

with them, as with every one else, Nenuphar was the favourite, and Heather merely a very ordinary girl, not remarkable in any way—rather bad-tempered too—but still forming an admirable contrast to the wonderful beauty of Nenuphar. All the admiration, all the love, fell to her share, and it was the more curious, as it seemed impossible for her to return any one's tenderness. She smiled graciously on all alike, and was always willing to receive any amount of admiration, but that was all; yet, strange to say, it seemed utterly impossible for any man to care for, or even think of, any other woman while she was present, though wherein lay her exact fascination it would have been difficult to say, beyond mere beauty. Perhaps it was the sense of rest and quiet that was always about her, setting her apart, as it were, from every one else in the world of her own—a world from which all toil and care had been carefully excluded.

Although in that way the girls saw a good many strangers, they had rarely, if ever, gone beyond the precincts of their own home. The world outside the grounds of Wykeham Manor had always been denied them, Mr. Clermont being of opinion that girls could not go too little abroad; therefore it was not altogether strange that they had entered into their nineteenth year before they saw Sebastian Long.

Sebastian Long was the greatest landowner in the neighbourhood, and "eccentric" was the mildest word used when speaking of him; indeed there were found some to hint cautiously and with bated breath of madness, although the only symptom evinced was that he had shut up the great house that his forefathers had bequeathed to him, and had spent a roving life in foreign lands, in preference to staying quietly and decorously at home.

But there was, as there generally is, another side to the question. The said house was large, and somewhat gloomy and lonely for a man who had neither wife nor mother to keep him company in it; so it was not perhaps altogether so wonderful his preferring to spend his time amongst his mother's Spanish relations, who made for him the nearest approach to a home he had ever known.

And now as to how and where he and his neighbours first met. It was the evening of a lovely summer's day, just such a one as that early dawn on which Nenuphar first made her appearance might have grown into later on, when the mists and the dew had alike passed away, giving place to something brighter and more glorious. But, as on that other occasion, the work of the day was not begun, so on this it was over and done with, and the two girls were out on the terrace that surrounded the house, Nenuphar lazily reclining on the marble steps reading, and Heather some few yards distant from her feeding the peacocks. It was a brilliant picture enough, for the sun was near setting, and its declining rays dyed scarlet everything they touched. They tinged even Nenuphar's white cheeks with some of their own warmth and colour, and caused the soft yellow curls that lay upon her forehead to brighten, until they shone like molten gold.

It was just what she wanted to give perfection to her beauty, which was otherwise too cold and colourless, though there were not often people to be found who thought so.

"How full the world is of sunshine!" exclaimed Heather, as she watched the evening glow intensifying the colours of the gorgeous birds before her, and the rich tints spreading over the landscape. "How full the world is of sunshine!"

Nenuphar did not reply to her companion's rhapsodies, being too much interested in her book; besides, she was not much given to thapsodia over anything.

After Heather's remark the silence remained unbroken, until suddenly on to the path was thrown a long black shadow, which lay still and motionless between the two girls—the shadow of Sebastian Long.

Heather was thinking too much of her peacocks and Nenuphar of her book to give it a thought, and his footsteps had been so silent over the smooth turf that led up to the gravelled walk, that they had never heard his approach; but presently he moved a little, upon which the shadow wavered for a second, and then fell right across Nenuphar, enveloping her in entire darkness.

At this sudden eclipse Nenuphar raised her head, and saw, standing before her, a man with soft Southern eyes, and dark foreign-looking moustache, and small pointed beard.

"Heather," she said; and at her voice the strange, turned towards the girl addressed, and raising his hat, said, "I beg your pardon for taking you by surprise in this way, but I have come home to see your father, and I took the short cut through the gardens instinctively; it is so long since I have been at home that I quite forget it might be a liberty."

"Then you are Mr. Long," exclaimed Heather, impulsively, holding out her hand; "how glad I am to see you! Oh, I hope you have come home for good!"

"Yes, I have come home," he replied; "but for good or for evil, who can say?" he added in a lower tone, as if to himself.

"Let me show you the way to my father's study," said Heather; "but first I must introduce you to my adopted sister—Nenuphar—Mr. Long."

Nenuphar bowed, and then the other two turned away towards the house, chattering merrily as they went.

When, a couple of hours afterwards, greet-

ings and explanations and welcomes over, Sebastian once more emerged from the house, he was a little startled to find Nenuphar still seated on the marble steps. She was no longer reading, although even that might have been possible, so brilliant was the starlight, and the moon, which had just risen, was shedding such a soft, quiet light over the scene he had last seen illuminated with the glow of sunset. She was sitting on one of the lower steps, her head resting against the urn filled with geraniums that stood behind her, and gazing up into the bright heavens above with such intense earnestness that she might have been trying to read her fate therein.

"Are you not cold out here?" asked Mr. Long, for want of something better to say, when he reached her side, as she still did not move.

"Cold?—no," she replied, sitting up and turning towards him. "Why, it would be a shame to go in on such a lovely night. Oh, if only this sort of weather would last all the year round!"

"There, Miss—!" and he paused.

"Nenuphar," she said, quietly.

"Miss Nenuphar," he repeated.

"I do not agree with you. Summer is all very well in its way, but it is nothing without winter to back it up. It is pleasant, of course, but enervating, and that is the reason why, with all its faults, I prefer this country to the ones I have been living in lately."

"But think of the snow and the cold and the storms that we know are coming, and then, looking up at that sky above us, and feeling the warm sweet air that blows around us, can you not find it in your heart to agree with me when I say that I would sacrifice one half of my life if the other half could all be spent in some sheltered sunny spot, far away from the existence of mingled heat and cold?" "Ah," and she gave a little faint shiver. "The very thought of winter makes me miserable!"

"I am afraid we should never agree on that subject, for I love a storm. I think it is a grand though fearful sight to see tall trees that have had a firm foundation in the earth for ages, fall before that giant power which is not even visible. Yes," he went on, warming with his subject, and for the moment almost forgetting his white, lovely listener, "I love to stand and watch such a storm; to hear the wind screaming through the branches, and to see the wild waves rising up madly in their wrath, and yet to feel that I, a weak man, can stand firm amongst the ruin around. It is at such times one realizes most that all about us there is a Power greater than ourselves, greater than the storm; then it is one understands most clearly what it is to be held in the hollow of His hand."

"I cannot understand you," Nenuphar made answer; "it is so incomprehensible to me how anyone can like noise and confusion."

"Is it?" he replied, still somewhat excitedly. "Cannot you understand the pleasure of fighting against anything, even though it is only a storm of wind? Why, the very struggle itself gives fresh life?"

But the girl only shook her head incredulously.

"It is different, I suppose, with you," she said; "you are a man, and I am only Nenuphar!"

He made no answer to her strange words, but suddenly remembering that he was on his way home, said "Good night," and left her.

She did not reply to his parting salutation—did not even seem to notice his departure. When he had gone some few steps, he turned back for one farewell glance. She was still seated as he had left her, looking upwards, and in the weird, chill moonlight she looked very white and ghostly. And was it fancy, he wondered, but as he looked it seemed to him that the border of her white dress waved softly to and fro; yet there certainly was no breeze to stir it.

With a smile at his fancies, he continued his walk towards his own lonely home. When he had arrived there, and was seated in the empty hall, he indulged in a walking dream—an amusement he was rather given to; but when he shut his eyes, so to give greater scope to his imagination, the vision he conjured up was not that of a woman with soft golden hair and wide blue eyes, which seemed always looking beyond the things around them, but that of a slim, graceful maiden, with rough brown locks and honest sweet eyes; and the last words he seemed to hear before he really passed through the ivory gates, where the echo of those which had reached his ears not so very long ago,—"I am so glad you have come back: I do hope that now you are going to stay," while a small hand was placed in his.

Some time after Mr. Long's departure, Heather was awakened by a sound in her room, and on looking up she discovered Nenuphar seated by the open window, bathed from head to foot in a broad sheet of moonlight. She looked very white and lovely as she sat thus gazing out—the moon's beams just turning her golden hair and white dress to silver; but, nevertheless, there was something in her calm, motionless attitude which sent a little shiver, almost of terror, to Heather's heart. But then it is enough to terrify any one to be awakened suddenly out of a first sleep.

"Nenuphar, what are you doing?" she questioned, after a second spent in watching her.

"Doing?" repeated Nenuphar; "I am doing nothing—only wondering how you can spend such a glorious night in bed. I came here because the moon does not shine into my room,

and you know how fond I am of moonlight. I think I was very nearly asleep when you spoke."

"Have you been there long?"

"No, not very long. I stayed out of doors until I feared that I should have been shut out altogether; then I came here; and ever since, till I began to get sleepy, I have been thinking and dreaming over—love;—I knew you would laugh."

"No; I am only laughing at the serious way you said it. But you should be careful, Nenuphar, for you know that they say moonlight causes madness."

"Another name for the same thing, perhaps. But what I was thinking of was, what is love? Heather," she said, rising, and speaking almost excitedly, at least for her, "what is it? Why is it that I cannot care for any one?"

"I do not understand you. You have never, perhaps, cared very much for any one as yet, because the right person has not come; but that is, after all, only one kind of love. You love us, do you not? I hope so; and that, of course, is the same kind of thing—at least it seems so to me."

"But do I love you?" questioned the other. "Oh, Nenuphar! how can you grieve me by speaking like that?" and Heather got out of bed, and crept to her friend's side.

"Tell me," said Nenuphar, "what it feels like, this love that every one talks of. You say you care for me, do you not? Well, supposing some morning you came into my room and found me lying there dead, what difference would it make in your life?"

"Oh, do not even suppose such an awful thing!" and there was a sob in the girl's voice as she spoke.

"What should I do?" cried tender, impulsive Heather. "I should die too!"

She, not yet having learnt to understand that death is the great reward bestowed on those who have fought and struggled; not like the Lethe of old, a river in which we can bathe and forget our pain, but the opening of the gates that have shut us out so long from the sight of our beloved ones—the entrance to the eternal rest after the pain has been suffered and conquered.

"Do you remember," said Nenuphar after a pause, "young Mr. Vivian?"

"Yes, certainly I do."

"Well, that was exactly what he said, when I told him I did not care for him. That it would kill him! But he is still alive; so you see, Heather, you are not right. As I said before, I cannot understand it."

"I think Mr. Vivian was right, all the same, Nenuphar," said Heather, softly; "for though he is, as you say, alive—and of course his saying it would kill him was nonsense—still I do not think he has ever been quite the same man since. He loves you, you see; and therefore, as you do not love him, the world must seem darker to him than it did. Cannot you see the loneliness of it, Nenuphar?"

But Nenuphar did not answer; her thoughts seemed to have wandered far away. After a time, however, they returned to Heather and the subject in hand. "You ask me if I do not see the loneliness, and pity it. I suppose you mean? No, I cannot say that I do; I am lonely, but I do not pity myself."

"Ah, Nenuphar! how can you say that? Are you not happy? You have nearly all my love, surely I have some of yours."

"But you forget—I cannot love; and that brings us back to the beginning of the argument—back all the way to where my thoughts were before you woke up. What is it that I do not possess? What is it that makes me so different to every one else? For I am different, Heather, as even you, with your different eyes, blinded as they are by affection, must acknowledge."

"You are only different," said Heather, putting her arm around her, "in that you are a thousand times more lovely than any one I ever saw. And that being the case," she concluded somewhat timidly, "you should not be too kind, until you have found some one really worthy of your love, and then you will find out quickly enough the meaning of the word."

"Do you really think so?" said Nenuphar dreamily, leaning her white arms on the sill, and looking down into the garden.

"Yes, of course. They say that every one loves once."

"I should like to think so," replied her companion in a softer voice than that in which she had yet spoken. "But, come, it is quite time you were asleep again, Heather; so I must shut the window, for I see you can hardly keep your eyes open! Good night, dear." She stooped as she spoke, and just touched Heather's forehead with her lips; then, without another word, she glided away, still bathed in moonlight, to the door which led to her own room, leaving Heather to find her way back to bed, there to dream dreams of the strange conversation she had held with her midnight visitor.

ECHOES FROM PARIS.

THE Banquet of Nations, at Paris, which has been talked of for some time, is to comprise several thousands of guests.

THE Paris season is to be continued until June, two months after the usual time. Balls and dinners will be given at the Marshal's every Thursday.

THE works of the Exhibition building and ad-

juncts will, it is now ascertained, not cost less than forty-five millions of francs, £1,800,000.

THE *Frégate*, the French vessel fitted up for the bringing of fresh meat from South America, has come up the Seine from Rouen, and will be on view during the Paris Exhibition.

THE Portuguese Government propose to send to the Paris Exhibition fifty artisans from their arsenals, manufactories, &c., and the Lisbon and other municipalities intend to despatch industrial delegates.

LORD LYONS's ball is mentioned by the whole French Press as the most brilliant *pôte* of this brilliant season, and they speak with wonder of the fact, that it cost the British ambassador no less than £4,000.

IN a piece at the Ambigu, one of the characters has to propose the toast of "England." On Saturday last when he did so, the lord of the village responded, "My whole heart is with France." The appropriateness of the response in the words lately used by the Prince of Wales caused an enthusiastic outburst of approval.

A young lady of Paris has been arrested by the police for attempting to procure small quantities of arsenic from various chemists. She states that, having learnt how the people of Styria grew red and stout by eating the mineral, and being anxious to look more beautiful for the sake of her lover, she would fain have poisoned herself into loveliness.

MADAME asked her husband for a new outfit. "My darling," he replied, "that would make the third in two months, and times are so hard that—" "You will kill me," exclaimed the lady, bursting into tears. "and my funeral expenses will cost you more than a new dress!" "Ah, but I should have to bury you only once," was the comforting rejoinder.

THE President of the Republic and Melane la Marechale de MacMahon in the course of their visit to the British section of the Exhibition on Wednesday stayed a few minutes at Mr. Bimuel's stand to witness an experiment of his *Marguerite*, a new apparatus invented by him to extract the aroma of flowers in a few seconds. The operation was made on freshly gathered lilacs, and was perfectly successful, the perfume produced being unusually delicate and giving the true odour of the flower.

ELECTRIC light has been employed for the first time to illuminate a Paris theatre, the Chatelet, the system being that put in use for the lamp-posts on the Place de l'Opera. For some months past the inventor, M. Jabluchoff, and M. Castellano, the manager of the Chatelet Theatre, have been attempting experiments that have finally succeeded, and now the dazzling electric light throws its brilliant radiance over the ballets and the principal effects of the spectacular fairy pieces now being played at the Chatelet. Electric light will probably become of frequent use at theatres.

THERE is really no rallying place in the Exhibition, as in the case of the central or round point in the Palace of 1877. The terrace of the grand vestibule appears to be a favourite trysting place, and the hoisting of a white *mondoir* on the end of a cane the detail sign, having become useless, especially as the ways resort to the plan as a trick. The English and Austrian Fine Arts sections are favourite spots to drop into after a fatiguing walk; their contents are beautiful, and, in addition, complete. The machinery galleries are far from being in working order, but then one laggard can keep back many punctual exhibitors.

COPY OF TESTIMONIAL JUST RECEIVED.

30 ST. FRANCIS XAVIER STREET,
MONTREAL, 28th April 1878.

To the Proprietors of "Phosfozone."

MONTREAL.

Gentlemen,

I have been using your PHOSFOZONE for the last two months, and I have thus derived very great benefit from it in the cure of a DISORDERED LIVER and of INDIGESTION, and I can therefore most cordially recommend it to all suffering from either of these ailments.

Respectfully,

(Signed.)

JOHN POPHAM

"Phosfozone" can be had from every Chemist and Druggist throughout the Dominion. Price, \$1.00 per bottle.

CANCERS ARE CURED AT THE LONDON

MEDICAL AND SURGICAL INSTITUTE by

a new scientific, painless, and speedy process.

The knife is never used, and a cure is warranted

in every case when undertaken. Ulcers, tumors,

feversores, and all diseases successfully treated.

One or two of the physicians of the Institute

will be at the Windsor Hotel, Montreal, on

Wednesday, the 15th day of May, and will re-

main a few weeks for the purpose of effecting

cures of cancers and other diseases during their

stay. Ladies will receive attention by the Prin-

cipal of the Institute. Call early.