

Family Reading.

Unequal.

In reply to "Alone with Conscience." BY AUGUSTA MOORE.

To sit alone with his "conscience," In the land where time shall cease, Is all that many a sinner Would ask to assure his peace. His conscience he can manage; He scared it long ago— That is, if he ever had one; And he does not surely know. And if you show him clearly, That the only judgment sure, Is that of conscience, gladly That judgment he'll endure. There hardly lives a robber Or a murderer in the land Who would not jump with pleasure That pain alone to stand. Only the tender-hearted Much suffering would bear; And the judgment-day, if that, will be A most unjust affair. What conscience has the villain, Who trades in all that's vile? What conscience has the traitor, With murder in his smile? But young, unthinking sinners, With hasty, generous heart— Oh, theirs would be the torture, The dire, eternal smart. For such it were sufficient, With conscience all alone, To sit and talk forever; But only make it known That there's no God Almighty, Who sees and hears and cares, And will "avenge," and ruin On all that's righteous stares. For men are—men; And Satan can hardly be more base Than men who fear not judgment Upon a godless race. But God is God! Forever His promises endure; And all His awful threatnings Will prove as true and sure.

New Select Serial.

MISTRESS MARGERY:

A TALE OF THE LOLLARDS.

BY EMILY SARAH HOLT,

Author of "Sister Rose," "Ascliff Hall," etc.

CHAPTER XII.

EASTWARD HO!

"Whether he go to East or West, With Christ he always is at home." —NEWTON.

For a few minutes after Richard finished reading the letter, there was silence, unbroken save by the sound of weeping, in the old hall. Friar Andrew cried like a child. Dame Lovell, too, wept profusely, especially at the passage in which Margery begged her forgiveness, and sobbed forth that she had nothing to forgive her. Richard had hard work to read. He heard her voice in every line, and when he came to the one sentence addressed to himself, he very nearly broke down altogether. After that long pause, Richard, who had been sitting with his head buried in his hands, looked up and spoke.

"Mistress, you mind that I did promise you not to go hence save with your good will?" "Well, Richard?" "May I have the same, good mistress, for a season?" "Where wouldst go, lad? Dost want to see thy father I meant not to let thee from going home at times, so thou leave me not wholly." "You do misconceive me, mistress. I trust soothly, to go but for a season, though mayhap a long one; but not home. An' you will give me leave, and I have my father's goodwill to it, I shall go abroad." "Go where, Richard?" asked Dame Lovell in some alarm and no little astonishment. "Anywhere," he answered listlessly, "that is far enough away. I shall wend unto the East country." "Eh, Richard! thou wilt be slain of robbers!" cried Friar Andrew. "All yon country is filled full of Saracens and heathens, who think no more of

shedding Christian blood than of cooking a capon."

"I shall be slain, good father, I trow, if I stay here. There is no peace hereaway in England for them who read God's Word, and I have read it. I should quickly be indicted, I ween, for a Lollard, an' I stayed. Master Carew told me yestreen, that there were spies hereabouts, and he did trow he was suspected. And if they take him, they will come next to me."

"Richard! Richard!" cried Dame Lovell. "Thou frightest me, lad! but wilt thou go, soothly? I wis not how to leave thee do so."

"Dear mistress," said Richard, in a low tone, "I pray God and you to pardon me, but I fear I am only a poor caitiff coward. I could not bear the fiery ordeal which Margery has borne. I will confess to you, good lady, that night and day I do pray God to spare me the same. I had better go, ere I am tried, and perchance fail and deny my Master. I will give you to wit of my welfare, in case I should meet any Palmers on their way home: and maybe I can come back, an' there should rise a king who shall give us leave to live."

"Well, my lad! I trow I must not let thee," said Dame Lovell in a pained tone. "I wis not how to do without thee, Richard; but I ween I should sorrow more to keep thee and bring thee to grief, than in leaving thee go away from me."

The following day brought a servant in Lord Marnell's livery, with a letter to Richard.

"To the hands of Master Richard Pynson, at Lovell Tower give thee."

GOOD MASTER PYNSON.—I pray you for to look warily unto your ways; for I hear by messengers from London that you be suspected for a Lollard, and Abbot Bilson hath your name on his list of evil affected unto the Church. If you can wend for a time unto some other country, I trow you would find you safety in so doing. I beseech you burn this letter, or it may do me mischief.

"It hath come into my mind that Madge did name unto me your desire of knighthood. If such be still your wish, I pray you make use of me in this matter. Let me wit by the bearer of these your pleasure herein, and if you desire to watch this even, I will meet you in Bostock Church early on the morrow."

"I set out on my way to London to-morrow."

"Commend me in all lowly fashion to my good mother; and with God's blessing and mine to the child, I rest, your loving friend,

"R. MARNELL."

Richard read Lord Marnell's letter to Dame Lovell, and then at once put it in the fire. He determined to accept the kind offer thus made to him; and accordingly he sent word by the messenger that he would be ready to meet Lord Marnell in Bostock Church, at an early hour on the following morning.

Knighthood was then conferred in two ways. A knight-banneret was one created on the field of battle. An ordinary knight was required to be of good family and of a suitable age, and the accolade was given him after a night's fasting and watching in some church. Other but less important ceremonies were also observed. This latter course was necessarily the one chosen by Richard. At five o'clock on the following morning, Lord Marnell met him in Bostock Church, and gave him the stroke on the shoulder, with the flat of his sword, which was required to make its recipient a knight. Richard thanked Lord Marnell fervently for his warning, and also for his kindness in offering him knighthood; and told him that he had already resolved to go abroad, before receiving his letter.

"I think you will do well," said he; "but I pray you, Sir Richard, to lose

"Knighthood is now conferred only by the Sovereign, who is 'the fountain of honour,' or by a viceroy, as representing the Sovereign. In ancient times, however, 'a knight could make a knight.' When the Duke of Suffolk was taken prisoner in battle by a simple squire, he asked, before surrendering his sword, 'Are you a knight?' 'No,' was the answer. 'Kneel, then,' replied Suffolk, 'that I may make you one; for I will never give up my sword to a squire.' The squire knelt, and Suffolk knighted his captor, and then delivered his sword to one who, by the laws of chivalry, had now become his equal.

no time, for spies be about in Marston even now."

Late that night, after an affectionate farewell to Dame Lovell and Friar Andrew, and a warm kiss to little Geoffrey, who was fast asleep, Sir Richard Pynson set out on his long and perilous journey. Dame Lovell sent with him one of her own servants, a man whom she knew would imperil his own life sooner than that of Richard; and he returned to her in a few days with the welcome tidings that he had seen Richard safely embarked on a vessel for La Rochelle, with Master Carew's son, a youth of about eighteen, as his squire. The servant had, however, more and less agreeable news than this to tell; for as he passed through Marston, he had been told that Master Carew was arrested, and on his journey to London under a strong guard.

So set in the bitter persecution, which was to last for many weary years.

A full twelvemonth had passed since Richard's departure. Of Lord Marnell, Dame Lovell had neither seen nor heard anything more. Alice Jordan had arrived, to little Geoffrey's great delight; but she had only been able to report the return of her master to London, as she had left that place the day after his arrival. Dame Lovell fulfilled her promise of promotion for Margery's humble but faithful friend, who was henceforth generally addressed in the house as 'Mistress' Alice. Little Geoffrey, though somewhat consoled by Alice's appearance, missed Richard sorely; and demanded of his grandmother at least once a day, 'when he would come back?'

The family and household were seated at supper, on a summer afternoon in the year 1402, when the sound of a horn outside the moat sent one of the farm-servants hurriedly to the gate. He returned, saying, 'A holy Palmer, good mistress, seeking entrance.'

"A Palmer! bring him in speedily, good Hodge!" exclaimed Dame Lovell. "Blessed is a house whereinto entereth a Palmer,—and mayhap he may give us to wit of Richard."

The Palmer was attired in a long coat of coarse brown frieze, with a large flapped hat, not unlike that of a coal-heaver. He was conducted to the high table, where Friar Andrew served him with meat, and put all manner of questions to him. He had come, he said, from Damascus, where he had met with a friend of theirs, one Sir Richard Pynson, and he brought a packet from him; which he thereupon took from his wallet, and delivered unto Dame Lovell's hands. It was a large packet, and evidently contained something more than merely a letter. Dame Lovell was highly delighted, particularly when, on opening the parcel, she drew out a magnificent piece of baudekin, one of the richest dress-stuffs then made, and only to be procured from Constantinople. Beside this the packet only contained a letter, which Dame Lovell was sorely puzzled how to read. There was nobody at Lovell Tower who could read except Friar Andrew, and he, as has been previously stated, was not by any means a first-class scholar. However, Dame Lovell passed him the letter, and after spending some time in the examination of it, he announced that he thought he could read it, 'for the lad had written the letters great, like a good lad, as he always was.' Richard had, indeed, purposely done so, because he anticipated that Friar Andrew would have to read it. The Palmer interposed, saying that he could read well and offered to read the letter; but this Dame Lovell civilly declined, because she thought there might be secrets in the letter, and she did not know whether the Palmer were to be trusted. Friar Andrew was mechanically retiring into one of the deep windows, but Dame Lovell stopped him, and requested him to follow her to her own room. She gathered up her baudekin, and left the servants to entertain the Palmer, who she gave orders should be feasted with the best in the house.

"Now, father," said Dame Lovell, when she had Friar Andrew and the letter in her own apartment, "Now read, I pray thee; but we will have no eavesdroppers, and though Palmers be holy men, yet may they carry tales."

Friar Andrew sat down, cleared his throat, and began to read rather grandiloquently. He read syllable by syllable like a child, and every now and then stumbled over a hard word. As to the names of places, he declared himself unable to read those at all. I therefore propose to give the letter, not as Andrew read it, but as Richard wrote it.

"To the hands of the very worthy Dame, my good lady and mistress, Dame Agnes Lovell, of Lovell Tower, be these delivered with all convenient speed."

"DEAR MISTRESS AND MY WORTHY DAME,—In as humble and lowly wise as may be, I commend myself to your kindly favour, hoping that these may find you in health, as they leave me presently. I do you to wit, good mistress, that I have arrived safely, by the grace of our Lord, at Damascus, which is a very fair and rich city, and full of all manner of merchandise; and I have been by Byzantium, and have seen all the holy relics there kept; to wit, the cross of our Lord, and His coat, and the sponge and reed wherewith the heathen Jews [Cursed be they!] interposed Friar Andrew did give Him to drink, and more blessed relics else than I have the time to write of the which natless be named, as I think, in the travels of Sir John Maundeville. This city of Damascus is very great, and there be about the same so fair gardens as I never did see at any other place; moreover, Saint Paul here dwelt, and was a leech. Also I give you to wit, good lady, that I look by our Lord's help, to go on to the holy city of Jerusalem, the which is from here five days journey. And I send you herein a fine piece of baudekin, the bravest I could see, the which I bought in the market at Byzantium, to make you a rare gown for feast-days. Moreover, I beseech you to say unto good Father Andrew (I count he will read this letter, and therefore do say unto himself) I would fain have sent you somewhat likewise, good father, but as yet I found not to my hand aught that would like you; but I look, when I shall be in Jerusalem, if it be the Lord's pleasure that I come therein, for to get you some relics, by the which I wis you will set great store. [Thou art a good lad,] said the friar."

Edmund Carew is in health, and is a faithful squire, and a passing honest fellow; but he doth long for to hear news of his father, and my heart also is oftentimes sore to wit what is become of mine old friend. If you shall hear of anyone who wendeth unto the Land of Promise, I beseech you send us news herein. Likewise would I fain know somewhat of the Lord Marnell, who I guess hath now returned to London. Is Geoffrey yet with you? I pray you ask him if he remembereth me, for an' he doth, I will bring him a brave thing when I shall come: and God's blessing and mine be with the sweet heart, and keep him ever from all evil.

"I beseech you commend me humbly unto the Lord Marnell, if you see him or send to him, and also unto Sir Ralph Marston, when you shall have speech of him; and greet well all the maidens and servants from me. Pray salute also Mistress Katherine on my part, and specially Mistress Alice Jordan. Moreover, I beseech you to make my most humble duty and service unto my good knight my father, and my good lady my mother, and salute from me lovingly my sistren, who I trust be all in health. I met this holy Palmer at a church called Our Lady of Sardenak, the which is five miles from this city; and he hath promised me for to deliver my letters with safety, and in all convenient haste. I have written also unto my father by him; wherefore, if he come unto you first, as I count he will do, I pray you for my sake to put him in the way to Pynsonlee."

"I give you to wit also, good mistress that in this country be some men who call themselves Jacobites,—to wit, disciples of Saint James,—and they be right Lollards, holding that a man should make confession to God and no wise unto the priest; and also read they God's Word in their own tongue, and not in Latin, the which giveth me much marvel how they came in this place, for they do wit nothing of us and of our country. Nathless, I trow that God learneth. His own alike in all lands and at divers times."

"I pray you specially, good mistress, that you give me to wit how I may come home. Doth King Henry still reign? and is he yet evil affected toward the Lollards? for so long as things be in this case, I dare in no wise take my way unto you."

"And now, dear mistress, I pray God to have you in His holy keeping, to the which I commit you all."

"From your very humble serving-man and loving friend,

RICHARD PYNSON.

Edmund Carew prayeth me for to make his lowly commendations unto you. Written at Damascus, this xxvii day of November.

This was the first and last letter which Dame Lovell received from Richard Pynson. Probably he wrote many others, but they never came to hand. Friar Andrew, with the greatest difficulty, managed to write back a few lines. His letter took him a whole week to compose and transfer to paper. It was written in short sentences, like a child's epistle; and nearly every sentence commenced with Richard's name. Friar Andrew informed his correspondent that all parties named in his letter were well, that Geoffrey was still with them, sent his loving commendations, and said he remembered him, and would never forget him as long as he lived; that of Lord Marnell they had only heard a rumor which they could not believe, of his having joined an insurrection in the West; that Master Carew was had up to London and strictly examined by the council, but that his answers were so ingeniously evasive that they could lay hold of nothing, and nothing had been found in his house which could criminate him; he had accordingly been dismissed with a caution. Sir Ralph Marston had privately declared that 'the old fox must have hidden his Lollard books in some uncommonly safe place, for I wis he had some.' Friar Andrew concluded his letter with a malediction upon 'evil companions,' by which he meant the anti-Lollard party; for though Andrew cared not a straw about the matter of opinion, he could never forgive them for his favourite's death. He also besought Richard to 'look well to his ways, and have thought to do with heathen Jews and Saracens, who all worshipped mawmetis,† and to come home as soon as he could,—which however must not be just now."

Friar Andrew then folded his elaborate and arduous piece of composition, and directed it in remarkable characters and singular spelling, as follows:—

"To y hondes of y verayge gode knyghte, Syr Rechurt Pynsone of Pynsonlee, beyng yn y Halie Londe at Demossesc (this word gave him immense trouble), or elsewhere, dilygher thes."

"There!" said the friar, with a deep sigh of relief in conclusion, as he exhibited the fruit of his prowess in triumph to Dame Lovell. "Methinketh that Richard himself could not better those letters!"

Dame Lovell looked with unfeigned admiration at the cabalistic characters, for such they were in her eyes, and declared them 'right brave,' opining moreover that 'learning was soothly a passing rare thing!'

†Teaches.

†Idols. Our forefathers had a rooted idea that Jews and Mohammedans were idolaters. Their very word for idols, 'Mawmetis,' was a corruption of the name of Mahomet.

Ye great men, spend not all your year in building castles in the air, or houses on the sand; but set your hands and purses to the building of the porches of Bethesda. It is a shame for a rich Christian to be like a Christmas box, that receives all, and nothing can be got out till it be broken in pieces; or like unto a drowned man's hand, that holds whatsoever it gets.—John Hall.

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The Iron Egg.

In the museum at Berlin is an iron egg, of which the following story is told: Many years ago a prince became affianced to a lovely princess, to whom he promised to send a magnificent gift as a testimonial of his affection. In due time the messenger arrived bringing the promised gift, which proved to be an iron egg. The princess was so angry to think that the prince should send her so valueless a present that she threw it upon the floor, when the iron egg opened, disclosing a silver lining. Surprised at such a discovery, she took the egg in her hand, and while examining it closely, discovered a secret spring, which she touched, and the silver lining opened, disclosing a golden yolk. Examining it carefully she found another spring, which when opened, disclosed within the golden yolk a ruby crown. Subjecting that to an examination, she touched a spring, and forth came the diamond ring with which he affianced her to himself.

So often come the richest gifts of God to us. Their outward seeming is as unattractive as the iron egg, but within the seeming repulsiveness lies hidden the silver lining of a divine love. Within that love lie hidden the golden treasures of the gospel. Within that still lies hidden the crown of life. ("Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life.") and within the crown the jewelled ring with which He—the Bridegroom—will affianch his bride unto himself. "And I saw the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."—Ill. Christian Weekly.

Temperance.

A man by the name of Williams, in Wake county, bought a quart of liquor, got drunk killed a man against whom he had no ill-will, mistaking him for another man, and is now to be hung for the bloody deed. The State has lost two citizens, Wake county pays a heavy bill of expenses, two families are plunged into grief and shame, and a certain bar-keeper pockets fifty cents, feels respectable, and is ready to do the same thing again with the same results. Of all the parties concerned he cares the least. The state authorizes men to make and sell a drug that destroys reason and causes those who drink it to commit murder and then hangs their helpless victims. In other words, it takes the lives of two men at great expense to honest people in order to put fifty cents into the pocket of a third one.—Meth. Advance.

The King of Sweden never loses an opportunity of saying a good word for temperance. An English company is at present engaged in working a gold-mine in Norway, and the King recently had an interview with the heads of the concern, who presented him with some gold jewellery, the produce of the mine. The King on being informed that a large number of the miners were Good Templars, said, 'I am very glad to hear it, because they are just the sort of people to give satisfaction.'

"I have made ten thousand dollars during the year," boasted a saloon-keeper to a crowd. "You have made more than that," said a pale woman, looking in at the door. "You have made my two sons drunkards. The younger, in a drunken fit, fell and injured himself for life. You did that. You have made their mother a broken-hearted woman. You have made more than I can reckon up; but you'll get the full count some day—you'll get it."

Both Houses of the Swedish Parliament have passed a bill closing public houses on Sunday throughout Sweden. Mrs. Eliza Blakney obtained a verdict for \$5,000 against a saloon keeper of Cincinnati who continued to sell her husband liquor after being notified not to do so.

Says the Union Signal: "In the window of a Cincinnati saloon is a stuffed rattlesnake coiled upon a whisky jug and wreathed in flowers. The proprietor evidently has a correct view of the fitness of things."

Complete legal prohibition of the traffic in intoxicating drinks is the duty of civil government.

The North Carolina Sons of Temperance says: 'Give us prohibition free from politics.'

'The liberty of the individual ceases where the rights of society begin.'