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Thinking could he was not a little surprised to
see the handsome youth he had noticed in school

HUGH LATIMER;

OR, THE

SCHOOL-BOYS' FRIENDSHIP.

By SUSANNAH STRICKLAND, (Woodie)

AUTHOR OF THE LITTLE PRISONER, ROWLAND MASSINGHAM,
PREJUDICE AND PRINCIPLE,
&c. &c.

LONDON

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Jane M. Mahan

Jan.

HUGH LATIMER;

OR, THE

SCHOOL-BOYS' FRIENDSHIP.

“WHAT is the matter, that you sit away from the fire, moping in that dark corner, Hugh?” said Mrs. Latimer to her son; a fine, tall youth, of twelve years old. “Nothing,” replied Hugh, without raising his eyes, which were quite full of tears, from the book he was studying.

“But, my dear child, you cannot see where you are sitting; come here, and tell your mother who has offended you.”

“Dear mother, I do not like to tell you,” returned Hugh, without moving from his former position.

“I fear,” resumed Mrs. Latimer, “that you do not like going to school; but you should remember, if your lessons are more difficult than those you learned when under my care, that time will reward you for the pains you now take.”

“I like learning very well, but not learning at that school,” replied her son.

“And why not?”

“Dearest mother, I cannot tell you, but I shall always hate it.”

“I am afraid you are a very idle, wayward boy,” said his mother; “I had not expected this, after the many promises you made me that

you would attend the better to your studies.”

“It is not learning that I dislike,” said Hugh, as he again turned his eyes towards his suspected lessons.

Mrs. Latimer was vexed that her son should appear so obstinate; and turning to his uncle, an old veteran soldier, who was seated by the fire, leaning on a crutch, she said, “I cannot think what is the matter with Hugh; I fear he has played truant, or joined his school-fellows in some mischief; and that it is the chastisement which he merits, that he is anticipating with so many tears.”

When Hugh found that his mother suspected him of misconduct, his grief redoubled, and he sobbed aloud.

“Leave the boy to me, sister,” said old Mark Latimer; “if he has done any thing amiss, I am sure he will tell his poor uncle.”

Shortly after, Mrs. Latimer left the room, and the soldier, who had been, for some time, watching his nephew’s changing countenance, called him to his side.

“Latimer, have you committed any fault? now tell me, truly; for you know when you speak the truth you need not fear punishment from your kind mother, much more from me.”

“I have done nothing wrong that I know of,” replied his nephew.

“Why do you cry, then? if it is no crime you have committed, you need not be ashamed of telling me.”

Latimer looked wistfully up in his uncle's face: "Uncle, I do, indeed, love you and my mother dearly; but I do not like to live in a shop."

Mr. Latimer now looked surprised, and rather angry. "And pray, sir, what are your reasons for despising that which maintains you and your mother?"

Hugh looked very foolish, but, after a short silence, he replied "Before I went to that hateful school, I did not know the difference between my mother's keeping a shop, or living in any other house. I used to be as happy as the day was long; sitting on the little counter, and watching my mother wait on the customers; but now, I would rather

die, than live in a shop.—I hate the very sight of it.”

“Then, I suppose,” returned his uncle, very seriously, “that you hate your poor mother, and me; I am glad, however, that you had the grace not to tell her the cause of your tears. Pray, who taught you these distinctions of rank?”

“Oh! uncle, all the boys laugh at me, and mock me.—They call me a beggar’s brat, because I am on the foundation of the school, and my mother does not pay a large sum of money yearly for my learning, as their parents do. When I come into the play-grounds, they whisper amongst themselves so loud, that I hear them, ‘Here comes old Mother Latimer’s son! the woman

who sells threads, needles, and tape. Instead of sending him amongst *gentlemen*, she had better bind him 'prentice to a tailor; then he can be supplied with thread from the shop.' Oh! uncle, I am so wretched, I hate my life."

"My dear boy," said his uncle, "these trials are somewhat severe for a child; and there are too many men, who have not fortitude enough to perform their duty, because they are sneered at by the weak and foolish. But, Hugh Latimer, if you pursue virtue, and stedfastly adhere to the paths of truth, even if you were a beggar's brat, you would, by this course, gain the esteem of the good and sensible part of mankind, and need not fear the ridicule of

those who wantonly commit crime, because they think that their rank shields them."

"But, dear uncle, will not you take me from that hateful school?"

"Certainly not. A friend, by great interest, got you placed on the foundation of Mr. Vernon's free-school, and your poor mother can scarcely afford to clothe, much less to pay the expenses of schooling for you. Now, Latimer, let me ask you one question: Which would you prefer, to gain your living in this shop, or as a gentleman?"

"As a gentleman!" returned Hugh, indignant at the idea of the shop.

"Then," resumed his uncle, "you must subdue this false pride;

and as those who laugh at you will neither keep company with you, nor provide for your wants, would you not be very foolish to give up an advantage to please them?"

Now Hugh looked very simple, and hardly knew what answer to make; he stood by his uncle's side, with his arms folded, and his eyes bent on the ground.

"Come," said his good uncle; "I see you repent of your folly; bring your stool, and, whilst your mother is absent, I will give you a short sketch of the hardships that your brave father and I had to go through, long before we were your age."

Hugh gladly took his seat by his uncle's side; and after pausing a

few minutes, Mark Latimer related the following story:—

“Your grandfather was a farmer in Essex, and I have heard him say, of a good family, reduced in circumstances; yet, though poor, he contrived to maintain his family respectably. But misfortunes are incidental to every station of life. One bitter frosty night, when we were all in bed, and asleep, a fire broke out in my father’s premises; nor could its dreadful progress be stopped till every thing was consumed. All the unthreshed corn, the produce of which was to have been our whole year’s support, and to have paid my poor father’s rent, was entirely lost: but, what was far

worse, he was so shockingly burnt in striving to save his children and property from the devouring element, that he was carried on a hurdle to the next village, and never survived that dreadful night.

“Hugh Latimer! I, like you, was but a child; but I shall never forget the screams of my poor mother, when she found her husband was a corpse, and herself and children exposed naked to the piercing cold.

“Some kind neighbours took us in for the night; but as all the little property my father had been saving for years, as a provision for his children, was lost in the flames, we had no expectation but of going to the poor-house. Fortunately for us, my father’s landlord was a kind-hearted

man. He was so good as to raise a few pounds amongst his friends, to clothe us, and to bury my poor father. He likewise gave my mother a small hovel on his estate, rent free, to live in.

“There were five of us, and I, who was the eldest of the party, but a boy of eleven years of age; yet, with these hands, I contrived to earn the scanty pittance of bread for my distressed mother and family; and if I saw a smile upon her sorrowful countenance, I was more than repaid. I not only worked the live-long day, but often till midnight, when the moon was clear, in digging peat off the cold moors.

“When I had reached my sixteenth year, I entirely supported my

family, with the assistance of your dear father, whom I loved with almost parental affection, for he was many years younger than myself. You complain, Latimer, who have never known the want of bread, or necessary comfort.—I have known a few potatoes serve us from week's end to week's end; yet I never once murmured, though I might have gone to service, and, by that means, have lived well; but I preferred staying at home with my mother, and my half-famished brothers and sisters, who looked up to me, as to a father.

“Like you, I was proud, and thought I remained independant whilst I worked in the open fields. Your father had great natural abili-

ties, and a spirit that would have done honour to any station. Some one showed him how to join letters together; and in the dark winter nights, when we could not see to work, he not only taught himself to read, but me to write. Ah! my child! you want for no comfort, if you are poor. We never had a fire by which to warm our half-frozen limbs. The poor girls used to get up at four o'clock of a cold winter's morning, to spin, by the feeble light of a lamp; and I, though I abhorred the employment, mended the shoes, and botched the clothes of the neighbouring peasants. This was the life I led, till I was nineteen years of age; when my unremitting toil was put a stop to, and the dear beings for

whom I had unrepiningly worked, were swept away from me by the small pox.

“My mother died first, and then the tender girls; for we had not the means to provide them with the common necessaries of life.

“I thought my heart would have broken quite, the first time my brother Hugh and I sat down alone, in our now miserable hovel.

“All my labours then seemed light; all the cares that I had endured, nothing. Oh! how I missed, in that dreary moment, the cheerful prating of the dear girls, over their spinning-wheels. Even the poor half-starved cat, looked so forlorn and miserable, that the sight of her renewed our sorrow.

“Your father, too, wept bitterly; at length, starting up, he cried, ‘I cannot live thus; Mark, there is a regiment of soldiers passing through the village, on their way for embarkation,—I will be a soldier.’

“He rushed out of the house; I followed to persuade him not to go; but could not overtake him until he had enlisted;—a few moments afterwards saw me follow his example.”

“Then my father was a soldier!” exclaimed Latimer eagerly starting up.

“He was; and as brave a one as ever went into battle. It is useless to tell you all the trials we went through, in our profession; the life of a common soldier, on actual service in a foreign country, is a con-

tinued series of privation, suffering, and hardship, too dreadful to be described.

“After many years of hard service, both in Germany and Spain, we both attained the rank of sergeant. My brother, like his brave commander, the Earl of Peterborough, possessed a daring courage; he thrice saved the life of that great nobleman, at the imminent risk of his own; and was presented with a commission as a reward for his services.

“Here he had new mortifications to encounter; the officers, considering him beneath them in birth, would not associate with him; but your father had ambition, and a spirit that, had he lived, would have

made his way in spite of opposition. Such a spirit his son ought to possess."

Here Hugh blushed deeply; and his uncle continued:—

"From those who looked down on him, your father kept himself proudly aloof; and in the performance of his duty, he held in contempt the sneers of his less high-minded comrades.

"It was in Spain that he married your mother, who was the daughter of a lieutenant in our company; and her father never forgave her for the choice she had made. You were born in the camp, amidst the horrors of war; and, whilst yet a little wailing infant, your mother had the anguish of beholding her husband

brought into the tent a mangled corpse. I thought she would have died; but the human frame is firmer under the pressure of misfortunes, than under the inroads of disease. Our officers, in compassion to Mrs. Latimer's situation, raised a subscription amongst themselves, which enabled her to return to England; and, with the help of a small pension, she was glad to open this shop to keep herself and her ungrateful little boy from starving."

The tears sprung to the eyes of Hugh Latimer, who was not a little affected by the sad story of his father's sufferings. "And when did you, my dear uncle, leave the army?"

Not till after the battle of Almanza, in which I lost my leg, and was thereby rendered unfit for service. I have little doubt but that I might have gained a commission, had I thought fit to persevere; but after the death of my brother, I was careless of what became of me. Like you, my dear boy, I was too proud to bear the insolence of those who actually were my inferiors in merit: You see what my false pride has brought me to; instead of living thus poorly with your dear mother, I might have been the means of supporting you both in plenty, and have gloried in beholding my little Hugh equal his regretted father in worth."

"And he shall do so, yet," cried

Hugh Latimer, flinging his arms round the veteran's neck; and wiping away the tears which, in spite of himself, glistened in Mark Latimer's eyes. "You supported my father in his youth, and I will learn night and day, that I may be able to maintain my dear uncle in his old age."

"Bless you! bless you! my boy; and a good and gracious God will add *his* to *my* feeble blessing, if you do your duty, and walk uprightly in that station of life to which it has pleased his Almighty providence to call you," replied his uncle, folding Latimer to his heart.

At this moment, his mother entered the room, when Latimer, flinging himself into her arms, kissed

her a thousand times, exclaiming, "Dearest mother, I will be a good boy; I will never repine at going to school again."

Mrs. Latimer embraced him tenderly. "I suppose, brother, I have to thank you for the change in my little boy's sentiments?"

A melancholy smile passed over the veteran's fine features, as he resumed his pipe, and Hugh returned to his tasks with double diligence.

The next morning Latimer was one of the first at school; as he passed through the play-ground, he was greeted, as usual, by the boarders, with, "Well, Latimer: how many yards of tape have you cut this morning?"—"How many balls of worsted have you wound?"

“How many pounds of plums have you weighed up?”—Whilst another with, what he meant to be, wit, said with a sly glance—“and how many have you eat?”—“Why child,” cried a third,—“you can hardly have had time to learn your lessons, as the old woman, your mother, keeps no shopboy.”

“Oh, you forget,” said Mat. Jackson, “that limping old jockey, with his fur cap, and his fierce dark eyes.”

At this insult, on the wounds his uncle had received in the service of his country, the indignation of Latimer could no longer be restrained; and darting forward, he knocked the boy down,—a roar of laughter immediately burst from his comrades.

“Master Jackson,” exclaimed Latimer,—“you are beneath contempt, and I am sorry that I have defiled my hands with striking you.”

Now Jackson was a great coward; and though he could sneer, he dared not fight, and on this score, he was glad to pocket all his affronts, and slowly rising from the ground, he wiped away, with the greatest unconcern, the dirt off the knees of his trowsers.

“Never mind, Mat,” cried a taller boy, “the fellow would be glad of your buying a farthing cake of his beggarly mother.”

“Nay,” returned Hugh, “if she were indeed a beggar, the poorest descendant of the noble house of

Latimer, shall be superior to a Smith, or a Jackson!"

"Ha! ha, ha," reiterated his insulting compeers, "see what a long pair of ears our ass has got,"—"I wonder," said Smith, "where the child learned these quality airs; not certainly, whilst he waited behind his mother's counter."

"There, Smith," replied Jackson, "I wonder how you can waste your words on the little plebeian; why do not you leave to his own sublime meditations, the noble descendant of the house of Latimer?"

Just then the school-bell rang, and the scholars hurried to their respective forms.

Whilst in school, Latimer heard one of the boys whisper to another

that sat next him—"Do you see that handsome boy who is talking to Mr. Vernon? his uncle brought him here yesterday, to be a parlour boarder. They say he is heir to a great fortune."

The other boy raised his eyes, and Hugh could not refrain from the like curiosity; they fell on a tall gentlemanly youth of his own age; the noble expression of whose open and beautiful countenance, more forcibly declared his rank, than the wealth that he heard he was entitled to—"Happy boy," thought Hugh, "how will you be courted, and admired; not sneered at, and insulted, as I am!"

Latimer had never been reprimanded for neglecting his lessons,

during the half year he had been at school; but always got the praises of the second master, under whose care he was. Mr. Manby was an excellent young man, and rewarded his scholars according to their merit, having been himself educated on the foundation of that school.

Latimer happened to say his lessons that day extremely well, and Mr. Manby, as he left the school, turned to the young gentlemen of his class, saying,—“I wish, gentlemen, that you would follow the example of Latimer; he is the best boy in the third form.”—“Y-e-s,” exclaimed the head boy of that form, with so strong a sneer, that the insult passed through the whole class.—“Never mind, Latimer,”

he said the good usher, (who too well understood their meaning), as he closed the door after him—"you do your duty; and I am happy to say, that you are an ornament to this school."

Directly the masters were gone, the whole group burst into an insulting laugh—and Jackson said, loud enough for the rest to hear—"Shall we hang him up, by cotton, thread, or tape? but I fear the ornament is too heavy to be suspended by any thing but rope-yarn."

Their tasks being completed, the great bell summoned the happy boys to the play-ground; but Hugh felt too wretched to play, and too low spirited to return home directly; seating himself, therefore, under a

tree, apart from the rest, he watched the groups of boys that leaped exultingly past him, some with hoops, some with balls, and some engaged in the active sport of leap-frog; whilst others, older and more mercenary, were employed in changing away trinkets and trifles, which their kind friends had given them at parting; this was a practice Hugh thought so contemptible, that no persuasion could ever induce him to join in it. Whilst his eyes wandered from boy to boy, he felt some one pull his sleeve, and on turning round, he was not a little surprised to see the handsome youth he had noticed in school.—“My name is Montrose Grahame,” said the young gentleman, holding out his hand at

the same time;—"I have shaken hands with all the gentlemen in the school but you; and I would rather be friends with you, than with any of the rest."

"Not when you know me," replied Hugh, drawing back.

"And why not?" returned the other—"How!—do you mean to refuse my hand?"

"I am poor—I am not a gentleman!" replied Latimer, a deep blush suffusing his cheeks.

"You have no knowledge of Montrose Grahame, if you think that poverty could alter his opinion."

The eyes of Latimer kindled with pleasure.

"Master Grahame, I have been in this school nearly half a year,

and you are the first person that ever spoke kindly to me, or without insult."

"Then I will be your friend," cried the impetuous Montrose,—“I will fight for you; I will make them treat you with the respect that I am sure you deserve.”

Latimer shook his head.

“You know I heard what Mr. Manby said of you, as he quitted the school-room.”

“You likewise heard the sneers of my gentlemen compeers,” returned Latimer.

“I did, and should like to know their reasons.”

Hugh fixed his eyes on the ground, and remained silent.

“Have not I told you, I shall

not love you the less for being poor?" said Montrose tenderly.

"I do not doubt your goodness," replied Hugh sorrowfully: "you might not mind poverty, but your rank is high; and, before those in the same station as yourself, you might not like to own acquaintance with a boy, whose mother keeps a small shop: and, Montrose Grahame, the blood of a Latimer is too proud to be reckoned a disgrace to any one."

"You shall never be reckoned so by me," returned the other; "I honour you for your spirit, I love you for your independence; from this moment we are friends, on the word and the hand of a Grahame."

Latimer, the happy Latimer, re-

turned with warmth the friendly pressure of the high-spirited boy, and that day he returned home, exulting in his good fortune, forgetting all his former mortifications, in the delightful idea of having found, at last, a friend.

Weeks and months passed away, and Montrose Grahame and Hugh Latimer became inseparable companions; together they pursued their studies, together drew plans of future glory; whilst both being boys of high carriage, their comrades dared not so easily affront them, though they gave them the nickname, amongst themselves, of Balaam and his Ass.

Now Montrose felt these things more keenly than Latimer; he

hated to be laughed at; an insult addressed to him, was followed by a word and a blow; but the blow was generally struck first, and his anger spake afterwards, and, though truly noble, he had many faults. He loved Latimer, and shielded him from ill-usage, but when engaged in conversation with gentlemen of his own rank, he felt a secret mortification in the lowly station of his young friend, and though he was far too generous to show it openly, he did not feel it the less.

One afternoon, which was a holiday; as Montrose and Latimer were walking up and down the playground, arm in arm together, their attention was suddenly drawn to a black youth, who entered the bounds

with a basket of cakes on his head.

“Who buy, who buy?—Little massa, buy cake of poor Blackey?”

It happened to be the hour when the day-scholars generally dispersed to their respective homes, and they were gathered together in an idle ring, discussing the manner in which they intended spending the afternoon, preparatory to their leaving the play-ground. Idleness has well been denominated the root of all evil: the minds of young people, when unoccupied, are too apt to waste their energies in unprofitable thoughts, which often lead to the commission of mischievous and cruel actions.

The black youth had scarcely en-

tered the ground, before he was surrounded by a group of these idlers, who unfeelingly remarked on the dingy colour of his skin, and asked him a thousand trifling, and impertinent questions.

One foolishly said, that "He ought to go to school, to learn grammar:" another, "That a magpie could speak better English:" but Jackson, more alert than the rest, cried out, "Come, boys, we have no money to lay out this afternoon, so let's expel him."

Then springing suddenly past the negro, he dexterously struck the arm which upheld the basket he carried on his head, and the whole contents were instantly strewed on the ground; cakes, plums, and

oranges, were scattered promiscuously into the dirt; and those which fell on the grass, were seized upon and instantly demolished by the unthinking beings, who never paused to consider the cruelty and dishonesty of their conduct.

What was sport to them, was agonizing to the feelings of the poor negro. He stood for some moments stupified with amazement, gazing with vacant eyes upon the wreck of his property trampled thus wantonly beneath their feet. At length the full sense of his misfortune suddenly rushed upon his mind; uttering a wild and piercing cry, he sank down upon the ground, and burying his head between his knees, wept aloud.

Some of the young gentlemen, whose hearts were not yet steeled to this pathetic appeal to their humanity, appeared sorry for the mischief they had done, and were ashamed of their past conduct; but the promoters of this cruel frolic, not in the least abashed, now tried, by every method they could suggest, to induce the negro to leave the play-ground; but the poor fellow was so overwhelmed with grief, that he appeared perfectly deaf to their arguments; and when they had recourse to threats, he only redoubled his lamentations.

“Who has been so cruel as to ill-treat this poor black?” cried Montrose, advancing with Latimer to the scene of action.—“Surely,

gentlemen, you cannot have been guilty of such a base, and cowardly action?"

"It can be no business of your's," cried Jackson, reddening; "we have not been ill-treating you: so I think you had better look to your own affairs, and not trouble your head with what does not concern either you or your minion."

"You are mistaken, sir," returned Montrose, his indignation burning on his cheek—"humanity compels me to take part with an unfortunate and suffering fellow-creature. How hard must be that heart," he continued with increasing warmth, "who could wantonly augment his sorrows! Is it not enough that he is an exile from his country, and,

perhaps, under the controul of a tyrannical master; but that you, unworthy and unfeeling that you were, should maliciously add another pang to his heart, and increase the miseries of his hard fate? Let those who have been foremost in perpetrating this base, unmanly action, look well to themselves. My arm is strong, and his wrongs may not go unpunished."

Fearing that Grahame should realize his threat, the culprits, one by one, stole away from the spot, leaving the black with his brave defender, and Hugh Latimer.

"Where do you live, my poor fellow?" said the latter, gently touching the negro on the shoulder; but the black could not answer his

questions for weeping. "Come, dry your tears, Blackey," he continued, "we are your friends, and should be very sorry to increase your present distress."

The black raised his large eyes, red and bloodshot with weeping, mournfully to Hugh's face—"Alas! Alas! good massa, poor Blackey has no friend." The tears rushed into the eyes of Montrose as the unfortunate negro again renewed his pathetic lamentations.

"How I wish I had not spent my week's allowance in such nonsense as I did yesterday!" he said: "you told me, Hugh, I should soon repent of my folly. Can you lend me any money?"

"I have but six-pence," returned

Hugh, producing the sum as he spoke from his pocket; "it will go but a short way in replenishing this poor creature's basket; but if it were a guinea, he should be equally welcome to it." Then, turning to the black, who had wiped away his tears, he said—

"Here is a trifle for you, Blackey: I wish it were more, with all my heart."

"No! no!—good little Massa—Pedro no take money.—Massa sorry, Massa cry for poor black boy. He love kind hearts better than silver."

"The generosity of this poor creature," said Montrose, greatly affected, "ought to be a lesson to those who have so cruelly ill-treated him." Then, turning to the negro,

he said,—“Pedro, whom do you serve?”

“Massa Isaac, Jew,—live there,” returned Pedro, pointing down the street: “me no go home. He beat with great stick, give no eat—speak hard words, and make poor Blackey cry;” and here the unhappy negro again burst into tears.

“I have thought of an excellent plan!” cried the impetuous Montrose: “I will take this poor lad with me to my uncle, Colonel Graham, and ask him to indemnify him for the loss he has sustained. He is too good a man, and loves me too well, to refuse so reasonable a request.”—Then, motioning Latimer and the negro to follow him, he was on the point of leaving the school-

bounds, when Hugh laid his hand on his arm, and forcibly detained him—

“Consider, my dear friend, what you are about. If you leave the school-bounds without a note from one of the ushers, you will be severely reprimanded by Mr. Vernon: and you have too many enemies among the boarders, for your conduct to pass unnoticed.”

“A fig for Mr. Vernon, his rod, and his bounds!” returned Montrose, putting his hand on the top of the rails which enclosed the playground, and springing lightly over: “if I can alleviate this poor fellow’s distress, I will not mind his anger. Come, Latimer! come, Pedro! follow your leader.”

And away ran the ardent boy as quickly as his legs could carry him down the opposite street, followed by the negro and Latimer, who would not desert him, though he feared the result which must accrue from his daring infringement of the rules of the school.

At length, pausing before a large mansion in one of the principal streets, Montrose gave a quick double rap at the door.

"That is my young master's knock, I'll answer for him," said the old porter, as he unclosed the door.

"Is my uncle at home?" asked Montrose eagerly.

"Yes, Master Grahame—to you. But I should not think he has

any great desire to see the strange people with you: and I shall not admit them, till I receive further orders from my master."

"But indeed you will, George," returned Montrose impatiently, "or I shall complain to my uncle of your impertinence, in daring to catechise his nephew. Let me pass directly."

Before George could reply to this sally, a door opened in the hall, and a fine looking middle-aged man, whose gentlemanly deportment and military carriage proclaimed him to be Colonel Grahame, came out to meet them.

"What is the meaning of this unusual noise, George?" he said in a stern voice; "and who are the

strangers, you are parlying with at the door?"

"Please your honour," returned George, whose consequence seemed gently offended by the appearance of his young master's associates, "your nephew insists on my admitting to your honour's presence that black ragamuffin, and some shabby boy he has picked up in the streets; and I would not comply with his request, without further orders from you."

The Colonel's surprise scarcely appeared less than his domestic's, at beholding his nephew and heir in such strange company.

"Montrose!" he said very gravely, surveying the group before him; "what is the reason of your hasty

visit this afternoon? what has put you in such a desperate heat? and who are these strangers you have brought with you?"

"To the first part of your question, uncle, I answer, humanity!—this poor black is the object of it: and that young gentleman is my friend."

"Very well, so far," returned the Colonel, smiling at the energy with which his nephew spoke; "but whose permission had you to leave the school this afternoon?"

"The sanction of my own heart," replied Montrose; raising his fine eyes to his uncle's face; "and a firm belief in Colonel Grahame's generosity."

"My dear boy," said his uncle,

grasping his hand, "these reasons may have satisfied you, and speak highly for the benevolence of your intentions; but I fear it will prove a very unsatisfactory one to your master. You ought not to perform one duty by sacrificing another. Had you stated your motives for leaving the school to Mr. Vernon, I am sure he would not have denied your request."

"You are right, my dear uncle," returned Montrose, blushing and looking down. "I should have done so; but was so circumstanced, I could not do it, without informing against my school-fellows; and I would rather incur the danger of a thousand floggings, than have become an informer."

He then proceeded to inform his uncle of the whole particulars, and his reasons for bringing the black home, and concluded by saying—
“I am sure, dear uncle, for my sake, you will give the poor fellow the value of his basket again.”

“You shall do it yourself, my generous boy,” returned the colonel, not a little pleased at this benevolent trait in his nephew’s character—then, going to his desk, took out a couple of sovereigns; “Here, Montrose, take these: give the poor black what you please, and divide the rest between yourself and your young friend.”

“I know which Latimer will prefer,” said Montrose, putting, as he spoke, both into Pedro’s hand.

Words would fail to express the lively joy felt by the poor negro, when he found himself thus unexpectedly relieved from all his terrors: His tears burst out afresh, and he wept and laughed alternately, in his excess of gratitude.

“This poor fellow seems to possess a feeling heart,” said the Colonel, greatly moved by his emotion.—“From what country are you, Blackey?”

“Africa, massa;” replied the negro, making a low bow, in his untaught, but expressive manner.

“From what part of Africa?”

“The Coast of Coramondel—from the great river,” returned the black, his eyes flashing as, perhaps, the recollections of his country

awakened a thousand bitter feelings in his breast.

“And how did you come to England?” asked Colonel Grahame.

“O, in de great ship. All asleep, white men come,—burn hut,—take away,—quite little child!—Serve many massas—see many country—go to France,—massa Isaac bring to England.”

“Then is he a cruel master to you, Blackey?”

“Iss, iss,—beat much, give little eat,—call Black, dog! Pedro hate massa,—Pedro cry,” returned the negro, in a sorrowful tone. “Me love kind massa—me no hate good man.”

“Montrose,” said his uncle, after a few minutes’ reflection, “if I

were to take this poor negro into my service, would you be kind to him?"

"Uncle! dear uncle!" cried the delighted boy, his blue eyes filling with tears as he spoke; "you could not please me better. Let him be my servant; he will feed my dog, and take care of my pony, and work in my nice little garden, while I am at school; and when I return for the holidays, I will teach him to read and write; and I know my friend Hugh will assist me."

"Who is this friend of yours?" said the Colonel, who had been for some minutes attentively surveying the mild, dignified countenance of Hugh Latimer; "I never had the pleasure of seeing him before."

Montrose remained silent.

“What! both tongue-tied? I suppose,” continued the Colonel, with a good-natured smile, “the young gentleman is not ashamed of his name?”

“I should not deserve to be a member of a poor, but worthy family, if I were,” replied Latimer, stifling the sigh which rose to his lips: “after the striking instance of generosity, that I have just witnessed, I should not think Colonel Grahame was a man to despise any one on the score of poverty.”

“God forbid!” returned the Colonel, slightly colouring: “I may have been guilty of such folly in my youth; but I have since learned to consider those whom Providence

has wisely ordained to move in a lower sphere of life, in a more just and benevolent point of view. My young friend," he continued, kindly taking his hand, "what is your name?"

"Hugh Latimer, sir."

The Colonel started, and surveyed the youth with intense interest:—"What was your father?"

"A soldier."

"In what regiment did he serve?"

"I have forgotten," returned Hugh; "but my uncle, Mark, could tell you. He was, however, a lieutenant in one of the regiments commanded by the brave Lord Peterborough, and was killed at the taking of Barcelona."

"I served in Spain at the same

period," said the Colonel, with a sigh: "I was not present in that action. I have heard your father mentioned as a brave and deserving officer; and I dare say, had he lived, he would have risen high in his profession.—Is your mother living?"

Hugh hesitated: then, as if ashamed of his weakness, firmly replied—"Yes, sir: she keeps the little shop at the corner of this street, to maintain herself and me, and to afford an asylum to my uncle, in his old age, a veteran soldier, who lost his leg at the battle of Almanza."

The Colonel seemed, for a few minutes, lost in thought: at length taking the hand of Latimer, he

placed it in that of Montrose, and pressed them both affectionately together in his own,—“Continue, Montrose,” he said, “to love this young gentleman; and never return for a holiday without bringing him with you.”

“I only wanted this permission to render me quite happy,” said Montrose.

“Now, my dear boy, you had better return to school,” said the Colonel, “and apologise to your master, for quitting it without his permission. I will accompany you as far as Isaac’s, the Jew’s, and try if I can release poor Pedro.”

The Colonel’s benevolent application was successful; and, for a few pounds, the Jew consented to

release him from his engagements to him; and before the young friends reached the play-ground, they had the satisfaction of knowing that Pedro was transferred into the Colonel's service.

As they walked up the stately avenue of trees that led to the school, the young friends were so well pleased with their success in their late adventure, that they quite forgot the storm which awaited them there; till they received, from a young gentleman in the first form, a formal message from Mr. Vernon, to attend him in the hall.

“So,” said Montrose, with affected gaiety, “my dear Latimer, we are fairly caught.”

Before they could obey this pe-

remptory summons, all the real culprits thronged eagerly round them, exclaiming in a breath, "Don't tell of me." "Don't say 'twas I." "Remember, Latimer, I did not upset the basket, I only ate the cakes when they were down."

"Contemptible cowards!" returned Montrose; "you did not scruple to commit a base action, but you care not who bears the punishment." And, trying to compose his agitated countenance, he took Latimer's arm, and entered the hall.

Mr. Vernon was seated at the upper end of the hall, in his great arm-chair, (which was fashioned somewhat after the same pattern as the celebrated Dr. Busby's,) his right hand resting on that instru-

ment of punishment, which he was reputed to wield so unsparingly against all delinquents, and which was an object of terror to all in his vicinity.

After surveying the two young friends for some minutes, with a stern countenance, he addressed himself to Montrose; who, conscious of his own integrity, tried to assume a courage which he did not actually feel. "Mr. Grahame, who gave you leave to quit the bounds of the school this afternoon?"

"No one, sir."

"Then how dared you disobey the positive orders you have received from me, never to quit them without my permission, or a note from Mr. Manby?"

“For reasons, sir, which I cannot mention,” returned Montrose, modestly, but firmly: “I acknowledge I was not acting rightly, when I quitted the play-ground without your leave; but hope, as this is my first offence, your forgiveness will be extended to me.”

“Not till you can give a better reason for your conduct,” replied Mr. Vernon.

“I have no other reason to give.”

“Sir, you are uttering a falsehood,” returned his offended master. “Latimer, you were in Master Grahame’s company, and were with him during his absence: what induced him to disobey my commands, and break through the established rules of the school?”

“Indeed, sir, I cannot tell you; I have given my word of honour not to mention the affair. My friend has acted imprudently; but did you know the motives which influenced his conduct, I am certain you would pardon his transgression.”

“You are, truly, a pretty pair,” rejoined Mr. Vernon; “if you had not been guilty of some great offence, you would have no reason for concealing your actions. You, Latimer, are a day-scholar, and your time is consequently your own after the school-hours are over; but Mr. Grahame I shall most certainly punish.”

“I will never submit to such a disgraceful mode of chastisement,” cried Montrose, stepping indig-

nantly back, while the colour mounted to his before pallid cheek.

Mr. Manby now came forward, to intercede in his behalf; he stated that it was the first offence of the kind his pupil had committed, and he earnestly recommended Mr. Vernon to pardon him; but Mr. Vernon was a strict disciplinarian, and would not grant his request.

“If I let Grahame off,” said he, “it will be the signal for every boy to commit the like offence with impunity, and I might search for my scholars half over the city; while they would accuse me of injustice for inflicting on them a punishment I withheld from him. When they witness his disgrace, it will make them more careful for the future.”

Young Grahame's eyes were slowly filling with tears, but he stood immoveable, with his arms folded across his breast, and his glance fixed sadly on the ground.

Latimer flung himself at Mr. Vernon's feet, and implored him, with tears, to forgive his friend. "Oh! sir, if it is absolutely necessary to punish one of us, punish me, in his stead; this disgrace will break his heart."

"That would not be justice," said the inflexible master; "Montrose has deserved chastisement, and he shall receive it."

"Oh! sir, if you should ever become acquainted with the real motive that induced him to commit this fault, you would be very, very

sorry for it," said Latimer, with increasing agitation. "But rather than my friend should be punished unjustly, I will tell you the whole truth."

"And by so doing, forfeit my friendship for ever," rejoined Montrose. "Cease, Latimer, to plead my cause; I would rather endure this disgraceful punishment, than forfeit my word."

Just then, a martial step sounded in the hall, and the next moment Colonel Grahame stood by Mr. Vernon's side; and, in spite of the entreaties of his enthusiastic nephew, informed him of the whole transaction.

Mr. Vernon was so pleased with an explanation so satisfactory to all

parties, that he instantly pardoned Montrose, and, at his earnest request, promised not to chastise the real delinquents beyond an additional task on the morrow; and the happy boys, released from all their fears, returned to spend the evening together with Colonel Grahame, who lavished so many praises on Latimer, that Montrose laughingly said, that Hugh was in a fair way of stealing his uncle's heart from him.

Thus time rolled onward, and the two friends daily advanced in learning and merit. Latimer felt a proud conviction that if his circumstances were poor, his mind was rich in worth; that every new attainment he acquired, instead of rendering his condition more despicable in his

eyes, reconciled him to it. He learned to be cheerful and agreeable, even to those who had oppressed him; and in ceasing to regard their ungenerous sarcasms, he ceased to feel them.

He studied to forgive the faults of his fellow creatures, and he pitied their weakness, while he diligently strove to avoid falling into the same temptations, by making their foolish example serve as a warning to himself; which rendered it an easier task to control every disposition in his own heart to commit evil.

His good uncle, not content with laying down lessons of morality, enforced his precepts with quotations from Holy writ, and Hugh never omitted reading a chapter

from the Bible to his uncle morning and evening; and the comfort he derived from this sacred service, was a balm for every wound, and made him feel an ardent desire to attain to the greatest height of moral and spiritual excellence.

One evening, when reading aloud to his mother and uncle, the xiii. chapter of St. Matthew, his uncle made him pause at the 57th verse. "Hugh," said he, "oblige me by reading that verse, and the two foregoing ones, a second time;" and his nephew read in a clear voice—

"Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary, and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?"

"And his sisters, are not they all

with us? whence, then, hath this man all these things?

“And they were offended in him.”

Mark Latimer laid his hand on the book, and, looking stedfastly in his nephew's face, said, “Hugh, what do these verses recal to your mind?”

“My own weakness and folly, dear uncle, in repining over my situation; when the Son of God, the creator of the whole earth, condescended to take no higher station, while in this world, than the son of a poor carpenter.”

“And for what purpose, do you imagine, he chose to take upon himself so lowly a condition?”

“Surely, my dear uncle,” cried Hugh, his eyes sparkling, and his

countenance becoming suddenly animated, "it was done to convince men of the sinful folly of despising the poor, and paying homage to riches, instead of virtue."

"You are right, my boy," returned Mark Latimer.—"It was to enforce the same lesson of humility that he condescended to wash the feet of his disciples; shewing them, by that action, that the moral worth of the soul was confined to no station in life; and that virtue would alone bestow a nobility of mind, which would be perfected, through him, in another world.—Without this treasure, a man's riches and station avail him nothing. A good king is called the father of his people, and is universally beloved by

his subjects; while a bad king is hated, and called a tyrant, though he finds sycophants to fawn upon him and execute his commands; But a bad man is never loved;—no, not even by his own children. They may fear him; but it is a punishment attached to the guilty, to be despised, even by those who are weak enough to imitate them, and wicked enough to flatter their bad actions. Walk stedfastly in the right path, my son; turn neither to the right nor to the left; but do the thing which is upright and just, and you will win the approbation of heaven, and be in favour with all men.”

“It was surely the same feeling, uncle, which tempted the Jews to

despise their Lord for being a carpenter's son, that induced my school-fellows to insult me, because my mother kept a shop?"

"Yes, Latimer; and should any reverse of fortune reduce them to the same situation, they would then feel the weakness and folly of their present conduct. A man must possess a great mind, and have a true sense of religion, before he can be modest in prosperity, and resigned in adversity to the will of Providence. Should you ever, by perseverance and industry, recover that situation in life which we lost through unavoidable misfortunes, always bear in mind your present station, and never set too much value on riches, which have once,

and can again, take to themselves wings and flee away."

"I hope, dear uncle," said Hugh, "that I shall never forget the good advice you have given me.—I wish it may please God to enable me to earn a competence to support you and my dear mother in your old age;—I do not desire more."

Shortly after Latimer's conversation with his uncle, he was doomed to undergo a more severe trial than he had yet experienced.—A young gentleman, of the name of Sinclair, the son of a rich baronet in the country, was placed at the same school, and made one in the same class with the two friends.

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, was greatly offended at these remarks; and high words, and even blows, had been exchanged on the occasion, 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 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 whom he had loved, and regarded in the light of a brother,—for whom he would have suffered any punishment, and borne any insult, rather than have swerved one moment in the fidelity they had so often vowed to each other: could it, indeed, be true that Montrose Grahame, his Montrose, had ceased to love him? Every day increased the apparent coolness between these before-inseparable companions. Latimer's heart ached in secret, and his eyes were often full of tears; he grew thin, and the colour faded from his cheek.

Mr. Manby, who was much attached to Latimer, and justly appreciated the worth of his character,

perceived this alteration in his appearance with concern; and guessing the cause, he pitied the mental sufferings which, he knew, a boy of his keen feelings must endure, at the unmerited neglect of his young friend.

One afternoon, as Latimer took up his hat to leave the school-room, (for he had no motive now to detain him in the play-ground, and Montrose was walking to and fro in the cathedral cloisters, with his arm thrown carelessly round Sinclair's neck,) Mr. Manby tapped him on the shoulder, and asked him to take tea with him at his lodgings, and 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, surprised at his master's particular notice, readily accepted his invitation, and they walked together towards the river; for Mr. Manby lodged in a pleasant house, fronting the clearest stream imaginable, which commanded a fine view of the adjacent country from the windows.

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

“My young friend, are you ill?”

said Mr. Manby, remarking the sudden change in Latimer's countenance.

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

"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 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 among 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 am certain, when Montrose sees his error, he will be very sorry for the uneasiness he has occasioned 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 captivated by the splendid talents of Sinclair; but when he perceives what a mere worldling he is, he 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 (which I doubt not he will) of his present injustice, never suspect his since-

ity; lest, when you offend against God, and repent of your crime, he should doubt your contrition. 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 you imagine I have lived nearly thirty years in the world, without experiencing, in a tenfold degree, the sorrow of which you so loudly complain. The time will come, when, tossing on the stormy ocean of life, you will forget the

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petty troubles of boyhood, and consider them light, indeed trifles, when compared to the trials which await the man.

“You will not doubt my words, when I tell you that I was educated on the foundation of this school. My father was a tailor in the city, and his business afforded a large scope for the malice of my enemies to work on. All that you have suffered, I endured. But I was hot and headstrong, and fought my way up to the top of the school, and made my persecutors feel the strength of my arm, and the bitterness of my irony. When my fist failed, and my tongue was tired with retaliating their impertinence, I had recourse to my pen, and held them up

to ridicule, by caricaturing them. All this was beneath me; and, consequently, I was universally detested. They feared my arm; they dreaded my talents; but their hatred was implacable; and, I must own, in some measure, I deserved it.

“You early adopted a wiser course, and by ceasing to notice their insolence, in a great 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 one 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 was so great,

that, many times, we have fought together, till both parties have kept their beds for a week afterwards. My dislike to that youth amounted to a deadly crime, and our feelings of animosity were mutual.

“In time, I became the head scholar in the school, and he was the 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 be so undutiful as to forget to recommend his father's shop, in case my lord judge should want a new coat, or a pair of new breeches.'

" 'Oh,' returned his colleague, 'he knows his business, and his father's interest, too well, to do that: remember, it would 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 adventure happened, I was walking by myself 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 the sun had not long been up; 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, and was very tall and strong for my age, and generally esteemed an excellent swimmer.

“The water looked so cool and refreshing, with the first rays of the sun glancing on it, that I abandoned my resolution of not bathing that morning; 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 his assistance, and, before the waters shut him from my view, recognized 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 deaf to his prayers, I stood

looking upon the waters with a sort of horrible satisfaction. It was my enemy, my bitter enemy, who had been the torment of my life, from my boyhood upwards, whom I saw sinking before me; and 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 human feelings than myself, at that moment, flew forward and barked vehemently, and plunged into the water, as if trying to excite me to emulate his example. I perceived Carey's struggles were fainter, and that his eyes were fixed and glaring, but I fancied their dying glance was fixed on me. His hands, too, moved convulsively, as if striving to grasp at every straw floating on the surface of the stream. A sudden thought darted through my brain, and the awful voice of conscience loudly upbraided me for my inhumanity: I plunged instantly 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.’

“It was not merely his death, alone, which rendered my remorse so acute,—I had never thought seri-

ously on religious subjects,—but a vague idea of the awfulness of eternity, and the critical situation in which a person must be placed, thus suddenly launched into it, darted across my mind.

“It was not only Carey’s body I had murdered—I had, perhaps, been the death of his soul; and, unable to contend with these agonising reflections, 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 I heard the tinkling of the school-bell, 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 moment I was an altered character.

“When Carey 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 Mr. Manby, with a sigh, “he is gone. He never rose from that bed, and I never quitted him till the last strug-

gle 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 your lips to confirm my apprehensions.’

“‘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 show 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 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 by his death-bed, 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 impres-

sion 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.

“Had it pleased God to have

granted my life, Thomas, I would have proved to you the sincerity of my gratitude and repentance.'

"'Oh! don't mention it,' 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 give you back to our prayers.'

"'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 those who are 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 was 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 readily 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, nor any of the luminaries of heaven. It is the sun of righteousness, who

bringeth healing on his wings—the refulgence 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 deep night of my soul the brightness of eternal day. Farewell, Manby! we shall meet again in that world where sorrow and sighing are unknown, and 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 marble brow, but they were unregarded by him; his spirit had vanished from among us, and was already enjoying the fulfilment of its hopes.

“You see, my dear Hugh,” continued Mr. Manby, after a long pause—“I did not mistrust the repentance of one who had been my enemy: why, then, should you suspect the contrition of a friend?”

“Were I, dear boy, to repeat to you 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

very unhappy, and 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 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 had always gloried in being at the head of his class; but, when under the examination of the

masters, Latimer had made such good use of his time during the summer months, both in public and private study, that he far surpassed him. This stung Montrose to the quick; and, unable to bear with becoming fortitude so severe a mortification, in the heat of the moment, he 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; no, no—however he might have ceased to love him, he was sure he would never hear him spoken ill of, much less 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, stopped, and became silent altogether. "Master Grahame, resume your place," said Mr. Manby, while he felt for his young friend the strongest commiseration.

Montrose, the conscious Montrose, felt 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 months before had been as warm as Latimer's. Sinclair remarked Montrose's varying countenance, and whispered in his ear, "Surely you do not mean to pay any 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, if he were to spurn me from his feet."

So saying, he threw down his books, and 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, rejoicing to see that Montrose was truly sorry for his past conduct, retired, leaving the friends to work out their own reconciliation, which he saw thus happily commenced.

When Latimer perceived that Montrose was weeping, all his resentment vanished, and all his love returned. "Montrose," he said, "my once dear friend, I do forgive you, most sincerely, for the past;

and will never mention this affair to you again."

"Oh, Latimer, I do not deserve this goodness from you," cried Montrose; "I am sure you must hate, despise, and scorn me for my meanness."

"That would not be acting like a Christian," returned Latimer, raising him from the ground, and tenderly embracing him; "Montrose is sorry for his past conduct, and that, in my eyes, is a sufficient atonement."

"Latimer, if you are poor," cried Grahame, "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 your's, better than the owner does. Come, dry these tears, or I shall indeed be angry with you."

Montrose wiped his eyes, and stepping a few paces back, gazed on Latimer as if he had been contemplating a superior being, then folding him suddenly in his arms, and loading him with caresses, said, "Do you think, Latimer, you can in future ever love me as well as you have done?"

"Yes, not only as well, but I do think a thousand times better," returned Hugh.

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

“Yes, any thing in reason,” said Hugh.

“No, that will not do, I must have no preliminaries; you must say yes, without any reserve, and give me your hand upon it.”

“Well, then, there is my hand; and now what is this favour?”

“To spend the holidays with me.”

“I think the favour, in that case, should be transferred,” said Hugh, laughing. “Yes, most willingly, if agreeable to your uncle, and provided you have no other friends.”

“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 cer-

tainly 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 fault on me," returned the gay Montrose. "Come, Latimer, say that you will accept my kind uncle's invitation."

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

"Indeed, Montrose, you know the place you hold in this heart, too well; you know I never could 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 Latimer; 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 the most lively expressions 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, who shared his affection equally between them, 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 behindhand 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 Dundee, and relating many interesting events of his extraordinary life, a carriage stopped at the door; and the thunder at the knocker proclaimed their quality guests. Hugh made a hasty retreat to the other side of the room as the footman flung back the door, and announced Master George, and Miss Jane and 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, feeling 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 in their blunders at the game of Crambo.

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 his illness, which had deprived him of the same enjoyment; but when his eye fell for the first time on Latimer, who was playing at chess 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 by me."

“So I will, dear John; but do let me just 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 chess-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 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.”

This was said in such a low voice, that it was only heard by the parties concerned.

“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, told him to fetch the board, and he would try his skill.

The Colonel's kindness brought the tears into Hugh's eye. He speedily placed the men, but the

gaity 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 never was 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 you not 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."



“So am not I,” 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.”

And with this magnanimous resolution in their heads, the two young ladies forgot in sleep Latimer’s lowly origin.

Meanwhile, John Sinclair informed his brother of the discovery the young ladies had just made, who expressed his resentment in somewhat the same terms as 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 situation, 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 not you 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.

"How!" exclaimed Montrose, blazing into anger, "dare you insult Hugh Latimer to my face! do you know, sir, in whose house you are?"

"Yes!" returned Sinclair; "and I must confess, in such a house, I never expected to have been placed on the same footing with tradespeople."

"Contemptible!" retorted Montrose, "I could find it in my heart—he paused ere he finished the sentence: and Hugh stepping between them, said, in a low voice, "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 the friend of Montrose Grahame."

"You, certainly, are at liberty, Mr. Grahame, to choose your own companions," returned Sinclair, haughtily; "I have long tried to convince you of the folly of noticing those who are inferior to you in rank, in vain; but you cannot force me to associate with Mr. Latimer, or be on more friendly terms with him in your house, than in the playground."

“You need not stay, then, 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. So, Mr. Montrose, good day to you and your friend.” And so saying, the brothers hastily quitted the apartment.

Montrose was so overcome with passion, that he could scarcely refrain from tears; in vain Latimer entreated him to be pacified, and to put an end to the quarrel, by letting him return home; Montrose would not listen to him.

Shortly after, the Colonel entered the room, to whom Latimer preferred his suit.

“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 great favour, and I am sure you will comply with my wishes, 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 the outside show of titles and riches. I have been talking very seriously to them, and I think the young ladies are rather touched by my lectures."

"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 waits for us."

And taking Latimer's hand, he

led him to the breakfast-parlour, where his 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 went more deeply to the heart of the feeling

Latimer, who sometimes thought he could perceive a change in his friend's manner; but this was indeed fancy.

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, and not according to 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 his 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 king with his blood, and died fighting for 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, with frost and snow, 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 decypher the characters in his Homer; yet, as the ladies ran giddily past him, he several times gently put back, with his hand, the full muslin frocks they wore, as the motion given to them by exercise, once 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 ineffable haughtiness, and whisking her frock past him, as if in contempt, exclaimed in a petulant tone: "I wish people would mind their own business, and by all means 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 schoolfellow 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; all his nice chesnut curls were completely singed off his head, and his eyes and eyelids 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 less 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, my young friends! this despised Latimer has saved the life of your sister, perhaps at the expence of his own."

Latimer could no longer distinguish objects, but following the sound of Colonel Grahame's voice, he flung himself into his arms; whilst the young Sinclairs, forgetting 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.

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 any 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 very apprehensive for his life.

When, however, he recovered the use of sight and reason, the first object that struck him was Montrose seated 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, the tears springing to his eyes. "You far surpass me in generosity; I wonder now how I could remain so blind to your worth. To know you for 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 beneath my notice.”

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 no small satisfaction of Colonel Graham and Montrose. At the termination of their visit, which took place before Hugh could leave his bed, they each presented him with a handsome present, to keep in remembrance of them; and Laura declared, she should always remember, with gratitude, the 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 which was suspended over the mantle-piece, and smiling, bade Hugh guess to whom that shabby, old-fashioned weapon once belonged.

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

"It did, indeed," returned the Colonel; "but that hero, Hugh Latimer, was thy 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 very 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 enough to join with the other

officers in annoying him in every manner that I possibly could. I could not help admiring him for his talents, though I despised him on account of that origin which ought to have been reckoned a glory to him: but, Latimer, if your father was poor, he far surpassed me in greatness of mind; he never condescended to take the least notice of my behaviour towards him. Lord Peterborough was singularly attached to your father, who had twice saved his life; and that noble officer, seeing the contempt in which his gallant soldier was held, merely from having risen from the ranks to the station he then held, instead of being subaltern by purchase, gave us a public reproof one day for our

folly, 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 not you aware

that you have forfeited your life by this rash 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 with me. A few months 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 intelligence of your brave fa-

ther'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 no less 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 could not help expressing his earnest desire to be a soldier. The Colonel shook him by the hand, as he said, "Apply yourself to your studies, Latimer, and we will talk of that hereafter."

In process of time, these two young gentlemen stood at the head of the school; and their friendship, thus closely connected in boyhood, 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's pride was gratified by the request, and all the classes were drawn up in due form, to receive their noble visitor.

Hugh Latimer, as the head scholar, delivered a speech in Latin on the occasion, and pronouncing it

with great 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 he was.

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

“His face brings forcibly to my recollection the circumstance 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 great respect and partly to hide his glowing cheeks—
“Hugh Latimer, my Lord.”

“Your father was a soldier?”

“Who served under the brave Lord Peterborough,” replied Hugh, bowing yet lower.

“You are, then, the son of the gallant officer who thrice saved the life of Peterborough, and, the last time, at the expence of his own? Give me your hand, young man; and, from this moment, consider me your friend.”

Then tapping Hugh on the shoulder, he said in a lower voice, “An hour hence, meet me at the hotel in the market-place, and I will try if Mordant* can reward your father’s services in you.”

This was said for Latimer’s ear

* The family name of Lord Peterborough.

alone, but his fellow-students had caught a part of the speech, and they wondered that so great a nobleman as Lord Peterborough should notice such a poor fellow as Hugh Latimer. Even Montrose was curious to know the result. Begging Mr. Vernon's leave for an hour's absence, he ran home and informed his uncle what had passed at the school. The Colonel was not less anxious to know the result of Latimer's interview with his old commander, and taking down his hat and cane, he accompanied Montrose to Mrs. Latimer's house.

The Colonel sat down in the little inner parlour, determined to wait for his return, without giving a hint of the probable good fortune that

awaited Hugh, as he thought Latimer would like to communicate the joyful tidings 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 loss of his leg, and the defeat at Alamanza, when the door suddenly burst 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, my uncle!” he exclaimed, first embracing one, and then the other. “I have seen—have spoken—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 the renowned Lord Peterborough?" said Mark Latimer, his eyes glistening with unusual brilliancy. "Why, boy, you rave—Where can you have seen my noble commander?"

"I have only this moment parted from him," cried the delighted Latimer. "Oh! we shall be so happy! my mother need no longer keep this shop; and you, uncle, may be comfortable in your old age. I am to be a soldier; he has promised me a pair of colours. And this, uncle, is for you."

He put into the veteran's hand a sealed paper, which, on opening; he

found to contain a deed of gift of fifty pounds, to be paid yearly, as long as either he or Mrs. Latimer lived.

After having thus given vent to his feelings, Hugh was not a little surprised to find his friend, the Colonel, and his nephew, had witnessed the overflowings of his heart, and he blushed deeply.

Colonel Grahame folded him to his heart. "My dear Latimer, you need never blush for your feelings on the present happy occasion, they do you great honour. Well have you deserved your good fortune, and may you ever continue to deserve it. The brave Mordant has but anticipated my intentions, and since a double commission would be

of no service to you, I will be at the expence of your equipment, and send you forth into the world as befits a gentleman."

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

FINIS.

Jane McMahon 7.10.18

This year see Remember
Me and keep Me in your
Mind let all the world
Say what they will speak
of Me as you first do

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