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## MILDRED ROSIER.\*

A TALE OF THE RUINED CITY.

BY MRS. MOODIE.

### CHAPTER XI.

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The charm of nature had the power to please  
The worldling nursed upon the lap of ease.  
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COLONEL STAINER was alone in his study when his servant announced his long absent son. His sudden and unexpected appearance, left him no time for deliberation, no opportunity of consulting with his wife, in what manner he should act, whether to receive him with kindness and affection, or dismiss him from his house. Since the colonel's conversion, the wild, reckless, and immoral conduct of the young man, had occasioned him great uneasiness, and had been a heavy burden upon his conscience and his purse. The crimes of his own youth appeared doubly heinous when reflected in his son, who inherited all the vices and evil passions of the father in a still greater degree. The evil seeds, which his own bad example had sown in the breast of his child, were likely to produce, in manhood, fruit whose poisonous qualities would shed bitterness and sorrow on all connected with him by the ties of blood. The colonel had written to him many letters upon this subject, which had been read by the son with a contemptuous smile, and committed unanswered to the flames. Finding that his pious exhortations produced no effect upon him, the old man adopted a new method. He stopped suddenly the handsome allowance which he had yearly bestowed from the family patrimony. This brought Mr. William to reason. He had neglected the profession for which he had been educated; had still to receive his first brief, and was, moreover, deep-

ly involved in debt, and surrounded with difficulties, from which his father alone could rescue him.

At this critical period an old school-fellow wrote to him, informing him how matters stood at home, and strongly urging him to make a friend of his father, before he bequeathed his property to his wife and her spiritual advisers. How this was to be effected, after the undutiful conduct of the son, the friend did not devise, and for some time the prodigal was sadly perplexed in what way to bring about a reconciliation. To return, as the gay, careless, man of pleasure, would be to lose both the blessing and the inheritance. That would never do. He would turn saint—would trust to their pious credulity, and his own ingenuity, to keep up the facade; and to secure a friend in case of failure, he would interest himself in bringing about an union between his sister and her rejected lover, his cousin Lewis Chatworth. His interview with that gentleman had converted his kindly feelings towards him into gall, and he determined to secure the favor of his father, by thwarting and opposing every attempt which might be made to bring the matter to an amicable termination.

Full of these schemes he appeared before the colonel in the light of a repentant sinner—deeply conscious of his past guilt, and anxious to make every effort to secure by his present, well doing, his eternal welfare. Calmly and humbly, he entered into a touching detail of his sudden conversion, and deep repentance; imploring his attentive auditor, to aid and strengthen, by his own experience and pious counsels, the deep impression,

\* Continued from page 405.