

On the use of the word British / by Ralph Thomas.

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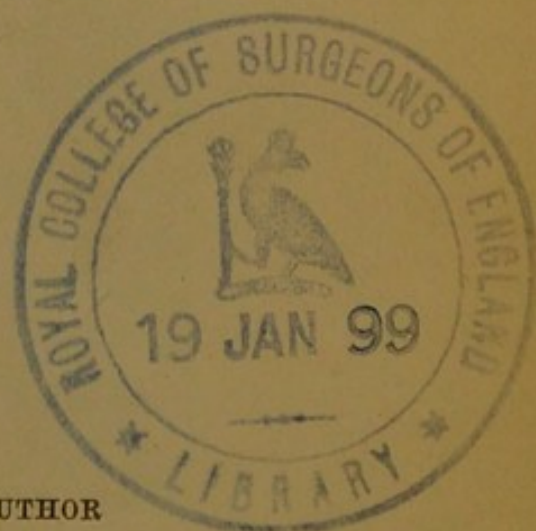
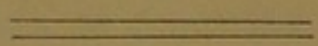




ON THE
USE OF THE WORD
BRITISH

7.

BY
RALPH THOMAS



LONDON
·PRIVATELY PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR
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1897

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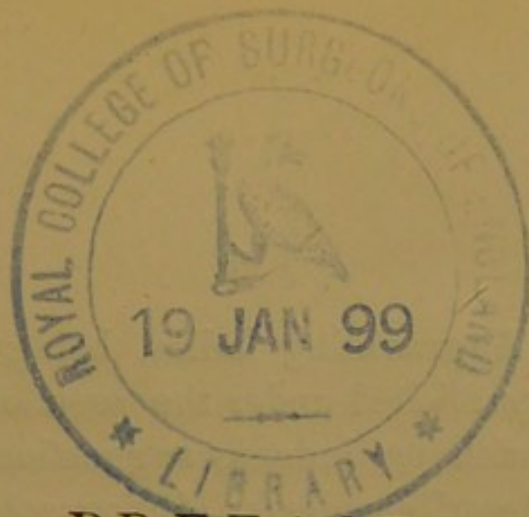
JOHN C. MANN

NEW YORK

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR

1871

1871



PREFACE

For some time past I have been engaged on a new edition of my List of works on swimming. As will be at once apparent my note on the word British is an outcome of this.*

It is only one of the numerous questions that have arisen in the course of writing my work: several like this have been mooted in Notes and Queries, in the numbers of which for 2nd and 23rd jan. of this year "British" first appeared.

I have made a few alterations in the style of printing, to put the article more in accordance with some of the ideas I have advocated for many years past. Most of these ideas are set out in a technical bibliographical booklet I published in 1880 en-

* I shall be grateful for any information about books or articles in magazines on swimming.

titled *Aggravating ladies*, being a list of works published under the pseudonym of a lady; with preliminary suggestions on the art of describing books bibliographically.

I am able to write to periodicals, but I am not able to make the editors print my contributions according to my theories.

Many years ago if a letter was written to *The Times* about the "holidays," that word always appeared in print, not as written but as "holydays." In the same way now, if you write to *Notes and Queries* or any other periodical about *Marseille*, that word comes out with a meaningless, incorrect, and to a Frenchman confusing final s. If English people mean to admit that they are incapable of pronouncing *Marseille* without a final s let them pronounce it so, but there appears to me no necessity to alter the spelling. I think it is time we tried to make a stand against the ignorant practice of our forefathers. Many Welsh names are worse than foreign ones, and yet we manage to struggle through them as spelled by the Welsh.

BRITISH

I AM writing about Everard Digby, the author of 'De arte natandi,' the first book published in England on swimming in the year 1587, and I wanted to say, of course with pride, that he was an Englishman pure and simple, and not a Britisher. That is, he lived before the union of England and Scotland, when James I. came to the throne. At least that is my notion of a Britisher.

I have a bad habit now of looking out for the accepted, or rather dictionary, meaning of words to see if I am right—a bad habit, because, as will be seen by the following observations, it almost invariably leads one into endless searches, that take up time. So let us see what the authorities say about British, and, as I have a bad memory for dates, what was the date of this so-called union.

Ah! Haydn's 'Dictionary of dates' is sure to give me both under "British." No. All sorts of British institutions and British Museum. Under "Britain" we are told the kingdom merged into that of England 874; but that is a British or

Britain that I am not concerning myself with now. Under "England" we get the date of James VI.'s accession to the English throne, 1603 ; but no explanation of British. Most of the institutions called British are not British at all, but purely English, unless the fact of Scotsmen coming to England, remaining permanently there, and joining these institutions makes them British.

I see it is the English dictionary I must go to ; but it is sunday, and I have very few. Let us try the largest first. Cassell's 'Encyclopædic' says, "British, of or pertaining to Britain." Well, that is no use, because we have no definition of Britain, which, like British, is the point ; besides, Haydn told us Britain was merged into England.

Well, now Ogilvie's 'Imperial dictionary,' 1882. It simply copies Cassell's, or *vice versâ*. Now then, Nuttall (an edition of about 1880) : "British, pertaining to Britain, or Great Britain, or its inhabitants" ; but in another edition, 1893, the Rev. James Wood, the editor, seems to have had his suspicions, for he has left out the words "Britain or," unless this was simply done without reflection, to make it shorter.

So that an Irishman, a Frenchman, a German, or Chinese, if he is "an inhabitant," is a Britisher,

which of course cannot be, for a man born in England must be an Englisher, one born in Wales a Welsher, &c.

Let us try Percy Smith's most useful 'Glossary of terms and phrases,' 1889. No. Like Nuttall, it gives "British gum," and "British seas," and "British ship," "one owned by a British subject," but no definition.

Well, Dr. Brewer's 'Phrase and fable' hardly ever fails one. He gives some interesting information about the British lion, but not what I want, though under "Britain" we get near it, for he says Great Britain consists of *Britannia prima* (England), *Britannia secunda* (Wales), and North Britain (Scotland). The natives of these countries, I apprehend, are all Britishers when they act in concert; but I want a book that tells me exactly. One more chance: Wharton's 'Law lexicon.' No. It defines "bridge," and "brief," and "British Columbia," but plain "British" you are supposed to know.

Having exhausted my books, it is clear that I must wait until I can go to a library. In the mean time I may remark that I never use the word British if English will do. If I am abroad I call everything English—whether Scotch, Welsh, or Irish—if I am proud of it; but if bad I assign

it to the country it belongs to if possible, or repudiate it as not English. Sometimes the result is curious, as in talking of one of the magnificent ships which you know are built in Scotland and hail, say, from Glasgow. An Englishman abroad is proud of her, so, in reply to what country she belongs to, "la belle Havraise" is informed she is English. You cannot go into details, and say, Well, probably she is built in Scotland by Irishmen and much of the materials and inventions are from England. What would a Scotsman answer? Would he reply British, or Anglais, or Écossais?

At Marseille* there is a tradesman who has

* The curious English one meets with in France is proverbial. In this town there was a bootmaker who had "High-life boot-maker" painted over his shop. The French restaurants persist in translating "dejeuner" as "breakfast," which is quite unintelligible to an Englishman (I mean a Britisher, no I mean an English-speaking person) unacquainted with French: whereas if they gave it, its proper equivalent, which is given in my dictionary viz "lunch" it would be understood by all. To translate it breakfast, also gives the French an idea that we partake of that meal between 11 and 1 the French "dejeuner" hours.

At Dieppe, a barber in order to induce the natives of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland to get shaved has the word "LAVATORY" painted right

"British butcher" painted over his shop. This always puzzled me, even before I looked up this question, because I thought a man must be either an Englishman or a Scotsman, unless spoken of collectively, such as in the navy or army, when, of course, English, Scotch, and Welsh are properly spoken of as British. He was, perhaps, acquainted with Scotch prejudices, and thought to catch Scots as well as English.

The French do not take to the word "British,"* probably because they have "Anglais," which formerly, I believe, included all English-speaking people; but of late years Americans have travelled in such numbers that it does not now include them.

I have referred above to the "so-called union."

across his house. He no doubt took the word from a dictionary, and is evidently unacquainted with the change of meaning that has been coming on for some years in the use of that word, brought about by the beautiful clean places that now form such useful and ornamental adjuncts in most of our large towns.

* Nor do the English; they use the word more generally of late years, in consequence of a kind of boycotting threat from the Scotch—at least, so I have been informed. There was a long discussion in the *Times* some years ago, and the Scotch writers told us that if we did not use the term British they would leave off building our ships.

What kind of a union is it when each country has separate laws? For legal matters Scotland is as much a foreign country as France; for you cannot serve an English process in Scotland or France without leave of a judge. It is much better than it was some years ago, when a Scotsman could come to England, run up large bills, return to Scotland, and flip his fingers at his creditors. It is the same with Ireland; and yet, though we never conquered Scotland, we always pretend we did Ireland. It is not much of a conquest of a country when it still keeps its own laws. Of course, the above instance is only supposition—"make believe," as the children say—no one would suspect either Scotsmen or Irishmen of doing such a dishonest thing.

An English judgment solemnly pronounced by the most powerful lord we have is mere waste-paper in Scotland or Ireland, until it has gone through the required legal process to make it worth anything in those two countries respectively.

The Union I have been referring to is that of the accession of James I.; but I need not say that this was only a union of the two crowns, the "real" (?) union was not until the Act of 5 & 6 Anne, c. 8, 1706 (in The Statutes revised edition 1871 this is 6 Anne cap. xi.), upon the 1st may,

1707; the latter is as much a sham as the former, so far as the law is concerned.

Probably one must not expect any explanation of a word from gazetteers—at all events, if you did you would not get it; still it is worth while seeing what they have to say.

I have the tenth edition, 1797, of R. Brooke's 'General gazetteer'; it does not give British at all. In a subsequent new edition, 1869, we are informed in the preface that the "first edition was issued to British readers" in 1762. Under "British America" we are told that "this extensive territory will be found under ten heads, under the head of 'British Empire.'" Under that heading nothing of the kind is to be found;* but under "Great Britain" we are told it is divided into three parts—England, Scotland, and Wales.

The 'Gazetteer of the British Isles,' edited by John Bartholomew, Edin. (1893?), gives no definition of British, Britain, nor British Isles.

* I thought I must have made some mistake, so I referred to an experienced literary friend, who confirmed me, with the observation that "there was hardly a page of any of our books of reference that could be relied on." I have thought this, but felt that people in glass houses must not throw stones, and prefer to let some one else say it.

I need not search further, as they are all about the same ; but, lastly, let us see what an American says. Lippincott's 'Gazetteer of the World,' Philadelphia, 1880, under "British Empire," refers to Great Britain, where it says : Great Britain or Britain is England, Wales, and Scotland, but the "British Isles are the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland." This is not large enough, however ; it should have added the isles of Guernsey, Jersey, Alderney, and Sark, for incidentally I may say that the legislature found it necessary to define British Islands, and in all Acts of Parliament passed after 31 dec., 1889, those words mean the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, and the Isle of Man (Stroud's 'Judicial dictionary,' 1890). It would thus appear that the editor of Nuttall was not right in leaving out "Britain or."

The whole thing seems to show that they none of them know much about, or at all events are not thoroughly certain about the matter. Let us suppose a man born in Ireland, or, better still, instead of supposing I will give an actual case, that of a valiant soldier who served his country faithfully for twenty years—John Leahy, taken from his own account in his 'Art of swimming,' 1875. He is a Corker, having been born in the county of Cork, where at the age of seventeen he

enlisted in our army ("our" neatly avoids English and British), and is brought to England, where he is forthwith attached to a Scotch regiment, 78th Highlanders, and for the rest of his military career poses before the natives of India as a Scotsman (I presume in Scots dress). He comes back to England, where he remains, an Irishman still (?), though if he met any of those Indian natives they would, of course, look upon him as a Scotsman in England. In 1868 he joined the Eton College Rifle Corps, when we find, from his book above referred to, he had left off the Highland dress, as he is represented teaching the college boys swimming, in civilian's costume.*

Although in the "British army," it would be unfair to call him British, because that word, as we have seen from all the authorities, and also as we know from our constitution, does not include the Irish, nor any others (if there are any) who

* I use the word "costume" in its ordinary sense here; it does not mean the dress worn at our swimming entertainments, which consists of a tight-fitting body and double drawers, made according to the laws of the Amateur Swimming Association. I am quite prepared to find, in a few years' time, that the word will be solely applied in this latter meaning. The swimming galas are now headed "Costume entertainment. Ladies specially invited."

contribute to keep up the empire. Why should his nationality be sunk? He served the empire with great bravery, frequently distinguishing himself during his twenty-one years. Now if there is a word that includes British and Irish, it appears to me that Sergeant Leahy is entitled to be called by it.

Has not a mistake been made by the Scotch in insisting that the word "British" be used instead of "English"? England is the larger country, and should the lesser not have merged in the greater?

We frequently use the word English in the most extended meaning. Thus Mr. F. Boase has called his dictionary of persons who have died since 1850 'Modern English biography,' though he includes not only English—in fact, they would only give a portion of the names—but Scots, Irish, and every other nationality if identified with the British Empire. Thus using the word in a much larger sense than ever British has been used.

Another person who uses the word English is the editor of one of our most popular journals *To-day*. In the issue of 19 sept., 1896, p. 211, the author of 'Three men in a boat' is apparently answering some one who has been taking him to task for using the word English, and with a meek-

ness which even Montmorency would never have shown, and most unusual in an editor, instead of holding out and showing that he was right, he gives his case away without the least reflection. He says to his correspondent, "You are quite right," and apologetically adds, "When I think of it I say British in preference to the word English. But journalism is generally written red-hot, and the latter word to an Englishman generally comes more pat to the tongue."

I should have answered, "You are quite wrong. English is by far the better word. According to all the authorities, British only includes England, Scotland, and Wales. Why should the Irish be left out? They speak the English, and not the British language; they fight in the British army; they go to the English bar; and they distinguish themselves in the Parliament held in England, and thus do honour to the English nation. I here use English as including the whole peoples under the sovereignty of Queen Victoria."

It would seem that some of our writers have not given much heed to this question. For example, when Mr. W. Prideaux Courtney, a couple of years ago, published his delightful volume entitled 'English whist,' it never occurred to him that he ought to cater for Scotch readers in his title as

well as in the book, or no doubt he would have called it 'British whist.' Many Scotsmen are mentioned in it, though the book requires to be read through to find out where, as there is only an index of proper names.* If Mr. Courtney wanted to be quite certain of including Irish, he must have called it 'British and Irish whist.' Should not our English dictionaries be renamed to include all three countries?

The curious thing is that, when we do come across a book with British in the title, it is, from the view I am taking, quite wrong—for example, 'The British citizen,' by Mr. J. E. Thorold Rogers, M.P., 1885. For the information of readers abroad, I may say that Mr. Rogers is not a Scotsman, as his title would lead one to suppose. He tells us that he was "a youth in a Hampshire village sixty years ago" (p. 139). His title, however, is almost a fraud, quite innocently and unintentionally, of course, but it might induce a Scotsman to buy it, thinking that in it he would read a good deal about his own country.

* I consider the omission of subjects unfortunate. An Irishman or an American, after looking at the index, would throw the book on one side as containing nothing about their countrymen. They would be wrong; numerous are the allusions to and anecdotes of all three.

When I say that in Scotland our politicians or visitors are immediately corrected if they talk about the English (they must always say British), the disgust of a Scotsman on reading 'The British citizen' can be imagined on finding that it is all about the English.

Mr. Rogers begins by saying, "It is my purpose to point out how it has been that the modern Englishman has," &c., and so he goes on. It is all England and the English; there is nothing to justify British in the title, for it would be absurd to say that it is justified by the information (p. 136) that Adam Smith was a Scotchman (*sic*), who was educated for nearly seven years at Balliol College, Oxford, or by chap. xxiii. on the higher education in England, where occurs one short paragraph as to education in Scotland.

Probably Mr. Rogers originally called it 'The English citizen,' and then found that there was already an "English citizen series," so in a weak moment he adopted British. If so, the altered title does not suit the text.

The above allusions are all I can discover in a cursory perusal; for, though issued by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 'The British citizen' has no index, and is stuck together with

wire, which has rusted and spoiled the pages where the abomination is placed.*

This "remarkably clever" book was reviewed in the *Athenæum* of 21 nov., 1885, p. 667, without the reviewer detecting the deceit; but the indexer was alert; he declined to index it under "British," though it is apparent that he has no particular spite against that name, as he indexes "British Association."

There was probably at some period in English history a doubt whether men belonging to various counties were Englishmen; at least, the doubt is suggested by the following incident, the relation of which was overheard, some thirty years ago, at an inn just outside Cornwall.

A young man who had just returned from the remote districts of America was telling a small crowd of admiring listeners the incidents of

* Mem.—Never buy books without indexes and stuck together with wire. This reflection reminds me of another, which may be useful to careful readers. I saw it in an American periodical called *Puck*, whose office is close to that of 'N. & Q.,' and I quote it, knowing that neighbours like to be friendly to one another; at the same time I fear it will be no use for *Puck* to try to borrow a volume of 'N. & Q.' of his neighbour. It is: "Never make lead-pencil comments in a borrowed book, the owner may rub them out—use ink."

an encounter which he and his comrades of all nationalities had with the police. After a severe struggle they were all captured except one little man. He was a "wrestler," as they say in the West of England, and each policeman as he approached the little fellow was thrown over his back. "They could not take him anyhow," said the narrator, and "he was an Englishman"! But at that moment, as the thought struck him, he had doubts on that point, and added, "Leastways, he was a Cornishman."

It will be recollected that Cornwall was instanced to show the gross want of fairness of the Union of 1707, as that one county "sent up as many members, one excepted, as the number allotted for the whole of Scotland" (Knight's 'Pictorial history of England,' vol. iv. p. 188).

If we give up the delightful word "English," I fancy the Americans will not be long appropriating it. Lately at an hotel I heard an American lady telling an English lady that she (the American) was English, and that the English lady was really British; but the English lady would not have it, she stuck to her colours like a man (what an example for the editor of *To-day*), and said that she was a native of England and was English, and that nobody who was not born in

the dominions of Queen Victoria could be English.

Now, then, at last, we have got to a week-day, and can see what our great authorities say on this subject. First, let us take the latest and greatest of all, the 'Oxford English dictionary,' a masterpiece it is difficult even to think of without a feeling of pride, and which, though, like a little dog looking up at the monster St. Bernard, I occasionally try to bark at, I nevertheless regard with awe, remembering, as the Editor of 'N. & Q.' pictorially puts it, "that not much information is to be gleaned when the harvest waggons of the 'Dictionary' have carried off their golden load" (8th S. x. 327) :—

"*British*, of or belonging to Great Britain or its inhabitants. From the time of Henry VIII. frequently used to include English and Scotch, in general use in this sense from the accession of James I. and in seventeenth century, often opposed to Irish : legally adopted at the Union in 1707."

Then we have all sorts of most useful instances in which British is used ; that popular article of commerce "British gum" is cut very short, it is "a commercial name of dextrin."

Poor old Ireland—left out in the cold, although her population is larger than that of Scotland, and in proportion she is more largely represented

in the House of Commons than England, Wales, or Scotland, or, to put it differently, than any of the countries forming that part of the empire we call British.

Dr. Murray thinks *Britisher* originated with Americans in their War of Independence.

The 'Century dictionary' appears to me to have copied Webster; but in the latter "*British gum*" is more, in fact most fully described. By this word *British*, printed in the 'Century' with a capital B, an ignorant person or a foreigner is enabled at once to see if a small letter or capital must be used. All words not requiring capitals are printed without, thus avoiding useless and confusing capitals. I should have thought, however, that "*british gum*" might be printed without a capital B—it would be in French and German.

The 'Century' says:—

"*British*, of or pertaining to Great Britain, or, in the widest sense, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland or its inhabitants."

"*Britisher*, a British subject or citizen in any part of the world, but more particularly a native or inhabitant of Great Britain, especially of England; now chiefly colloquial or humorous."

There can be little doubt that this definition of *British* is in accordance with the popular idea. 'The Financial reform almanack,' 1896, in-

cludes not only Ireland, but Guernsey, Jersey, and Alderney in the term British, without the slightest suspicion.

I feel that I have only touched the fringe of this subject. Every new book and new place suggest something more. For example, I have just been reading Steedman's 'Swimming,' published at Melbourne in 1867. He writes all the way through his book of the "English"—that is, I presume, Australians (?) who are English as well as Australians ; but if some people had their way, Steedman should have written using the inferior term British, as no doubt the population is made up of all English-speaking peoples.

Again, I go to the Portsmouth Museum ; the first object that attracts my attention is one of those exquisite ship models on loan from the South Kensington Museum. The label is "English line-of-battle ship, 1780-1790." This ship is, or was, no doubt, more truly English than she would be in the present day, as she was built, in all probability, entirely at home, most likely at Deptford.

I have tried my hand at a definition for the future dictionary maker:—

British, a native of England, Scotland, or Wales, but not of Ireland until the end of the

nineteenth century, when, according to an American dictionary, the word began to have a more extended meaning, and included the Irish, though formerly used as opposed to them.

Thus British became applicable in the eyes of foreigners to all these countries, but without any lawful or legal authority of the British themselves.

Britisher, a word at one time used in ridicule, but finally adopted as a convenient designation by the British.

Let me say I make no scientific pretensions. My simple contention is that, as an ordinary inquirer, I think I have a right to expect an exact definition of a word in the books of reference without having recourse to a great library ; but I think I show that in this case both resources fail.

BRITISH

by Ralph...

ADDITIONAL MATTER.

JUST as I had issued the foregoing an article was published which appeared to me to complete the subject. I thereupon decided to issue no more until I had annexed the additional matter.

I have been frequently told, "But you come to no conclusion." Well, my reply is, I was chiefly writing on the views, or want of views, of our dictionaries, and left my readers to draw their own conclusions. Besides, the subject was quite new to me, and I hardly dared venture on bolder views than those at which I hint.

Fortune, however, favoured me, as I have said. A few days after my first edition was issued the subject cropped up in quite an unexpected way, and gave a writer in The Daily Telegraph an opportunity of expressing his views in no undecided manner. I at once wrote for permission to reprint them, which was kindly given.

A book just published has done good service by directing attention to Our national name. Though not acknowledged, it is evident that this note in *The London handbook*, 1897, published by the Grosvenor Press at 59 and 60, Chancery Lane, is prompted by what I have written on the subject.

It is a curious thing that if we want a derogatory term we use British ; for example, if work is badly done we say, "That is a regular British workman job," but, if well done, we say, "That is good English work," or some such expression.

On receipt of a print of the first edition, Mr. George Jacob Holyoake wrote to me on 15th june, 1897, as follows : "It is very wise, relevant, and interesting, is your timely dissertation on the word British. It supplies an historical want."

The following is the review of the first issue in *The Law Notes*, edited by Albert Gibson and Arthur Weldon, for September, 1897 :—

"This is an interesting little pamphlet on a word that has recently given rise to much discussion. That it is written by a man of law may be gathered from the doubt thrown on the reality of the union between England and Scot-

land, merely because each country has separate laws. Spite of its shortness, the work contains many amusing stories, and proves that the author is possessed of a marked faculty for acute observation, even of apparently most insignificant facts. It is a pity that the late Bishop of Wakefield had not this work before him at the time when he was engaged on his Jubilee hymn ; he would scarce have dared to change 'English' into 'British,' and would certainly not have apologized to his critics for the unintentional use of the former instead of the latter word."

Although I have argued in favour of the word English, I am bound to confess that I believe the Scotch will get their way with the word British, to which I seem to object more and more. Even since this pamphlet was written it has been much more generally used in England ; in fact, the confiding and yielding nature of the Englishman is no good against the persistence and dogged determination of their brethren of the north.

The following is the Irish Home Rule view : Mr. Michael Davitt, M.P., writing to the Rev. David Macrae, of Dundee, on the agitation against the use of the word English as a

synonym for British, says that Ireland dislikes British as much as the word English. In a political sense, he adds, both have the same meaning to Celtic people, namely, the wrongs inflicted upon them by English statesmen through British rule. Irishmen will never consent to be called British. Ireland stands independently on the Atlantic. He would be the first to resent, with or without Home Rule, the proposal to sink the name and individuality of Ireland in that of Great, Greater, or Greatest Britain.

Lastly, I have an explanation to make to such as are readers of Notes and Queries. In my original article I gave the French pronunciation of British (Breeteesh). For though in ancient times our neighbours altered English to Anglais, Scotch to Ecossais, and Irish to Irlandais they very properly allowed British to remain in its native form ; I presume from its being of later use. An irate Scotchman then accused me of ridiculing his countrymen. Being as ignorant of Scotch as he is of French pronunciation, I had not the least idea they pronounced it thus ; moreover, many Scotchmen are very great friends of mine, and I should never intentionally say anything that might hurt their feelings, and repudiate any idea of so doing.

*From The Daily Telegraph of 7th and 8th July,
1897.*

“The Bishop of Wakefield has hauled down the flag of England. In the Diamond Jubilee hymn which he wrote recently occur the lines :

Where England's flag flies wide unfurled,
All tyrant wrongs repelling,
God made the world a better world
For man's brief earthly dwelling.

Mr. Macnab of that ilk, and Mr. Mackenzie of another, wrote his lordship, protesting against the use of the word ‘England,’ and pointing out that there is now no English flag in existence, the Union Jack being the product of the three national flags of England, Ireland, and Scotland. The Bishop was therefore asked, in order to spare the susceptibilities of Scotchmen and Irishmen, to take out all reference to England, and to substitute ‘Britain.’ He has weakly yielded. To one of his correspondents he writes : ‘A Mr. Kincaid Mackenzie has already pointed out the error in my hymn, which I deeply regret. “Britain's flag” would have been so much better than “England's.” I have asked Messrs. Eyre & Spottiswoode whether they can make the correction in printing the words on slips, but I fear there would be a difficulty, the whole

matter being in the hands of the Privy Council. I can only express my sincere sorrow to have made such a mistake.—Yours faithfully, WM. WALSHAM WAKEFIELD.' But surely this spirit of tribal pettifoggery is rather unworthy of the time-honoured manliness of Scotsmen. Thomas Campbell was a Scot—a better one than the critics of the Bishop of Wakefield, for he was of an old Highland family who traced their descent from the first Lord of Lochawe—and yet he was broad-minded enough to write the soul-stirring song :—

Ye mariners of England !
That guard our native seas.

According to the new kail-yard critics, Campbell ought to be ostracised, and his poems revised by the Two Macs. It is difficult to explain why Scotsmen should be so anxious to have themselves dubbed Britons, and thus identify themselves with the naked tatooed savages who inhabited, not Scotland, but England, before the least glimmer of civilization had dawned upon it. This surely is belittling the proud boast of the Scottish clan, that at the time of the Flood it did not require the assistance of Noah's Ark because it had a boat of its own."

“Lost causes often elicit a good deal of respectful pity and sympathy, but it is difficult to apply these feelings to a cause which is lost before it can be said to have begun. Such a cause—in our opinion—is the effort, idly put forth at this time of day, to suppress the all-sufficing name of ‘England’ when people speak or write about the United Realm. For a long while past a petulant little movement has been going on among some silly if well-intentioned Scotchmen, Irishmen, and Welshmen to banish, if possible, that noble title from public employment in favour of Greater Britain, or Britain, or Britannia, or even some fantastic and new-fangled combination of characters or syllables which should embrace the initial letters of the various portions of the Kingdom, and perhaps stuff into the artificial vocable the Colonies and India as well. We drew attention yesterday to the latest of these assaults upon the time-honoured appellation of our common country. With undisguised sorrow we mentioned how the Bishop of Wakefield had hauled down the flag of England. In that prelate’s Diamond Jubilee hymn occurs the line, ‘Where England’s flag flies wide unfurled,’ and we told how a Mr. Macnab and a Mr. Mackenzie wrote to his lord-

ship protesting against the use of the word 'England,' and pretending that there is now no English flag in existence, the Union Jack being the product of the three national flags of England, Ireland, and Scotland. The Bishop was therefore asked, in order to spare the susceptibilities of Scotchmen and Irishmen, to take out all reference to England, and to substitute 'Britain.' He weakly yielded. He went so far as to say: 'I can only express my sincere sorrow to have made such a mistake.' These small-minded Scotchmen, these patriots of a petty type, would have, as we pointed out, to delete many a splendid passage from their own Highland and Lowland poets and historians, and half the mighty pages of Shakespeare and Milton and a thousand other authors before they could bring literature into a condition to suit their absurd jealousies. As for the argument derived from the Union Jack, it really cuts the other way. The Jack is a blue flag, with three united crosses extending to its extreme edges, the first being St. George's, red on white; the second St. Andrew's, white on blue; and the third St. Patrick's, red on white. There is nothing referring to 'gallant little Wales,' either on the field of that noble emblem of unity nor upon the

Royal Standard, which has three red quarters and one blue quarter, the first and third containing the leopard-lions, the second the Thistle of Scotland, and the fourth the Harp of Ireland. Just as the blue ground of the Jack contains and comprehends all the separate symbols, just as the blue quarter of the Standard may equally represent the Empire of the Waves, which shuts all the parts of the Realm in together—so the great and glorious word England combines the greatness and the glory of each division of the Kingdom, and is the right name, the totally irrevocable and unchangeable name of the Realm which shelters within it Anglians, Scots, Welshmen, and Irishmen, and justly and proudly denominates them all, making them—for the purposes of daily life—that which they are, and may be glad and grateful to be, ‘Englishmen of England.’

“To what purpose and with what hope can the Macnabs and Mackenzies of this futile movement enter upon a crusade to expunge the word ‘England’ from the lips and books and speech of the present generation? History, custom, letters, habit, and tradition, at home and abroad, have decided against them. It was not Lord Rosebery who proclaimed a new and unknown fact when he styled England ‘the

predominant partner.' Nature and British chronicles have made her overwhelmingly the chief sister of the four Anglo-British sisters. Contrast with the statistics of Scotland, or Ireland, or Wales the figures of the English shires and cities relating to population, revenue, taxation, commerce, industry, wealth, enterprise, education, science, learning, art, mechanical developments, whatever you will, and the dimensions of the English facts dwarf all others into comparative insignificance. London on Jubilee Day will contain more living souls than the whole of Scotland ever numbered. Are we to efface all these obvious truths, and call the conglomerate Realm Britain—which excludes Wales and Ireland—when Campbell and Burns and Scott teach better sense, and when all our literature has definitely adopted the obviously suitable word which St. Augustine used for Pictish and Celtic and British slave-boys in the market at Rome—'Non Angli, sed Angeli!'? Shakespeare does not fish for a foreign word, or coin a new one, when, speaking of all the dominion of Henry, he writes: 'This England never did, nor never shall, Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror, But when it first did help to wound itself.' Let not

the children of the Kingdom go about to wound its unity, even with these pin-pricks of pedagogic and pedantic grumbling. The name of England is great enough for the largest self-respect, high enough to cover the tallest eagle's feather that ever waved on a Scotch bonnet, big enough to shelter the most self-contented Welshman or most restless Irishman. It is elastic enough, by its meanings and historical associations, to include all those undenied glories and services in the past, all those honoured and illustrious heroes and worthies, which most certainly the three younger sisters have contributed to the splendid annals of the eldest. Scotland and Ireland and Wales are not lost or merged by being comprehended in the convenient, compact, and entirely correct appellation of 'England,' any more than jewels set in a crown are lost, or gold and silver embroidery upon a royal garment. The flag of England, whether it be for the moment either the Royal Standard or the Union Jack, has a colour for all, a corner for all—a blazon never forgotten, never left out of memory or mind—of what the noble and gifted partners of the Empire have done for its progress and security. There is room, we repeat, for every local pride, every special point of

patriotism, every recollection, and every renown within the limits of that good name of England—which, indeed, we no more claim exclusively for children born south of the Tweed than north of it. Let not any of these children lightly find fault with the word which is a badge of glory and grace to them all. It is a word which henceforth can never be altered or disused, and if forty bishops were to alter four thousand hymns to please the Macnabs and Mackenzies, those perfervid reformers would not be nearer to their impossible goal by the breadth of a single bawbee."



