

A French wit being asked how the opera at Paris might best be supported, answered, that the most probable means he knew of, was to lengthen the dances, and shorten the petticoats. His advice was adopted, and the French opera was ever afterwards well attended.

“While lawyer Bounce with zeal attends the courts,
At home with Bounce's clerk his wife disports;
And this he knows—but what excuse has he?
Qui facit per alium, facit per se.”

Tacitus most admirably illustrates the nature of popular credulity in the following story. A great part of the Roman legions being very much disposed to mutiny, an audacious fellow, who was only a private soldier, being elevated on the shoulders of his comrades, addressed himself to the army in these words; “You have given liberty to these miserable men,” pointing to some criminals whom they had rescued, “but which of you can restore life to my brother? He was murdered last night by those ruffians who are entertained by the General for no other purpose than to butcher the poor soldiery. Tell me Blæsus, “for that was the name of the general, who was then sitting on the tribunal,” tell me where thou hast cast his dead body? An enemy does not grudge the rights of burial. When I have tired myself with kissing his cold corpse and weeping over it, order me to be slain upon it. All I ask of my fellow-soldiers, since we both die in their cause, is, that they would lay me in the same grave with my brother.” The whole army was in an uproar at this moving speech, and resolved to do the speaker justice; but, upon further enquiry, it was discovered, *that he never had a brother.*