

February 14

Hungerfords - *you may bask in proverbial glory!*

The Society Secretary, John Hungerford, received this most interesting letter from **Meredyth Hungerford** a few weeks ago. Fascinating reading!

Dear John,

While glancing through the May 2000 issue of *Gardening Australia* this afternoon, I came across a reference to 'Margaret Hungerford' in an article by Colin Campbell entitled 'The Irresistible Araceae', (page 66). Campbell was writing about his favourite plants, and the article began:

As Margaret Hungerford wrote in the late 1800s, 'Beauty is in the eye of the beholder' ... and so on the article continued.

I was stunned to find what is, to me, a common quotation, attributed to a member of our family! What do I do? why, reach for my copy of *The Concise Dictionary of Quotations* and there, low and behold, (as they say!) hiding at the bottom of page 111, I find

MARGARET WOLFE HUNGERFORD 1855?-1897

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder,
Quoted in *Molly Bawn* (1878)

The item also said .see page 238., which I then did and found

LEW WALLACE 1827-1905

Beauty is altogether in the eye of the beholder.
Quoted from *The Prince of India* (1893)

I had never heard of Lew Wallace; have you? His book was twenty years later.

Anyway, we may all shine in Margaret Wolfe Hungerford's glory!

For those who may not know it, Margaret Wolfe Hungerford was Margaret Hamilton when in 1863 she married Thomas Henry Hungerford, the eldest son of Henry Jones Hungerford, of Cahirmore (see *HAFS Journal* Vol. 4, No. 1, May 1997, page 33.)

Four only of Margaret's novels are listed in The Irish Family Records. They are *Grey Grief*, *A Maiden All Forlorn*, *A Modern Circe*, and *Neither Wife nor Maid*. (Do these titles whet your appetite?) There is no mention of *Molly Bawn*. The only one of her novels held in the NSW Public Library in Sydney is *A Mental Struggle* H936/2. (This last piece of information I got when I was doing hands-on research in the long ago!)

All this has prevented me from going to sleep on a warm Saturday afternoon! Best wishes to you and your family and the Society,

Meredyth Hungerford

and see to your little family
the lord only nows how i would