

Reproduction produced by Richard D. Hathaway
Copyright © 2006 by Richard D. Hathaway
Permission is hereby granted to an individual to make a
single copy for personal use.

This, the original 1845 version of Sylvester Judd's *Margaret*, has never before been reprinted. *Margaret* is the preeminent novel of the Transcendentalist movement. The only other one, Lydia Maria Child's *Philothea*, set in ancient Athens, lacks the Emersonian combination of lyrical idealism and downrightness, the "smack of the soil" that James Russell Lowell particularly prized. He called *Margaret* "the most emphatically *American* book ever written," a note picked up by Nathaniel Hawthorne's labeling it "intensely American." Even such a leader of the Realist movement as William Dean Howells placed *Margaret* second only to the romances of Nathaniel Hawthorne among New England books, saying, surprisingly, that it was "vastly better. . . than the best new novel of our generation." And this was in January 1871, just as Howells was about to publish Henry James's first novel, *Watch and Ward* in *The Atlantic Monthly*.

Making the first edition of *Margaret* once again available is significant for the following reason. The language of Judd's revision was smoothed down. Occasionally an improvement, this was in other ways a bowdlerization, a response to the genteel critics who had attacked the novel's uncouth, vulgar language—the grittiness that might have attracted readers a hundred years later had they been able to see the novel's original version. Here are a couple of examples: on page 30 Brown Moll says to her husband, "Panguts!...what do you do? Lazying about here like a mud-turtle nine days after it's killed." When Pluck tries to mollify her with "Dearest Maria," Moll replies "Don't deary me with your dish-cloth tongue." In the revised version Judd changed "Panguts!" to "Trencher worm!" and removed "with your dish-cloth tongue." Genteel novels did not speak of "guts," and women had only "limbs." Though Judd used the word "bellygut" to describe a way of a child's flopping on a sled, he discreetly omitted the word from the revision.

M A R G A R E T .

A TALE OF THE

Real and Ideal, Blight and Bloom ;

INCLUDING

SKETCHES OF A PLACE NOT BEFORE DESCRIBED,

CALLED

M O N S C H R I S T I .

"It is the vernal season ; for the heart is every moment longing to walk in the garden, and every bird of the grove is melodious in its carols as the nightingale : thou wilt fancy it a dawning zephyr of early spring, or new year's day morning ; but it is the breath of Jesus, for in that fresh breath and verdure the dead earth is reviving."—SAADI.

B O S T O N :

J O R D A N A N D W I L E Y .

SOLD BY C. S. FRANCIS, BURGESS AND STRINGER, AND W. TAYLOR,
NEW YORK ; G. B. ZIEBER AND CO., PHILADELPHIA ; SHURTZ AND
TAYLOR, BALTIMORE ; A. HEAD, CHARLESTON, S. C. ;
AND TAYLOR AND CO., WASHINGTON, D. C.

M DCCC XLV.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1845, by
JORDAN, SWIFT, AND WILEY,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Massachusetts.

BOSTON:
PRINTED BY THURSTON, TORRY AND CO.
31 Devonshire Street.

PART I.

CHILDHOOD.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

PHANTASMAGORICAL.—INTRODUCTORY.

WE behold a child eight or ten months old; it has brown, curly hair, dark eyes, fair conditioned features, a health-glowing cheek, and well-shaped limbs. Who is it? Whose is it? what is it? where is it? It is in the centre of fantastic light, and only a dimly-revealed form appears. It may be Queen Victoria's or Sally Twig's. It is God's own child, as all children are. The blood of Adam and Eve, through how many soever channels diverging, runs in its veins, and the spirit of the Eternal, that blows everywhere, has animated its soul. It opens its eyes upon us, stretches out its hands to us, as all children do. Can you love it? It may be the heir of a throne, does it interest you; or of a milking stool, do not despise it. It is a miracle of the All-working, it is endowed by the All-gifted. Smile upon it, and it will smile you back again; prick it, and it will cry. Where does it belong? in what zone or climate? on what hill? in what plain? It may have been born on the Thames or the Amazon, the Hoan Ho or the Mississippi.

The vision deepens. Green grass appears beneath the child. It may, after all, be Queen Victoria's in Windsor Park, or Sally Twig's on Little Pucker Island. The sun now shines upon it, a blue sky breaks over it, and the wind rustles its hair. Sun, sky, and wind are common to Arctic and Antarctic regions, and belong to each of the three hundred and sixty terrestrial divisions. A black-cap is seen to fly over it; and this bird is said by naturalists to be found in

every part of the globe. A dog, or the whelp of a dog, a young pup, crouches near it, makes a caracol backwards, frisks away, and returns again. The child is pleased, throws out its arms, and laughs right merrily.

As we now look at the child, we can hardly tell to which of the five races it belongs; whether it be a Caucasian, Mongolian, American, Ethiopian, or Malay. Each child on this terraqueous ball, whether its nose be aquiline, its eyes black and small, its cheek-bones prominent, its lips large, or its head narrow; whether its hue be white, olive, or jet, is of God's creating, and is delighted with the bright summer light, a bed of grass, the wind, birds, and puppies; and smiles in the eyes of all beholders. It is God's child still, and its mother's. It is curiously and wonderfully made; the inspiration of the Almighty hath given it understanding. It will look after God, its Maker, by how many soever names he may be called; it will aspire to the Infinite, whether that Infinite be expressed in Bengalee or Arabic, English or Chinese; it will seek to know truth; it will long to be loved; it will sin and be miserable, if it has none to care for it; it will die. Let us give it to Queen Victoria. "No," says Sally Twig, "it is mine." "No," says the Empress Isabella, "it is destined to the crown of Castile." "Not so shure of that, me hearty, it is Teddy O'Rourke's own Phelim." "Nay," says a Tahitian, "I left it playing under the palm-trees." "What presumption!" exclaims Mrs. Morris, "it is our Frances Maria, whom the servant has taken to the Common." "I just bore it in my own arms through the cypresses," says Osceola.

It seems to be in pain. "Mein Gott! gehet eilend hin." "Poor Frances Maria!" "Paneeweh htouwenaunuh neen-maumtehkeh!" "Per amor del Cielo!" "Jesus mind Teddy's Phelim." "O Nhaw nddg erm devishd!" "Wæ-sucks! my wee bonny wean, she'll die while ye are bletherin here." "Bismillahi!" "Ma chere enfante!" "Alohi, Alohi!" "Ora pro nobis!" "None of your whidds, dub the giggle, and take the bantling up." "Eatooaa!" What a babel of exclamations! What manifold articulations of affection! But hold, good friends, may be the child does not belong to you.

The scene advances. Two hands are seen thrust down towards it, and now it smiles again. Near by discovers itself a peach tree. Where does that belong? Not like the black-cap everywhere. In the grass shows the yellow disk of a

dandelion; the skin of the child settles into a Caucasian whiteness, and its fat fingers are making for the flower. Be not disappointed, my friends, your children still live and smile; let this one live and smile too. Go, Mongolian, Ethiopian, American, or Malay, and take your child in your arms, and it will remind you of this, since they are all so much alike.

Now the child crawls towards the peach tree. Those two hands, that may belong to its brother, set the child on its feet by the side of the tree, as it were measuring their heights, which are found to be the same. Yellow and brown chickens appear on the grass, and run under the low mallows and smart-weed. A sheet of water is seen in the distance, spotted with green islands. Forest trees burst forth in the rim of the picture — butternuts, beeches, maples, pines. A sober-faced boy, seven or eight years old, to whom the two hands are seen to belong, sits down, and with a fife pipes to the child, who manifests strong joy at the sound. A man in a three-cornered hat and wig, with nankeen small-clothes, and paste buckles, takes the child in his arms. Where is the child? A log cabin appears; a woman in a blue striped long-short and yellow skirt, comes to the door. An Anglo-Saxon voice is heard. If you were to look into the cabin or house, you would discover a loom and spinning-wheels, and behind it, a larger boy making shingles, and somewhere about a jolly-faced man drinking rum. The woman, addressing the first boy as Chilion, tells him to bring the child into the house.

This child we will inform you is Margaret, of whom we have many things to say, and hope to reveal more perfectly to you. She is in the town of Livingston, in that section of the United States of America known as New England. And yet, so far as this book is concerned, she is for you all as much as if she were your own child, and if you cared anything about her when you did not know her, we desire that your regards may not abate, when you do know her, even if she be not your own child; and we dedicate this memoir of her to ALL who are interested in her, and care to read about her. In the meantime, if you are willing, we will lose sight of her for seven or eight years, and present her in a more tangible form, as she appeared at the end of that period.