

CHAPTER XVI.

'Till the secret be secret no more
In the light of one hour as it flies,
Be the hour as of suns that expire
Or suns that rise."

It is quite a month later. August, hot and sunny, is reigning with quite a mad merriment, making the most of the days that be, knowing full well that the end of the summer is nigh. The air is stifling; up from the warm earth comes the almost overpowering perfume of the late flowers. Perpetua moving amongst the carnations and hollyhocks in her soft white cambric frock, gathers a few of the former in a languid manner to place in the bosom of her frock. There they rest, a spot of blood color upon their white ground.

Lady Baring, on the death of her elder brother, had left town for the seclusion of her country home, carrying Perpetua with her. She had grown very fond of the girl, and the fancy she had formed (before Sir Hastings' death) that Thaddeus was in love with the young heiress, and that she would make him a suitable wife, had not suffered in any way through the fact of Sir Thaddeus having now become the head of the family.

Perpetua, having idly plucked a few last pansies, looked at them, and as idly flung them away, goes on her listless way through the gardens. A whole *long* month and not one word from him! Are his social duties now so numer-