

Kindelon and the elder lady having gone. "I want very much to meet many of your friends," Pauline proceeded. She put her head a little on one side, while her lips broke into a smile that her companion appeared to understand perfectly and to answer with mute gay intelligence. "I suppose you have heard all about me and my grand project, just as your charming mother has heard, Miss Dares?"

"Oh, yes," returned Cora.

"And you think it practicable?"

"I think it praiseworthy."

"Which means that I shall fail."

Cora looked humourously troubled. "If you do, it will not be your fault. I am not doubtful on that point."

"Your mother has by no means encouraged me. She says that I must be careful in my selections, but she gives me very little hope of finding many worthy subjects to select. She seems to think that when the wheat has been taken from the tares, as it were, there will be very little wheat left."

"Yes, I know mamma's opinions. I don't quite share them. My sister Martha does, however, thoroughly. . . Ah, here is Martha, now. Let me make you acquainted."

Martha Dares proved to be still more unlike her mother than Cora, save as regarded her stature, which was very short. She had a plump person, and a face which was prepossessing solely from its expression of honest good-nature. It was a face whose fat cheeks, merry little black eyes and shapeless nose were all a stout defiance of the classic type. Pauline at once decided that Martha was shrewd, energetic and cheerful, and that she might reveal, under due provocation, a temper of hot flash and acute sting.

"And now you know the whole family, Mrs. Varick," said Cora, when her sister had been presented.

"Yes, I complete the group," said Miss Dares, with a jocund trip of the tongue about her speech that suggested a person who did all her thinking in the same fleet and impetuous way. "I hope you find it an interesting group, Mrs. Varick?"

"Very," said Pauline. "Its members have so much individuality. They are all three so different."

"True enough," hurried Martha. "We react upon each other, for this reason, in a very salutary way. You've no idea what a corrective agent my practical turn is for this poetic sister of mine, who would be up in the clouds nearly all her time, trying to paint the unpaintable, but for an occasional downward jerk from me, you know, such as a boy will give to a refractory kite. But I'll grant you that Cora has more than partially convinced me that life isn't entirely made up of spelling, arithmetic, geography and the use of the globes—for I'm a school-teacher, please understand, though in a rather humble way. And there's poor dear mamma. Goodness knows what would become of *her* if it were not for both of us. She hasn't an idea how to economize her wonderful powers of work. Cora and I have established a kind of military despotism; we have to say 'halt' and 'shoulder your pen,' just as if she were a sort of soldier. But it will never do for me to rattle on like this. I'm as bad, after my own fashion, as our mutual friend, Mr. Kindelon, when I once really get started. By the way, you know Mr. Kindelon very well indeed, don't you?"

"Very well, though I have not known him very long," answered Pauline.

She somehow felt that Martha's question concealed more interest than its framer wished to betray. The little black eyes had taken a new keenness, but the genial face had sobered as well. And for some reason just at this point, both Martha and Pauline turned their look upon Cora.

She had slightly flushed; the change, however, was scarcely noticeable. She at once spoke, as though being thus observed had made her speak.

"He always has something pleasant to say of you," softly declared Cora. Here she turned to her sister. "Will you bring up some people to Mrs. Varick," she asked, "or shall I?"

"Oh, just as you choose," answered Martha. She had fixed her eyes on Pauline again. The next moment Cora had glided off.

"What my sister says is quite true," affirmed Martha.

"You mean . . . ?" Pauline questioned, with a faint start which she could scarcely have explained.

"That Mr. Kindelon admires you very much."

"I am glad to hear it," returned Pauline, thinking how commonplace the sentence sounded, and at the same time feeling her color rise and deepen under the persistent scrutiny of those sharp dark eyes.

"Don't you think him intensely able?" said Martha, much more slowly than usual. "We do."

Pauline bowed assent. "Brilliantly able," she answered. "Tell me, Miss Dares; with which of you is he the more intimate, your sister or yourself?"

Martha gave a laugh that was crisp and curt. She looked away from Pauline as she answered. Oh, he's more intimate with me than with Cora," she said. "We're stanch friends. He tells me nearly everything, I think he would tell me if he were to fall in love."

"Really?" laughed Pauline. Her face was wreathed in smiles of apparent amusement. She looked, just then, as she had often looked in the fashionable world, when everything round her seemed so artificial that she took the tints of her environment and became as artificial herself.

But it pleased her swiftly to change the subject. "I am quite excited this evening," she went on. "I am beginning a new career, you understand, of course. Tell me, Miss Dares, how do *you* think I shall succeed in it?"

Martha was watching her fixedly. Her reply had a short, odd sound. "I think you are almost clever enough not to fail," she said.

(To be Continued.)

TRIOLETS.

TO HER PALETTE.

Palette, milky white,
How I envy you!
Hold her hand aright,
Palette, milky white.
Do her fingers light
And dainty thrill you through?
Palette, milky white,
How I envy you!

Palette, milky white,
How I envy you!
Have you any right,
Palette, milky white?
You cannot requite
Love, as lovers do.
Palette, milky white,
How I envy you!

GIVEN WITH A PAIR OF SCISSORS.

Scissors keen and bright,
Did you ever cut it?
For they say you might,
Scissors keen and bright.
Is their blaming right,
Will you now rebut it?
Scissors keen and bright,
Will you ever cut it?

Scissors bright and keen,
Can I trust your edges?
Cruel you have been,
Scissors bright and keen.
Will you come between
Us and cut our pledges?
Scissors bright and keen,
Can I trust your edges?

W. Bliss Carman.

A FANTASY.

As in a city given over to death,
One flying hour before the grave may be,
All frenzied mortals that have life and breath
Clasp hands, join lips, and take their fill of glee,—
The grave fulfils, and faster whirls the throng,
Redder the wine runs through the desperate days,
The dance grows louder, madder grows the song,
The kisses wilder as the blue plague slays:
So the leaves fall and death is wide to smite;
Haste, wind, make revel for a day and night!

A. Lampman.

IN Scotland they have narrow, open ditches, which they call sheep-drains. A man was riding a donkey one day across a sheep-pasture; but when the animal came to the sheep-drain he would not go over. So the man rode back a short distance, turned and applied the whip, thinking, of course, that the donkey, when going at the top of his speed, would jump the drain. But not so. When the donkey got to the drain he stopped, and the man went over Mr. Neddy's head. No sooner had he touched the ground than he got up, and, looking his beast straight in the face, said: "Verra weel pitched; but then, hoo are ye going to get ower yersel?"—
Independent.