

sides ached. The object of this commiseration was shown into the kitchen, where soap-suds and bandages abounded, and the servants were called in to put things in proper order, while the guests moved their chairs back, till the table should be arranged. One of the large damask table cloths, (for the table was so very long, as to need two of Mrs. Biggs' largest ones,) was exchanged for another, the obnoxious tea and warm drinks, with dishes of meat, and so forth, removed, and their places filled with pastry, pies, jellies, &c. The liquors and dessert filled up the vacant places. This was done in a few moments, and in the greatest order, but the affair of the butter-knife, which had been obtained, with great trouble, and at considerable expense, and was expected to excite so much admiration, had very much discomfited Mrs. Biggs; who sat fidgetting on a chair, with a face glowing like a turnep, and the perspiration standing in little drops on her forehead. Silvette's face was suffused with crimson, John looked like 'nii awkward school-boy,' and Mr. Biggs bit his lips and frowned. Mr. Lane, the life of the company, called it a capital joke, and his fan, together with the light food, soon restored the former gaiety. Mrs. Biggs, after seeing the plates of pastry handed about, drank a glass of lemonade, and consoled herself with the idea that now, as the scalding water and sharp instruments were removed, there would be no further misfortunes, unless, indeed, some of them should choose to crush the tumblers with their elbows.

"We were speaking," said the Methodist minister, who took up the thread of the former conversation, when Mr. Hope made his appearance again, "we were speaking of the Graham system. That is to say, that bread is—"

"Is the staff of life. Even so, Mr. Smith. Isn't it, Squire Walker?"

"Oh, certainly. Perhaps if you are a believer in that system, you can enlighten us. For my part, I have very small faith in the matter."

"So have I, honored sir, and I can but express my sorrow that our friend—"

"Has fallen into it, you would say, Mr. Smith. But you don't know what you are talking about. I eat meat; does it not do good? I eat pies; are they not delicate? But faith such messes as salad of celery, covered with oil and sugar, salt and vinegar; why sir, a dog would starve before he'd touch it. Then tomato ketchup, thank God there's none of either here. But that stuff compounded of pepper, black, red and gray, ginger, onions and horseradish, with all the spices of the Indies—faith, General Howe, I appeal to you. Isn't it enough to destroy body and soul?"

"I am inclined to be of your opinion, Mr. Spones, that is, the elder—" At this moment a crashing noise was heard, and the attention of the company was directed to Miss Addleton, who sat the picture of despair. Her mouth opened slowly, out fell her gold and ivory.

"A miserable brown bean," gasped Miss Addleton, gazing into her plate, and her face became sorer at every word.

"People who wear false teeth should beware of bones, and hams and bread crust." Miss Addleton probably, if she had been near enough to the man of speeches, would have accidentally hit him a knock with her elbow, or trod on his toes. Mrs. Biggs' face grew redder and redder under this accumulation of misfortunes; and almost out of patience with herself and every body else, she was about touching the bell to summon the servant girl to receive a severe reprimand,

when the gruff voice of Mr. Hope who declared it a thing of the least consequence, and the melodious one of Miss Dunnegan, who united with Mr. Hope in consoing the unlucky hostess, dissuaded her from her purpose. Miss Dunnegan however, carefully picked over her pie, as did some of the ruder guests, but those who understood any thing of real politeness, ate the nice dish without leaving a crumb, as though nothing unpleasant had occurred. Mrs. Biggs was very much mortified, but she felt delighted to see that her charming daughter retained her composure, and was making herself very agreeable to those near her, by her vivacity and cheerfulness.

"Ma, ma," said Miss Silvette, leaning by two or three individuals, "do see Matty Tibbs; she eats every thing that is put on her plate. How shocking, vulgar. No gentleman eats more than half of any thing."

"Reflect, my beloved, that Matty Tibbs never had the advantages of good breeding that you have had."

"Certainly no. Then besides the opportunity of such a family as yours, Mrs. Biggs, or yours, ladies, one needs to attend a gentleman school, you know," observed Miss Dunnegan.

"I believe we were conversing about the utility of the Graham system, were we not?" inquired Rev. Mr. Smith, of the gentleman near him.

"I believe we were," replied Major Talbot.

"Or else of Animal Magnetism, Mesmerism; what do you call it?" said Mr. Spones.

"Pray, Mr. Spones," said Miss Lucy Barker to her nearest neighbor, "I wish you would tell me something about Animal Magnetism. I really don't understand it."

At this moment she raised her eyes timidly, and caught the glance of Wylbraham's clear, dark eye. Mrs. Sanford, who sat near, a very shrewd, observing woman, as she saw the blush that mantled the face of the young girl, remarked to Mrs. Talbot, that little Lucy Barker would now understand pretty well the science of Animal Magnetism.

"This fruit is charming, these pears are delightful," said Miss Dunnegan, to the students, as she passed a fruit basket. The pears deserved the praise, as far as appearances were concerned, for a beautiful golden tinged one side and a blush the other. But those who were tempted, by the brilliant coloring to taste them, found that they were intended for show and not to be eaten.

"Are these the Boyden pears?" asked Mr. Vernon, his mouth still smarting from the effects of eating the chunky fruit.

"I should think not," said the lawyer, "but here are some of that kind."

These were about the size of a large walnut, of a dull green color, but juicy and delicious.

"Pass them on, Mr. Hope, if you please," said Mr. Biggs.

"Give one to Mr. Lane," growled the crusty man, "he will make just one mouthful of it. God gives one food to eat and time to eat it."

"I prefer an apple," was the reply.

"Better like one of these," said Mr. Hope, as he finished a pear, stem and all.

"Thank you sir, this apple is very nice. It reminds me of some I saw the other day, down at my old friend Jo Train's orchard. Speak of Jo!"

"You have not tasted it yet sir."

"No, but I know the apple very well.

However, as I was saying, Jo Train—" Jo Train? Is Jo Train alive yet?" asked Mr. Tandy.

"Mr. Lane, I thought he died two years ago. The last time I saw him, he looked like a man who was searching for a last resting-place. Can he be alive?"

Mr. Lane profited by the interruption of Deacon Tibbs, and raised the apple to his mouth. What it was Jo Train told Mr. Lane, remains unspoken, for when the deacon looked up for an answer to his inquiry, behold, the teeth of his informant were fast fixed in an apple of wax, yet showing an irresistible inclination to grin. At least half the delicious apple he had spoken of in such high terms, was in his mouth, and that, with the convulsion of the risible muscles, had nearly choked him. Mr. Spones looked and laughed, then looked again and exclaimed, "the joker has got joked himself, at last."

The laugh was of short duration, however, for those nearest Mr. Lane, saw that his countenance was actually changing color, and expressed some alarm at the result. The humorist, however, with his fingers and teeth succeeded in extricating himself from his dilemma, and laughed louder than any one. Miss Dunnegan had attempted to peel one, and had discovered the mistake before any serious consequences ensued, but pretty Laura Barker left the print of two or three of her pearly teeth in the wax fruit.

"She takes small mouthfuls," said Mr. Hope; "if people would eat slow and take small mouthfuls, and eat little at a time they might live to the age of the Antediluvians—to say nothing of Methuselah."

Mr. Lane saw the crimson hue settling on the cheeks of Mrs. Biggs, and laughingly said, for he could always boast of being a mischief mender:

"That little imp of a Jane—I should like to pinch her ears for wasting the wax fruit that I gave her. Mischievous rogue where is she?"

Mrs. Biggs now beginning to breathe cooler, at the suggestion of the ready wit, touched the bell and requested that her "little darling" might be sent in. Soon little Annie Jane, a pouting beauty, made her entree, dressed in white muslin with pink trimmings. She was praised for her wit, commended for she knew not what, and loaded with plums and cakes till she gladly threw off the lady, and acted the merry child.

"This is as it should be," said Mr. Hope, who, whether in season or out of season, was always ready to speak. "This is as it should be. Children should be children, merry as larks, busy as bees, and happy as lambs. Isn't it a great fault, Mrs. Walker, that people learn their children to bow, and smile, and ape the manners of men and women, before they are ten years old? But Mrs. Biggs! Madame, your little one has grown within doors. She has never seen the sun, if one may judge by her complexion."

"Oh, Mr. Hope, you are out of all reason in your remarks. Excuse me Sir, for saying so, but I surely think you are. Now see the little pet, she has played out in the sun till she is brown as a berry. She is hardly recognizable."

"She must have been very, very white, then," said Mrs. Sanford, good humoredly, yet feeling that she could willingly tell Mrs. Biggs that she was never more mistaken. Just at this moment, the door opened, Walker arose, and begged leave to be permitted to leave the company, even at that early hour—he was engaged in making out