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Discontent.

A SONNET, BY ROBERT MLIOTT.

One time a rose upon a rocky height
Saw low adown a dale a lily fair,
With beauty bloom in May's divinest air,
Shedding on all around a tender light
Of Purity, as shines at dead of night
A star above a desert bleak and bare,
Yet in the lily's heart a cold despair,
"Gan reign and therewith did her beauty blight,
For discontented with her lot she sighed,
All for the freedom of the rose above.
The rose, now humbled from her haughty pride,
For quiet of the dale express'd her love;
Thus in men's hearts grows discontent, whereof
Grows weariness, of which have many died.

The Breadfinder.

BY EDWARD YOUL.

CHAPTER III.—(Continued.)

WE do not know when we talk of the trials of poverty what those trials are. We but faintly appreciate the sufferings of the poor. It is not the bodily pain that is the real evil. The wound that the soul gets in the unequal conflict with the world is the only enduring pain. That endures; that lingers. The hunger of to-day, the cold and pain of to-day, are forgotten in the feasting and warmth of to-morrow; but the slight and insult that lacerate the soul, in too many cases, yield hideous harvest in after years.

Except in the noblest natures, which are rare in any class; but with such natures, "poverty," to use the words of a great German, "is but as the pain which attends the piercing of the young maiden's ears, who hangs beautiful jewels in the wound."

It could not have been wholly by chance—for is there in the universe such a thing as chance?—and certainly it was not by intention that Harding found himself in Finsbury, near to where his father dwelt. The old house where his childhood and youth and dawning manhood had been spent, stood before him. It rather seemed to have risen up before him in the walk than to have waited in the old spot for his approach. But there it was, the house where his mother died—he was not a twelvemonth old then—and where his father had reaped such gain, as, when society is improved, will be offered to no man's sickle. But even usurers' wealth is not always tangible, and will not unfrequently resolve itself into waste paper.

How he found himself with his finger on the knocker he did not clearly know. The startled servant let him pass without a note of recognition, and he was immediately in his father's presence.

"Zounds, Bill!—the carpet—you'll spoil the carpet with the snow, boy. Haven't you got an umbrella?"
He had been mantled in a fog up to this point; but now he perceived that he was everywhere whitened, like a twelfthcake.

"It's a Brussels, and nearly new," the usurer continued.
"You can't hurt the old cloth in the kitchen. Run down and dismiss the girl. So you are come back to the old man," he added, when they were alone in the lower region of the house. "I expected it. Well, I'm forgiving. Shall I kill the fattened calf, eh?"

"I want some money, father," said the young man, doggedly.

"No? Do you now? Dear me!" cried the elder Harding, with feigned surprise.

"Getting it from you is better than starving, perhaps," the son proceeded. "And I shall rob if you don't let me have it. I know what you will say—that I once affected to be squeamish about the way you got your money. Well, I did. But I am cured of that, I hope. I see that we should all be honest if we could, but when we can't—"

"Aye, when we can't," said his father, taking up the sentence, "what then?"

"Why," said William, we make the best of circumstances. I have made the best of mine, and come to you to aid me."

"To aid you? Just what other people do. They come to me to aid *them*," said the usurer. "But there's the wrong I do them. I do aid them, and my son cuts me for my inhumanity, though I've had them here before now ready to go down on their knees for help."

"I am not going down upon my knees, father; but I want fifty pounds—Let me have it," said the young man.

"Fifty pounds;—that's a large sum. On—on good security, Bill?"

"On the devil," replied William, pettishly, "or, he added, with a grim smile, "YOU MAY TAKE A POSTORIT."

"Which means that you will pay principal and interest after my death," said the money-lender. "I'll do it."

"Eh?" said the son, raising his eyelids.

"I'll do it," repeated the usurer. "That is," he added "at two hundred per cent.—not a farthing less, Bill, because it may turn out that there will be no assets. At a cool two hundred, payable at my death."

The young man looked at his father's feet. "Well," he said, presently—for he thought of the young wife at home—"as you will. I'll sign to it."

He was about to follow the old man for the purpose, but the latter motioned him back and said that the Brussels carpet was nearly new.

"Won't you take a little of something, Bill? A glass of sherry and a biscuit," he said, when the requisite forms had been compiled with. "Do let me prevail upon you."

The other crumpled the gold before he replied.

"If you will give me a fresh bottle, and let me draw the cork, and let me fill for myself, I will take two or three glasses," he said.

The usurer seemed puzzled.

"Why a fresh bottle?" he asked.