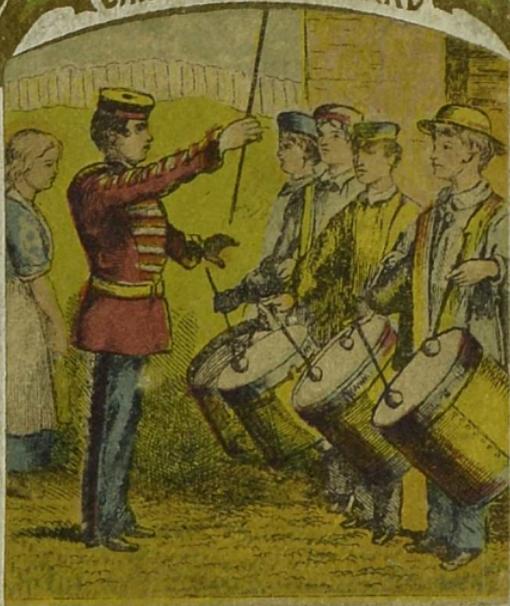


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THE  
CHILDREN OF ENGLAND



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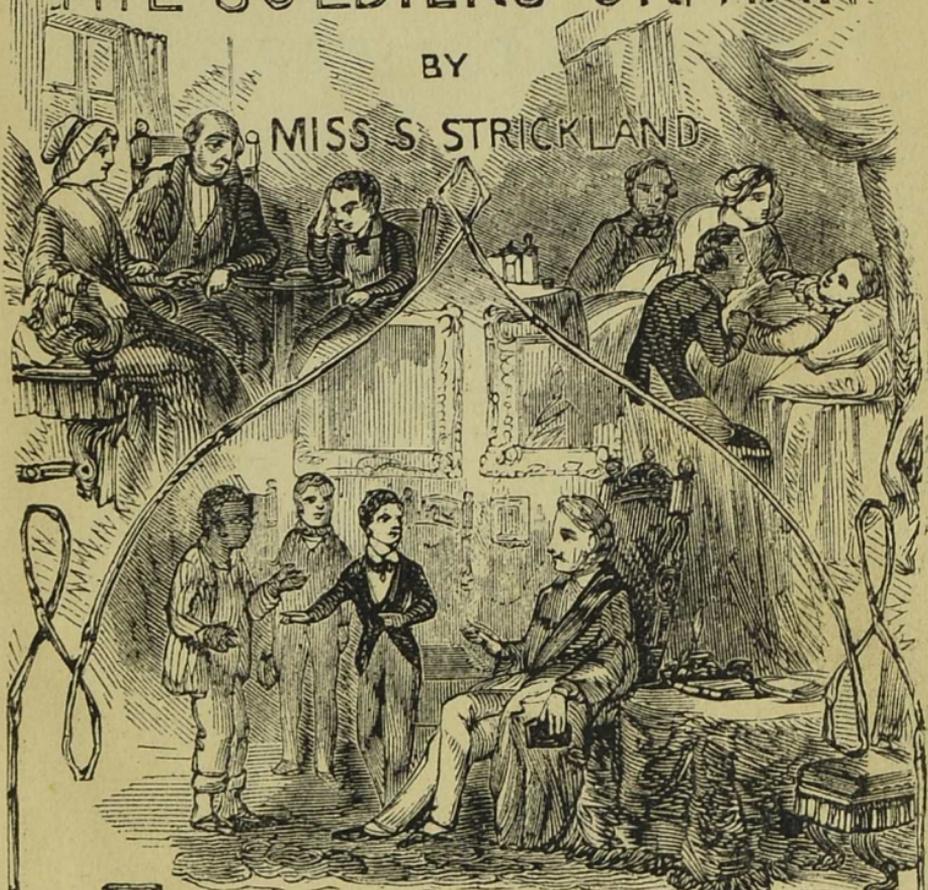


SOMETHING MORE  
ABOUT

# THE SOLDIER'S ORPHAN

BY

MISS S. STRICKLAND



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SOMETHING MORE ABOUT THE  
SOLDIER'S ORPHAN;

OR, THE

**FURTHER ADVENTURES**

OF

HUGH LATIMER.

---

“Worth consists neither in rank nor riches, though it adds  
a lustre to both.”

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BY SUSANNAH STRICKLAND,

AUTHOR OF

“HAPPY BECAUSE GOOD,” “LITTLE DOWNY,” &c. &c.

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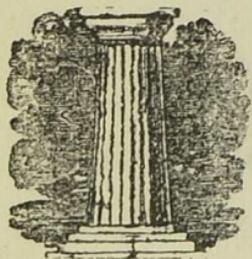
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## SOMETHING MORE

ABOUT THE

# SOLDIER'S ORPHAN.



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IN our former pages of the early life and early school experience of the hero of our tale, we detailed the trials to which he was exposed, the manner in which he conducted himself under them, and the happy result which so far crowned his patience, endurance, and exertions. We left him, at the close of the vacation, with extended and improved views, and with a disposition calculated, as he himself considered, to meet whatever mortifications and difficulties might await his further progress at the academy, to which he was soon about to return.

Little was Latimer aware that his resolutions were so soon to be put to the test; little did he think that a mortification greater than he had yet encountered, was about to assail him. But we will not anticipate,—let the incident speak for itself.

Upon the return of himself and Montrose to school, a renewal of the good feelings that had previously existed, took place. It so happened, however, that a young gentleman, of the name of Sinclair, was placed at the same school. He was the son of a rich baronet, who resided not far from the mansion occupied by Colonel Grahame; and was, from that reason, not altogether unknown to Montrose. Being somewhat advanced in his studies, the new pupil was placed in the same class with Montrose and Latimer.

John Sinclair was a boy of the most

extraordinary parts, and very gentlemanly and prepossessing in his manners; but so proud of his ancient family, that he felt very indignant at being placed beneath Hugh Latimer, whom he said, openly, belonged to the *canaille*, and was not fit company for a gentleman; and he much wondered that Montrose Grahame should make a friend and constant companion of one so far beneath him.

Montrose, at first, felt hurt and offended at these remarks; and angry words, and even blows, had passed between them, but unknown to Latimer.

It so happened, that Montrose and Sinclair were bed-fellows; and the latter had travelled abroad with his father, and had visited Rome, and Paris, and Venice, and could describe, in glowing colours, the magnificent views in Switzerland, the awful terrors of Vesuvius, and dwell on

the august monuments of antiquity, which Montrose had often contemplated in idea, and, with the enthusiasm of his character, wished to behold; and the brilliant conversation of Sinclair possessed, for a boy of his romantic turn of thought, a thousand charms. By degrees, he was seen oftener leaning on Sinclair's arm than conversing with Latimer; and it was whispered among his young comrades, that Montrose Grahame was tired of his old favourite.

For some time, Hugh Latimer would not open his eyes to the change in his friend's manners towards him—that friend for whom he would have suffered any punishment, and borne even an insult, rather than have swerved one moment in his fidelity they had so often vowed to each other; could it, indeed be true that Montrose Grahame had

ceased to love him? Latimer's heart ached in secret, and his eyes often filled with tears; he grew thin, and the colour faded from his cheeks.

Mr. Manby, the head teacher, was much attached to Latimer, and justly appreciated the worth of his character: he observed this alteration in his appearance with concern; and guessing the cause, he pitied the mental sufferings which he knew a boy of such keen feelings must endure at the unmerited neglect of his young friend.

One afternoon, as Latimer was about to leave the school-room, Mr. Manby tapped him on the shoulder, and asked him to take tea with him at his lodgings, saying he would give him a pretty pot of geranium, for his mother's little parlour-window; as he knew she was fond of flowers. Latimer, somewhat surprised at

his preceptor's particular notice, readily accepted his invitation, and they walked together toward the river; for Mr. Manby lodged in a very pleasant house, fronting a pretty clear stream, which commanded a fine view of the adjacent country.

It was a lovely evening in June, and the new-mown hay in the meadows smelt deliciously; and as Latimer stood by the window, gazing on the beautiful prospect, he could not help thinking how many happy hours he and Montrose had spent in those very fields together, and his eyes slowly filled with tears.

“My young friend are you ill?”—said Mr. Manby, noticing the change in Latimer's countenance.

“No sir,” returned Hugh, with a heavy sigh; “I was thinking of the past, and contrasting the very happy moments I have enjoyed in these fields, with my present miserable feelings.”

“But, my dear Latimer,” said Mr. Manby, “what makes you unhappy? You are sadly changed of late, and do not attend to your studies with the ardour which you used to do.”

“Oh! sir,” returned Hugh, with increasing agitation, “if you had had a friend whom you loved as tenderly as your own brother, and saw him forsake you for another, without any apparent cause, it would render you unhappy, and make your heart ache, as mine does at this moment. I am now a solitary individual amongst a host of strangers, with no one to share my studies, or enter into my feelings or pursuits, or even give me a friendly welcome. I cannot even vent my indignation on the author of my sufferings, for I love him still.”

Hugh turned away to conceal the

tears which were fast trickling down his cheeks.

“Continue to love him, my dear boy. He is, at present, led away by bad example; but I feel certain that Montrose Grahame will be led to see his error, and then he will deeply regret the uneasiness he now occasions you.

“I wish I could only think so,” returned Hugh: “oh, no, no—he has forsaken me for ever, and has learnt to consider his generosity to me, in the light of a crime.”

“But the heart from whence these feelings sprung, my young friend, is the same; he is allured by the showy talents of Sinclair: but when he finds what a mere worldling he is, Montrose will love you with redoubled ardour.”

“But I am afraid I should never trust him again,” returned Latimer.

“Hugh! that last was not a sentiment I expected from your lips. If your friend should repent of his present injustice, never suspect his sincerity; lest, when you offend against God, and repent, He should leave you in doubt as to whether He has forgiven you. Remember the golden rule, to do unto others as you would be done unto yourself.”

“Oh! sir,” said Latimer, “you have never experienced what I now feel; you know not half the bitterness occasioned by the loss of a friend,”

“Hugh!” returned Mr. Manby, motioning him to take a seat beside him;—“do do you imagine I have lived nearly thirty years in the world, without experiencing, in a tenfold degree, the sorrow of which you so loudly proclaim. The time will come, when, tossing on the stormy ocean of life, you will forget the petty troubles

of boyhood, and consider them trifles, when compared to the trials that await the man."

"Like yourself, I was educated on the foundation of this very school. My father was a tailor in the city, and his business afforded ample scope for the malice of my enemies to work on. All that you have suffered, I endured.—But I was rash and headstrong, and fought my way up, making my persecutors feel the strength of my arm as well as the bitterness of my irony. When my fist failed, and my tongue tired of retaliating, I had recourse to my pen, and held them up to ridicule. All this was beneath me; and, consequently I was universally disliked.—They feared my arm; they dreaded my talents; but their hatred was implacable; and I own I merited it.

"You early adopted a wiser course,

aud, by ceasing to notice their insolence, in some measure, you ceased to feel it, But my nerves were always in a state of feverish restlessness, and my mind constantly on the alert, to watch for, and take up affronts.

“There was a boy, of the name of Carey, the son of a very opulent merchant, who was one of my most strenuous persecutors, and a bitter enemy; our hatred of each other was so fixed, and our feelings of animosity so intense, that we have fought together till both parties had to keep their bed for more than a week afterwards.

“In time I became the head scholar in the school, and he was next in degree; and it is a customary thing for the head boy in the school to make a set oration, when the mayor, or judge, or any great personage comes to visit it. Well, I was

equipped for the occasion, and my speech ready conned; and I walked forth, with becoming dignity, to meet the learned judge and the mayor; when, just as all eyes were upon me, I heard Carey whisper to a boy behind me, loud enough for the whole hall to overhear him, 'I hope Manby won't forget to recommend his father's shop; my lord judge may want a new coat, or a pair of new breeches.'

"'Oh,' returned his colleague, 'he knows his father's interest too well, to do that; remember, it might be rather a difficult matter to *cheat* a judge.'

"He laid such a provoking stress on the word *cheat*, that, forgetting every particle of my speech, and every feeling of decorum, in spite of the awful presence of the judge, the mayor, and my master, I sprang forward and knocked him down.

"You may imagine the uproar that

ensued ; but, fortunately for me, the learned trio had heard the provocation, and, on the intercession of the judge, I was only ordered to leave the hall, with a severe reprimand from my master. I obeyed ; at the same time vowing vengeance against Carey, and determining to punish him for his insolence, the first opportunity which chance afforded me.

“ A few days after this incident, I was walking in these meadows, with a favourite little spaniel and a book. It was very early in the morning, at this season of the year, and many of Mr. Vernon's scholars rose at four o'clock, to bathe in the river, before the heat of the day. I had just completed my seventeenth year, was tall and strong for my age, and a good swimmer.

“ The water looked so cool and refreshing, with the rays of the sun on it, that

I determined to have a bathe, and laying down my book by the side of a haycock, began to strip off my clothes, when I saw somebody struggling, at a little distance from me, in the water. I instantly ran to the spot, and recognised the face of Carey. He gave one faint scream, and held up his hand, as if to implore my aid; but my heart was hardened against him, and I stood gazing, with a sort of horrible gratification, upon my enemy,—he who had been the torment of my life, sinking before me. I stood rooted to the spot, without putting forth a hand to save him from destruction.

“Were I to live a thousand years, Hugh, I should never forget that moment. Consider, how criminal, how dreadful must those feelings have been, which induced me to stand calmly by, while I saw a fellow-creature perish.

“While I stood gazing with staring eyes, upon the spot where he had disappeared, he rose again to the surface. My dog, possessed of more generous feelings than myself, at that moment flew forward, and plunged into the water, as if to excite me to emulate his example. I perceived that Carey's struggles grew fainter, and that his eyes became fixed and glaring; but I fancied their dying glance was fixed on me. His hands, too, moved convulsively, as if striving to grasp at any object, however slight. A sudden impulse shot through my brain,—for the awful voice of conscience upbraided me for my inhumanity; I plunged into the river, and with great difficulty succeeded in bringing the body to land.

“He was senseless,—I thought dead, and the feelings produced by this idea no language can describe. I imagined

myself his murderer : and all my late animosity, and his ungenerous conduct, were forgotten in this one horrible thought. My tears flowed in torrents over his wan face, and I groaned aloud in the anguish of my heart.

“ ‘Poor Carey!’ I cried, ‘if you were but alive, I would never hate you more ; I would forgive all your past conduct, and love and cherish you as a brother. But, wretch that I am ! I have suffered you to die, and God will require your life at my hands.’

“ Unable to contend with the agonising reflections which now tortured me, I rushed from the spot, and, leaving Carlo to guard the body, swam over the river, and called the ferryman to my assistance.

“ The body was quickly removed to his house, and medical aid procured ; and, before the school-bell sounded, I had the

satisfaction to find he was restored to animation.

“No circumstance which has ever happened to me during the course of my life, ever carried such a thrill of joy to my heart, or removed such a heavy weight from off my mind. That hour contained the experience, the repentance, of years. From that time I was an altered character.

“When Cary learned who was his preserver, and was strong enough to bear the interview, he sent for me; and a scene followed of painful and touching interest. We wept in each other's arms, and mutually forgave, and asked pardon for past injuries.

“Poor Carey!” continued Mrs. Manby, with a sigh, “he is gone. He never rose from that bed, and I never quitted him till the last struggle for life was

over, and his soul returned in peace to the God who gave it.

“The night before his death, he begged the medical gentleman who attended him, not to conceal from him his danger: ‘I feel myself dying,’ he said, ‘and only want to hear if your lips will confirm my apprehension.’”

“‘My dear young friend,’ replied Dr. Garth, ‘I would advise you to prepare for eternity.’”

“‘I have prepared for it:—I have made my peace with God,’—was his meek reply, as he bowed his head on my bosom. ‘If it had not been for Thomas Manby, my generous preserver, I should have died in my sins. Oh! my friend,’ he continued, taking my hand, ‘you restored me, for a little while, to this world, just to shew me of what little worth it was, when compared with that

glorious country whither I am hastening.'

"I could not bear to hear him commend me for my feelings, which were a disgrace to me. But I did not like to disturb his dying moments by telling him how unwillingly I had saved him; and that a dog had showed me the duty I owed to a dying fellow-creature. But my heart received a lesson I shall never forget.

"Gazing long and earnestly on the setting sun, he remarked, that he should never see it rise in this world again, 'I shall never forget, Manby,' he said, 'the impression which the sight of that glorious luminary made on my mind, while I was struggling in the water. I did not view it with the same feelings I do now; though, in both instances, I felt assured I should never behold it again; for there

was a horrible thought in my mind, of death, and judgment, and condemnation; and when, as my senses failed me, I tried to call for assistance, and only felt the iron grasp of suffocation in my throat, I fancied I saw your eyes looking on me; I thought I was already summoned to the awful bar; and that you were come to condemn me for my base and ungenerous conduct towards you.'

“‘Oh! do not speak so,’ I cried; ‘we were both in fault; I was far the most guilty of the two. But I hope your life will yet be spared, and that Heaven will restore you to us.’

“‘Do not wish me such an evil,’ he returned; ‘I no longer dread death; but welcome it as a sure passage into eternal life. Thomas Manby, we must learn to die, before we can hope to live, through

Him who gave His precious life to redeem the dead in sin.'

“ He fell asleep soon after, and did not awake till the middle of the night. I had been reading the Bible by the side of his bed, and, hearing him stir, I asked him whether he had enjoyed his sleep, as it was the first time he had closed his eyes for several nights.

“ ‘Oh’ yes he said, ‘I am free from all pain.’ ‘This is a prelude to another sleep; a sleep unruffled by dreams, and unbroken by pain.’

“ I asked him if I should pray by him as usual. He acquiesced, and after a few minutes spent in fervent devotion, he suddenly exclaimed :

“ ‘The sun is rising, but it is not of this world. A glorious light is shining round me, but it proceedeth from neither the sun nor the moon,—it is the reful-

gence of Him, who called the light from darkness, and formed all things, and pronounced them good.—He will redeem me from my earthly bondage, and pour upon the night of my soul the brightness of eternal day.—Farewell, Manby; we shall meet again where sorrow and sin are unknown, and where tears shall be wiped from all eyes: may the hour of thy departure be without a cloud, and as free from doubt as mine is now!

“His head sunk on my bosom: my tears fell fast over his brow, but they were unregarded by him; his spirit had vanished from among us, and was enjoying the fulfilment of its hopes.

“He was buried under the yew tree in the church-yard. I visited his grave occasionally, and I think those visits made me a wiser and a better man.

“You see, my dear Hugh,” continued Mr. Manby, after a long pause,—“I did

not mistrust the repentance of one who had been so much my enemy; why, then, should you suspect the contrition of a friend?

“Were I, my dear boy, to relate all my troubles and sorrows, from my youth upwards, you would see that life is but one perpetual scene of trial; and that those who most carefully conceal their inward sufferings, do not feel them less keenly.

“Were you to envy Sinclair his talents and riches, and his easy and graceful deportment, you would not change situations with him, to be, as he is, the victim of a cruel disease, which is hereditary in his family. In spite of all his pride, if he were secretly interrogated, which he would rather be,—Hugh Latimer, the widow's son, with a fine, healthy, and robust constitution; or John Edward

Sinclair, the heir to a title and one of the finest estates in England, and a martyr to the king's evil; he would say, 'Give me health, and I would not regret the loss of my fine possessions.'"

"And is poor Sinclair so afflicted?" said Latimer, forgetting all his resentment.

"Do not you perceive he is very lame? I dress his knee and hip, every morning and evening, for him; and it is a thousand chances if he ever lives to enjoy the wealth of which he is so proud; besides, he is unhappy,—you seldom see a smile upon his face."

"You surprise me, sir," said Latimer: "I thought he must be very happy. Poor fellow! no wonder he is so stern and proud. But yet I know not how to forgive him for depriving me of my friend."

“You must take a lesson from His example, who taught us to forgive injuries, Latimer. But it is growing late, and you must return to your mother, who will be anxious on your account. I hope what I have said will have a salutary effect on your mind: wait patiently, and time will restore to you your lost friend.”

Latimer did feel much happier since his conversation with Mr. Manby, and he returned home, that night, more at peace with himself, and less indignant at the conduct of his friend.

What Mr. Manby had promised, however, did not so speedily come to pass. Time rolled on, till the end of the Christmas quarter was rapidly approaching, and the school never broke up without an examination of all the classes. This examination the boys, among themselves,

denominated "trials and term time, and question and answer days;" and every boy was anxious to succeed; our two friends, in particular, had an ardent desire to be at the head of whatever they engaged in.

Montrose always gloried in being at the head of his class; but when under the examination of the masters, Latimer, who had made such good use of his time, during the summer months, both in his public and private study, far surpassed him. This stung Montrose to the quick; and unable to bear, with becoming fortitude, so severe a mortification, he, in the heat of the moment, muttered to himself, as Latimer walked up to the head of the form, "To be surpassed,—by a *plebeian*, too!" The words reached the ear, and struck on the heart, of Latimer: an insult from Montrose he never had dreamed of; oh! no, no—

however he might have ceased to love him, he was sure he would never wound his feelings by any sarcasm of his own.

He raised his eyes reproachfully to young Grahame's face, but his heart was full. In the midst of a very successful examination, he hesitated, then stopped, and became silent altogether, "Master Grahame, resume your place," said Mr. Manby, while he felt for his young friend the strongest sympathy and commiseration.

Montrose, the conscious Montrose, felt that Latimer had heard his cruel speech; and, struck with the baseness of his conduct, with a deep blush of shame, took the head of the class.

"I am sorry for you, Latimer," said Mr. Manby; "you were not used to make any mistakes, particularly such a foolish blunder as this." Latimer

heard not his kind tutor's remark; he was cut to the heart by what Montrose had said, and he covered his face with his hands to hide his tears, but the bright drops found their way through his clenched fingers.

“You are ill, Latimer,” said Mr. Manby, hastily rising as the youth reeled forward, and the next moment he held him in his arms. As he led, or rather carried, the fainting boy to the door, for the benefit of the fresh air, a smile of triumph passed from boy to boy, and they all seemed to rejoice in Latimer's disappointment and confusion; but the hysterical sob which had burst from the overcharged heart of Latimer, as Mr. Manby led him from the hall, had smote painfully on Montrose's ear, and blanched his cheek, and given birth to the pangs of remorse in his heart, which, a few minutes before,

had been as warm as Latimer's. Sinclair remarked Montrose's varying countenance, and whispered in his ear, "Surely you do not pay attention to Latimer's airs?"

"Say no more about him, Sinclair," cried Montrose: "had it not been for you, I should never have forsaken my friend: I have injured him, and I am determined to tell him so, even were he to spurn me from him." So saying, he rushed from the hall,

He found Latimer seated on a bench, beneath one of the great elm-trees in the court, with his head resting on Mr. Manby's arm; and springing forward, he flung himself, weeping, at his feet. "Latimer, dear Latimer," he exclaimed, "forgive me!—forgive the worthless, wicked boy, who could wantonly join in ill-treating you."

Mr. Manby, delighted to see that Montrose was truly sorry for his past conduct, returned to his duty, leaving the two friends to work out their own reconciliation, thus happily recommenced.

When Latimer perceived that Montrose was in tears, all his resentment vanished, and all his love returned,—“Montrose,” he said, “my once dear friend, I forgive you most sincerely for the past; and will never mention this affair to you again.”

“Oh, Latimer, I do not deserve this kindness from you,” cried Montrose; “I am sure you must despise and scorn me for my base meanness.”

“That would not be acting like a Christian,” returned Latimer: “if Montrose is sorry for his past conduct, that, in my eyes, is sufficient atonement for all that has taken place.”

“Latimer!” cried Grahame, “if you are poor, you far surpass me in nobility of soul: I do not think I could have done what you are now doing.”

“Oh, yes, you would, Montrose; take my word for it,” said Latimer, fondly pressing his hand: “I know the movements of that heart of yours, better than the owner does. Come, dry these tears, or I shall be angry with you.”

Montrose wiped his eyes, and stepping a few paces back, gazed on Latimer as if he were a superior being, then folding him in his arms, and loading him with caresses, said, “Do you think, Latimer, you can, in future, ever regard me as you have done?”

“Yes, not only as well, but I think a thousand times better,” returned Hugh,

“Then grant me a favour, dear Latimer, in proof of your words.”

“Any thing in reason,” said Hugh.

“No, that will not do; you must say yes, without any reservation, and give me your hand upon it.”

“Well, then, yes: there is my hand; and, now what is the favour?”

“To spend the holidays with me.”

“In that case,” said Hugh, smiling, “I think the favour lies the other way: yes, willingly,—if agreeable to your uncle, and provided you have no other visitors.”

“Only Sinclair, his brother George, and their two sisters.”

“Then, my dear Montrose, I must be excused.”

“Nay, it is useless to make any objections now, Latimer; you certainly do not expect any further ill-treatment from me?”

“Not from you—but——”

“But you do not like Sinclair.”

“I must confess he is no favourite of mine,” returned Latimer with warmth; “in the school-house we are almost on an equality: but in your uncle’s house, they will consider me as an intruder,”

“Dear Latimer, it is my uncle’s request: and I am sure you will not disoblige him,”

“I see, Montrose, you will take no denial: but if I should not be happy?”

“Lay the blame on me,” returned Montrose. “Come, Latimer, say that you accept my uncle’s invitation.”

Hugh still hesitated; Montrose took his reluctant hand, and looking beseechingly up in his face, said—“I am sure, Hugh, you cannot refuse Grahame such a trifling request.?”

“Indeed, Montrose, you know the place you hold in this heart full well; you know I never deny you any thing.”

“That I request, *in reason*,” returned Montrose, laughing. “Well, Latimer, I shall expect to see you to-morrow; in the mean time, I must go and prepare for the reception of my guests.”

And, shaking hands with each other, the two young friends parted at the school room door.—Hugh returned to his humble dwelling.

Latimer felt that he would rather remain at home and pursue his studies, than pay this visit; but his poor mother was so delighted with the idea of her Hugh being noticed by so great a gentleman as Colonel Grahame, that she would not listen to any objections her son could make. “Who knows what the good Colonel may do for him?” she said, as she collected Hugh’s scanty wardrobe into a small leathern portmanteau.

“Aye, sister,” returned Mark Lati-

mer; elevating his crutch, and twisting his cap on his head, "he has great interest in the army; he may make a soldier of him."

This last speech had more weight in inducing Latimer to go, than all the rest, and he resolved to bear every mortification, rather than lose sight of the cherished hope of one day becoming a soldier.

It was a clear, frosty morning, about a week before Christmas, when Hugh, with his little trunk under his arm, knocked, with a palpitating heart, at Colonel Grahame's door. Montrose received him with evident feelings of delight. "I was afraid, Latimer, you would not come. Sinclair has not yet arrived with his sisters and brother: when they come, we shall be so merry."

Hugh felt his heart sink; yet, for the

sake of his friend, he determined to keep up his spirits.

That week they passed alone with Colonel Grahame, and it proved a truly delightful one. The Colonel seemed to spare no pains in making their time pass away agreeably. That week was one of the happiest in Latimer's life. It opened his mind to the discovery of a thousand truths he had been ignorant of; it gave him a wish to acquire knowledge, to make himself master of every useful science and laudable pursuit; nor was Montrose behind hand in keeping pace with the persevering efforts of his friend.

Christmas-eve arrived, and the Sinclairs had not yet made their appearance, to the no small satisfaction of Latimer; but Montrose was piqued at, what he termed, their neglect and contempt of his polite invitation.

Towards the evening, as they sat around the fire, enjoying the conversation of the Colonel, who was giving them an animated description of the great Wellington, and relating many interesting events of his extraordinary life, a carriage stopped at the door; and the thunder of the knocker proclaimed their quality guests. Hugh retreated to the other side of the room as the footman flung back the door, and announced "Master George, and Miss Jane and Miss Laura Sinclair."

Indisposition prevented Master Sinclair joining the party, till his physician declared him capable of enduring the fatigue of a journey.

The Colonel received the young people with his usual courtesy; the gay Montrose, with unaffected pleasure; and Latimer, with unaffected politeness, feel-

ing that proper diffidence which ought always to be paid to those of a superior rank.

Neither Montrose nor Latimer had ever before seen the young ladies or gentleman present; and the little folks, shy at first, soon got acquainted with each other, and, ignorant of Latimer's station in life, treated him not only with politeness, but manifested their good-will towards him by many little acts of courtesy, which Hugh felt grateful for, when he contrasted their manners to him with the insolence of their brother.

After the tea-things were removed, the laugh went round, the frolic, and the jest. Even Colonel Grahame joined in their mirth: and helped the young ladies out of their blunders at the game of forfeits.

All was good humour and pleasure; and many a sly glance Montrose cast

at Latimer, when he saw how greatly he enjoyed the sports of the evening.

At ten o'clock, the Colonel gave orders for bed; and the young folks parted well satisfied with each other.

Several days passed away, and they were so cheerful and happy, that Latimer began to hope Sinclair would not make his appearance: but in this he was disappointed. Late one evening, a well-known step sounded in the hall, and Montrose, who was still very fond of him, sprang forward to meet his friend. The young people, too, gave their brother a warm welcome, and with mingled voices proclaimed how happy they had been.

John Sinclair listened to their details with pleasure, and lamented the illness which had deprived him of the same enjoyment: but when his eye fell for the first time on Latimer, who was playing

at draughts with Miss Laura, his pale cheek suddenly reddened with passion, and stepping up to their little table, he said in a low voice to his sister, "Laura, I beg you will leave off playing directly, and come and sit down with me."

"So I will, dear John; but do let me finish this game; Master Latimer will think me so rude, to leave him on the point of winning."

"You have no occasion to mind what Master Latimer thinks. Attend to my request; he is no play-fellow for you." So saying, he took hold of her hand, and casting a scornful glance on Hugh, led her from the table.

A momentary flush of indignation gave an additional lustre to the dark eyes of Latimer, as he rose and carefully replaced the men in the box.

"Who was victor?" said the Colonel,

entering the room. "You, Latimer, I suppose, for I considered our fair little friend in a bad way."

"The game was undecided," returned Latimer.

"Why, surely, my dear boy, it never could have come to a drawn game, you had so greatly the advantage?"

"True," replied Latimer, with a smile: "Miss Sinclair's game was decided by a superior force."

Sinclair half started from his seat. Montrose caught his arm—"John, remember, you are in my house: if you insult my friend, you insult me."

"Montrose," replied Sinclair, "I never expected in your house to be put on an equality with a shop boy."

At this moment, Colonel Grahame joined them.

"Why, Mr. Sinclair, did not you suffer

your sister to finish her game? It was hardly fair to rob my young friend of his victory."

"I had not seen my sister for several days, Colonel Grahame, and had several messages to deliver from home. She was already beaten, and I wonder she attempted to play with one she could not cope with."

There was something in young Sinclair's haughty manner, which greatly displeased Colonel Grahame. He turned coldly away, and calling Latimer to him, desired him to fetch the board, and he would try his skill.

The Colonel's kindness brought the tears in Hugh's eyes. He speedily placed the men, but the gaiety of the evening was over. The two Sinclairs walked to and fro the room together. The young ladies talked apart; and the pleasant

party broke up at an early hour, mutually dissatisfied with each other.

When the young ladies were undressing to go to bed, Jane said to her sister, "Do you know what my brother has been telling me?"

"I guess what you are going to say," said Laura; "I was never so surprised in my life. Who would have thought that the handsome Latimer, whom we both admired so much, should belong to such vulgar people?"

"La, ladies!" said Betty, their maid, "did not you know that before? John, the footman, told me last night, that his mother keeps the farthing shop just down the street."

"And why did not you tell us so, Betty?" said Laura: "do you imagine I should have played with the boy, if I had known his origin? Latimer being a

noble name, and his manners good, I thought he might be related to my Lord Latimer, or at least the son of some country gentleman."

"Who would have thought," rejoined Jane, "that such a handsome face, and such good abilities and such charming manners, could have belonged to a shop boy? well, I must confess I am sorry that Hugh Latimer is not a gentleman."

"Not so," returned Laura, tossing up her pretty little head with an air of infinite disdain, "I shall certainly treat him with the contempt that his situation deserves. I wonder a man of Colonel Grahame's breeding, should suffer his nephew to associate with such people; but if Latimer does not quit the house, I shall."

Meanwhile, John Sinclair informed his brother of the discovery the young ladies

had just made, and expressed his resentment in somewhat the same terms his sisters had done.

Unconscious of the anger he had occasioned, Hugh rose as usual in the morning, but not with the same buoyancy of heart and spirits which had marked him on the preceding days; what he had dreaded he felt assured would come to pass, and that Sinclair would a second time try to deprive him of his friend.

Montrose too began to reproach himself for having placed his friend in such an awkward position, though done with the best possible motives; he wished Sinclair to acknowledge the merit of Latimer, and to love him as well as he did himself, and he was very much hurt by his conduct the preceding evening.

At half-past ten, Sinclair and his brother entered the room; Montrose

shook hands with them both, in his usual frank manner; but when Latimer, willing to make all the concessions in his power, without actually cringing to Sinclair, respectfully gave him the compliments of the morning, he carelessly turned away and addressed himself to his brother.

“Sinclair,” said Montrose, colouring deeply, “Latimer speaks to you.”

“I heard him,” replied Sinclair, coldly.

“Then why did you not answer my friend, Mr. Sinclair?” cried Montrose, starting forward, and involuntarily doubling his fist.

“Your friends are not mine, Montrose Grahame,” retorted Sinclair, proudly drawing back as he spoke.

“Contemptible!” retorted Montrose, “I could find it in my heart—he paused ere he finished the sentence: and Hugh

stepping between them, said, "For Heaven's sake, my dear friend, restrain your indignation. Remember Mr. Sinclair is an invalid. Let me return home, since my presence is displeasing to your high-born visitors."

"Let me perish, if you do!" replied Montrose, his eyes flashing with anger: "they shall treat you with the respect due to a friend of Montrose Grahame."

"You, certainly, are at liberty, Mr. Grahame, to choose your own companions," returned Sinclair, haughtily; "but you cannot force me to associate with Mr. Latimer, or be on more friendly terms with him in your house, than in the play-ground."

"You need not then stay another moment where he is," rejoined Montrose; "those who despise Latimer, insult me."

"Colonel Grahame invited me to stay

a month at his house, and no tradesman's son in the world shall force me to leave, till I like, without your uncle's positive commands to that effect." And so saying, the brothers hastily quitted the apartment.

Montrose's feelings were so deeply wounded, he could scarcely refrain from tears; but it was in vain that Latimer intreated him to be pacified, and to put an end to the quarrel by allowing him to return home; Montrose would not listen to him.

Shortly after, the Colonel entered the room, to whom Latimer preferred a similar request.

"I am sorry, my young friend," he said, "that your feelings should have been so cruelly wounded by the conduct of these unthinking beings; yet I particularly request your stay; I ask this

sacrifice of your inclinations as a favour, and I am sure you will comply with my wish, when I inform you of my reasons for requesting it."

Latimer bowed, and the Colonel proceeded :

"These young people have not, by nature, bad hearts; their late behaviour is the result of early prejudices, engrafted on their minds by those attendants who have had the care of them when very young. I feel it my duty to convince them of their folly. I would teach them to value their fellow-creatures according to their merit, and not wholly for their titles and riches. I have been talking seriously to them, and I think the young ladies are rather touched by my lecture."

"For this reason, my excellent benefactor, I will stay," returned Hugh, "in spite of every mortification."

“Latimer, they themselves will thank you for your forbearance, before they leave my house,” said the Colonel; “but, come, my dear boy, breakfast awaits us.”

And taking Latimer's hand, he led him to the breakfast-parlour, where the young guests were already assembled. They arose, and received Hugh with chilling politeness, in a manner even condescending, which would have been flattering to him, had he not been aware of the real motives which dictated it. Nor did they once alter this line of conduct towards him: if he mingled in their sports, they seemed unconscious of his presence, differing nothing in ease of manner or playful freedom with each other. If he ventured any remark on their reading, or pursuits, he always received a polite answer, but so distant, and accompanied with such haughty

coldness, that it sunk deeply into the heart of the feeling Latimer. Once, and only once, one of the young ladies insulted him: Colonel Grahame had chosen a little drama for them to get up, and perform on the new year's day; and he had arranged the characters according to the abilities of his youthful visitors, rather than in accordance with their rank.

This gave great offence to Miss Laura, who said in a low voice to her sister:—  
“There is but one character Latimer ought to perform, and that is the servant.”

Now Latimer, who was sitting at no great distance, studying his part, heard this speech; and slowly raising his eyes from the book, he fixed them calmly on the young lady's face, and said mildly:—  
“My father was a servant, Miss Sinclair:

and I hope, one day, to follow in his steps; he sealed his services to his sovereign with his blood, and died in defence of his country."

Laura coloured deeply, and secretly wished she had not wounded Latimer's feelings so cruelly.

The evening after this, the children all went up stairs into the drawing-room, to play at blind-man's buff; and though the furniture had been removed, to accommodate them, there was, on account of the intense cold that had set in, a very large fire.

As Latimer was in general shut out from their sports, he sat apart from the joyous party, on a stool by the side of the fire, trying, by the help of the broad light, to decipher the character in his Homer: yet, as the ladies ran giddily past him, he several times gently put

back with his hand the full muslin frocks which they wore, as the motion given to them by exercise, one or twice nearly wafted them between the bars of the stove; but when he happened to touch Laura's dress, she drew herself back with an air of haughtiness, and whisking her frock past him, as if in contempt, exclaimed, in a petulant tone: "I wish people would keep their hands to themselves."

Latimer returned no answer to this speech, but, sighing deeply, turned again to his book.

Just then, Montrose ran down stairs to speak to a school-fellow at the door, and Hugh was left alone in the room with the visitors; but finding that his observations only raised their displeasure, he turned himself entirely away from the scene, and soon, transported in idea to

the walls of Troy, forgot, in the interest its fate awakened, his own recent mortifications.

His attention was now very suddenly roused by a dreadful shriek: that which he had cautioned the young ladies against, had actually taken place: Miss Laura's frock had caught fire, and the unhappy girl was completely enveloped in flames. The children, unable to lend her the least assistance, mingled their cries with her's, and ran screaming down stairs.

Latimer, always cool in danger, with his usual presence of mind, begged the suffering girl to stand still where she was; and snatching a large woollen cloth from a side table, he succeeded in wrapping it round her from head to foot; but he could not extinguish the flames until his own hands and face were shockingly

burnt, his nice chestnut curls were completely singed off his head, and his eyes and eye-lids so scorched by the fire, that he lost the use of his sight for several days afterwards.

The moment the Colonel heard of the accident, he rushed up stairs, followed by Montrose and the terrified children, expecting nothing else than to behold Laura a blackened corpse upon the floor: but when, on entering the room, he found her safe, and poor Latimer the greatest sufferer, he could not contain his admiration; but turning to the children, exclaimed, "See, Mr. Sinclair, and you, my young friends, the noble but despised Latimer has saved the life of your sister, perhaps at the expense of his own."

Latimer could no longer distinguish objects, but following the sound of the Colonel's voice, he flung himself into his

arms; whilst the young Sinclairs, forgetting in their admiration of his conduct, all their former prejudices, clung weeping round him, kissing his hands, and calling him their dear, dear Latimer; and thanking him a thousand times for having saved the life of their sister Laura. Nor was Laura herself less grateful; she felt and acknowledged the nobleness of Latimer's conduct; and bitterly did she reproach herself for her unkindness to him.

Colonel Grahame, alarmed at the situation of Hugh, seeing he was completely unconscious of surrounding objects, carried him in his arms to bed, and lost no time in sending for medical assistance. The whole of Laura's clothes were nearly destroyed by the flames; but her hands and arms had alone received a slight injury; whilst poor Latimer's face and

head were so dreadfully burnt, that he was dangerously ill, and, for many days, was blind and delirious; and the Colonel became seriously apprehensive for his life.

When, however, on the sixth day, he at last recovered the use of sight and reason, the first object that struck him was Montrose on one side of his bed, and John Sinclair on the other.

Montrose shed tears of joy when he found Latimer recognized him, whilst Sinclair, holding out his hand, said—  
“Mr. Latimer, I have injured you—and, with sincere repentance for the past, I entreat your forgiveness.”

“The features of Latimer brightened as he grasped the outstretched hand of the young gentleman.

“Forget the past,” said Latimer, “it cannot now be recalled; and let me

assure you, that the present moment amply compensates for any uneasiness your conduct occasioned me. Perhaps," he added with a sigh, "had I been in your situation, I might have acted as you did."

"Never!" returned Sinclair, "you far surpass me in generosity; I wonder now how I could remain so blind to your worth. To know you half a year, and hate you!—for what?—for being superior to myself."

"Believe me, Mr. Sinclair," said Latimer, tenderly pressing his hand, "worth consists neither in rank nor riches, though it adds a lustre to both."

"I need no further conviction of the truth of your words, than your own conduct," returned Sinclair; "for your sake, dear Latimer, I will never again act so ungenerously to any individual whom

I may foolishly consider as my inferior in station.”

And Sinclair kept his resolution ; he from that day treated Latimer with the greatest respect and affection ; and his example was followed by the other children, to the great satisfaction of Colonel Grahame and Montrose.

At the termination of their visit,—which took place before Hugh could leave his bed,—they each made him a handsome present ; and Laura declared, as she affectionately bade him farewell, that she should always remember, with feelings of gratitude, the great service he had so generously rendered her.

The day after their departure, as the Colonel and Montrose were seated by Latimer's bedside, the former pointed to a very plain sword, suspended over the mantle-piece, and smiling, bade Hugh

guess to whom that old-fashioned weapon once belonged.

Hugh, remembering that the Colonel was descended from a family renowned for their great exploits in arms, supposed this weapon had been wielded by some mighty hand, and answered the Colonel's question with the enthusiasm so natural to youth—"I suppose to an hero."

"It did, indeed," returned the Colonel; "but that hero, Hugh Latimer, was your father!"

"How!" exclaimed Hugh, springing up in his bed, and catching eagerly hold of the Colonel's arm: "did you, then, know my father?"

The Colonel sighed—"I did, my young friend; we were for some time in the same regiment: Listen to me, Latimer." The Colonel paused for a few minutes, and then continued:

“When I was young, I very much resembled Montrose, both in person and character, without possessing his generosity of heart and feeling. Like him, I ardently wished to be a soldier, and my father, at last, reluctantly yielded to my wishes.

“Chance threw me into the same regiment and company with your father. I was very proud, and he was my superior officer, and I could not brook to be under the command of one whom I considered every way beneath me; and I was mean and weak enough to unite with the other officers in annoying him in every manner that we could. I, for one, could not but admire his talents, though I despised him on account of his origin, which was, and ought to have been, considered a glory to him: but, Latimer, if your father was of humbler birth, he far surpassed me in

greatness of mind; he never condescended to take the least notice of my illiberal behaviour.

“ Our commanding officer, Lord Peterborough, was singularly attached to your father, who had twice saved his life; and that nobleman, observing the contempt in which this gallant soldier was held, merely from having risen from the ranks to the station he then held, instead of being a subaltern by purchase, gave us, one day, a public reproof, by taking the arm of Latimer, and walking for some time to and fro, before his tent, conversing with him in the most easy and familiar terms.

“ Most of the senior officers were very much affected by this proof of their brave general's greatness of mind, and many went up to Latimer and shook hands with him, and congratulated him on his good fortune.

“As for me, so far from following their example, I sought every opportunity of quarrelling with your father; and on one occasion, meeting him accidentally, I so far forgot myself, as to strike him.

“He caught my hand: ‘Young man,’ he said, ‘are you not aware that you have forfeited your life by this rash and foolish action?—I am your commanding officer.’

“I stood motionless,

“‘Thank God, there is no other witness of your folly: I forgive you; go and sin no more.’

“I sank, overwhelmed with a thousand remorseful feelings, at his feet. He raised me in his arms, and, from that moment, we were friends: we mutually asked some memorial, in token of our amity and forgiveness, and he exchanged his sword for mine. Some time after, I was promoted into another regiment, just

before the taking of Barcelona ; and when the news arrived of that fortunate event, it was saddened by the tidings of your brave father's death : I mourned for him, Hugh, as a brother, and I shall ever prize that sword for his sake ; and, from regard to his memory, I will ever love and befriend his worthy son."

"Dear Colonel Grahame," said Hugh, with glistening eyes, "am I at all like my father?" The Colonel smiled: "In person, Hugh, most strikingly ; but in spirit, he was quick, impetuous, and enterprising ; had he lived, he would have been a general."

Here Hugh expressed his earnest desire to be a soldier. The Colonel shook him by the hand, as he replied, "Apply yourself to your studies, Latimer : we will talk of that hereafter."

The two friends returned to school, and, in process of time, stood at the head of the senior class; and their friendship, thus closely cemented, became proverbial among the scholars, as they approached towards manhood.

Hugh had just completed his eighteenth year, when Lord Peterborough passing through that city, amongst other objects of interest, expressed a wish to see the free school.

Mr. Vernon was gratified by the request, and all the classes were drawn up in form to receive the noble visitor.

Hugh Latimer, as the head scholar, read an address on the occasion, and delivered it with spirit and elegance. Lord Peterborough so greatly admired the speaker, that, turning to the mayor of the city, who accompanied him, he asked whose son that youth was.

“He is the only son of a poor widow, my Lord,” returned the mayor. “Her husband was killed in battle in Spain, and, I have heard, had the honour of serving under your Lordship.”

“His face brings forcibly to my recollection that of a very brave officer,” replied his Lordship. Then turning to Latimer, he said, “What is your name, young gentleman?” Latimer bowed very low, partly out of respect, and partly to hide his glowing cheeks, “Hugh Latimer, my Lord.”

“Your father was a soldier?”

“Who died in Spain, serving under the brave Lord Peterborough,” replied Hugh, bowing yet lower.

“You are, then, the son of the brave officer, who thrice saved my life, and, the last time, at the expense of his own. Give me your hand, young man; and,

from this moment, consider Peterborough as your friend." Then, tapping Hugh on the shoulder, he said, in a lower tone, "An hour hence, meet me at the hotel, in the market place, and I will try to reward your brave father's services in you."

This was intended for Latimer's ear alone, but his fellow-students caught a part of the speech, and they wondered that a nobleman, like Lord Peterborough, should notice such a poor fellow as Hugh Latimer. Even Montrose was curious to learn the result. Asking Mr. Vernon's leave for a short absence, he ran home, and informed his uncle of what had passed at the school. The Colonel was no less anxious to know the result of Latimer's interview with his old commander, and taking down his hat, he accompanied Montrose to Mrs. Latimer's house.

The Colonel sat down in the little par-

lour, resolved to wait for Hugh's return, without giving any hint of the probable good fortune that awaited him, as he thought Latimer would like to announce the joyful news himself.

Mark Latimer was delighted in having an opportunity of fighting his battles over again with the Colonel, and was giving a very pathetic account of the battle in which he lost his leg, when the door suddenly flew open, and Hugh Latimer sprang into the room; and, without observing Montrose, or his uncle, flung himself, weeping, into his mother's arms.

“Joy! joy! dear mother! Rejoice with me, uncle!” he exclaimed, “I have seen, and have shook hands with, the brave Lord Peterborough. He has not only called me his friend, but has made me the happiest fellow alive!”

“What of Lord Peterborough?” said

Mark, his eyes glistening with delight: “why, boy, you rave—where can you have seen my noble commander?”

“I have only just parted from him,” cried the delighted Latimer. “Oh! we shall be so happy!—mother, you and uncle will both be comfortable in future. I am to be a soldier: his lordship has promised me a pair of colours.—And this, uncle, is for you.”

He put into the veteran's hand a paper, which, on reading, proved to be a deed of gift of fifty pounds, to be paid yearly, as long as either himself or Mrs. Latimer lived.

After giving this expression of his feelings, Hugh was not a little surprised to find that the Colonel and Montrose had witnessed the overflowings of his heart, and he blushed deeply.

“My dear Hugh,” said the Colonel,

kindly taking his hand, “you need never blush for your feelings on this happy occasion,—they do you honour. Well do you deserve your good fortune, and may you continue to do so. The brave Peterborough has but anticipated my intentions; and since two commissions would be useless, I will take charge of your outfit, and send you forth as becomes a gentleman.”

The two young friends accordingly entered the army together; they served in the same regiment, fought in the same wars, and bled in the same cause. Montrose, after many gallant actions, was made Lord Grahame: and Hugh Latimer, rising by degrees to the height of his profession, received the badge of knighthood from the hand of his Sovereign.

THE END.



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