

why should not you ? A good toad-eater ought never to be wiser or better in any respect than his master ; and it is positively a great piece of presumption to suppose that toady can lose reputation by any changes which his feeder may dictate.

But now methinks I hear you say, " Might not a toady's feeder be a little flattered by some appearance of independence, so that agreement with his opinion should seem to be the result of judgment rather than of assentation ?" Ay, to be sure—you must pretend to be independent and to be sincere ; you would be a great donkey if you let slip any intimation that your agreement arose from mere complaisance, and was only verbal. Let me illustrate this by a reference to the story of the captain who mistook the furze-bush for a church tower. He did not say it was so without looking at it, but he looked earnestly in order to be convinced, and he was convinced. All then that you have to do, in fitting your opinion to that of your patron, is not to make the matter too broad a caricature ; there must be something of an appearance of conviction, otherwise it is a mockery ; still I must be permitted to say, that those great people who feed toad-eaters are not always cunning enough to see the hypocrisy of their dependents. A man may go a great way in humouring his patron's caprice, and very few patrons have so much wit as the noble Lord above alluded to, who endeavoured to make trial of the servility of his hanger on ; but if that said captain had been foolish enough to discern the joke, he might have gained a loss by his sagacity. A toad-eater, without being a conjuror, may be able to see through his patron, but he must not let his patron know that,—if he does, he loses his place immediately. The captain let the laugh be turned against him either from craft or stupidity, and so he kept his place and gained promotion. Now when I tell you that flattery cannot be too gross, I do not tell you that you may at the moment of administering it say point blank, that it is mere gross flattery, and that you do not mean what you say. No, but if you would play the toady's part well and successfully, you must have no opinion of your own, and be ready to say and think whatever your patron tells you. You must