

## A NEW YEAR.

BY MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

Why do we greet thee, O blithe New Year?  
What are thy pledges of mirth and cheer?  
Comest, knight-errant, the wrong to right,  
Comest to scatter our gloom with light?  
Wherefore the thrill, the sparkle and shine,  
In heart and eyes at a word of thine?

The old was buoyant, the old was true,  
The old was brave when the old was new.  
He crowned us often with grace and gift;  
His sternest skies had a deep blue rift,  
Straight and swift, when his hand unclasped,  
With welcome and joyance thine we grasped.  
O tell us, Year—we are fain to know—  
What is thy charm that we hail thee so?

Dost promise much that is fair and sweet—  
The wind's low stir in the rippling wheat,  
The wave's soft splash on the sandy floor,  
The bloom of roses from shore to shore,  
Glance of wings from the hower's nest,  
Music and perfume from east to west,  
Frost, to glitter in jewelled rime,  
Blush of sunrise at morning's prime,  
Stars above us their watch to keep,  
And rain or dew though we wake or sleep?

These, O Year, we shall have from thee,  
For the thing that hath been aye shall be.  
Sowing and reaping, from seed to sheaf,  
The waiting long and the fruitage brief.  
What beyond is thy guerdon bright  
To us who stand in thy dawning light?

Canst drop a balm into sorrow's heart  
Till the aching wound forgets to smart?  
Canst comfort the mother when tempests  
beat

On a mound with stones at head and feet?  
Canst fill with courage the weary soul,  
And give the penitent bliss for dole?  
Thus other years have been rich in grace,  
Have dried the tears on the furrowed face,  
O, day by day, and from sun to sun,  
Wilt thou, good Year, do what they have  
done?

A whisper, such as an angel drops  
When over a cradled babe bestops—  
It says: "Oh, never to grieve or pain,  
To anguish or yearning, loss or bane,  
Hath any such ease to bring as Time.  
Listen, how softly my joy-bells chime.  
So, out of the winter and through the snow,  
The New Year's promises flash and glow.

Once more a voice, and I hear it call  
Like a bugle note from a mountain wall;  
The lines uplift it with mighty sound,  
The billows bear it the green earth round;  
A voice that rolls in a jubilant song,  
A conqueror's ring in its echo strong;  
Through the ether clear, from the solemn  
sky

The New Year beckons, and makes reply:  
I bring you, friends, what the years have  
brought

Since ever men toiled, aspired, or thought—  
Days for labor, and nights for rest;  
And I bring you love, a heaven-born guest;  
Space to work in and work to do,  
And faith in that which is pure and true.  
Hold me in honor and greet me dear,  
And sooth you'll find me a happy Year.  
—Harper's Bazar.

## HOW IT ALL CAME ROUND.

(L. T. Meade, in "Sunday Magazine.")

CHAPTER LIII.—THE PRINCE OF PEACE.

It was very nearly midnight when Mr. Home, entering the sitting room where his wife waited up for him, asked her to come with him at once.

"There is a hansom at the door," he said, "put on your bonnet and come. I will tell you all as we drive along; come at once, we have not a moment to lose."

Charlotte Home, accustomed as Home's wife to imperative demands, only thought of a night's nursing of some specially poor patient. She rose without a word, and in two minutes they were driving, as fast as a fleet horse could take them, to Prince's Gate.

"Charlotte," said her husband, taking her hand, "God has heard my prayer, God has given me the man's soul."

"Whose soul, my dearest?"

"The soul of John Harman. Charlotte, I have prayed as I never prayed before in all my life for that guilty and troubled sinner's

soul. I have been in an agony for it; it has seemed to me at times that for this lost and suffering brother I could lay down my very life. On Monday last I went to conduct service in the small iron church. I tried the night before to prepare a sermon; no thought would come to me. I tried at last to look up an old one; no old sermon would commend itself. Finally I dropped all thought of the morrow's sermon and spent the greater part of the night in prayer. My prayer was for this sinner, and it seemed to me that, as I struggled and pleaded, God the Father and God the Son drew nigh. I went to bed with a wonderfully close sense of their presence. At morning prayers the next day, Miss Harman and her father entered the church. You may well look at me in surprise, Charlotte, but when I saw them I felt quiet enough; I only knew that God had sent them. For the first time in my life I preached without note or written help. I felt, however, at no loss for words; my theme was the Prodigal son. I thought only of Mr. Harman; I went home and continued to pray for him. On Tuesday morning—that is, this morning—he was again at the church. After the prayers were over he waited to speak to me; he asked me to visit him at his own house this evening. I went there; I have been with him all the evening; he told me his life story, the bitter story of his fall. I am now come for you, for he must confess to you—you are the wronged one."

"I am going to see John Harman, my half-brother who has wronged me!" said Mrs. Home; "I am going to him now without preparation! Oh! Angus, I cannot, not to-night, not to-night."

"Yes, dear, it must be to-night; if there is any hardness left in your heart it will melt when you see this sinner, whom God has forgiven."

"Angus, you are all tenderness and love to him; I cannot aspire to your nature. I cannot. To this man, who has caused such misery and sin, I feel hard. Charlotte I pity, Charlotte I love; but this man, this man who deliberately could rob my dead mother! It is against human nature to feel very sorry for him."

"You mean to tell me, Charlotte, that you refuse to forgive him?"

"No; eventually you will conquer me; but just now, I confess, my heart is not full of pity."

Mr. Home thought for a moment. He was pained by his wife's want of sympathy. Then he reflected that she had not seen Mr. Harman. It was plain, however, that they must not meet until her spirit towards him had changed.

"Do not stop at Prince's Gate," he called out to the cabby, "drive on until I ask you to stop."

During the drive that followed, he told his wife Mr. Harman's story. He told it well, for when he had finished, Charlotte turned to him eyes which had shed some tears.

"Does Charlotte know of this?" she said. "I do not think so. Will you come to Mr. Harman now?"

"Yes, I will come on one condition!"

"What is that?"

"That I may see Charlotte afterwards."

"I am sure that can be managed."

Then Mr. Home desired the cabby to stop at Prince's Gate. A sleepy-looking servant waited up for them. He manifested no surprise at sight of the lady and gentleman at such an hour. Mr. Home took his wife's hand, and the servant led them straight to his master's study.

"I have told her the story," said Mr. Home; "she is your father's child, she comes to me."

Here the clergyman paused and looked at his wife, he wanted the word "forgive" to come from her own lips. Mrs. Home had grown white to her very lips. Now, instead of replying, she fell on her knees and covered her face.

"Charlotte," said Mr. Harman, "can you do what this clergyman wants? Can you forgive the sin?" There was no answer; Mrs. Home was sobbing aloud. "I have robbed you, I have robbed you most cruelly. My dying father asked me to be good to you; I have been worse than cruel. You see before you an old, old man, as great a sinner as can be found on God's earth. Can you forgive me? Dare I ask it? At last, at last I make full reparation; I repent me, in dust and ashes; I repent, and I restore all fourfold." But here Charlotte Home had risen suddenly to her feet. She came up

close to Mr. Harman, and taking his hand raised it to her lips.

"My husband has told me all. I, I quite forgive you," she said.

"Mr. Harman glanced at the clergyman. "Your husband?" he said.

"Yes; sir, my wife," answered Mr. Home. "Sir, you heard my wife say that she quite forgives. You may go to rest to-night, with a very peaceful heart; the peace of God which passes all understanding may encompass your pillow to-night. It is late and you have gone through much, may I go with you to your room? There will be many explanations yet to make; but though a clergyman, I am also in some measure a physician. I see that you can go through no more emotion to-night, rest satisfied that all explanations can wait till to-morrow."

"I will go with you," answered Mr. Harman, "but may I first thank your wife?" Charlotte Home's bonnet had fallen off as she knelt on the floor, now suddenly a withered and trembling hand was placed on her head. "God bless you! Even from a sinner like me, such words from a full heart must be heard."

"Ay," said Mr. Home, in a loud, exultant voice "the Prince of peace and forgiveness has come into this house to-night."

CHAPTER LIV.—CHARLOTTE'S ROOM.

Mr. Home and Mr. Harman went away together, and Charlotte was left alone in the study. By the profound stillness which now reigned in the house she guessed that every one had gone to bed. The servant who had admitted them at so late an hour had looked sleepy as he had done so. Doubtless Mr. Harman had desired him not to wait longer. Charlotte felt there was no use in ringing a bell. She scarcely knew her way about in this great house. Nevertheless she must find Charlotte; she could not wait until the morning to throw her arms round her neck.

She took one of the candles from the mantel-piece and began her tour through the silent house. She felt strangely timid as she commenced this midnight pilgrimage. The softly-carpeted stairs echoed back no footfall; she passed door after door. At last she recognized Charlotte's own private sitting-room, she had been there two or three times, but had never seen the room where her friend slept. A corridor, however, ran directly from this sitting-room, and Charlotte saw a closed door at the farther end. "That must be the room," she said to herself, and she went straight towards it. The door was closed, but Charlotte heard a faint sound within. Instantly on hearing it she knocked lightly, but distinctly. There was a quick sound of hurried and surprised feet, and Charlotte Harman opened the door. Her eyes were heavy and red, as though she had been weeping. Her face was pale. She had not begun to undress.

"Charlotte! Charlotte Home!" she exclaimed. "Oh, what is wrong? My father!"

"Nothing is wrong, dear Charlotte, I hear dear Charlotte; but may I come in? I have a great deal to tell you."

"Oh, I shall be glad! but how astonished I am to see you. I could not sleep. Yes, come in, you shall keep me company. Charlotte, you have been crying. Charlotte, there is something wrong."

"You may well be surprised to see me here," said Mrs. Home; "but strange as it may seem, things are more right than wrong. My husband came first, then he brought me."

"Yes, I saw Mr. Home early in the evening. I saw him go into my father's study. When he went away I went there myself, but the door was locked, and my father called out from within, 'Not to-night, my child; don't sit up for me, come to me in the morning, I would rather be alone to-night.' He never before refused to see me to say good-night. I went to my room. I could not rest. Everything seems very dark. I have been crying, and now you have come. Oh, Charlotte! what is the meaning of it all?"

"The meaning is good, Charlotte; but good or bad, you have to thank yourself for it. Why did you take your father to my husband's church on Sunday?"

"He came to me on Sunday morning," answered Miss Harman. "He said he would like to go to church with me. He never did go to church with me—never, for many months. I asked him where he would go. He said he would leave it to me. Then it flashed across me that he did not know Mr. Home, also that I had never heard Mr. Home preach. I resolved to go to his church,

We drove to Kentish Town. I made a few inquiries. I found out the little church where your husband told the people of his congregation how best to live, how best to die. Ah, Charlotte! he did preach to us. What a man he is!"

"He realizes the absolute daily presence of God more perfectly than any man I ever met," answered his wife. "My dear, it was God himself led you to my husband's church on Sunday. Your father went there again to-day. After the service he stopped to speak to Angus. He asked him to come to see him this evening. This evening he told my husband all; all the story of his sin, his repentance. Angus heard all, and when it was over he sent for me. I saw your father, Charlotte, your father may have been a sinner, but with such sinners, as he was one, the New Jerusalem will be filled by-and-by. Ah! thank God for the peace I saw in his face before I left him. Do you know that he put his hand on my head and blessed me. Angus is with him now, and I have come to you."

"My father has told all!" said Charlotte Harman. Her face could scarcely grow any whiter. She made no further exclamation, but sat quiet. Charlotte Home, having told her story watched her face. Suddenly, with tears springing to her eyes, she turned to the wife and mother who stood by her side.

"Charlotte, how hard my heart has been! I have passed through some dreadful weeks. Oh! how heavy was my burden, how heavy was my heart! My heart was growing very hard; but the hardness is gone now. Now, Charlotte, I believe, I believe fully what your little Harold said to me some weeks ago."

"What did I say to you dearest?"

"He said that Jesus Christ loved me very much. Yes, I believe Jesus does love me very much. Oh, Charlotte! do you know that I am tired and rested, and I want to sleep altogether. Will you lie down beside me? You will not leave me to fight?"

"No darling; I will not leave you to-night."

CHAPTER LV.—HOW SANDY WILSON SPEAKS OUT HIS MIND.

Early in the morning, the father and daughter met. Not very many words passed between them. Mr. Harman knew that Mrs. Home had told Charlotte all. Now, coming to his side, she put her arms about him, and knelt, looking into his face.

"Charlotte, you know what I have been," he said.

"Father, I know what you are now," she answered.

After these few words, she would scarcely allow him to speak again, for he was very weak, too weak to leave his bed; but later on, in the course of the day, they had a long talk together, and Charlotte told her father of her own suffering during the past weeks. There was no longer need of concealment between them, and Charlotte made none. It was a very few days later that two trustees of the late Mr. Harman's will saw each other for the first time.

Sandy Wilson had often looked forward to the moment when he could speak out his mind as to the enormity of the crime committed by Mr. Harman. Hitherto, this worthy man had felt that in this respect circumstances had been hard on him. His Daisy, his pretty little gentle sister, had been treated as hardly, as cruelly, as woman could be treated, and yet the robber—for was he not just a common robber!—had got off scot-free; he was to get off scot-free to the very end; he was to be let die in peace; and afterwards, his innocent child, his only daughter, must bear the brunt of his misdeeds. She must be put to grief and shame, while he, the one on whose head the real sin lay, escaped. Sandy felt that it would have been some slight relief to his wounded feelings if he could find some one to whom he could thoroughly and heartily abuse Mr. Harman. But even this satisfaction was denied him. Mr. Home was a man who would listen to abuse of none; and even Charlotte, though her eyes did flash when his name was mentioned, even she was simply silent, and to all the rest of the world Sandy must keep the thing a secret.

There was no doubt whatever that when, the day after Mr. Harman's confession, the Homes came to Uncle Sandy and told him, not only all, but also that at any moment he might receive a summons to visit Mr. Harman, he felt a sense of exultation; also that his exultation was caused not by the fact that his niece would now get back her own, for he had supplied her immediate need for