

from behind the furniture, to the covert of which they had retreated from her dazzling presence. At first she was petrified with astonishment, then a look of displeasure crossed her face, till having run her eyes over the grotesque assembly, she met the comically grave expression of her husband's countenance, when she burst into a violent fit of laughter, during the paroxysm of which the bursting of corset laces could be distinctly heard by the company.

"Mary," said her husband, sternly. She suppressed her mirth, stammered an excuse, and added,

"You will forgive me, and believe yourselves quite welcome."

"That is well done," whispered Mr. W. Then turning to the company, he said:

"My friends, as my wife is not acquainted with you, I will now make a few presentations."

Then leading her towards an emaciated creature, whose distorted limbs were unable to support his body, he said, this gentleman, Mary, is the Rev. Mr. Brown, who, in his youth, traveled much, and endured much to the cause of our common Master. A violent rheumatism, induced by colds contracted among the new settlements of the West, where he was engaged in preaching the gospel to the poor, has reduced him to the present condition. This lady, his wife, has piously sustained him, and by her own labor procured maintenance for herself and him. But she is old and feeble, as you now see."

Then, turning to a group of silver locks, and threadbare coats, he continued, "These are soldiers of the Revolution. They were all the sons of rich men. They went out in their young strength to defend their oppressed country."

"They endured hardships, toils, and such as we deem it impossible for men to endure and live. They returned home at the close of the war, maimed in their limbs, and with broken constitutions, to find their patrimonies destroyed by fire, or the chances of war, or their property wrested from them. And these men live in poverty and neglect, in the land for the prosperity of which they sacrificed their all. These venerable ladies are the wives of these patriots, and widows of others who have gone to their reward. They could tell tales that would thrill your heart and make it better."

Then, turning to another, he said: "This is the learned and celebrated Dr. M——, who saved hundreds of lives during the spotted epidemic; but his great success roused the animosity of his great medical brethren, who succeeded in ruining his practice, and, when blindness came upon him, he was forgotten by those whom he had delivered from death. This lovely creature is his only child, and she is motherless. She leads him daily by the hand, and earns the food she sets before him. Yet her learning and accomplishments are

wonderful. She is the author of those exquisite poems which appear in the —— Magazine."

"These children," said he, turning to a group of juveniles who had gathered at the other end of the room, were orphaned in their infancy by the Asiatic cholera; and their hearts have seldom been cheered by a smile, or their palates regaled by delicious food. Now dry your eyes, love, and lead them on to the dining room."

She obeyed, and notwithstanding her emotions, the thumping of coarse shoes, and the rattling of canes, crutches and wooden legs behind her, well nigh threw her into another laugh.

To divert her attention she glanced over the table. There stood the dishes for which her husband had stipulated, in the shape of two monstrous, homely-looking meat pies, and two enormous platters of baked meats and vegetables, looking like mighty mountains among the delicate viands which she had prepared for the refined company which she had expected. She took her place, and prepared to do the table honors; but her husband, after a short thanksgiving to a bountiful God, addressed the Company with, "Now, brethren, help yourselves and one another to such as you deem preferable. I will wait upon the children."

A hearty and jovial meal was made, the minister setting the example; and as the hearts of the old soldiers were warmed with wine, they became garrulous, and each recounted some wonderful or thrilling adventure of the Revolutionary war, and the old ladies told their tales of privation and suffering, interwoven with the histories of fathers, brothers or lovers, who died for liberty.

Mrs. W—— was sobbing convulsively when her husband came round. He observed it, and touching her lightly on the shoulder, whispered,

"My love, shall we have dancing?"

That word, with the ludicrous associations, fairly threw her into hysterics, and she laughed and cried at once.

When she became quiescent, Mr. W. thus addressed the company:

"I fear my friends, that you will think my wife a frivolous and inconsistent creature, and I must therefore apologize for her. We were married only last fall, and have attended several gay parties, which our rich neighbors gave in honor of our nuptials, and my wife thought it would be genteel for us to give a dinner in return. I consented on conditions—one of which was, that I should be allowed to invite the guests. So, being a professed minister of Him who was so lowly in heart, I followed the word of command, 'But when thou makest a feast, call in the poor, the lame, the maimed and blind.' You will recollect the passage. Mrs. W., not knowing who her guests were, was highly delighted with the