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THE MISER AND HIS SON.

A TALE.

BY SUSANNA MOODIE.

Continued from our last Number.

CHAPTER XII.

"The world has done its worst—you need not heed its praise or censure now. Your name is held in deep abhorrence by the good—the bad. Make it a sad example for fresh guilt."

WE will leave Anthony Hurdlestone, to weep and watch beside the newly dead; and conduct our readers into the interior of the cottage occupied by farmer Mathews and his family. In returning the night before from market, very much the worse from liquor, the farmer had received a severe contusion of the brain, in falling from his horse. William, surprised at his long absence, left the house at day break in search of his father, and found him, lying apparently dead, a few steps from his own door. With Mary's assistance, he carried him into the house—medical aid was sent for; but though all had been done that man could do, the injured man still lay upon his bed, breathing hard and quick, but perfectly unconscious of surrounding objects. It was a close, dark, rainy night. The door of the cottage was open to admit the air; and in the door, very partially revealed by the solitary light which burnt upon the little table by the bed side, stood the tall, athletic form of William Mathews. His sister was sitting on a low chair by the bed's head, her eyes fixed with a vacant stare upon the heavy features of the dying man.

"William," she said, in a quick, deep voice; "Where are you? do come and watch with me. I do not like to be alone."

"You are not alone," said the ruffian; "I am here—and some one else is here, whom you cannot see."

"Who is that?"

"The devil to, be sure," responded her brother. "He's always near us—but never more near than in the hour of death and the day of judgment."

"Good Lord deliver us," said the girl, repeating unconsciously aloud, part of the liturgy of the church to which she belonged.

"All in good time," returned the fiend, glancing

at his sister's figure. "Has father shewn any sign of sense, since I left this morning?"

"No, he has remained just the same—William, will he die?"

"You may be sure of that, Mary—living men never look as he does now."

"It is a terrible sight to look upon," said the girl. "I always did hope that I might die before father. But since I got into this trouble, I have wished that he might never live to know it. That was sin, William—see how my wicked thoughts have become prophesy. Yet, I am so glad that he never found out my crime, that it makes the tears dry in my eyes to see him thus."

"You make too much fuss about your present situation, girl! What is done, cannot be undone. All you can now do, is to turn it to the best possible account."

"What do you mean?"

"Make money by it."

"Alas!" said the girl, "what was given away freely, cannot be redeemed with gold. Had I the wealth of the whole world, I would gladly give it to regain my lost peace of mind. Oh! for one night of calm, sweet, fresh sleep, such as I used to enjoy after a hard day's work in the field. What would I not give for such a night's rest? Rest—I never rest now—I work and toil all day; I go to bed, heart weary, and head weary, but sleep never comes, as it used to come. After long hours of tossing from side to side, just about the dawn of day a heavy stupor comes over me—full of frightful sights and sounds, so frightful that I start and wake, and pray not to sleep again."

"And what has made such a change—that one act?" said the ruffian. "Pshaw girl! God will never damn your soul for the like of that. It was foolish and imprudent—but I don't call that sin."

"Then what is sin?" said the girl, solemnly.

"Why murder and theft—and —"

"And what?"

"Hang me if I wish to go into the matter. But if that is sin then the whole world are sinners."