

Family Reading.

The Trodden Violet.

A violet in the morning dew, With sunshine melting in its spheres, Whose honey all the wild bees knew, And birds and breezes, happy crew— A violet in the morning dew Was like her in the early years.

A violet trodden under foot, Its breath with piercing perfume rife The birds and bees and breezes mute, And only tears about the root— A violet trodden under foot Was like her in her later life.

Sweetness past telling did she shed, When day by day brought darker dole, And sorrows with a heavy tread Crushed her and bruised the lovely head— Sweetness past telling did she shed, As the bruised violet sheds its soul.

So was the spikenard bruised and crushed, And so the precious ointment filled With odor that about it gushed As if, within, the whole gardens blushed— So was the spikenard bruised and crushed That over the Lord's feet was spilled. —Harriet Prescott Spofford.

New Select Serial.

MISTRESS MARGERY:

A TALE OF THE LOLLARDS.

BY EMILY SARAH HOLT,

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

CHAPTER II.—Continued.

The great man from London, who sat in a large oak chair in the hall, was a great man in all corporeal senses. He was very tall, and stout in proportion; an older man than his cousin Sir Ralph, perhaps ten or fifteen years older; and there was something in his face which made Margery drop her eyes in an instant. It was a very curious face. The upper part—the eyes and forehead—was finely formed, and showed at least an average amount of intellect; but from the nose downwards the form and expression of the features were suggestive only of the animal—a brutal, sensual, repelling look. Margery, who had looked for the great man from London with girlish curiosity, suddenly felt an unconquerable and causeless dislike to him swell up in her heart, a something which she could neither define nor account for, that made her wish to avoid sitting near him, and turn her eyes away whenever his were directed towards her. Sir Geoffrey presented his wife and daughter to Lord Marnell, and Sir Ralph came forward with a cordial greeting; after which they took their seats at table, for Richard Pynson was already bringing in the 'farsure of hare,' and Mistress Katherine following with the pottage. The occupants of the high table, on the dais, consisted of Sir Geoffrey and Dame Lovell, Lord Marnell, Sir Ralph Marston, Margery, Richard Pynson, Mistress Katherine, and Friar Andrew Rous, Sir Geoffrey's chaplain. The maids sat at the second table, and the farm-servants at a third, lower down the hall. Sir Ralph, as usual, was full of fun, and spared nobody, keeping the whole table in a roar of laughter, excepting Lord Marnell, who neither laughed at his cousin's jokes, nor offered any observation of his own, being wholly occupied with the discussion of the various dishes as they were presented to him, and consuming, according to the joint testimony of Dame Lovell and Friar Andrew after the feast, 'enough to last seven men for a week.' When dinner was over, and 'the tables lifted,' the company gathered round the fire, and proceeded to make themselves comfortable. Sir Ralph sang songs, and told funny anecdotes, and cracked jokes 'with the young people; while Lord Marnell, in conversation with Sir Geoffrey, showed that the promise of neither half of his face was entirely unfulfilled, by proving himself a shrewd observer, and not a bad talker. In the midst of this conversation Sir Ralph, turning round to Sir Geoffrey, inquired if he had heard anything of a certain sermon that had been preached the day before at Bostock Church. 'I heard of it,' answered he, 'but I heard it not. Some of mine, methinks, heard the same, Madge, wentest not thou thereto?' 'Ay, good father, I went with Master Pynson.'

'Ah!' said Sir Ralph. 'I went not, for the which I now grieve, the more as my good cousin telleth me that Master Sastre is accounted a great one by some—but these seem not of the best.' 'Misconceive me not, fair cousin,' said Lord Marnell. 'It is only the Lollards that think well of the man, and thou wottest that Holy Church looketh not kindly on their evil doings. That ill priest, John Wycliffe, who is accounted their leader, hath done more hurt to the faith than any heretic these many years.' 'Thou art but ill affected unto them, I trow,' said Sir Ralph jokingly. 'I'll affected!' exclaimed Lord Marnell, bringing down his hand violently upon the arm of his chair, with a blow which made Margery start, 'I cry you mercy, fair mistress—but if I knew of any among my kin or meynie\* that leaned that way—say, were it mine own sister, the Prioresse of Kennington—I tell thee, Ralph, I would have her up before the King's Grace's council, and well whipped!' Margery shuddered slightly. Sir Ralph leaned back in his chair, and laughed heartily. 'Well said, fair cousin mine! But I pray thee, tell me what doctrines hold these men that thou wouldst have them all up afore the King's Grace's council, and well whipped?' 'All manner of evil!' answered Lord Marnell wrathfully. 'They hold, as I hear, that the blessed Sacrament of the Altar is in no wise the true body of Christ, but only a piece of bread blessed by the priest, and to be eaten in memory of His death; for the which reason also they would allow the lay folk to drink Christ's blood. Moreover, they say that the blessed angels and God's saints be not to be worshipped, but only to be held in reverence, and kindly memory. Also, they give to the common people the Scriptures of God's Word for to read, which we wot well is only fit for priests. And in all things which they do, I find not that these evil wretches do hold any true thing as taught by Holy Church, but one, which is masses for souls departed. I wis not much concerning them, for they move mine anger.'

'I pray your good Lordship,' asked Sir Geoffrey, 'can you tell me whether these men be in great force in London or thereabouts at this time? Find they any favour in the Court?' 'They be ever increasing,' said Lord Marnell, 'so much so that the King's council have seen good to prepare some orders against them—fobidding of their assemblages, and such like—for to present unto the Parliament. These orders provide, as my good friend holy Abbot Bilson did tell me, that all convicted to be Lollards shall suffer close prison, for longer or shorter time, as pleaseth the King's Grace. I trow they find not favor at Court with many, but the few that look well on them be unhaply of the highest. I have heard say that some in the Duke of Lancaster's palace show them favour, and it is no news that the Queen—whose soul God pardon!—did lean that way. In all open hours she was reading of Scripture in the vulgar tongue. Master Sastre, the priest, who my fair cousin telleth me was a-preaching in Bostock Church yesternorn, is, I take it, one of their chief men, and did learn of Master Wycliffe himself. I trow he will find it go hard with him if ever he cometh near London again. He goeth a-preaching of his doctrines up and down the realm, and perverting from the faith evilly-disposed men and sely† damsels who lack something to set their tongues running.'

'Sir Ralph here made a remark which turned the conversation; for this Margery was sorry, as it had interested her extremely. Lord Marnell's remarks taught her more about the Lollards than she had ever known before. So the Queen read the Bible in English I thought she. Why should not I do the same? She sat wrapped in her own thoughts for a long time, and when she roused herself from them, she noticed that Dame Lovell had quitted the room, and that Sir Ralph and Sir Geoffrey were talking politics, wherein they were occupied in proving, to the unqualified satisfaction of each, that there was 'something rotten in the State,' and that England could not last very long, her only business being to demolish France. And Margery, finding the conversation now extremely dull—though had she for an instant suspected the turn it would take in her absence, she certainly would never have gone—slipped out, and joined the more noisy party in the kitchen, where she found Dame Lovell seated in the chimney-corner and inveighing fervently against late hours. 'An it be not three of the clock already,' said that angry lady, 'I am a heathen Jew, and no Christian! Time to prepare supper for Christian folk—but when that great bulk of a man, that can do nothing in this world but eat, thinks to sup, I wis not! Marry, I trow that nought more will go down his throat until evensong! I marvel if our grandsons will be as great fools as we be!' 'More, Dame,' answered Mistress Katherine sententiously. She was a woman who very seldom spoke, and when she did, compressed all her ideas into as few words as would serve the purpose. 'Nay, Saint Christopher! I hope not,' said Dame Lovell. 'And what am I for to do now? Madge, lass, open the door and bid hither Richard Pynson.'

Margery softly opened the door into the hall; and as softly called the person who answered to that name. He rose, and came to her, and Sir Geoffrey and Lord Marnell, who were in low-toned, earnest conversation, suddenly stopped as she appeared. 'Richard,' said Dame Lovell, in what she doubtless intended for a whisper, 'I pray thee, good youth, to go in softly, and privily demand of Sir Ralph what time he list to sup.' Richard executed the order, and, returning, closed the door behind him. 'Sir Ralph saith, good mistress mine, that the Lord Marnell when at home suppeth not afore six of the clock; but he prayeth you for to sup when you will, to the which he will without doubt accommodate himself.'

'Six of the clock!' cried Dame Lovell in amazement. 'Richard, art sure thou hearest aright?' 'Certes, good mistress.' Dame Lovell sat in silent horror. 'Well!' said she at length, 'if ever in all my days did I hear of a like thing! Cicely, serve a void in my privy chamber at four of the clock. This poor country of ours may well go to wrack, if its rulers sup not afore six of the clock! Dear, dear, dear! I marvel if the blessed Virgin Saint Mary supped not until six of the clock! May all the saints forgive us that we be such fools!' Thurlow Weed's Pigeon. 'How are you progressing with the biography of your father?' a reporter asked the daughter of the late Hon. Thurlow Weed. Just then the pigeon that was Mr. Weed's pet about six years alighted on the reporter's shoulder, and cheerily cooing, peered round into his face. Suddenly the bird became dumb and flew into an adjoining room. 'He has done that to every gentleman that has come into the house since father died,' said Miss Weed, with a sigh. 'He takes most kindly to General Bowen, who visits me occasionally, and who has been in feeble health some time, and walks slowly. The bird will coo and fly to the general's shoulder, but when he sees it is not my father he will stop his cooing and find some other perch. Since the day that father's remains were carried away, the affectionate creature has been seeking for his master. He flies through every room in the house and fairly haunts the library where father spent most of his time with his pet. 'He will tread over every inch of space on the lounge and then go to the rug, over which he will walk repeatedly as if in expectation of his dead master's coming. He invariably does this at meal times, when our table is set in the back-parlor, of which we now make a dining-room. He can see our table from the rug.' 'Then you do not put him in a cage?' 'Oh never' was the response. 'The run of the house has been his since he came into it. Of course, in this warm weather many of the windows are open, but he will not fly out into the street nor into the large yard below into the church which lies on the east side of the study. But here he does go,' added Miss Weed, as she led the way through the dining-room and pointed out of the raised windows. There was a large yard in view, with arbors, running-vines and a profusion of other foliage. 'Other pigeons come here frequently, and our pet sometimes joins them, but he seems to take no pleasure in the freedom they enjoy, and sits with drooping head while they fly about or perch beside him and coo. He seldom remains long with his fellow-birds, but comes back through one of the windows and begins his search again through the house for my father.'—Our Dumb Animals.

What Geometry will do for a Boy, HOW PRESIDENT LINCOLN BECAME AN EXPERT REASONER. BY PROF. W. A. MOWRY. Now, boys, let us have a little talk about geometry. You know it has been a famous study for boys for many ages. Euclid was an old Egyptian who lived about three hundred years before Christ. His treatise on geometry has been the foundation for all modern works upon the subject. Plato, who lived a century earlier, founded a noted academy at Athens, and it is related that over its entrance he placed the celebrated inscription, Let no one ignorant of Geometry enter here. This branch has been considered an important part of a good education for two thousand years. Yet I hear many boys in these days saying, 'I don't like geometry. I wonder what good it will do me.' I once heard a very interesting story about Abraham Lincoln, which may help you to understand the 'good.' Before Mr. Lincoln was a candidate for president, he made a tour through New England and lectured in many cities and towns. Among other places he spoke in Norwich, Ct. A gentleman who heard him, and was struck with his remarkable logical power, rode the next day in the cars with Mr. Lincoln to New Haven. During the ride the following conversation took place: 'Mr. Lincoln, I was delighted with your lecture last evening.' 'Oh, thank you, but that was not much of a lecture, I can do better than that.'

\*Household retinue. †Simple, unlearned.