

ÆTAT 6.

"Where'er I go
A wistful child's face haunts me still."
Above the ringlets shaken
In careless curls of gold,
The sun's shorn shafts retaken
In single splendour rolled;
Beneath the crowning splendour
That wreathes the young fair head,
Eyes sweet, and grave and tender,
Curved lips of rosiest red.

What plight the years shall bring her,
What cheer of fortune's spell,
The untouched tones that linger
In life's harp—who can tell?
Dear heart, so fond, confiding,
Rose-paven be thy way,
The swift-shod hours are gliding,
And morning melts in day.

Melts like a snow-drop drifted
Upon a sun-pierced stream,
Yea, as a shade uplifted
Floats through a summer dream.
O, what so sweet as youth is,
The unsoiled plume of dove!
O, what so fair as truth is
Sealed with the seal of love!

The folded bud foreshadows
The blossom and the fruit,
And dreams far El Dorados
Wherein all pain is mute;
Where summer ever tinges
Her smiles and kisses blown,
The flowers, and sprays, and fringes
That grace her glorious throne.

Thy merry laughter ringing
Gives little reck of aught.
Birds in the branches singing
Their summer songs untaught,
Are not more glad than you are,
Prattling in childish glee,
With pattering feet and bluer
Eyes than the blue, deep sea.

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White sheen of stately roses,
White fold on fold of flower,
White flakes that fleck cold closes
And limn the leafless bower;
White angel mist-ropes flowing
Back on the sunset air,
White clouds, star-rifted, glowing,
And all things pure and fair—

Are types of what her soul is,
Fair in its chastity,
A brief, bright life, whose whole is
A summer song sin-free.
Words, wishes, win scant favour,
Unworthy and unmeet,
But heart-traced I engrave her,
The sweetest of the sweet.

Toronto.

J.F. Davidson.

THE ADVENTURES OF A WIDOW.

By EDGAR FAWCETT, author of "A Gentleman of Leisure," "A Hopeless Case,"
"An Ambitious Woman," "Tinkling Cymbals," etc.

IV.—Continued.

"Not at all," said Kindelon. "It is true that she goes about a good deal. Her position as a journalist gives her, of course, the *entrée* to many theatres, and as she is passionately fond of the drama, her face is seldom missed on a *première* at any reputable house—Daly's, the Union Square, the Madison Square or Wallack's. She takes delight, too, in appearing at the entertainments of her various friends, and she always does so, clad elegantly, richly, but without a shadow of ostentatious display. On these occasions her society is eagerly sought; I have sometimes wondered why, for her conversation, though invariably full of sound sense and pithy acumen, lacks the cheerful play of humour which is so widely demanded to generate anything like

popularity wherever men and women are gathered together. But she is very popular, and I suppose it is her striking simplicity, her gift of always being sincerely and unaffectedly *herself*, which has made her so. . . . Still, for all this gregarious impulse, if I may thus name it, I do not believe she would take the first step, where you are concerned, to establish an acquaintance."

"And for what reason?" asked Pauline. Her tones, while she put this query, were full of a hurt bewilderment. Kindelon seemed to muse for a brief space; and any such unconversational mood was rare, as we know, with his mercurial lightsomeness of manner. "She would be sensitive," he presently said, "about making an advance of this sort."

"Of this sort?" repeated Pauline, with a somewhat irritated inflection, "Of what sort?"

Her companion watched her with fixity for a moment. Then he raised his large forefinger, and slowly shook it, with admonitory comedy of gesture. "You must not tell me that you don't understand," he said. "Put yourself in this lady's place. Suppose that that you, in spite of fine brains and noble character, lacked the social standing—"

Pauline broke in quite hotly, at this. Her eyes had taken a quick sparkle, and the color was flying rosy and pure into her fair face. "Pshaw!" she exclaimed. "It is not any question of social standing. I want to know these people——" She suddenly paused, as though her tongue had betrayed her into some regrettable and unseemly phrase. "I want to pass," she continued more slowly, "from an aimless world into one of thought and sense. Mrs. Dares is prominent in this other world. From what you say I should judge that she is a very representative and influential spirit there. Why should she not be benign and gracious enough to seek me here? Why should she require that I shall emphatically pay her my court? Your description makes me glad and happy to know her. If she learned this would she hold aloof from any absurd scruples about a disparity in social standing? . . . Well, if she did," declared Pauline, who by this time was quite excitedly flushed and fluttered, "then I should say that you had over-painted her virtues and too flatteringly concealed her faults!"

Kindelon threw back his head, as she finished, and laughed with such heartiness that more of his strong white teeth were transiently visible than would have pleased a strict judge of decorum.

"Oh, how amusing you are!" he cried. "You are really superb, and don't perceive it! . . . Well," he proceeded, growing graver, "I suppose you would be far less so if you had the vaguest inkling of it. . . . Now, pray listen. Does it enter your conscience at all that you are disguising a kind of royal patronage and condescension behind a gentle and saint-like humility? No—of course it doesn't. But, my dear lady, this is unequivocally true. You scoff at social standing, and yet you complacently base yourself upon it. You want to desert all your old tenets, and yet you keep a kind of surreptitious clasp about them. You would not for the world be considered a person who cared for the aristocratic purple, and yet you wrap it round you in the most illogical fashion. Mrs. Dares has her evenings; to-night is one of them. You, as yet, have no evenings; your *salon* is still in embryo. You want to affiliate with her, to be one of her set, her surroundings, her *monde*. And yet you quietly bid her to your house, as though she were proposing your coöperation, your support, your intimacy, and not you hers!"

Pauline, with perhaps a deepened tinge of colour in her cheeks, was staring at the floor when Kindelon ended. And from beneath her gown came the impatient little tap of a nervous foot. After an interval of silence, during which her friend's gaze watched her with merry vivacity of expression, she slowly lifted her shapely blonde head, and answered, in grave, even saddened tones:

"Then my *salon* is to be a failure?—an unrealizable castle in Spain?"

"Oh, no," promptly said Kindelon, with one of those sympathetic laughs which belonged among his elusive fascinations. "By no means—unless you so will it."

"But I don't will it," said Pauline.

"Very well. Then it will be a castle in—in New York. That sounds tangible enough, surely. It is the first step that counts, and you have only to take your first step. It will certainly look much better to know some of your courtiers before you ascend your throne. And meanwhile it would be far more discreet to cultivate an acquaintance with your probable prime minister."

"All of which means. . . ?" she said.

"That you had best let me accompany you to Mrs. Dares' house this evening."

"But I am not invited!" exclaimed Pauline.

"Oh, yes you are," said Kindelon, with easy security in the jocund