

## THE ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE.

AN EXCELLENT NEW SONG.

*AIR—Let Schoolmasters puzzle their brains.*

'TIS not very easy to say  
 How language had first a beginning,  
 When Adam had just left the clay,  
 And Eve hadn't taken to spinning ;  
 Or if we suppose them to spring  
 Tongue-tied from the lower creation,  
 What power cut their chattering string,  
 Or prompted their speechification ?

*Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.*

Some think men were ready inspired  
 With lexicon, syntax, and grammar,  
 And never like children required  
 At lessons to lisp and to stammer.  
 As Pallas by Jove was begot  
 In armour all brilliantly burnished,

So Man with his Liddell and Scott  
And old Lindley Murray was furnished.

*Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.*

Some say that the primitive tongue  
Expressed but the simplest affections ;  
And swear that the words said or sung  
Were nothing but mere Interjections.  
*O! O!* was the signal of pain :  
*Ha! Ha!* was the symptom of laughter ;  
*Pooh! Pooh!* was the sign of disdain,  
And *Hillo!* came following after.

*Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.*

Some, taking a different view,  
Maintain the old language was fitted  
To mark out the objects we knew,  
By mimicking sounds they emitted.  
*Bow, wow* was the name for a dog :  
*Quack, quack* was the word for a duckling :  
*Hunc, hunc* would designate a hog,  
And *wee, wee* a pig and a suckling.

*Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.*

Who knows if what Adam might speak  
Was mono- or poly-syllabic ;

Was Gothic, or Gaelic, or Greek,  
 Tartàric, Chinese, or Aràbic?  
 It may have been Sanscrit or Zend—  
 It must have been something or other;  
 But thus far I'll stoutly contend,—  
 It wasn't the tongue of his mother.

*Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.*

If asked these hard things to explain,  
 I own I am wholly unable;  
 And hold the attempt the more vain,  
 When I think of the building of Babel.  
 Then why should we puzzle our brains  
 With Etymological clatter?  
 The prize wouldn't prove worth the pains,  
 And the missing it isn't much matter.

*Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.*

In courtship suppose you can't sing  
 Your Cara, your Liebe, your Zoè,  
 A kiss and a sight of the ring  
 Will more quickly prevail with your Chloe.  
 Or if you in twenty strange tongues  
 Could call for a beef-steak and bottle,

A purse with less learning and lungs  
Would bring them much nearer your throttle.

*Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.*

I've ranged, without drinking a drop,  
The realms of the dry Mithridates:  
I've studied Grimm, Burnouf, and Bopp,  
Till patience cried "*Ohe jam satis.*"  
Max Müller completed my plan,  
And, leave of the subject now taking,  
As wise as when first I began,  
I end with a head that is aching.

*Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.*

The speech of Old England for me ;  
It serves us on every occasion !  
Henceforth, like our soil, let it be  
Exempted from foreign invasion.  
It answers for friendship and love,  
For all sorts of feeling and thinking ;  
And lastly, all doubt to remove—  
It answers for singing and drinking.

*Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.*