

much more care on the improvements of such grounds than if they partake of a picturesque character. Suppose the mansion stood on an elevated site where the view commanded the whole demesne. Then the eye would take it all in at one glance, and the conditions would be changed at once. They might work such reformation of the original plan, which was only adapted to limited scenes of quiet beauty, as to require alterations in the approach, and in the planting and grouping of trees to correspond with the different expression worn by nature. But, on the level lawn bordering the carriage way, where the eye has a limited range, ornamental beds of flowers and clusters of rare shrubs are always in good taste and serve to connect groups of trees. Figs. 8 and 9 are common methods of planting flowers and shrubs; though beds of fancy patterns look pretty when well cared for. Be careful to avoid crowding; for the design is not to strew a flower garden along the road side.

The utmost neatness will be constantly required to keep the paths and roads looking well. Grass must not be allowed to grow in the gravel. The margins should be kept smoothly mown with a lawn mower, as the scythe is not a fit tool for the work. Every plant, large and small, must be forked around often, and carefully staked, and tied and mulched. The little vine planted at the base of a ledge of rocks, where it will bear red berries in the autumn, needs the same attention. Its successful growth is as much a triumph as any other achievement. Attention to small details marks the successful gardener; while brambles, weeds and thriftless management will ruin any fine place in a few weeks.—*J. B. Armstrong, in Pacific Rural Press.*

CHARITY.—Night kissed the young rose, and it bent softly to sleep. Stars shone, and pure dew-drops hung upon its bosom, and watched its sweet slumbers. Morning came with its dancing breezes, and they whispered to the young rose, and it swung to joyous and smiling tones. Lightly it swung to and fro in all the loveliness of health and youthful innocence. Then came the ardent sun-god, sweeping from the east, and smote the young rose with its scorching rays, and it fainted. Deserted and almost heart-broken, it drooped to the dust in its loveliness and despair. Now the gentle breeze, which had been gamboling over the sea, pushing on the home-bound bark, sweeping over hill and dale, by the neat cottage and still brook, turning the old mill, fanning the brow of disease, and frisking the curls of innocent childhood, came tripping along on her errand of mercy and love. And when she saw the young rose, she hastened to kiss it, and fondly bathed its head in cool, refreshing showers, and the young rose revived, and smiled in gratitude to the kind breeze. But she hurried away, for she soon perceived that a delicate fragrance had been poured upon her wings by the grateful rose; and the kind breeze was glad in heart, and went away singing through the trees. Thus charity, like the breeze, gathers fragrance from the flowers it refreshes, and unconsciously reaps a reward in the performance of its offices of kindness, which steals on the heart like rich perfume, to bless and to cheer.—*London Telegraph.*

MOTHER'S SEWING.—Rose Terry Cooke writes to the *Sunday Afternoon* as follows: I never shall forget my own childish tears and sniffs over my sewing. My mother was a perfect fairy at her needle, and her rule was relentless; every long stitch was picked out and done over again, and neither tears nor entreaties availed to rid me of my task till it was properly done; every corner of a hem turned by the thread; stitching measured by two threads to the stitch; felling of absolutely regular widths, and patching done invisibly; while fine darning was a sort of embroidery. I hated it then, but I have lived to bless that mother's patient persistence; and I am prouder to-day of the six patches in my small girl's school dress which cannot be seen without searching than of any other handiwork—except perhaps my bread!

ABOUT JOKES.

Dr. Hall says: "Joke" is not slang, but a respectable word honestly descended from the Latin *joens*, and reproduced in the French "jeu." And a joke is not a vulgar or coarse thing, nor a thing inherently bad, but has its place in the economy of human life, and only becomes a bore, or a nuisance, when out of place. The organization of the human face provides for laughter; for it will not be alleged, we presume, that the effort to laugh developed the muscular capacity, any more than the effort to articulate made the organs of speech.

The first and best arena for the joke is the family, everyone is known and trusted, and every member is or ought to be at home with a budget of fun collected from the ridiculous side of human nature during the day. Family life has many dark and cloudy days from toil, sickness, losses, bereavements, apprehensions. It is entitled to its sunshine and its hours of gladness. The play of wit, the unexpected turn, the grotesque collocation of words, or ideas, and the absurd suggestion, are in order. Like the wild flowers of the green, without arrangement, and without labor, they give a simple pleasure that costs nothing, and does no harm in any direction. If men would only take the pains to "make fun" for the "folks at home" that they sometimes take to "make the table ring" abroad, they would add no little to the sum of human happiness.

But even the grave business of life may be helped on by a joke. Mind works on mind sometimes as iron on iron. Friction, sparks and abrasion follow. The lubricating oil of a timely witticism prevents these ill consequences. Unpalatable truths can be sweetened by a good saccharine witticism; and insipid communications can be made palatable by a sprinkling of "Attic salt." President Lincoln, with a strong, original, and shrewd mind, grew up among fresh and original combinations, and in his varied contact with men noticed much which he remembered. He knew well that an anecdote, a droll saying, or even a common saying made droll by manner, will persuade many, when a cogent argument would bewilder, irritate or repel them. It is probable that he is, and will be, credited with far more "stories" than he ever told; for the echoes of voices in such high places are many, fitful, and far resounding. Dean Swift, Sidney Smith, and other men like them, get credit for more than they ever said. But even allowing for all this, it is certain that he made many a happy hit, which had all the value of a blow without the hurt, through "stories," incidents, and quaint speeches of which he was "reminded." That his own mind rested, in some degree, while thus disporting itself, and was thus helped to bear the weight of care, is an ingenious theory; but it is far from being certain. There was, all through, a chain of grave purpose. The "funny" things were but flowers thrown around it. It is more nearly true to say, that Lincoln—a remarkable man at the outset, with a remarkable training, such as only Western public life could give—"brought forth fruit after his kind," and did his persuasion in his own way because he could do it, and had found it effective.

A joke is a useful instrument in a public address. Men listen better after the facial muscles have been exercised.

Of course wit is as various in its kind as the races of men; but, as with the races, it has common underlying properties, for there are jokes current to-day, and new so many, which are at least 2,000 years old, and which have passed through all the nations of historic Europe.

There is English wit which Scotchmen do not appreciate; and there is a "sly, pawky" Scottish wit which takes best in Scotland, but is not without the power to enlist outsiders, as one may see in Sir Walter Scott, or in Norman McLeod, or in the genial author of *Lab and His Friends*. There is an Irish wit which Carlton,

Lever and Lover have illustrated, though one must live in Ireland to get it in perfection; just as one must go to the lands that grow them to get oranges at their best. It is marked at once by *abundant*, ingenuity, and shrewdness, and often owes something, as does "Yankee" humor, to the tones in which it is enunciated, and to that natural dramatic power which many Oriental races possess. How often the prefatory "Ah, thin, yir honor" relaxes the muscles that work in laughter, and—like a good introduction to a speech—brings you to a receptive frame of mind for what's coming.

When you are sure that the droll or quaint or humorous turn is part of the man—like his voice, or his accent—you are not to blame him even when the oddity turns up "in meeting." The man who was converted "in spots," according to his account of himself, was not open to common censure.

It is out of place when it is plainly "prepared for the occasion;" when you are dragged by a long, circuitous route in order to get the witty thing forward, and when the point of the thing needs to be explained. A good joke is like a mathematical axiom. It shines in its own light. It is its own interpreter, and nothing is sadder, in its way, than to see a poor tyro in wit floundering through an explanation of his abortion of a joke. It is as if somebody lit a candle to show you his fire-works!

HIGHLY SEASONED FOOD.

As long as the American people consume such quantities of stimulating and highly-seasoned food as they do, they will want to imbibe stimulating drinks. Stimulating food and stimulating drinks go necessarily together. The one is the concomitant of the other. Many a man who seasons his dinner liberally with the contents of the casker excites in his system a thirst for something stronger than cold water. Not that cold water would not be the best thing which to extinguish the fire he has kindled within the vital domain by the use of such hot, stimulating condiments; but that is too insipid. Having partaken of such highly seasoned food he craves a drink equally stimulating.

Now, it is not true that every one who eats inordinately and of stimulating and highly-seasoned food is a drunkard, but I hold that such a one, by his manner of living, supplies a very important condition for becoming a drunkard. That he does not become one is, perhaps, because of a high moral principle, acting in conjunction with a great will power to restrain his appetite for diffusible stimulants; for we hold that in such a case, this appetite, to a greater or less extent, exists. The converse of this proposition, however, is true; that as a general thing, men who are fond of stimulating drinks are also fond of stimulating and highly-seasoned food.

On the other hand it was the opinion of Liebig, founded upon observation, that persons who live mostly upon farinaceous and amyloseous food cannot take wine; all kinds of alcoholic drinks seem to be repugnant to such. It is only those whose daily diet consists largely of animal food, who can relish spirituous liquors. Savage nations living in tropical regions, where they have subsisted mostly upon fruits and vegetables, the spontaneous productions of mother earth, have rarely, on coming into contact with the white man and his fire-water, fallen victims to intemperance like the North American Indian, who, living by the chase, has subsisted almost wholly upon animal food.—*Sunday Afternoon.*

ANCIENT WISDOM.—The ancients knew the elements of science to a wonderful extent, and when Hippocrates declared that "patrefactio autem superna est gradus ad vitam," he laid down a principle which moderns have with the microscope demonstrated to be correct. It would seem as if inspiration attended the investigations of the ancient sage, who, with in his own mind, developed theories which we moderns, with all our learning and progress, have not deemed proper to change.