

(ORIGINAL.)

THE MISER AND HIS SON.

A TALE.

BY SUSANNA MOODIE.

Continued from our last number.

CHAPTER VII.

I see no beauty in this wealthy dame ;
'Neath the dark lashes of her downcast eyes,
A weeping spirit lurks. And when she smiles—
'Tis but the sunbeams of an April day
Piercing a watery cloud
“ Oh, she is fair !
To me, most beautiful !

“ So Colonel Hurdlestone's son and nephew have arrived at the Hall. Reach me down Juliet's portfolio, Dorothy ; I must write the good Colonel a congratulatory note,” said Captain Whitmore, to his solemn faced sister.

The Captain was a weather beaten, stout old gentleman, who had seen some hard service during the war, and what with wounds, hard drinking, and the gout, had been forced to relinquish the sea, and anchor for life in the pleasant village of N——, in the neighbourhood of which he held property to a considerable amount. His wife had been dead for some years, and his only daughter, whom he scarcely suffered out of his sight, was educated by her aunt, who professed to be the most accomplished, as she certainly was the most disagreeable woman in the world.

“ I think you had better defer your congratulations, Captain Whitmore, until you know what sort of persons these young men are. Mrs. Grunt assured me yesterday, that one of these gentlemen is very wild—quite a profligate.”

“ Fiddlesticks !” said the jolly Captain, snapping his fingers ; “ a gay dashing lad, I suppose, whose hot blood and youthful frolics, old maiden ladies construe into the most awful crimes.”

“ Old maids, sir ! Pray whom do you mean to insult by that gross appellation ?”

“ Gross—I always thought that maiden was a term that implied innocence and purity, whether addressed to the young virgin, or the antiquated spinster,” said the Captain, with a knowing glance.

“ I hate your vulgar insinuations,” said Miss Dorothy, her sharp nose flushing to a deep red ; “ but how can one expect politeness from a sea brute ?”

“ Ha ! ha ! ha !” shouted the provoking Captain ; “ never mind, Dolly ; don't give way to temper, and curl up that bow-sprit of yours, with such a confounded ugly twist, and there may be a chance yet

for you. Let me see—I don't think you are fifty-four yet. My nurse, Betty Holt, was called an old maid for thirty years, and married at last.”

“ I wonder, brother, that you are not ashamed of naming me, and that low born person in the same breath. As to matrimony, I despise the male sex too much to degrade myself by entering upon it.”

“ It would have sweetened your temper amazingly,” said the Captain, calmly filling his pipe ; “ I believe, Dolly, you were never put to the trial.”

“ How can you, Captain Whitmore, sit there, and traduce your virtuous sister ? You know that I refused at least a dozen good offers.”

“ Whew ! I never heard a word about that before.”

“ I always had too much delicacy to reveal secrets,” said Miss Dorothea, drawing herself up with great dignity, although she knew that she was uttering a great fib. “ You were at sea, sir.”

“ I suppose,” said the Captain, drawing a long whiff from his pipe, “ I must have been a great way off, and these things must have happened a long time ago.”

“ I could marry yet, if I pleased,” cried the indignant spinster.

“ Indeed ! pray who is the happy man ?”

“ Don't think that I mean to subject myself or him, to your vulgar ridicule, Captain Whitmore.”

“ I wish him luck,” said the Captain, turning over the leaves of Juliet's portfolio. “ What the deuce does the girl mean ? she has scribbled over all the paper. I hope she don't amuse herself by writing love letters.”

“ I should take good care to prevent my niece from spending her time in such an improper manner. But, indeed, brother, I wish you would speak to Juliet, (for she does not mind me,) on this subject.”

“ On what subject—writing love letters ?”

“ No, sir ; something almost as bad.”

“ Well ?”

“ She has the folly to write verses.”

“ Is that all ?”

“ All ! Only consider the scandal that it will bring upon me. I shall be called a blue-stocking.”

“ You ! I thought it was the author to whom persons gave that appellation.”

“ True, Captain Whitmore ; but as I instruct the