

Family Reading.

Mortality.

"And we shall be changed."

Ye dainty mosses, lichens gray,
Pressed each to each in tender fold,
And peacefully thus, day by day,
Returning to your mold;—

Brown leaves that with aerial grace
Slip from your branch like birds
a-wing,
Each leaving in the appointed place
Its bud of future spring;—

If we, God's conscious creatures, knew
But half your faith, in our decay,
We should not tremble as we do
When summoned clay to clay.

But with an equal patience sweet,
We should put off this mortal gear,
In whatsoever new form is meet,
Content to reappear;—

Knowing each germ of life he gives
Must have in him its source and rise,
Being that of his being lives
May change, but never dies.

Ye dead leaves, dropping soft and slow,
Ye mosses green and lichens fair,
Go to your graves as I will go,
For God is also there.

—Miss Muloch.

New Select Serial.

MISTRESS MARGERY:
A TALE OF THE LOLLARDS.

BY EMILY SARAH HOLT,

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A REGULAR OF OXFENFORDE.

"Give me the book, and let me read;
My soul is strangely stirred—
They are such words of love and truth
As ne'er before I heard!"
—MARY HOWITT.

The sun was shining brightly on the battlements and casements of Lovell Tower. The season was spring, and the year 1395. Within the house, though it was barely seven o'clock in the morning, all was bustle and confusion, for Dame Lovell was superintending her handmaidens in the preparation of dinner. A buxom woman was Dame Lovell, neither tall nor short, but decidedly stout, with a round, good-natured face, which just then glowed and burned under the influence of the fire roaring on the large grateless hearth. She wore a black dress heavily trimmed at the bottom with fur, and she carried on her head one of those remarkable elevations generally known as the Syrian or conical head-dress, made of black stiffened gauze, and spangled with golden stars. Her assistants, mostly girls of from sixteen to twenty-five years of age, were occupied in various parts of the kitchen; while Mistress Katherine, a staid-looking woman of middle age, who filled a post somewhat similar to the modern one of housekeeper, was employed at a side table in mixing some particularly elaborate compound. Among this busy throng moved Dame Lovell, now giving a stir to a pot, and now peeping into a pan, boxing the ears of any maiden who appeared remiss in her duty, and generally keeping up a strict and active supervision.

"Nan, thy leaks be not hewn small enough. Cicely, look to the pottage, that it boil not over. Al'ce, thou idle jade!"—with a sound box on the ear,—"thou hast left out the onions in thy blanch-porre! Margery! Madge! Why Madge, I say! Where is Mistress Margery, maidens? Joan, lass, hie thee up, and see whether Mistress Margery be not in the chamber."

Joan, a diminutive girl of sixteen, quitted the parsley she was chopping, and ran lithely out of the room, to which she soon returned, and, dropping a courtesy, announced that "Mistress Margery was in her chamber, and was coming presently,"—which latter word, in the year 1395, meant not 'by and by,' as it now does, but 'at present.' Mistress Margery verified the assertion of Joan by following her into the kitchen almost immediately. And since Mistress Margery is to play the important part of heroine, it may be well to devote a few words to her person and costume.

She is the only child of Sir Geoffrey Lovell, Knight, and Dame Agnes Lovell, and is now seventeen years of age; rather under the middle

height, slenderly formed, with an appearance of great fragility and delicacy; her complexion is very fair, of that extreme fairness which often betokens disease, and her face almost colourless. Her features are regular, and classical in their contour; her eyes are a clear gray—honest, truthful eyes, that look straight at you; and her hair, which is almost long enough, when let down, to touch her feet, is of that pale golden colour so much celebrated in the Middle Ages, and so very rarely to be seen now. Mistress Margery's attire comprises a black dress, so stiff, partly from its own richness of material, and partly with whalebone, that it is quite capable of standing upright without any assistance from Mistress Margery's person. Its trimming consists of a border of gris or marten's fur; and over this black petticoat the young lady wears a cote-hardie, or close-fitting jacket, also edged with gris. Her head is not encumbered by the steeple-cap which disfigures her mother; instead of it she wears the beautiful 'dove-cote,' a net of golden tissue, ornamented with pearls, within which her hair is confined.

It may also be as well to notice here, that Mistress Margery is highly accomplished. Of course she can play the lute, and sing, and work elaborate and delicate embroidery, and compound savoury dishes; and equally of course does she know any nobleman or gentleman by a glance at his shield, and can tell you in a moment to whom belong the three lions rampant sable, and who owns the bend engrailed argent on a field gules. These are but the ordinary acquirements of a gentlewoman; but our heroine knows more than this. Mistress Margery can read; and the handmaidens furthermore whisper to each other, with profound admiration of their young mistress's extraordinary knowledge, that Mistress Margery can write. Dame Lovell cannot do either; but Sir Geoffrey, who is a literary man, and possesses a library, has determined that his daughter shall receive a first-rate education. Sir Geoffrey's library is a very large one, for it consists of no less than forty-two volumes, five of which are costly illuminated manuscripts, and consist of the Quest of the Sangraal,* the travels of Sir John Maundeville, the Chronicle of Matthew Paris, Saint Augustine's City of God, and a Breviary. Dame Lovell has no Breviary, and as she could not read it if she had, does not require one; but Margery, having obtained her father's permission to do so, has employed her powers of writing and illuminating in making an elaborate copy of his Breviary for her own use; and from an illumination in this book, not quite finished, representing Judas Iscariot in parti-coloured stockings, and Saint Peter shooting at Malchus with a cross-bow, is Margery now summoned away to the kitchen.

Margery entered the kitchen with a noiseless step, and making a low courtesy to her mother, said in a remarkably clear, silvery voice, 'It pleased you to send for me, good mother.'

'Yea, lass; give a hand to the blanch-porre, for Al'ce knows no more than my shoe; and then see to the grewall, whilst I scrape these almonds for the almond butter.'

Margery quietly performed her task, and spoke to the mortified Al'ce in a much gentler tone than Dame Lovell had done. She was occupied in the preparation of 'eels in grewall,' a kind of eel-stew, when a slender youth, a little older than herself, and attired in the usual costume of a page, entered the kitchen.

'Why, Richard Pynson!' cried Dame Lovell, 'thou art a speedy messenger, in good sooth. I looked not for thee until evensong.'

'I finished mine errand, good mistress,' replied the youth, 'earlier by much than I looked for to do.'

'Hast heard any news, Richard?'

'None mistress mine, unless it be news that a homily will be preached in Bostock Church on Sunday next ensuing, by a regular of Oxenforde, one Master Sastre.'

*The Sangraal was the vessel in which the wine was contained which Christ gave to His disciples, saying, 'Drink ye all of this.' This vessel was supposed to have been brought into England by Joseph of Arimathea; and the "quest" or search for this important relic formed one of the chief adventures of the Knights of the Round Table.

The grewall was standing still, and Margery was listening intently to the words of Richard Pynson, as he carelessly leaned against the wall.

'Will you go, Mistress Margery?' Margery looked timidly at her mother. 'I would like well to go,' said she, 'an' it might stand with your good pleasure.'

'Ay lass, go,' replied Dame Lovell good-naturedly. 'It is seldom we have a homily in Bostock Church. Parson Leggatt is not much given to preaching, meseemeth.'

'I will go with you, Master Pynson,' said Margery, resuming the concoction of the dainty dish before her, 'with a very good will, for I should like greatly to hear the Reverend Father. I never yet heard preach a scholar of Oxenforde.'

Dame Lovell moved away to take the pottage off the fire, and Pynson, approaching Margery, whispered to her, 'They say that this Master Sastre preacheth strange things, like as did Master John Wycliffe a while ago; howbeit, since Holy Church interfereth not, I trow we may well go to hear him.'

Margery's colour rose, and she said in a low voice, 'It will do us no harm, trow?'

'I trust not so,' answered Richard; and, taking up his hunting-bag, he quitted the room.

'Why, Cicely!' exclaimed Dame Lovell, turning round from the pottage, 'had I wist thou hadst put no saffron herein, thou shouldst have had mine hand about thine ears, lass! Bring the saffron presently! No saffron, quotha!'

Before we accompany Margery and Richard to hear the homily of Master Sastre, it might perhaps be as well to prevent any misunderstanding on the part of the reader with respect to Richard Pynson. He is the page of Sir Geoffrey Lovell, and the son of Sir John Pynson of Pynsonlee; for in the year 1395, wherein our story opens, it is the custom for young gentlemen, even the sons of peers, to be educated as page or squire to some neighbouring knight of wealth and respectability. Richard Pynson, therefore, though he may seem to occupy a subordinate position, is in every respect the equal of Margery.

The morning on which Master Sastre was to deliver his homily was one of those delicious spring days which seem the immediate harbingers of summer. Margery, in her black dress, and with a warm hood over her cotehardie, was assisted by her father to mount her pillion, Richard Pynson being already seated before her on the gray palfrey: for in the days of pillions, if the gentleman assisted the lady on her pillion before he mounted himself, he ran imminent risk of knocking her off when he should attempt to mount. They rode leisurely to church, the distance being about two miles, and a little foot page ran beside them charged with the care of the palfrey while they attended the service. Mass was performed by the parish priest, but the scholar from Oxenforde, who sat in the sedilia, where Margery could scarcely see him, took no part in the service beyond reading the Gospel.

The sermons of that day, as a rule, may be spoken of in two classes.—Either the preacher would read a passage of Scripture in Latin, and throw in here and there a few remarks by way of commentary, or else the sermon was a long and dry disquisition upon some of the (frequently very absurd) dogmas of the schoolmen; such as, whether angels were synonymous with spirits, which of the seven principal angels was the chief, how long it took Gabriel to fly from heaven to earth at the Annunciation, at what time of day he appeared, how he was dressed, &c. Sastre's discourse could not be compressed in either of these classes. He read his text first, as usual, in Latin, but then he said:

'And now, brethren and sistren, to declare in the vulgar tongue unto you that have not the tongues, this passage of God's Word as sueth. *The Lamb that was slain is worthy to take vertue and Godhed and wisdom and strengthe and onour and glorie and blessing!*'

What followed was no scholastic disquisition, no commonplace remarks on

*It will readily be seen that all the quotations from Scripture in this story, are necessarily taken from Wycliffe's translation.

the passage chosen. 'The Lamb that was slain' was the beginning and the end of Sastre's discourse. He divided his sermon into the following subjects: 'Who is the Lamb?—how and why was He slain?—why is He worthy?—and, who are the speakers in the text who thus proclaim His worthiness?' He showed them, by a reference to the Mosaic sacrifices, why Christ was called a Lamb; he told them most fully that He died, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God; he placed completely before his audience the full and free and finished nature of His perfect work: he told them that God's love to sinners was such that He gave out of His bosom His own dear Son, the Son of His love, that their sins might be counted His, and that His righteousness might be accounted theirs. And under his last head, he spoke of that holy, happy city, whereinto no sin, nor harm, nor death could ever enter; whose foundations were gems, and whose gates pearls; the dwelling-place of the blessed ones, who having washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, would never rest day nor night in singing the praises of His worthiness.

Sastre also drew the attention of his hearers to the fact that the ascription of praise in the text was made by the angels. 'In all this Book,' remarked he, 'I find nowhere such like laud as this given unto any but God only. The blessed angels do worship unto the Lamb, but I see not any offer for to do worship unto the angels, save only Saint John himself, who doth twice fall down to worship afore the feet of the angel which did show these things unto him. But I find not the angel in any wise gladdened with the same. Nay, the blessed John doth receive a sharp rebuking of his folly: 'See thou that thou do not,' saith the angel; 'worschipe thou God.' Wherefore, good friends, ye may see hence how foolish are they who do worship unto the blessed angels: and how grievous would be the same unto those good spirits of God if they did knowledge it. Whether or no they be witting of such matters, I wis not, for this Book saith nought thereupon; but ye see, friends, that if they wit it not, what are ye the better for praying unto them? Moreover, meseemeth for the same reason, that the blessed Virgin Saint Mary, who is now in heaven with her Son and Lord, Christ, would not be in any wise over well pleased if she wist how men do worship unto her on the earth. And the like, I trow, may be said of all God's saints.'

At the conclusion of his sermon, Sastre leaned forward over the pulpit and spoke in a low, earnest, loving tone. 'Who is here, good friends, asked he, 'that loveth this blessed Lord Jesu, the Lamb that was slain? Who is here who will give up this vile and wretched world for His sake? Who that will see this blessed Lamb whithersoever He goeth, even though He lead along the sharp way called tribulation, or the weary way called prison, or the bitter way called poverty, or even verily through the low and dark door called death? Who is here? Is there none, I beseech you, good friends, hath Christ no souls in this place? When the blessed angels count up the number of the purchased ones, will ye have them leave Bostock out of their reckoning? Shall it be worse than Sodom and Gomorrah, wherein there was one soul that was saved? Is there not one here? Nay, brethren, I trust it is not so. I trust ye will come, yea in numbers, yea in throngs, yea in multitudes, and crowd on Christ to touch the hem of His blessed garment, that is the power of His great mercy. Christ loveth to have folk crowd on Him to cry Him mercy. I read not that ever He complained of the crowding of the multitude. I read not that ever He turned away so much as one poor caitiff sinner who came unto Him. I read not that His lips plained ever of aught but that they came not—that they lacked faith. I am an old man, friends, and in all likelihood shall I never come here again; but I say unto you that I shall scan well the multitude in the white apparel for the faces which be upturned unto me this day. I pray you that I miss them not. I pray God that ye—yea, that every man and woman of you, may be clothed in yon glistening and shene raiment, and may lift up

your voices to cry, 'The Lamb is worthy' in the city of God!'

That sermon was a strange thing to Margery Lovell. Never, from the day of her birth to that day, had she heard as she now heard of the Lamb that was slain. For above a mile of their way home Richard and Margery kept perfect silence, which the latter was the first to break just before they came in sight of Lovell Tower.

'Master Pynson, we have heard strange things to-day.'

'We have, of a truth, Mistress Margery. I wonder whether Master Sastre be right.'

'I wish greatly,' replied Margery, 'that I could get the book wherein I have heard that Master Wycliffe rendered God's word into the vulgar tongue. I could see then whether Master Sastre were right. I would I knew of any man who had that book!'

'Master Carew of Marston told me some time ago,' said Richard, rather hesitatingly, 'that he had the Gospel according to John the Apostle, copied out by a feat scribe from Master Wycliffe's rendering thereof.'

'O Master Pynson!' said Margery entreatingly, 'I pray you that you ask good Master Carew to lend me that book! Tell him that Mistress Margery Lovell will lay her best jewels to pledge that she returneth the book safe. I must see that book, Master Pynson!'

'Softly, I pray you, good Mistress Margery,' answered Richard, smiling; 'it were well to go warily to work; for wot you not that Master Wycliffe—ay, and Master Sastre too—be accounted heretics by some? You would not, trow, fall under the ban of Holy Church?'

'I would with a good will do aught, or bear aught,' replied Margery earnestly, 'so I might wit of a surety that I should be one of those who wear the white apparel, and cry, 'The Lamb is worthy' in the city of God!'

'Well, Mistress Margery,' said Richard soothingly, 'I will do my best for to get you the book, but it may be some time ere I see Master Carew.'

Dame Lovell herself was standing on the steps of Lovell Tower, apparently looking out for the riders, for as soon as they came within hearing distance she raised her voice to say, 'Richard Pynson! Sir Geoffrey would speak with you. Come in quickly, I pray you, and leave the handmaidens to help Mistress Margery from her pillion.'

'I need no help, good mother,' said Margery, as she sprang lightly from her seat, while Richard hurried into the house to find Sir Geoffrey.

'Sir Geoffrey would send Richard Pynson to Marston,' said Dame Lovell, as she preceded Margery into the hall. 'And how liked you Master Sastre, Madge?'

'Very greatly, good mother; never heard I before a homily so brave.'

'That is well,' said Dame Lovell, and disappeared into the kitchen, as Margery ran up stairs to her own room, and brought down in her hand a valuable necklace. Richard came into the banquetting-hall from one door, as Margery made her appearance from the opposite one.

'I have a letter from Sir Geoffrey to bear to Sir Ralph Marston,' said he, 'Have you any commands for Marston, Mistress Margery?' he mischievously added.

'Master Pynson,' said Margery earnestly, in a low tone, 'I pray you to take this jewel to Master Carew, and to leave it in pledge with him, in case he will lend me the book. If he value it at more than this, I can send other jewels; but, Master Pynson, bring me the book!'

Richard placed the necklace for safety in the bosom of his doublet, and answered, 'Fear not, good mistress; if I bring you not the book, it shall not be for lack of entreaty. Only hope not too much, for I may chance to fail.'

'Pray God he lend you the book!' was her only answer.

Not Trustworthy.

One afternoon a gentleman was shown into Mr. Lamar's library.

'Mr. Lamar,' asked the visitor, 'do you know a lad by the name of Gregory Bassett?'

'I guess so,' replied Mr. Lamar, with a smile. 'That is the young man,' he added, nodding toward Gregory.

The latter was a boy aged about fourteen. He was drawing a map at the wide table near the window.

'A bright boy, I should judge,' commented the visitor, looking over the top of his glasses. 'He applied for a clerkship in my mill, and referred me to you. His letter of application shows that he is a good penman. How is he at figures?'

'Rapid and correct,' was the reply. 'That's good! Honest is he?'

'Oh, yes,' answered Mr. Lamar. 'The work is not hard, and he will be rapidly promoted, should he deserve it. Oh! one question more, Mr. Lamar; is the boy trustworthy?'

'I regret to say that he is not,' was the grave reply.

'Eh!' cried the visitor. 'Then I don't want him.'

That ended the interview.

'O uncle!' cried Gregory, bursting into tears.

He had set his heart upon obtaining the situation, and was very much disappointed over the result.

'Gregory, I could not deceive the gentleman,' Mr. Lamar said, in a low tone, more regretful than stern. 'You are not trustworthy, and it is a serious failing; nay, a fault rather. Three instances occurred, within as many weeks, which sorely tried my patience, and cost me loss of time and money.'

Mr. Lamar's tone changed into one of reproach, and his face was dark with displeasure.

'I gave you some money to deposit in the bank,' he resumed. 'you loitered until the bank was closed, and my note went to protest. One evening I told you to close the gate at the barn. You neglected to do so. The colt got out through the night, fell into a quarry, and broke its leg. I had to shoot the pretty little thing, to put an end to its suffering!'

Gregory lifted his hand in a humiliated way.

'Next I gave you a letter to mail. You loitered to watch a man with a tame bear. The nine o'clock mail will do, you thought. But it didn't, being a way mail, and not a through mail. On the following day I went fifty miles to keep the appointment I had made. The gentleman was not there to meet me, because he had not received my letter. I lost my time, and missed all the benefit of what would have been to me a very profitable transaction. It is not too late for you to reform; and unless you do reform, your life will prove a failure.'

The lesson was not lost upon Gregory. He succeeded in getting rid of his heedless ways, and became prompt, precise, trustworthy.

Vacation Visits.

One of the principal advantages of vacation outings is that of change—change of companionship, change of scene, change of food, and change of air. To some the scenes and associations and breathings of the seaside are a grateful change. To others the dim forests, the balsamic air of the pine woods, the breezy perches on the mountain top, are the necessary changes to give a new impetus to the sluggish blood and new ideas to the tired brain. In either case a sense of rest and freedom from care must accompany the change of locality, or all the benefit of the effort is lost. The "shop" must be left behind.

But the air and sun are the great curatives. The seaside goes imagine that the surf bath is the reason and secret of restored energy; but they give too little credit to the open-eyed sun and free blowing air of the seashore. An air bath and sun bath have as much to do with renovation of jaded human frames as the direct contact of salt water.

I have often noticed that the man who would have done such wonderful things if he had been there, never gets there.—Josh Billings.

There are 625 streets in Winnipeg, the total length of which is 290 miles. Within the city limits there are 1 1/2 mile of Assiniboine and ten miles of Red River frontage. There are 11 miles of railway, besides some 15 miles of siding. The present city limits comprise an area of 17,774 miles, or about 25 square miles. It is 7 miles from north to south, and 1 1/2 from east to west. There are about 50,000 surveyed lots.