

Family Reading.

Songs of the Christian Life.

TAKE HEART AGAIN, BROTHER.

Take heart again, brother; Thy sun above The cloud still shining, Forbids repining; Rest in God's love.

Take heart again, brother; To bleeding hearts Comes healing balm, Through storms the calm Which peace imparts.

Take heart again, brother; Through sorrow's plaint Comes grace all healing, Love's gentle sealing; Do thou not faint!

Take heart again, brother; Through failures, skill Comes forth to brighten; Love's work they heighten; Wait and be still.

Take heart again, brother; All through the way, Behold, the Saviour Marks thy behaviour; Do thou obey.

Take heart again, brother; Life's discords bring Sweet hymns of gladness, Dispelling sadness— Songs from the King.

Take heart again, brother; Through bitter, sweets; Our darkness brightens, Our burden lightens, Love strangely greets!

Take heart again, brother, Do not despair; Things giving sorrow May help thee to-morrow— Loosen thy care.

Take heart again, brother; Thy bleeding feet No path can tread Like His who bled— His bitter's sweet.

Take heart again, brother; Though it is night, Yet comes the morning; Lo! its light dawning Breaks on thy sight!

Brighton. W. POOLE BALFERN.

New Select Serial.

MISTRESS MARGERY: A TALE OF THE LOLLARDS.

BY EMILY SARAH HOLT,

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

CHAPTER VI.

NEWS FROM HOME.

"There are briars besetting every path, That call for patient care; There is a cross in every lot, And an earnest need for prayer; But a lowly heart that leans on Thee Is happy anywhere."

—MISS WARNING.

It was a lovely, clear, moonlight night, and the streets of London were hushed and still. By the light of the moon might be discerned a man in traveller's dress, walking slowly along Fleet Street, and looking up at the houses, as if uncertain which of them would prove the one he sought. The traveller, though he looks much older, and his face wears a weary, worn expression, we recognise as our old friend Richard Pynson. Suddenly, in the midst of his search, Richard stopped and looked up. From an oriel window, directly above his head, a faint sound of singing reached him—an air which he instantly recognised as 'The Palmer's hymn,' sung by the pilgrims to Jerusalem on their journey to the Holy Land. The voice of the singer, though low, was so clear, that the words of the hymn were floated distinctly to his ear.

"Holy City, happy City, Built on Christ, and sure as He, From my weary journeying. From the wastes, I cry to thee; Longing, sighing, hasting, crying; Till within thy walls I be. Ah! what happy, happy greeting For the guests thy gates who see! Ah! what blessed, blessed meeting Have thy citizens in thee! Ah! those glittering walls how fair, Jasper shene and ruby blee. Never harm, nor sin, nor danger, Thee can tarnish, crystal sea; Never woe, nor pain, nor sorrow, Thee can enter, City free!"

*Any reader acquainted with mediæval hymns will recognise in this— "Urbs celestis! urbs beata! Super petram collocata."

I have translated a few lines of the hymn for the benefit of the English reader; but my heroine must be supposed to sing it in the original Latin.

The voice ceased, and Richard Pynson, without any further doubt or trouble, applied at once for admittance at the gate of the house whence the music had issued. He could never mistake the voice of Margery Lovell. The old porter, half asleep, came to the gate, and, sentinel-like inquired, 'Who goes there?'

'A friend, a messenger from Dame Lovell, who would fain have speech, if he may, of the Lady Marnell.'

As soon as the porter heard the name of Dame Lovell, he threw open the gate. 'Enter, friend.' The ponderous gate swung to again, and the old man slowly preceded Richard through the archway to the door of the house, and up the wide staircase. He ushered him into a room panelled with oak, where he stirred up the decaying embers of the fire, requested him to be seated, and left the room. At the door of the adjoining chamber, Richard heard him softly whisper.

'Mistress Alice! Mistress Alice!' A gentle movement in the room followed, and then Richard heard the familiar voice of Alice Jordan.

'Hush! good Christopher,' said she in a low tone: 'the boy sleepeth at last—wake him not. What wouldst?'

'There is here a messenger from Lovell Tower, who would have speech of my Lady.'

On hearing this, Alice came forward at once into the oaken chamber where Richard sat.

'Ah! Master Pynson!' she said, 'is it you? My Lady will be right fain to see you—but you come at an evil hour.'

'How so?' asked Richard quickly. 'My Lady is watching this livelong night by the cradle of the young master, who is sore sick—we fear nigh unto death. The child is in grievous disease, and cannot sleep; and her good Ladyship hath been singing unto him, I ween, for to soothe him to rest. Her voice hushed as you came, wherefore I count that the boy sleepeth.'

'What aileth the poor child?' inquired Richard. 'My Lady counteth that he got him an ill rheum when we departed hence for my Lord his house of pleasure,† for to sweeten;‡ Howsoever that be, he is now grievous sick.'

'The Lady Marnell herself is well?' 'Alas!' replied Alice, 'I ween she is little better than the child. She hath been in sore trouble of late, wherefore it is no marvel. There be rumors of accusations for heresy out against her, and my Lord is ill angered against her! Well, God witteth, and God keep her! You will see how evil she looketh an' she come to speak with you, and I trow that she will when I give her to wit who is here.'

So saying, Alice returned to the room she had quitted, and for some minutes Richard heard nothing more. Then the door reopened, and a lady entered the chamber.

Was that Margery Lovell? Never, surely, were hers that feeble step, that worn, wan, white face, that dark ring round the eyes, telling of weary vigils, and of bitter weeping! But the smile of welcome was Margery Lovell's own, and the gesture, as she came forward quickly, holding out both hands, was hers also; though the smile died away in an instant, and the worn, wearied look came back instead.

'Dear, good friend!' she said, 'how it gladdeth me to see you! You come straightway from Lovell Tower? My Father and mother be well? And Mistress Katherine, and Cicely, and all the maidens? And Lyard, and old Beadesert? (naming her palfrey and the watchdog). And all mine old friends—Sir Ralph Marston, and Master Carew?'

Richard smiled a grave, almost mournful smile.

'You ask too many questions, good my lady, to be answered in a breath. But Dame Lovell is in health and greets you well by me, bidding you be assured ever of her love and blessing.'

'And my father? O Master Pynson, my father! my father!'

*Restlessness, uneasiness. †Country house.

‡'Sweetening' was a process to which our forefathers were compelled by their want of drains, and consisted in leaving a house entirely empty for a time, to have the windows opened, the rushes renewed, and to admit of a general purification. Families who had the means generally 'went to sweeten' at least every summer.

She sat down, and buried her face in her hands, and wept; for though Richard had made no answer in words, his face told his tidings too unmistakably. Sir Geoffrey Lovell was dead. After a time Margery looked up whiter and more wan than ever, and begged to know the particulars of her father's death. Richard informed her that Sir Geoffrey had been taken ill three days only before he died; they had immediately summoned Master Carew, who was a physician, and who had pronounced that since he could not live many days, it would be useless to send for his daughter, who could not possibly reach Lovell Tower in time to see him alive.

Dame Lovell was well in health, but had quite lost her old cheerfulness, and appeared to feel her husband's death very acutely. It had been arranged that Friar Andrew should remain with Dame Lovell as her confessor. As to himself, Richard said that he should of course return to his father for a time, until he could by some act of bravery or special favour receive the honour of knighthood; but he did not like to say anything to Dame Lovell about leaving her, so long as he saw that he was of any use to her, as he knew that she regarded him in the light of an adopted son, and had especially seemed to cling to him since Margery's departure.

Margery replied that she would have requested for him the favour of knighthood in a moment at the hands of Lord Marnell, but she did not like to ask him for anything so long as he was displeased with her. Richard inquired after Lord Marnell. Margery said he was well, and was with the King at Havering-atte-Bower; but talking about him seemed to increase her look of weariness and woe. She turned the subject by inquiring again about her old friends. Cicely and the maids, Richard told her, were well; but old Beadesert always howled whenever he was asked for Madge; and Lyard would stand switching his tail in the meadow, and looking wistfully at the house for the young mistress whom he must never see again.

'You miss me, then, all?' said Margery mournfully.

'You will never know how sore,' was Richard's answer. Another pause ensued—there seemed some strange constraint between them—and then Richard asked— 'And what tidings take I home, good my Lady? Dame Lovell bade me have a care to ask how you fared, and the child. I grieve to hear from Alice Jordan that he fareth but evil, and for you'—He smiled the same grave smile.

'Well—well, Master Pynson,' said Margery quickly. 'I fare well. I cannot go where is not Christ, and where He is, howsoever I fare, I must needs fare well. And for the child—come and see him.'

She led the way noiselessly to the adjoining room. Little Geoffrey lay in Alice's arms in a heavy sleep. His breathing was very quick and short, and his face flushed and fevered.

Richard stood looking silently at him for a few minutes, and then returned with Margery to the oaken chamber. She offered him refreshments, but he declined them. He had supped, he said, already; and ere breakfast-time, he looked to be on his way back to the North. Margery wrote a short letter to Dame Lovell, and intrusted it to him; and then she sat by the table, wearily resting her head upon her hand.

'I pray you, good my Lady,' said Richard suddenly, breaking the spell that seemed to bind them, 'what meaneth this bruit* of heresy that I hear of you?'

Margery looked up with a strange light in her eyes.

'You remember, I trow, asking Master Carew for to lend me yon book?—and wending with me for to hear Master Sastre's homily?'

'I mind it well.'

'That meaneth it. That because I read Christ's words, and love them, and do them, so far as in my poor power lieth, the charge of heresy is laid at my door. And I ween they will carry it on to the end.'

'The end?' said Richard trembling, for he guessed what that meant, and the idea of Margery being subjected to a long and comfortless imprisonment,

*Noise, rumor.

was almost more than he could bear. His own utter powerlessness to save her was a bitter draught to drink.

'Ay, the end!' she said, with the light spreading all over her face. 'Mind you not how Master Sastre asked us if we could sue the Lamb along the weary and bitter road? Is it an evil thing to sue the Lamb, though He lead over a few rugged stones which be lying in the path? Nay, friend, I am ready for the suing, how rough soever the way be.'

Richard sat looking at her in silence. He had always thought her half an angel, and now he thought her so more than ever.

'I trow you know these things, good friend?' said Margery, with her sad, faint smile. 'You know, is it not, how good is Christ?'

'I am assaying for to know,' answered Richard huskily. 'I have been a-reading of Master Carew's book, since I found you counted it so great a thing. Oft-times have Master Carew and I sat reading of that book whenever I could make an errand unto his neighbourhood; and he hath taught me many things. But I cannot say yet that I be where you be, Mistres Margery,' he added, calling her by the old familiar title, 'or that I know Christ as friendly as you seem to know Him.'

'Then,' said Margery earnestly, 'let not go your grasp till you have fast hold of Him. Ah! what matter how soon or how sore cometh the end, if whanne He hath loved Hise that ben in the world into the ende He loveth them.'*

'O dear friend, count not anything lost if thou keepest Christ His love! If He shall come unto thee and say of aught by which thou stetest store, as He did say unto Peter, 'Louest thou me more than these?' let thine answer be his, 'Ghe Lord, Thou woost that I loue Thee!† Oh count not aught too rare or too brave for to give Christ! He that loveth his lyf schal leese it; and he that haitith his lyf in this world, kepith it into everlasting lyf.‡ No man loseth by that chep of life worldly for life everlasting. Never shall the devils have leave to say, 'Behold here a man who hath lost by Christ!'

'Must we needs give Christ all?' said Richard in an unsteady tone.

'Is there a thing that thou wouldst keep from Him?—a thing thou lovest more than thou lovest Him? Then it will be no marvel that thou shouldst lose the same. Trust me, if His heart be set on thee, He will either have thy heart away from it by thy good will, or will have it away from thy heart by bitter rending and sorrow. And alas for that man who hath no portion in Christ his heart!'

Richard answered almost in a whisper, and bent forward to take Margery's hand as he did so. The spell was fully broken now.

'There was only one thing, and He hath taken it. Margery, I loved you. I had given readily all else but you. And I trow you will count it but a sorry giving, wherein the heart goeth not with the hands.'

She turned her head hastily away, and made no answer; but he felt her hand grow deathly cold in his own. He dropped it, and rose—and so did she. She went with him to the door; and there, as she offered her hand for a farewell greeting, she spoke—

'Richard, God hath parted thee and me, and whatsoever God doth He doth well. If it were as thou sayest, there was need thereof. When children comes home to their father's house from afar, I trow they fall not a-bewailing that they had not leave to come in company. And if only we may clasp hands at the gate of the Urbs Beata, I trow well that we shall count it no great matter, good friend, that we saw but little the one of the other on the journey!'

Richard kissed her hand, and then she drew it from him, and softly passed into her darkened nursery. For a moment he stood looking after her. 'Please God, we will, Margery!' he said to himself at length. Then he ran lightly down the stairs, and old Christopher rose at the sound of his step to open the door for him.

And so Richard Pynson and Margery Marnell parted, never more to speak to each other on this side of the Happy City.

*John xiii. 1. †John xxi. 16. ‡John xii. 25. §Exchange, bargain. ¶Poor, unworthy.

Love's Language Intelligible.

We were at a railroad junction one day last week, waiting a few hours for a train in the waiting-room, in the only rocking chair, trying to talk a brown eyed boy to sleep, who talks a great deal when he wants to keep awake. Presently a freight train arrived, and a beautiful old woman came in, escorted by a great big German, and they talked in German, he giving her evidently lots of information about the route she was going, and telling her about her tickets and her baggage check, and occasionally patting her on the arm. At first our United States Baby, who did not understand German, was tickled to hear them talk, and he 'snickered' at the peculiar sound of the language that was being spoken. The big man put his hand up to the old lady's cheek and said something encouraging, and a great big tear came to her eye, as she stood as happy as a queen. The little brown eye of the boy opened pretty big, and his face sobered down from its laugh, and he said, 'Papa, it is his mother!' We knew it was, but how should a four-year-old sleazy baby, that couldn't understand German, tell that the lady was the big man's mother? and we asked him how he knew, and he said, 'Oh, the big man was so kind to her.' The big man bustled out, we gave the rocking chair to the little old mother, and presently the man came in with a baggage man, and to him he spoke English. He said:

'This is my mother, and she does not speak English. She is going to Iowa. I have got to go back by the next train; but I want you to attend to her baggage and see her on the right car, the rear car, with a good seat near the engine, and tell the conductor she is my mother. And here is a dollar for you, and I will do as much for your mother some time.' The baggage man grasped the dollar with one hand and grasped the big man's hand with the other, and looked at the little woman with an expression that showed he had a mother, too, and we almost know the old lady was well treated. Then we put the sleeping mind-reader on a bench and got acquainted with the big German, and he talked of horse-trading, buying and selling, and everything, that showed he was a live business man, ready for any speculation, from buying a yearling colt to a crop of hop or barley, and that his life was a busy one and at times full of hard work, disappointments, hard roads; but with all of his hurry and excitement, he was kind to his mother, and we loved him just a little; and when after a few minutes' talk about business, he said, 'You must excuse me, I must go into the depot and see if my mother wants anything,' we felt like taking his fat red hand and kissing it. Oh! the love of the mother is the same in any language that is good in all languages.

—Burlington Hawkeye.

Brother Worry.

Dear Brother Worry, what a good soul he is—in many respects a most admirable man—kind, good and affectionate.

Benevolent too, never stingy and mean. We have never been refused when we have gone to him for charity; he always gives, and what is somewhat remarkable, gives frequently, more than his ability will allow. He is constant at church, and at the weekly meeting. With all his good traits, however, we are sorry to say, he has one very serious fault. He is almost always in a worry about something that is, or may be.

In this regard he and Sister Fret are very much alike. We do not like to meet them in the street for they have a frightened look and their words are in a minor strain. However bright the morning or prosperous the circumstances, they are full of doleful surmises. And when any shadow is cast, they are sure matters will grow worse, and a dreadful plunge be taken. They are full of painful forebodings, and the air is thick with disasters. The state is in awful condition; the community is badly off; the church is befogged and befouled; all the integrities are dying out; and things generally are on the high road to ruin. Dear souls, their faces are like thunder

clouds; their words merge into chronic groans, while their hearts, as our good doctors say, are in a state of perpetual exacerbation.

Their presence is like the chilling east wind upon neuralgic and rheumatic conditions of the body. Oh, how it makes one ache—how suggestive of old Giant Despair.

We are sorry for them; we try to help them, but we confess our efforts in this direction accomplish very little.

Their condition comes partly from constitutional characteristics, and largely from habit. They have allowed themselves to look upon the dark side of everything, till the sweet and promising are overlooked in shadowy and dark formations; the future becomes for them a dread arsenal alive with mischievous and destructive implements and machineries; God providences formidable with wrath, scattering broadcast seeds for harvesting of pain. Dear Brother Worry and Sister Fret, remember God is good, and life is sweet after all that occurs or may occur. Have faith and cheerful trust in God. He is no grim and merciless tyrant, but a loving Father. Come out of the chilling shade into the warm, glad sunshine of hopefulness; make the best of everything. Trust, oh trust in God, for your own sakes; for the sakes of those around you; for the honor and glory of God.

To Bathers.

1. The safest and best time is in the early morning, after a good night's rest and before eating. Then the system is rested and in full vigor to sustain the necessary reaction.

2. The best and safest mode of taking the cold bath is to take it at your home or at your lodgings—A sponge bath, followed by a good rubbing down with a crash towel and flesh brush. This is safe, can be made very convenient, refreshing and pleasant, and is every way as good as the sea-bath can be.

3. It is, I believe, a mistake that the salt water is more sanitary than fresh water. The sea water is cooler than pond, lake, or river water in hot weather, and consequently more bracing and exhilarating on a hot day, but on this very account more dangerous.

4. A cold bath should never be taken when the nervous system is exhausted with the toils or cares of the day, or soon after eating. Under these conditions, the nervous system cannot and will not sustain and secure the necessary reaction in the circulation.

5. A very cold bath on a hot day should be indulged in only with great care. There is peril in it, if continued more than from five to ten minutes. If continued long, the chilled blood sent in from the surface may produce a congestion fatal to health, if not to life.

6. A cold bath should not only be short, but be always followed by a vigorous rubbing and brushing and walking, to be sure and secure the necessary reaction.

7. It is presumption even for hardy, good swimmers to strike out in cold water on a hot day for a long swim. This is frequently done, and people are all amazed to find their dear friend, such a good swimmer, suddenly go down, and be drowned. The secret of this sudden disability and death is that the long chill sends the surface blood inward, and maintains it there so long that congestion of some vital organ takes place, and the swimmer becomes paralyzed, faint, powerless, and sinks.

ALARMING MALADY.—The Methodist Recorder gives this description of an alarming and widely prevalent malady:—"It is a peculiar disease of an intermittent character, recurring at intervals of seven days. It generally attacks persons on Sunday morning with great drowsiness, followed by lassitude, disinclination to motion, resulting in diabolism. Towards evening it sometimes wears off to such an extent that persons afflicted with it are able to take a little stroll, or sit on the front steps till nine or ten o'clock. Any reference to church services generally aggravates the disease, and adds to the discomfort of the patient. Generally by Monday morning the patient is carried off—to attend to household duties, shopping, making neighborly calls, or to the ordinary business pursuits of life."

Methodists are not the only people afflicted with this dangerous disease.