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The following interesting tale, written by Mrs. JULIA L. DUMONT, of Vevay in this state, was first published, we believe, in 1828 in the Crystal, Pittsburg—Pa. We have thought it her best production, and far superior to many of the prize tales now going the rounds, and which receive so much puffing.

THE SOLDIER'S SON.

"SHALL I take your baggage, Sir?" said an intelligent looking boy to a traveller, who had just landed at one of our eastern cities. "My servant takes charge of it," replied the gentleman, but struck with the peculiar interests of his countenance, as the boy retired, he flung him a piece of money. The boy looked at it with hesitation, and his pale cheek reddened to crimson. Picking it up at length, he approached the traveller with an air of embarrassment. "Excuse me, sir, I sought employment, not alms." "True, my little don," said the gentleman, laughing, "but you will not return so very a trifle on my hands?" The boy stood a moment in silence. His young spirit evidently recoiled from the idea of appropriating the humiliating gift, and he remained twirling it in his fingers. There was an expression of mingled haughtiness and gratitude in his wrought features, and his slender form assumed all the irregular attitudes of indecision. At this moment a beggar approached them, and his countenance brightened. "Permit me," he said, gracefully bowing to the traveller, "permit me to transfer your bounty," and presenting the unlucky coin to the humble mendicant, he instantly disappeared. This little incident made a strong impression on the mind of the stranger, and two days afterwards he distinguished the elastic figure of the boy among a group of labourers. Pleased at again seeing him, he immediately approached him. "May I ask your name, my young acquaintance?" he inquired in a tone of kindness. "Alvah Hamilton," replied the boy, and he still continued to ply the instrument of labor with bareless diligence. Our traveller whose name was Courtney, looked at him with increasing interest. The extreme beauty of his countenance its marked expression of high and noble feelings, strongly contrasted with the coarseness of dress, and the rudeness of his employment. "Have you parents?" inquired Mr. Courtney. "I have yet a father." "And what is his vocation?" "He is a worn out soldier, sir, of the revolution," and the boy applied himself to his task with an intensity that seemed intended to prevent further interrogation. The tenacious Courtney, however, was not to be shaken off. "Do you live with your father?" he continued. "Certainly, sir." "And where?" The boy pointed in silence to a decayed and miserable looking dwelling. Mr. Courtney signed. A keen November blast, which at that moment whistled around him, told the inadequacy of such a shelter. A soldier, he mentally exclaimed, "and perhaps his blood has been shed to secure the rights of those who revel in luxury!" A few hours afterwards, he knocked at the door of the shattered habitation. If an interest in the father had been already awakened by the son, it was at once confirmed by the appearance of the old man, now before him. He had raised his head slowly from the staff on which he was leaning at the entrance of the stranger, and discovered a countenance where the lines of sorrow and suffering were distinctly traced. Still there was something in his high, though furrowed brow, that told his affinity with the proud Alvah; and the ravages of infirmity had not yet altogether robbed his wasted form of the dignity of the soldier. "Will you pardon the intrusion of a stranger?" said Mr. Courtney. "I have been led hither merely to chat an hour with a revolutionary veteran." "He who comes to cheer the solitude of darkness must be welcome," said the old man; and Mr. Courtney now perceived that he was utterly blind! The events of the revolution afforded an easy clue to conversation, and they chatted without effort. "I would," said Mr. Courtney, "that every one who assisted in our glorious struggle might individually share the prosperity it has conferred to our nation. I fear, however, there are many whose blood even cemented the proud fabric of our independence, that are themselves left in want and obscurity." "True," said the old man, "the decayed soldier whose strength was wasted in the conflict has but little for

himself to hope; but I trust his posterity will reap the harvest he has sown." "You have a son," said Mr. Courtney, "worthy of such a harvest. Is the youth called Alvah your all?" "All that survives of a large family! He alone, the child of my old age, has been spared to save me from public dependence." "Have you been long deprived of light?" asked Mr. Courtney. "Only two years." "And during that period, have you had no resource but the labor of your son?" "None; but the wants of a soldier are few, and the filial piety of my boy renders him cheerful under every privation that affects only himself. He labors incessantly, and I have no regret but that of seeing him thus fettered to servitude." "I would," said Mr. Courtney with enthusiasm, "I would that I could place him in a sphere more suited to his worth. With the advantage of education, he would become an ornament to society; but this under your peculiar circumstances he cannot have had even in an ordinary degree." "But for his taste for learning," said the soldier, "he must have been utterly destitute. There were hours, however, when he could not labor, and as these have been invariably devoted to study, he has gradually acquired its common principles." The entrance of Alvah himself interrupted the conversation. He had brought some little delicacies for his father, the avails of his day's labor. "I have just been thinking," said Mr. Courtney, "of making some arrangements, with the approbation of your father, for your future establishment. I grieve to see a boy of promise thus losing the spring time of life." "You forget, sir," said Alvah, respectfully bowing, "that I can embrace no proposal that would separate me from my father, however advantageous." "Certainly not in his present situation; but I have friends here, who will readily assist me in making a suitable provision for his support, and you may then be put to business that will secure you a future competence." "Impossible, Sir! My father can have no claims like those on his son. 'Tis a short season only since his weakness required my support, and shall I now transfer the duties of filial gratitude to the hand of charity?" Mr. Courtney knew not what to reply. "Do not think me ungrateful for your proffered kindness," continued the boy, while his dark eye swam in tears, and every trace of pride suddenly gave place to the liveliest expression of gratitude; "I feel most deeply your benevolent solicitude for my interest, but indeed, sir, I am perfectly happy in my present condition. My father, too, is satisfied with the slender provision my labor affords, and should it hereafter become insufficient, I will not scruple to ask the aid of benevolence." Mr. Courtney was affected. The soldier had again leant his head over his staff and was probably invoking blessings on the head of his son! A storm had commenced, and the sleet was even then dripping thro' the broken roof. Mr. Courtney rose to depart—"Must I then go," he exclaimed, "without rendering you any service. Will you not even accept, and he put his hand in his pocket—but Alvah drew back with an expression that answered the unfinished sentence. The old man gave him his hand with a smile of benignity. "Accept my thanks, sir, and suffer me to crave the name of him who has thus sought the dwelling of poverty." The stranger gave his name and address, and receiving a promise that they would seek him in future need, reluctantly left them.

Mr. Courtney was a man of feeling, but he was also a man of pleasure; and with the votaries of dissipation, the soft and holy whisperings of benevolence are to often lost in more seductive strains. The scene he had now witnessed had however awakened all his better principles. The dignified submission of the father—the humility of the son, preferring the most servile labor to the shadow of dependence—his deep but quiet tenderness for his unfortunate parent, and his perfect exemption from selfish feeling—all were vividly impress on their visitant. If an intercourse with the good, influences even cold and torpid hearts (as is beautifully exemplified by the Persian fable of the piece of clay that became an odoriferous substance by the contact of the rose,) that influence must be strong indeed on the soul of feeling. The breath of a corrupt world may dim the native gems of the heart, but let the language of pure and elevated sentiment be heard, and the chords of responsive feeling will at once awaken like the sleeping tones of a harp attuned to the winds of heaven. For a little time, the pageantry of the world lost its power on the mind of the gay Courtney, and the haunts of pleasure were forgotten. He shuddered as he contrasted the elegancies that surrounded him with the destitution he had witnessed. The straw pallet of age and infirmity—the scanty fuel—the precarious supply—the picture that memory drew seemed even yet more vivid than their reality.

The following day Mr. Courtney had left the city, but a blank cover enclosing two hundred dollars, had been placed by an unknown hand in that of the old soldier. Years passed away, and the glow of earthly pleasure that the traveller then experienced was gradually forgotten. The blandishments of pleasure resumed their wonted influence—her glittering wave again hurried him onward without the power of reflection, and if a momentary wish would have led him to inquire the further fate of Alvah Hamilton, the bright fantasma that surrounded him diverted his purposes. Death had deprived him of an amiable wife whose influence might have won him from the sphere of illusion, and his only child early accustomed to the round of fashionable pursuits, thought not of opposing them. The exalted sentiments, however, which even in childhood she had imbibed from her mother, preserved her from their contaminating influence; and amid the blights of a gay world, the purity of her character remained stainless as the snows of the unapproachable cliff. Gentle as the reed of summer, she yielded to the impulse of those with whom her lot was cast; but her mind, supported by high and frequent communion with the memory of her sainted parent, escaped the turbarion, which habit might otherwise have secured. At the age of fifteen, she accompanied an invalid friend to the medicinal springs of Ballstown. This village, at that time, was a place of fashionable resort, and to a mind like Isabela Courtney's afforded themes of limitless reflection. The buoyancy of health was here contrasted with the languor of disease—the hectic of death with laugh of revelry—palpable images of mortality mingled with the votaries of pleasure—the listless, who strove to annihilate time, and the dying, who sought to add yet a few days to those they had to number. Soon after the arrival of Isabela, she was one day struck, on entering the common sitting room, by the appearance of an old man, who sat alone and apparently unnoticed. His sightless eyes, his palsied limbs, and white locks that were thinly scattered over his pallid temples, all at once riveted her attention. Her heart throbbed for pity, but reverence mingled with compassion as she marked the settled and placid expression of countenance. At no great distance, a group of ladies were indulging in bursts of levity that at the moment struck most discordantly on her heart. She felt that the presence of unfortunates age should at least inspire respect; and voluntarily approaching the unheeded old man, she was half resolved to address him. Her natural timidity, however, still withheld her, till she was called by one of the hoyden group, to partake of some strawberries. The irresolute expression of her countenance at once changed to that of pleasure. "I will beg some," she said, unhesitatingly presenting her work basket, "for this old gentleman"—and she now approached him without embarrassment. "Will you accept some strawberries, sir?"—The voice of Isabela was like the low, dying tone of an instrument; it touched every chord of the soul. The old man received them with a smile, that spoke a benediction; while an elegant though youthful stranger, who stood reading a newspaper with his back towards them, suddenly turned round and fixed his eyes on the blushing girl with mingled admiration and surprise. She instinctively retreated and joining the group she had hitherto shunned, mingled in their trilling. Soon after the youth himself approached with her basket. Presenting it with a look of indescribable import, he said, "accept, Miss, the thanks and blessings of age for your delicate attention." He then disappeared. In a short time he returned and addressed the old man in a tone of respect and tenderness. "I have at length found more quiet lodging, sir, and will attend whenever you feel able to walk." The old man rose and leaning on the benevolent arms of the youth they left the apartment. "They are then to be temporary sojourners in the village," thought Isabela, and a sensation of pleasure, of which she was perhaps unconscious, arose from the

idea of again meeting them. She was not disappointed. They met the next morning at the spring—and again and again met!—Who shall describe the mingling of kindred spirit? Who shall trace the intricate and delicate sources of that mysterious passion which at length sweeps like a torrent over the human soul? Scarcely a word had passed between the youthful strangers—they knew nothing of each other beyond the limits of few days; yet the years that had preceded had become as a tedious dream—the present was their all of existence and resembled the renovated life of chrysalis, when it

"Sails on new wings thro' the summer air!"

As yet, however, unconscious of the dangerous source of this sense of enjoyment, they met without embarrassment. The blush that dyed the cheek of Isabela in the presence of the stranger, was that abstract pleasure; and the delight, which flashed from his eye at her approach, was brilliant as the rays of heaven. The failing health of the blind old man, whom he daily attended to the spring afforded their only clue even to passing remark. The deep interest which his appearance excited in the bosom of Isabela conquered the scruples of vestal reserve, and she frequently ventured a timid inquiry respecting the aged invalid. There are a thousand nameless attentions, too trifling for description that come with a cheering influence over the feeble heart, like the imperceptible breeze that stirs the delicate leaf. Such were the attentions which misfortune invariably elicited from the bosom of Isabela, no matter how narrow her sphere of action. Her voice—her steps were already known to the discriminating ear of the old man, and if his cane was dropt, or a seat was brought him, he knew the ready hand that presented them. He was, however, evidently and rapidly failing—and at last Isabela met the interesting stranger no longer. There days passed and her attendance on her friend became a penance. A walk was proposed, and weary of herself, she gladly became one of the party. As they passed within view of the village cemetery, her gaze was arrested by a funeral procession. Their duties were finished and they were returning—but their was one who yet lingered, and with folded arms leaned over the new made grave!—Could it be?—yes it was the youthful stranger—and she at once comprehended the melancholy scene. The party proceeded and ere their return the surrounding landscape was flooded with the silver light of a full moon. The feelings of Isabela were rendered yet more intense by the softening influence of the hour, and almost unable to proceed she leant upon the arm of the friend, whose strength was yet but imperfectly restored, and fell behind her gay companions. Again her eye was turned to the last Asylum of humanity—the solitary mourner had left the spot and with a melancholy step, was slowly returning to the village. Their paths intersected, and he was already before her. He bowed and both were for some moments silent. He at length said in a voice of suppressed emotion. "The causes which brought me hither are now terminated in the grave.—I leave this place to-morrow. Suffer me then Miss, even at this moment of sorrow, to thank you, for the interest you have evinced in the sufferings of my departed father—for the soothing attentions you have paid him. If the cup of affliction is ever yours, may some spirit, gentle as your own, temper its bitterness—some being, bright and lovely as yourself, hover round your pillow." Isabela could not reply. Her party had now halted and as she rejoined them the young stranger uttered farewell, and striking into another path, disappeared. On her return the subdued Isabela was pressed to the bosom of her father. If any thing at this moment could have given her pleasure, it was his arrival, as she parted to leave a spot that was now to her utterly devoid of interest. The light adieu of ceremony were easily concluded and early the following morning she was equipped for departure.

As her father handed her into the carriage he stopped to speak with an acquaintance, while a young man, who was passing at the moment, suddenly paused and clasping his hands, exclaimed, "Mr. Courtney, my benefactor." "I do not understand you, sir," said the astonished Courtney. "I know of no one who can give me so flattering a title. Ah, said the young man, whose countenance and voice were but too familiar to the trembling Isabela, "am I then so much changed?"

Alvah Hamilton, the Soldier's son, whom, seven years ago, you rescued from extreme poverty?" Mr. Courtney pressed his hand with emotion.—"You mean, my young friend, the scornful boy whom I would have rescued, but for his intolerable pride." "Oh, sir, evasion is unavailing. We could not mistake the hand that relieved us.—Have you not then some interest in hearing—will you not suffer me to tell you, what have been the fruits of your bounty?" "I shall gladly listen to all in which you are concerned," said Mr. Courtney, and Alvah proceeded. "Two days after you left us, my poor father was removed to a more comfortable shelter and I was entered at school. I could yet attend to the personal wants of my father, and incited to exertion by every claim of gratitude and duty, I could but progress in my studies. I was soon a ready penman and accountant, and a year afterwards was received into a wealthy mercantile house as an under clerk. My wages enabled me to make immediate provision for my father, & they were yearly augmented. And now," he adds in a subdued tone, "since he is at length called to receive far higher wealth than that of earth, my first exertions shall be to discharge the pecuniary part of that obligation which has so greatly influenced my present destiny." "The obligation which you speak of," said Mr. Courtney, "does not exist. An ample equivalent was at once received in the pleasure of assisting indigent virtue. Do not then wound again by so unjust an allusion—but tell me, is your venerable father no more?" Alvah briefly sketched the late events, and Mr. Courtney now shook him warmly by the hand. "Farewell, dear Alvah. My carriage has been some time waiting; believe I rejoice in your prosperity, and remember you may always command my friendship." Alvah looked wistfully after him as he departed, but the form of Isabela was not visible. She had shrunk back in the carriage at his approach and had thus escaped observation. From her father, who was himself too much excited to notice the agitation of his child, she now heard a description of his first knowledge of Alvah Hamilton. She made no comments, but every word was treasured up in her heart, and though years passed away without a single event to her memory, every vision of her father's idea of moral excellence in the imagination of Isabela was identified with his image. This imperishable attachment, however, partook of the high tone of her mind. It was a deep and sacred principle, hidden, in the recesses of her heart, and leaving no trace on the surface of her character.

Isabela was far too lovely to remain unsought and Mr. Courtney was astonished at her decided rejection of repeated and splendid offers. He expostulated, he entreated, he taxed her with perverseness. She deprecated his anger with seraphic gentleness. She anticipated his every wish, but her firmness remained unshaken. His attention was at length called to objects of yet deeper anxiety. His love of pleasure, his boundless expenditures, his recklessness of gain, had gradually wasted an estate which, though sufficient for all the chaster elegancies of life, was inadequate to the support of prodigality. He now stood on the verge of ruin, and those who had shared his substance, looked coldly and carelessly on his wreck, while the unhappy Courtney, driven almost to madness, could scarcely believe the perfidy of the world he had hitherto implicitly trusted. He was not, however, without a comforter. At this hour of trial, the virtues of his child became more fully developed, as the gem gleams brightest thro' the shades of darkness. Her affection deepening in its intensity as its object was deserted by others, her fortitude, her cheerfulness now came over his scorched and withered heart with balmy influence. Their family seat was to be publicly sold, and the fearful day arrived. While it was yet crying a new purchaser appeared, apparently from a distance. His horse dripped with speed, and his countenance was pale and agitated. The property was frequent in such cases, was going at half its value, and the stranger hid it off. Mr. Courtney was still the occupant, and the new proprietor called on him immediately. Isabela had at that moment left her father for some domestic call; and the unfortunate man was musing on their impending expulsion from their present residence, when Alvah Hamilton stood suddenly before him. "Welcome, most welcome to my heart, dearest Alvah," he exclaimed,