

CURIOUS CASES OF NEGLIGENCE.

of the ferry company seems particularly impudent.

Another case was in an English county court, where the widow of a medical man sued the owner and occupant of a house for injuries inflicted on her by the bite of a dog belonging to one of them. The dog was savage when chained, as they well knew. The plaintiff, who was dependent on charity, had gone to the house to solicit aid, bearing a general letter of introduction. Not knowing the regular visitor's entrance, she inquired the way, and was directed to the back gates or tradesmen's entrance. She entered through an open door, and seeing no bell, or other means of signalling her arrival, she went to the foot of a staircase on one side of the stable-yard, and was there bitten by a dog, which was chained. It was held that she was on the premises for an unlawful purpose, namely, begging, and that the letter of introduction did not take her out of the category of beggars, not being addressed to anybody in particular. The court also held that there was no negligence on the part of the defendants, and that the plaintiff was herself negligent. Poor woman! she ought to have presented her letter to the dog. This case has excited considerable discussion in the English law journals. In the last number of the *Law Journal* a correspondent says: "Let me assure you that I have not 'taken up the cudgels on behalf of genteel beggars.' Persons of this description constitute, in my opinion, one of the minor pests of society."

The action of *Buckley v. Fitzgerald*, in Ireland, was brought to recover damages for injuries occasioned to the plaintiff's wife by a bull. Popham sold to Fitzgerald certain young bulls, which the vendor agreed to deliver at Bandon railway station, to be there taken charge of by the vendor. The animals were, as alleged, driven in a careless manner, without ring or rope, through the town of Bandon (in abandoned manner, as it were). Mrs. Buckley, the plaintiff's wife, stated that she was sitting at her kitchen fire, about half-past nine o'clock in the morning, with a child in her arms, when she noticed a large bull in the street. She went to close the door, but the bull rushed against her and knocked her down, and then ran into the kitchen. She called as loudly as she could for assistance, and while she was sitting on the floor she saw another bull trying to get in. Some men then came and drove the animal out, but the sight left her eyes, and she became

insensible. She sustained a slight concussion of the spine beside the fright. The jury found negligence, but could not agree whether the animals were in charge of the defendant's servants. So their verdict was set aside. How woman-like it was to go and shut the door when she saw the bull in the street! What more unlikely than that a bull should try to enter a house! But it is the unexpected that always happens. Probably the bull would never have thought of going in if he had not seen himself thus snubbed. This we know is a trait of the national Bull—to try to get in at every open door and every door shut against him—as in India, Afghanistan and South Africa, but although there is a tradition about an æsthetic bull in a china shop, this is the first instance to our knowledge of a culinary bull in a kitchen.

Coombe v. Moore was heard at Westminster, May 9th, before Mr. Justice Bowen and a jury. The parties were neighbours, living about 200 yards apart. The defendant is an American, and on July 4th last he was desirous of celebrating the anniversary of the declaration of the independence of the United States of America, and had invited several friends to his house on the occasion, and part of the entertainment which he had prepared for his guests was a display of fireworks. July 4th was a Sunday; and when the Sunday had passed, between twelve and one o'clock on the morning of the 5th, some fire-works were let off in defendant's garden. The reports of the fire-works were described by witnesses as having a sound like an explosion; and evidence was given that twelve or fourteen rockets had been let off on the occasion in question. The plaintiffs were aroused by the first report, and Mr. Coombe went down stairs, followed by Mrs. Coombe. While he was in his garden, he saw four or five rockets, the sticks and cases of which fell into his garden. Mrs. Coombe was much alarmed, and an attack of hysteria supervened, which was followed by neuralgia. Under the doctor's advice she went by sea for a trip to Ireland, which improved, though it did not quite restore, her health. Now who can conceive a case so harrowing to the feelings of the British citizen? And yet, thanks to native magnanimity, the jury let off the defendant for one farthing damages! If the hysterical lady had gone to the window she would have discovered that the day of judgment was not at hand. But she probably wanted a jaunt, and so worked upon