

Family Reading.

They neither Toil nor Spin.

BY MRS. M. E. SANGSTER.

They neither toil nor spin; they wear,
Their loveliness without a care;

As pure as when the Master's feet
Were set amid their perfume sweet.

The summer hills rejoice to see
Their carven censers swinging free.

They wait within the gate of dawn
Till all the watching stars are gone.

Then open cups of honey-dew,
To greet the morn's returning hue.

O fair, wise virgins, clothed in white;
O lilies, fresh from looms of light.

I dearly love you, for the word
That stars you, noted of the Lord.

I love you when, in gold and red,
The sunset colors o'er you spread;

Or when, like fairy sails of snow,
The river rocks you to and fro.

You are the Master's flowers to me;
His smile upon the grace I see.

My transient discontents I hush,
If but my garment's hem ye brush,

And everywhere your fragrance brings
This message from the King of Kings:

"We neither toil nor spin. And ye,
Who spin so long and wearily,

"Who toil amid earth's grime and dust,
Behold—a hallowed arc of trust.

"Oh, pause and hear the Father say
His angels are your guides to-day!

"While worlds in matchless order move
Ye shall not slip from sovereignty love:

"For He who bids the planets sweep,
Cares for the tiniest babe asleep."

New Select Serial.

MISTRESS MARGERY:

A TALE OF THE LOLLARDS.

BY EMILY SARAH HOLT,

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

CHAPTER XI.

The winter had just given place to spring, and a bright, fresh morning rose on Lovell Tower. Dame Lovell was busy in the kitchen, as she was when we first saw her, and so were Mistress Katherine and the hand maids; but Dame Lovell now wore the white weeds of widowhood, and her face was thinner and much graver. Richard Pynson, on his return from London, had brought her the terrible news of Margery's death; and Dame Lovell, in the midst of her sorrow, which was very deep, had solemnly affirmed that no power on earth should ever induce her to pardon her son-in-law for the part which he had taken in the matter.

Richard Pynson, long before this, had mooted the question of his return to his father, but Dame Lovell would not hear of it. He reminded her smilingly that she needed no squire; but she came and put both her hands on his shoulders, and made him look her in the face.

"Thou sayest sooth, Richard, that I need no squire, but I trow I need a son. I am an old lone woman, and shall not keep thee long; and I have loved thee as if I had been thine own mother. Promise me, mine own dear lad, that thou wilt not go hence while I live."

Richard looked up with the tears in his eyes, and told her as he kissed her hand, that it was no wish of his to depart, and that he would not do so without her full consent.

"That shalt thou have never!" was the answer.

So Richard remained at Lovell Tower. On the morning of which I speak, little Geoffrey, who was very fond of Richard, and was petted by him perhaps rather more than was good for him, had suddenly espied him at the farther end of the garden, and instantly rushed after him as fast as his little legs would carry him. A few minutes afterwards, Cicely came into the kitchen from the hall, and announced to her mistress that a strange gentleman wished to see her. Dame Lovell took off her apron, and rinsed her hands in water.

"See thou to the marchpane, Kat," remarked she to Mistress Katherine, as she went to receive her guest.

It was no wonder that Cicely had not known him, for some seconds elapsed before Dame Lovell could recognise Lord Marcell. Six years had passed

since they met at his marriage to Margery, but he looked at least twenty years older. His figure was still upright, though much thinner, but the very form of his features seemed changed, and his rich auburn hair was now white as drifted snow. His manner which had been blunt and almost boisterous, was remarkably quiet. When he saw that Dame Lovell did not recognise him, he said, with a smile—

"You know me not, fair mother?"

Dame Lovell's astonishment overcame her enmity for the moment.

"Troth, I knew thee not, good son! is it truly thou? Nay, how changed art thou?"

"I wis that well," he answered.

"Where is Geoffrey?"

"I trow he be in the garden with Richard," replied Dame Lovell. "I will bid him hither."

Little Geoffrey, holding Richard's hand, as if he would not part with him for a moment, returned to the house at his grandmother's bidding; but like her, he could not recognise his father, whom he had not seen for some months, until Lord Marcell's well known voice assured him of his identity. He rather shrank from him as usual; but when Lord Marcell, contrary to his custom, lifted him up and kissed him, he seemed a little reassured, and sat on his father's knee, staring at him intently. Lord Marcell gave a cordial greeting to Richard, and then, observing how earnestly his little son's eyes were fixed upon him, asked him at what he was cooking.

"What have you done with your hair?" was Master Geoffrey's puzzled answer.

Lord Marcell laughed, and told the child that everybody's hair turned white as they grew old.

"But your Lordship's hath done so quickly," remarked Richard.

"That were no great marvel," he answered gravely.

Dame Lovell found it rather difficult to keep up her revengeful determination. She was naturally a very easy-tempered woman, and the evident change, moral as well as physical, in Lord Marcell, touched her, and melted her enmity considerably.

"I pray you, fair mother," he said looking up, "to leave me tell you wherefore I came hither. Firstly, it was to give you a letter from Madge, which she wrote in the Tower unto you." And Lord Marcell, passing his hand into his breast, pulled out a small square packet tied with blue silk, and sealed with yellow wax. It was directed—

"To the hands of my singular good lady and most dear mother, Dame Agnes Lovell at Lovell Tower, be these delivered with speed."

Dame Lovell kissed the letter, and placed it in her own bosom. She could not read a word of it, but it was enough that it came from Margery.

"Secondarily," pursued Lord Marcell, I would fain ask you, fair mother, for to keep Geoffrey here a while longer, for I wis not yet what I shall do."

"That will I, right heartily," said Dame Lovell, in a tone as cordial as her words.

"Moreover, an' it stand with your pleasure, I would pray you for to take back Alice Jordan, as you will find in yon letter that Madge did desire her for to be about Geoffrey, if she would, and she seemeth right fain."

"I will have her with a very good will," answered Dame Lovell, "and she shall be next in mine house unto Mistress Katherine, and shall eat at the high table."

Lord Marcell thanked her sincerely for her readiness to comply with his wishes. He said that Alice should come down to Lovell Tower as soon as she could conveniently set out, and old Christopher, as the most trusty of his household, should escort her. There was silence for a short time, and then, with a kind of shadow of a smile, Lord Marcell said suddenly—

"Do you hate me, fair mother?"

"I did afore I saw thee this mornow," replied Dame Lovell candidly.

"And wherefore, not after?"

"Meseemeth thou has repented thyself of thy deed."

"Repented!" said Lord Marcell mournfully. "Mother will you erode me if I tell you that no sorrow worse than this can ever befall me, and that had I known what would come of my

seeking of Abbot Bilson, I had sooner cut off my right hand?"

"Ido," said she.

"Madge knew it, poor damsel! and she said she forgave me in such manner as Christ did forgive herself. Will you do the like, mother?"

With all mine heart and soul, good son! cried Dame Lovell, every shred of her animosity vanished, and the tears fairly running down her cheeks.

"Don't cry, g'ammer!" exclaimed little Geoffrey, jumping off his father's knee and running to Dame Lovell.

"What are you crying for? Somebody hurt you? If they have I'll kill 'em!"

Dame Lovell laughed through her tears at Master Geoffrey's threat. She was a good deal surprised when Lord Marcell spoke of going away; but he said he had promised his cousin Sir Ralph that he would stay with him next time he came into the neighbourhood; and he must return to London in a day or two. So he only remained to dinner, and departed immediately afterwards evoking from Geoffrey this significant remark that, "he liked him a great deal better this time."

That evening, Dame Lovell and Friar Andrew sat down by the fire to listen to that last letter. Her widow's dress, somewhat resembling that of a nun, but pure white, left only her eyes, nose, and mouth visible. Richard Pynson, in a rather more ambitious costume than the page's suit wherein we made his acquaintance, seated himself in the opposite corner. How like Margery's voice the letter sounded, in that old hall at Lovell Tower!—so much so, that it seemed scarcely a stretch of fancy to expect her to glide down the stair which led from her chamber, where her child now lay sleeping. How well Richard could recall the scene when, six years before, she came softly down to receive from his hand the cherished and fatal volume!

Richard broke the seal, while Friar Andrew threw back his cowl, and Dame Lovell smoothed her apron, and bent forward to listen.

"MINE OWN DEAR MOTHER.—In as humble and lowly manner as I may, I commend myself unto you, praying you of your daily blessing.

"Whereas I hear that Richard Pynson hath been here in London on St. Luke's Day last, and hath borne back Geoffrey with him, at the which news I am truly glad, I trow that you have heard of my close prison in the Tower, whence I now write. I pray you therefore, good mother, not to lay this overmuch to heart, neither to grieve for me; for I certify unto you that never was I so happy and blessed as now I am, when over the dark water, which is death, I can see a glimpse of the Happy City.

Neither, good mother, be downcast, I beseech you, when you shall hear that on Sunday, the eve of Saint Anselm, I am to die. I pray you dear mother, if you knew that on Sunday I should be advanced to some high place in the Court, would you sorrow? Yea would you not rejoice greatly therefore? Wherefore I entreat you, sorrow not now, but rejoice rather, for I am to be taken up into an high place, yea, passing high—even the Court of Christ himself, whence also none of those changes and evils can cast me down again, which are ever coming upon them who live in this world.

"Moreover, good mother, I do you to wit that this is Christ's truth for the which I suffer, and that Christ Himself is with me. Yea, I think on Christ as He that is standing on the other side of the fire; and shall I not then make haste through the same that I may come at Him?

"Likewise I do beseech you, mine own dear mother, grieve not when you think that I have had but little joy or gladness in this my short life. If divers children be playing in a garden, and the servingman do come and fetch away some afore others, that they may see their elders, and may have brave gifts the which be ready for them at home, fall they a-weeping, think you, because they must lose an hour of play? Nay, truly not, if their hearts be set on the brave gifts afore them. So, good mother, though you have passed in this weary and evil life nigh sixty years, and I only twenty three, count it, I beseech you, but an hour more or less of child's playing, which will surely be made up to us when we go home, and receive the brave gifts

which our Father hath for us in His store-house. And if I have not known joy as much as some, I have the less for to leave behind me in the case wherein I now am. For you know, good mother, that at the first I was wedded against mine own will and liking; and though I may and must say unto you for my Lord my husband, that in this evil case he hath been more gentler unto me than ever afore, and hath drawn mine heart much closer unto him, yet—nathless—I may say also that an' I had been with mine own will wedded, I trow that I had had far more for to leave for Christ, and had found far more hardship in the doing of it. For God doeth all His work well; and he wist surely what He did when my dear father—whose soul God rest!—was let wed me thus.

"Behold now, most dear mother, how I have taken from you all cause of your lamentation, and have left you nothing but to rejoice for me! Wherefore rejoice for me, for at this time a sennight hence, I shall be singing with the angels of God. I trow that one look at Christ Jesus will pay me all mine account in the same matter I have suffered for Him. I trow that if He but smile and say, 'Thou art welcome, dear child, for I have loved thee,' I shall count the fires of this world but light gear then. Will you sorrow that I am in good case? Will you grieve because I am blessed? Will you count you have lost your child, when she is singing in the great glory? Nay, good mother, I wis I have well said in praying you to rejoice rather.

"And, dear mother, I beseech you that you bring up mine own dear child in the same. I would have him, if I may, as dear unto Christ as I am, and as ready to leave all for Christ His sake, as I his mother have done. I say not this, God witteth to magnify my poor deeds, the which I know will be vile enough, and want as much great washing in Christ His blood, as the worst sin that ever I did,—but, good mother, teach my boy of Christ! Count it not anything that he leaveth for Him. Yea, forsooth, rather would I a thousandfold that he should live on a dry crust for Christ, than that he should have many brave dishes and rich fare without Him. To this end I beseech you, most dear mother, that you will have the child learned for to read, and will get that he may read God's Word which hath shown me how dear and gracious is Christ Jesus. I pray you spare no pains ne goods for to do this.

"Dear mother, I have prayed my Lord my husband that, if she will, Alice Jordan shall have the care of Geoffrey. She hath been a good and true-serving woman unto me, and she witteth how I would have him ordered. I pray you, therefore, if she come unto you, that you would put her about him. Likewise commend me, I beseech you, unto mine ancient friends and fellows, and all the meynie, and bid them learn for to love Christ Jesus, and we shall then meet shortly again. Specially I would desire mine humble service unto dear Father Andrew, and I do beg him for my sake to read for himself the blessed book which hath been my comfort.

"And to end,—for I will weary you no longer, dear friend Richard Pynson, with reading of mine evil hand, and I give you God's blessing and mine for the kindness you have done unto me, and pray you not to forget the last words which I said unto you with my voice, but to keep fast hold of Christ, till you know and love Him better than any friend in this evil world,—so to end, dear mother, I beseech you that you would forgive me all wherein I have been an ill daughter unto you, and all things wherein at any time I have troubled you. Good mother, I am happy. I am looking out of the night to see the day-dawn breaking. Come Sunday, I shall be in heaven. Come Sunday, by God's mercy—not by mine own good, which God witteth is but evil—I shall stand with the angels before Christ His throne. Haste, haste, dear good day that shall deliver me! And God give you to know Christ, and send us a happy meeting in that His blessed habitation, unto the great glad-ding of your most loving and dutiful daughter.

MARGERY MARCELL.

"Written this second of Mareh, from the gate of the Urbs Beata."

Dancing.

"Is the modern dance unscriptural or only undenominational?"

"We regret to say that it is altogether too undenominational, while it undoubtedly is unscriptural, i. e., positively and specifically forbidden by the Word of God.

"The pressure of the younger members for the dance is almost irresistible; few churches, alas! do resist and discipline promptly for this unchristian walk; and from no one thing is Christianity suffering more than this one thing—it has been so generally allowed that Christianity is emasculated of nearly all its power.

"The churches of Christ have for a century been free from persecution, and they have relaxed the old-time practice of rigid examinations for candidates for baptism; and, under the modern revival system, thousands of the unregenerated have been swept into the churches, and for the lack of Scriptural discipline, they are allowed to remain in the church, but these unregenerated members cannot be kept out of their old haunts of sinful pleasure, the ball-room and theatre, any more than the 'washed sow' can be kept out of a mud-hole. She can see nothing but a pleasant pastime in it and they can see nothing but an innocent amusement in them. They are the only places where they can find pleasure, and they cannot deprive themselves of all enjoyment; they find none in their religion. Our personal conviction is that it would prove a hard matter to influence a child of God to frequent the ball-room, and that it is a very difficult matter to keep an unregenerate church-member away from them, and therefore it is a very good test of the state of the heart. Any church can very well spare every member who can enjoy himself or herself better in a ball-room than a prayer-meeting. The light of that church is but dim and its influence misleading, that can fellowship the dancing girl as a witness for Jesus. A thousand times better that all such, bearing the Baptist name, were swept from the face of the earth, than to exist to encourage conformity to the world in her own members, and to shed such dangerous light abroad to the misleading of others."

But to the direct question, *Is dancing* to music positively and specifically condemned as a gross sin by the Word of God? In writing to the church at Rome Paul condemns 'rioting and drunkenness.' "Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying." Rom. xiii: 13. In writing to the churches of Galatia he specifically condemns "reveling" as among the works of the flesh and grossly sinful. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like: of which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Gal. v: 19-21. Peter, writing to Christians generally, classes "revelings" with banquetings and abominable idolatries.

"For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revelings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries." 1 Peter iv: 3.

No one will deny that "rioting" and "revelings" are specifically and emphatically condemned by God's Word as abominable sins—being classed with fornication, adultery, drunkenness, chamberings and abominable idolatries; and we have God's Word that all those, whether in or out of the church, who will do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

The question now is, What did these two words, "rioting" and "reveling" mean when Paul used them, and consequently to the Christian to-day?

We turn to the original Greek and find they are both the translation of but one word, and that word is "koomos." We open standard Greek Lexicons and find the definition of koomos to be, according to

Hedericus: "Saltationes in commensationibus, et saltationes universae"—dancing in merry makings, and dancing in general.

Liddell and Scott (the latest and standard Lexicon): "Koomos, a jovial festivity with music and dancing, a revel, a carousal, a merry-making, singing and dancing and playing all kinds of frolics or games."

Dancing to music, whether decorously or lasciviously, and 'rioting' were denominated koomos, and therefore condemned by the Apostles as 'works of the flesh,' and wholly unbecoming Christians who had professedly renounced them and put them away. With all such the churches were not to eat, or fellowship them as members of the kingdom of Christ.—Ten. Baptist.

A talk with Tom.

You want to know, Tom, what is the first quality of manhood?

Well, listen. I am going to tell you in one word of five letters. And I am going to write that word in very loud letters, as though you were deaf, so that you may never forget it. That word is 'truth.'

Now, then, remember, truth is the only foundation on which can be erected, for otherwise, no matter how beautiful the upper stories may be, and no matter of how good material they may be built, the edifice, the character, the manhood, will be but a sham which offers no sure refuge and protection to those who seek it, for it will tumble down when the trial comes.

Alas, my boy, the world is very full of such shams of manhood, in every profession and occupation. There are lawyers in this town who know that they have never had any training to fit them for their work, who yet impose upon the people, and take their money for giving them advice which they know they are unfitted to give. I heard of one lately who advised his partner 'never to have anything to do with law books, for they would confuse his mind.'

There are ignorant physicians, who can and do impose upon people more ignorant than themselves. There are preachers without number pretending to know what they have never learned. Don't you see that their manhood is at best but a beautiful deceit?

Now, I want you to be a man, and that you may be that I want you first to be thoroughly true. I hope you would scorn to tell a lie, but that is only the beginning of truthfulness. I want you to despise all sham, all pretence, all effort to seem to be otherwise than you are.—Bishop Dudley.

Household Customs in Japan.

When a woman reaches her house, she takes off her sandals, pushes aside the sliding doors of paper, and enters in her stocking feet. The rooms are softly matted, but contain no furniture.

The houses are built of wood, and among the poorer classes have but two or three rooms. In the kitchen is a large stone box with ashes and burning coals in it. This is called the *habachi*, and over it the rice is cooked. There is no chimney in the kitchen, but the smoke goes out either through the broad open door, or through an opening in the roof. After the rice is cooked, it is put into a small unpainted tub. At dinner time the mother brings out a little table two feet square and one foot high, with dishes and food upon it. The family sit upon mats, the tub of rice is in the centre, and each one dips in a bowl, taking rice sufficient for himself. They often pour cold tea over the rice, and always eat it with chop-sticks. Fish, sweet potatoes and a pickle, are sometimes served with a dinner.

Japanese houses often have but one sleeping room, which is occupied by the entire family. When guests come they share it with them. The beds consist of heavy comforters. They are spread out on the mats at night, and put away in the closets during the day. Each person puts his head on a little wooden pillow, constructed with a little hollow place, in which the head rests. In some room in the house is a closet containing a shelf for gods, and upon this shelf stands all the household idols, which have come down as heirlooms of the family from generation to generation.—Missionary World.

'Gentlemen of the jury,' said a Tecumseh (Neb.) lawyer last week, 'there were just thirty-six hogs in the drove. Please remember the fact,—just three times as many as in the jury-box, gentlemen.'

Benevolent Lady—I'm glad to see that you wear a blue ribbon. Crossing Sweeper—Yes'm, I gits as much in the way o'charity for wearin' on it as buys me drops o' beer an' such like comfort'ble.