

JESTING.

HARMLESS mirth is the best cordial against the consumption of the spirits; wherefore jesting is not unlawful, if it trespasseth not in quantity, quality, or season.

It is good to make a jest, but not to make a trade of jesting. The Earl of Leicester, knowing that Queen Elizabeth was much delighted to see a gentleman dance well, brought the master of a dancing school to dance before her. "Pshaw!" said the Queen, "It is his profession, I will not see him." She liked it not where it was a master-quality, but where it attended on other perfections. The same may we say of jesting.

Jest not with the two-edged sword of God's word. Will nothing please thee to wash thy hands in, but the font? or to drink healths in, but the church chalice? And know the whole art is learnt at the first admission; and profane jest will come without calling. If in the troublesome day of King Edward the Fourth, a citizen in Cheapside was executed as a traitor for saying he would make his son heir to the crown, though he only meant his own house, having a crown for the sign, more dangerous it is to wit-wanton it with the Majesty of God. Wherefore, if, without thine intention, and against thy will, by chance-medley thou hittest Scripture in ordinary discourse, yet fly to the city of refuge, and pray to God to forgive thee.

Wanton jest make fools laugh, and wise men frown. Seeing we are civilized Englishmen, let us not be naked savages in our talk. Such rotten speeches are worst in withered age, when men run after that sin in their words which flieth from them in the deed.

Let not thy jests, like mummy, be made of dead men's flesh. Abuse not any that are departed, for to wrong their memories is to rob their ghost of their winding-sheets.

Scoff not at the natural defects of any which are not in their power to amend. O it is cruelty to beat a cripple with his own crutches. Neither flout any for his profession, if honest, though poor and painful. Mock not a cobbler for his black thumbs.

He that relates another man's wicked jest with delight, adopts it to be his own. Purge them, therefore, from their position. If the profaneness may be severed from the wit, it is like a lamprey; take out the sting in the back, it may make good meat. But if the staple conceit consist in profaneness, then it is a viper, all poison, and meddle not with it.

He that will lose his friend for a jest deserves to die a beggar by the bargain. Yet some think their conceits, like mustard, not good except they bite. We read that all those who were born in England the year after the beginning of the great mortality 1349, wanted their four cheek-teeth. Such let thy

jest be, that they may not grind the credit of thy friend; and make not jests so long till thou becomest one.

No time to break jests when the heart-strings are about to be broken. No more showing of wit when the head is to be cut off. Like that dying man, who, when the priest, coming to him to give him extreme unction, asked of him where his feet were, answered, "At the end of my legs." But at such a time jests are an unmannerly *crepitus ingenii*; and let those take heed who end here with Democritus, that they begin not with Heraclitus hereafter.—*Fuller's Holy State*.

OVER-FEEDING.

Mr. Abernethy agreed with the opinion entertained by Franklin, who said that nine-tenths of the diseases were caused by over-feeding. That learned surgeon, in one of his lectures in 1827, thus addressed his hearers:—"I tell you honestly what I think is the cause of the complicated maladies of the human race; it is their gormandizing and stuffing, thereby producing nervous disorders and irritation. The state of their minds is another grand cause; the fidgeting and discontenting yourself about that which can't be helped; passions of all kinds—malignant passions and worldly cares, pressing upon the mind disturb the cerebral action, and do a great deal of harm."

METHOD OF OBTAINING FLOWERS OF DIFFERENT COLOURS ON THE SAME STEM.

Split a small twig of elder-tree lengthways, and having scraped out the pith, or soft part of the wood, fill each of the apartments with seeds of flowers, of different sorts, but which blossom about the same time: surround them with mould, and then, tying together the two bits of wood, plant the whole in a pot, properly prepared. The stems of the different flowers will thus be incorporated so as to exhibit to the eye only one stem, throwing out branches covered with flowers analogous to the seed which produced them.

Nine-tenths of the catsup sold in the shops is a vile compound of liver and the roan of fish, seasoned with vinegar, pepper, and other condiments. If you want the article genuine, make it yourself.

If you wish to annoy a little man, quiz him about his diminutive stature. He will affect to laugh at himself, but will, for all that, hate you like the devil.