

Family Reading.

Comfort one Another.

Comfort one another:
For the way is growing dreary,
The feet are often weary,
And the heart is very sad.
There is heavy burden-bearing;
When it seems that none are caring,
And we half forget that ever we were glad.

Comfort one another:
With the hand clasp close and tender,
With sweetness love can render,
And looks of friendly eyes.
Do not wait with grace unspoken,
While life's daily bread is broken:
Gentle speech is oft like manna from the skies.

Comfort one another:
There are words of music ringing
Down the ages, sweet as singing
Of the happy choirs above.
Ransomed saint and mighty angel,
Lift the grand, deep-voiced evangel,
Where forever they are praising the eternal love.

Comfort one another:
By the hope of Him who sought us
In our peril—Him who bought us,
Paying with his precious blood;
By the faith that will not alter,
Trusting strength that will not falter,
Leaning on the One divinely good.

Comfort one another:
Let the grave gloom lie beyond you,
While the Spirit's words remind you
Of the home beyond the tomb,
Where no more is pain or parting,
Ever's flush or tear-drop starting,
But the presence of the Lord, and for all
his people room.

—Independent.

New Select Serial.

MISTRESS MARGERY:
A TALE OF THE LOLLARDS.

BY EMILY SARAH HOLT,
Author of "Sister Rose," "Ashcliffe Hall," etc.

CHAPTER II.

A LATE DINNER.

"And there is something in this book
That makes all care be gone,
And yet I weep—I know not why—
As I go reading on!"

—MARY HOWITT.

Margery went into the kitchen, and helped to prepare supper, under the directions of Dame Lovell, and then she returned to her own room, and tried to finish her illumination of Peter and Malchus; but she could not command her thoughts sufficiently to paint well, so much was her heart set on "the book." Therefore she sat with her hands folded in her lap, and tried to recall Sastre's sermon. Then came supper-time, and Margery went down to the banqueting-hall; and after supper, having begged her parents' blessing before retiring to rest, she came back to her chamber. But she did not attempt to undress. When the sun set, a red glory above the tree-tops, she was watching at her casement for Richard Pynson; and when the silver moon and the little golden stars had taken the sun's place in the heavens, she was watching still. At last she heard the sound of a horse's feet, and stole softly down the private staircase which led from her room to the hall. As Richard entered the hall, Margery softly murmured his name.

"What, Mistress Margery!" he cried in astonishment. "You here! You have watched well for the book, and—there it is."

—And Richard drew from the bag slung over his shoulder a small quarto volume.

"Oh, thanks, good Master Pynson, a thousand thanks!" cried Margery in delight. "And how long season may I keep the book?"

"Master Carew said," returned Pynson, "that he asked not jewels for the safe-keeping of the book for the word of a Lovell was enough," and Richard drew the necklace from his bosom and handed it to Margery. "He will lend the book for one month's time. He said, furthermore, that he lent it, not because he loved it not, but because he prayed that you, Mistress Margery, might know and love it too."

"Amen!" was Margery's answer, as she folded the book to her bosom, and crept softly back to her chamber—but not to bed. The first thing she did was to take off her petticoat and cotehardie, and to put on a loose dressing-gown of gray serge. Then she divested herself of her head-dress, and

allowed her fair hair to flow down over her shoulders without restraint. Having thus rendered herself comfortable, she seated herself in a carved chair, furnished with an ample cushion, and proceeded to examine the book.

The book was bound in leather, dark brown in colour, and simple in workmanship. It was clasped with two small clasps of common metal, washed over with silver; the leaves were of vellum, and on the first page was a badly-drawn and violently-coloured illumination of Christ and the Samaritan woman. Stops (as a rule) it had not, except a full stop here and there; and capitals there were none, with the occasional exception of a letter in red ink. Notwithstanding this, the manuscript, being written in a clear small hand, was very legible to eyes accustomed to read only black letter. At first Margery felt as if she were doing wrong in reading the book, but her curiosity drew her on, as well as her earnest desire to know more of those "strange things" of which Sastre had spoken in his sermon. Margery had taken the precaution of fastening the door before she commenced the study of the book. After the first glance which had made her acquainted with the particulars above noticed, she opened the book at random near the middle, and her eye fell on the following words:—

"Be not your herte afayed, ne drede it; ye bileuen in God, and bileuee ye in me. In the hous of my Fadir ben manye dwellingis; if any thing lasse, I hadde seid to you; for I go to make redy to you a place. And if I go to make redy to you a place, efsone I come, and I schal take you to my self that where I am ye be."

Never before had Margery read words like these. "Be not your herte afayed!" Why the one feeling which she was taught was more acceptable to God than any other, was fear. "In the house of my Fadir ben manye dwellingis." Margery clasped her hands above her head, and laid head and hands upon the open volume; and in the agony of her earnestness she cried aloud, "O Lamb that was slain, hast thou not made ready a dwelling for Margery Lovell!"

Margery read on, and the more she read the more she wondered. The Church did not teach as this book did, and both could not be right. Which, then, was wrong? How could the Church be wrong, which was the depository of God's truth? And yet, how could the holy apostle be wrong in reporting the words of Christ?

Many times over during that night did Margery's thoughts arrange themselves in this manner. At one time she thought that nothing could possibly supersede the infallibility of the Church; at another she saw the complete impossibility of anything being able to stand for a moment against the infallibility of God. The only conclusion at which she could arrive was a determination to read the volume and judge for herself. She read on. "I am weye, treuthe, and luf; no man cometh to the Fadir but by me." Were these words the words of Christ? And what way had Margery been taught? Obedience to the Church, humility, penances, alms-giving—work always, Christ never. Could these be the right way? She went on, till the tears ran down her cheeks like rain—till her heart throbbed and her soul glowed with feelings she had never felt before—till the world, and life, and death, and things present, all seemed to be nothing; and Christ alone seemed to be every thing. She read on, utterly oblivious of the flight of time, and regardless that darkness had given place to light, until the fall of something in the room below, and the voice of Dame Lovell calling for Cicely, suddenly warned her that the house was astir. Margery sprang up, her heart beating now for a different reason. She hurriedly closed the book, and secreted it in a private cupboard, of which she alone had the key, and where she generally kept her jewels, and any little trinkets on which she set a special value. Margery's next act, I fear, was indefensible; for it was to throw the cover and pillows of her bed into confusion, that the maids might suppose it had been occupied as usual. She then noiselessly unfastened the door, and

proceeded with her dressing, so that when, a few minutes after, Dame Lovell came panting up the stairs, and lifted the latch, the only thing she noticed was Margery, standing before the mirror, and fastening up her hair with what she called a pin, and what we should, I suspect, designate a metallic skewer.

"What, Madge, not donned yet?" was Dame Lovell's greeting. "How thou hast overslept thyself, girl! Dost know it is already five of the clock, and thy father and I have been stirring above an hour?"

"Is it so late, of a truth?" asked Margery in dismay. "I cry you mercy, good mother!"

And Margery was thinking what excuse she could use by way of apology, when Dame Lovell's next words set her at rest, as they showed that the mind of that good lady was full of other thoughts than her daughter's late rising.

"Grand doings, lass!" said she, as she sat down in the carved arm-chair. "Grand doings, of a truth, Madge!"

"Where, good mistress mine?"

"Where? said Dame Lovell, lifting her eyebrows. "Why, here, in Lovell Tower. Where should they be else? Richard Pynson was so late of returning from Marston that he saw not thy father until this morn'g."

"I heard him come."

"Wert awake?"

"Yea. I was awake a long season!"

"Poor lass! said her mother. "No marvel thou art late. But hearken to what I was about to tell thee. Sir Ralph Marston and his kinsman, the Lord Marnell, dine with us to-day?"

"To day?"

"Yea, to-day. Dear, dear, dear! What folk must they be that live in London town! Marry, Sir Ralph sent word by Richard Pynson, praying us not to dine until one of the clock, for that the Lord Marnell is not used to it at an earlier hour. I marvel when they sup! I trow it is not until all Christian folk be a-bed!"

"Dwells the Lord Marnell in London?" inquired Margery with surprise; for Margery was more astonished and interested to hear of a nobleman from London dining with her parents than a modern young lady would be if told that a Chinese mandarin was expected.

"Yea, truly, in London dwells he, and is of the bedchamber to our Lord the King, and a great man, Madge! He thee down when thou art dressed, child, and make up thy choicest dishes. But good Saint Christopher! how shall I do from seven to one of the clock without eating? I will bid Cicely serve a void at ten."

And so saying, Dame Lovell bustled down stairs as quickly as her corpulence would allow her, and Margery followed a few minutes later. While the former was busy in the hall, ordering fresh rushes to be spread, and the tables set, Margery repaired to the ample kitchen, where, summoning the maids to assist her, and tying a large coarse apron around her, she proceeded to concoct various dishes, reckoned at that time particularly choice. There are few books more curious than a cookery-book five hundred years old. Our forefathers appear to have used joints of meat much less frequently than the smaller creatures, whether flesh or fowl, hares, rabbits, chickens, capons, &c. Of fish, eels excepted, they ate little or none out of Lent. Potatoes, of course, they had none; and rice was so rare that it figured as a 'spice' but to make up for this, they ate, apparently, almost every green thing that grew in their gardens, rose-leaves not excepted. Of salt they had an unutterable abhorrence. Sugar existed, but it was very expensive, and honey was often used instead. Pepper and cloves were employed in immense quantities. The article which appears to have held with them the corresponding place to that of salt with us, and which was never omitted in any dish, no matter what its other component parts, was saffron. In corroboration of these remarks, I append one very curious receipt,—a dish which formed one of the principal covers on Sir Geoffrey Lovell's table:—

FARSURE OF HARE.

"Take hares and fleech [flay] hom, and wash hom in brot of fleshe with

the blode; then boyle the brothe and ecome [skim] hit wel and do hit in a pot, and more brot thereto. And take onyons and mynce hom and put hom in the pot, and set hit on the fyre and let hit sethe. [boil:] and take bred and stepe hit in wyn and vynesgur, and drawe hit up and do hit in the pottle, and powder of pepur and clowes, and maces hole, [whole:] and pynes, and raysnyges of corance, [currants:] then take and parboyle wel the hare, and choppe him on gobettes [small pieces] and put him into a faire [clean] urthen pot; and do thereto clean grese, and set hit on the fyre, and stere hit welle tyl hit be wel fryed; then caste hit in the pot to the brot, and do therto powder of canel [cinnamon] and sugur; and let hit boyle togedur, and colour hit wyth saffron, and serve hit forthe."

It will be noticed from this that our ancestors had none of our vulgar prejudices with respect to onions, neither had they any regard to the Scriptural prohibition of blood. The utter absence of all prescription of quantities in these receipts is delightfully indefinite.

There were many other dishes to this important dinner beside the 'farsure of hare;' and on this occasion most of the rabbits and chickens were entire, and not 'chopped on gobettes;' for the feast was 'for a lord,' and lords were permitted to eat whole birds and beasts, while the less privileged commonly had to content themselves with 'gobettes.'

When Margery had concluded her preparations for dinner, she went into the garden to gather rosemary and flowers, which she disposed in various parts of the hall, laying large bunches of rosemary in all available places. All was now ready, and Margery washed her hands, took off her apron, and ran up into her own room, to pin on her shoulder a 'quintise,' in other words a long streamer of cherry-coloured-ribbon.

The guests arrived on horseback about half-past twelve, and Richard Pynson ushered them into the hall, and ran into the kitchen to inform Dame Lovell and Margery, adding that "he pitied Lord Marnell's horse," a remark the significance of which became apparent when the ladies presented themselves in the banqueting-hall. Sir Geoffrey was already there, conversing with his guests. Margery expected to find Lord Marnell similar to his cousin, Sir Ralph Marston, whom she already knew, and who was a pleasant, gentlemanly man of about forty years of age, always joking with everybody, and full of fun. But she did not expect what she now saw.

Gladstone as a Boy.

John Gladstone, the father of the present Premier of Great Britain, liked that his children should exercise their judgment by stating the why and wherefore of every opinion they offered, and a college friend of William's who visited him during the summer of 1829, furnishes amusing pictures of the family customs in that house, "where the children and their parents argued upon everything." They would debate as to whether the trout should be boiled or broiled, whether a window should be opened, and whether it was likely to be fine or wet next day. It was always perfectly good-humored, but curious to a stranger because of the care which all of the disputants took to advance no propositions, even to the prospects of a rain, rashly.

One day Thomas Gladstone knocked down a wasp with his handkerchief, and was about to crush it on the table, when the father started the question as to whether he had the right to kill the insect; and this point was discussed with as much seriousness as if a human life had been at stake. When at last it was adjudged that death was deserved because it was a trespasser in the drawing-room, a common enemy and a danger there, it was found that the insect had crawled from under the handkerchief, and was flying away with a sniggering sort of buzz as if to mock them all.

On another occasion William Gladstone and his sister Mary disputed as to where a certain picture ought to be hung. An old Scotch servant came in

with a ladder and stood irresolute while the argument progressed; but as Miss Mary would not yield, William gallantly ceased from speech, though unconvinced of course. The servant then hung up the picture where the young lady ordered; but when he had done this he crossed the room and hammered a nail into the opposite wall. He was asked why he did this. "Aweel, miss, that'll do to hang the picture on when ye'll have come rooned to Master Willie's opeenion." The family generally did come round to William's opinion, for the resources of his tongue-fencing were wonderful, and his father, who admired a clever feint as much as a straight thrust, never failed to encourage him by saying, "Hear, hear! well said; well put, Willie," if the young debater bore himself well in the encounter.

Is Drunkenness a Disease?

We answer No. It causes disease, much disease. It is the prolific source of many maladies, but it is no more a disease in itself than foul air or impure water is a disease. We regret to see in print a paper read last summer before the Social Science Association at Saratoga Springs, by Dr. T. D. Crothers, of Hartford, Conn., on "The Disease of Inebriety." We regret it because the writer maintains that inebriety is a disease to be treated as such. He makes an earnest plea to lay aside all theories of religious teachers and reformers, and examine inebriety from the side of exact science. He repudiates the 'theory' that 'drunkenness is a vice and moral defect a spiritual disorder that is curable by conversion, by the pledge, and by rousing up the will-power.' He insists that the conditions of inebriety are physical, not moral; his words are these: "Instead of the heart being deceitful and desperately wicked, it is a diseased and defective organism."

To the array of facts which the author presents in support of his doctrine, it is sufficient to oppose tens of thousands of well-known instances in which the so-called disease has been cured 'by conversion,' 'by the pledge,' and 'by the will-power.' Epidemics like the cholera have never been arrested, and thousands of those dying in its power were never cured by moral means. The preacher or reformer who should propose to stop the ravages of the plague by moral means would be justly esteemed a fanatic, while it is very true that moral means may be wisely and efficiently employed to mitigate the conditions and diminish the probabilities of disease. The man who leads a temperate and orderly life will be less likely to fall a victim to the epidemic than the dissolute and profligate, and his protection is therefore to be credited to his moral character. And so we have a combination of the moral and physical which must be considered in the treatment of the question. It is very true that drunkenness induces disease, and that disease may become hereditary, and pervade successive generations. But in the first instance it was the result of the voluntary yielding to the seductive temptations of a vice which has destroyed its millions, and should be regarded with the more horror when we know that it is to curse and ruin multitudes yet unborn.

We are well-aware that writers who take the view of Dr. Crothers are not likely to be affected by arguments drawn from the Bible. But there is no book (in this world or any other) that has more good common sense in it than this same old work. The knowledge of human nature in all ages, climes and conditions, that it exhibits is beyond all the compilations of philosophy and science; and from the early pages of that book to the last, the habit of intemperance is treated as a sin, a vice, a moral evil, to be voluntarily forsaken, repented of or punished; and at last the penalty of the fire that is never quenched, is pronounced on drunkards with other sinners who violate the laws of God and perish. When Noah, rescued from the flood, planted a vineyard and got drunk on the wine, it is not intimated that his conduct was disease, and no sane man ever supposed it was. But if Dr. Crothers is right, the erring patriarch was a sick man in need of medical treatment. Dr. Crothers says, 'the disease of inebriety

may be termed suicidal insanity. It is an affection of the central nervous system, in which the dominant insane impulse is to use certain narcotic agents for their effect, irrespective of all consequences.' This definition may satisfy the materialist, but we who regard man as a morally responsible being, endowed by his Creator with certain inalienable rights, among which are the freedom of the will and the pursuit of happiness will never admit that intemperance is not a sin before God, as human law makes it a crime before the judges. The whole system of moral responsibility must be revised, and especially that just law must be abolished which holds a drunken man liable for murder committed while he was drunk, if it be true that drunkenness is not a vice but a disease. N. Y. Observer.

Captain Robert.

Robert was kept in the house by a cold, so he flattened his nose against the glass and watched a military procession pass by. They were in very gay uniform with very bright buttons, and kept step beautifully.

Robert watched until the last glimmer of their brightness disappeared around a corner, then turned with a sigh to watch his mother place pies in the oven, and say to her:—

"I would like to be a soldier."

"Very well," said his mother; "then I would be."

Robert stared at her a few minutes and then said:—

"Would be what?"

"Why, a soldier. Wasn't that what you said you wanted to be?"

"Well, but how could I be?"

"Easy enough; that is if you put your mind to it. A soldier's life is never an easy one, of course. Clare, you may hand me that other pie; I think I can make room for it."

"But mother, I don't know what you mean," Robert said.

"Don't? You haven't forgotten the verse we talked about so long? 'Greater is he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.' It takes real soldier like fighting to rule a spirit, I can tell you."

"Oh," said Robert; and he flattened his nose against the glass again and thought.

"But, mother," he said at last, "I didn't mean that kind. I would like to be a captain and have soldiers under me."

"Nothing easier," his mother said shutting the oven door with a satisfactory air. "There are your ten fingers, and your eyes, and your ears, and that troublesome tongue that hates to obey. I pity any captain who has as troublesome ones."

Robert laughed. He had had so many talks with his mother that he understood her very well; yet this was a new way of putting it. He stood there a good while thinking about it, deciding that he would be a captain forthwith, and that his soldiers should obey perfectly. Then he wondered what orders he should have to give them first.

Poor fellow! In less than ten minutes from that time he knew.

He went to the sitting-room to find that baby Carrie had been there before him. There lay his birthday books his beautiful "Family Flight" on the floor some of the loveliest pictures in it torn into bits. His photograph album was on the sofa; but chubby fingers had tugged at mamma's picture until it lay loose and ruined, and papa's page was gone entirely.

Oh, how angry was Captain Robert! He wanted to run after Carrie and slap her naughty fingers; she was almost two years old, and ought to know better. He wanted to run to his mother, and with red face and angry voice to tell his story of wrong, and demand that Carrie be whipped. He wanted to bury his head in the sofa cushions and cry just as loud as he could roar. Why did he do none of those things? Just because he remembered in time that he was a captain, and had soldiers to obey.

"Halt!" he said to his feet, as they were about to rush away; and they instantly obeyed. "Stop!" he said to the tears, as they began to rush in torrents up to his eyes; and back they all went, save one little straggler which rolled down his nose, and was instantly wiped out of existence. In short, the boy proved himself a good captain, for that time at least. He even sent his feet upstairs presently with a rosy cheeked apple for Carrie, and bade his arms give a very loving hug, which they immediately did.

Mamma found out all about it, as mamma always do; and when papa came home at night, what did he do but bow low and say:

"Captain Robert, I am proud to salute you. I hear you have fought a battle and won a victory to-day."—Pansy.