

that is to say, to consider the means of preventing laughter and ridicule, those sources of general demoralization. Civil society can not exist without government and laws; government and laws, can not exist without awe and respect being paid to those who are at the head of affairs; awe and respect are raised in two ways, viz. directly, by the personal qualifications of public functionaries; and indirectly, by the suppression of all attempts at holding them up to ridicule if they do not possess those requisite qualities; to the first mode the great majority of the inhabitants of this province seem to have insuperable objections, because there are so few that are, from their own merit, entitled to such awe and respect; and they ought therefore to be, one and all, zealous in supporting all measures of restriction upon satire and laughter, and equally hostile to those persons who join in the laugh; unhappily however a strange propensity prevails amongst you for laughing outright, or in your sleeves, at your superiors, when they happen to be made the butts of some unlucky wight. Laughing is the bane of society: it is in fact a robbery of the public, in depriving them of that gravity and solemnity, with which it ought to be their delight to contemplate the wiseheads who wish to lead them. But the disposition I have complained of, arises from the false notion entertained that it is a less crime to laugh at public men than at private individuals; but the fact really is, that public men are not in such cases alone laughed at, but every individual comes in for his share, inasmuch as all have their foibles as well as their betters. The laugher, by despising pomposity and solemnity, obtains an advantage over the devotees of grave inanity and dignified dullness; and can such a state of things be tolerated,