence

CHAPTER XIII.
The Brogue

CHAPTER XIV.
Bath Coach Conversation

CHAPTER XV.
Bath Coach Conversation

CHAPTER XVI.
The Irish Incognito

CONCLUSION