

## THE ANGELS' SONG.

It came upon the midnight clear,  
That glorious song of old,  
From angels bending near the earth  
To touch their harps of gold:  
"Peace to the earth, good-will to men  
From heaven's all-gracious King!"  
The world in solemn stilling lay  
To hear the angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife  
The world has suffered long;  
Beneath the angel-train have rolled  
Two thousand years of wrong;  
And man, at war with man, hears not  
The love-song which they bring:  
Oh! hush the noise, ye men of strife,  
And hear the angelising!

And ye, beneath life's crushing load  
Whose forms are bending low;  
Who toil along the gliding way,  
With painful steps and slow,—  
Lock now! for glad and golden hours  
Come swiftly on the wing;  
Oh! rest beside the weary road,  
And hear the angels sing.

For lo! the days are hastening on,  
By prophet-bards foretold,  
When with the ever-circling years  
Comes round the age of gold;  
When Peace shall over all the earth  
Its ancient splendors fling,  
And the whole world send back the song  
Which now the angels sing.

EDMUND H. SEARS, D. D.

## HOW IT ALL CAME ROUND.

(L. T. Meade, in "Sunday Magazine.")  
CHAPTER XLVII.—CHARLOTTE HARMAN'S  
COMFORT.

Jasper Harman did not come to his brother's house that night, but about the time he might be expected to arrive there came a note from him instead. It was plausibly written, and gave a plausible excuse for his absence. He told John of a sudden tidings with regard to some foreign business. These tidings were really true. Jasper said that a confidential clerk had gone to the foreign port where they dealt to inquire into this special matter, but that he thought it best, as the stakes at issue were large, to go also himself to enquire personally. He would not be long away, &c. &c. He would write when to expect his return. It was a letter so cleverly put together as to cause no alarm to any one. John Harman read it, folded it up, and told Charlotte that they need not expect Jasper in Prince's Gate for at least a week. The week passed, and though Jasper had neither come nor written, there was no anxiety felt on his account. In the meantime affairs had outwardly calmed down in Prince's Gate. The agitation, which had been felt even by the humblest servant in the establishment, had ceased. Everything had returned to its accustomed groove. The nine days' wonder of that put off wedding had ceased to be a wonder. It still, it is true, gave zest to conversation in the servants' hall, but upstairs it was never mentioned. The even routine of daily life had resumed its sway, and things looked something as they did before, except that Mr. Harman grew to all eyes perceptibly weaker, that Charlotte was very grave and pale and quiet, that old Uncle Jasper was no longer in and out of the house, and that John Hinton never came near it. The luxurious house in Prince's Gate was unquestionably very dull; but otherwise no one could guess that there was anything specially ails there.

On a certain morning, Charlotte got up, put on her walking things, and went out. She had not been out of doors for a week, and a sudden longing to be alone in the fresh outer world came over her too strongly to be rejected. She called a hansom and once more drove to her favorite Regent's Park. The park was now in all the full beauty and glory of its spring dress, and Charlotte sat down under the green and pleasant shade of a wide-spreading oak-tree. She folded her hands in her lap and gazed straight before her. She had lived through one storm, but she knew that another was before her. The sky overhead was still grey and lowering; there was scarcely even peace in this brief lull in the tempest. In the first sudden fierceness of the storm she had acted nobly and bravely, but now that the excitement was past, there was coming

to her a certain hardening of heart, and she was beginning to doubt the goodness of God. At first, most truly, she had scarcely thought of herself at all, but it was insensibly as the days went on for her not to make a moan over her own altered life. The path before her looked very dark, and Charlotte's feet had hitherto been unaccustomed to gloom. She was looking forward to the death, the inevitable and certainly approaching death of her father. That was bad, that was dreadful; but bad and dreadful as it would be to say good-bye to the old man, what must follow must be worse; however she might love him, however tenderly she might treat him, during his few remaining days or weeks of life, when all was over and he could return no more to receive men's praise or blame, then she must disgrace him, she must hold him up for the world's scorn. It would be impossible even to hope that the story would be known, and once known it would heap dishonor on the old head she loved. For Charlotte, though she saw the sin, though the sin itself was most terrible and horrible to her, was still near enough to Christ in her nature to forgive the sinner. She had suffered; oh, how bitterly through this man! but none the less for this reason did she love him. But there was another cause for her heartache; and this was more personal. Hinton and she were parted. That was right. Any other course for her to have pursued would have been most distinctly wrong. But none the less did her heart ache and feel very sore: for how easily had Hinton acquiesced in her decision! She did not even know of his visit to the house. That letter, which would have been, whatever its result, like balm to her wounded spirit, had never reached her. Hinton was most plainly satisfied that they should meet no more. Doubtless it was best; doubtless in the end it would prove the least hard course; but none the less did hot tears fall now; none the less heavy was her heart. She was wiping away a tear or two and thinking these very sad thoughts, when a clear little voice in her ear startled her.

"My pretty lady!" said the sweet voice, and looking round Charlotte saw little Harold Home standing by her side. Charlotte had not seen Harold since his illness. He had grown taller and thinner than of old, but his loving eyes were fixed on her face, and now his small brown hands beat impatiently upon her knees.

"Daisy and Angus are just round the corner," he whispered. "Let us play a game of hide-and-seek, shall we?"

He pulled her hand as he spoke, and Charlotte got up to humor him at once. They went quickly round to the other side of the great oak-tree, and Harold, sitting down on the grass, pulled Charlotte to his side.

"Ah! don't speak," he said, and he put his arms round her neck.

She found the feel of the little arms strangely comforting, and when a moment or two afterwards the others discovered them and came close with peals of merry laughter, she yielded at once to Harold's eager request.

"May they go for a walk for half an hour, and may I stay with you, pretty lady?"

"Yes," she answered, stooping down to kiss him.

Anne promised to return at the right time, and Charlotte and Harold were alone. The boy, nestling close to her side, began to chatter confidentially.

"I'm so glad I came across you," he said, "you looked very dull when I came up, and it must be nice for you to have me to talk to, and 'tis very nice for me too, for I am fond of you."

"I am glad of that Harold," said Charlotte.

"But I don't think you are quite such a pretty lady as you were," continued the boy, raising his eyes to her face and examining her critically. "Mr. Hinton and I used to think you were perfectly lovely! You were so—bright—yes, bright is the word. Something like a dear pretty cherry, or like my canary bird when he's singing his very, very best. But you ain't a bit like my canary to-day; you have no sing in you to-day; ain't you happy, my pretty lady?"

"I have had some trouble since I saw you last, Harold," said Charlotte.

"Dear, dear!" sighed Harold. "everybody seems to have lots of trouble. I wonder why. No; I don't think Mr. Hinton would think you pretty to-day. But," as a sudden thought and memory came over him

"I suppose you are married by this time? Ain't you married to my Mr. Hinton by this time?"

"No, dear," answered Charlotte.

"But why?" questioned the inquisitive boy.

"I am afraid I cannot tell you that, Harold."

Harold was silent for about half a minute. He was sitting down on the grass close to Charlotte, and his head was leaning against her shoulder. After a moment he continued with a sigh—

"I guess he's very sorry. He and I used to talk about you so at night when I had the fever. I knew then he was fond of you, nearly as fond as I am myself."

"I am glad little Harold Home loves me," said Charlotte, soothed by the pretty boy's talk, and again she stooped down to kiss him.

"But everybody does," said the boy. "There's father and mother, and my Mr. Hinton and me, myself, and above all, the blessed Jesus."

A strange feeling, half pleasure, half surprise came over Charlotte.

"How do you know about that last?" she whispered.

"Of course I know," replied Harold. "I know quite well. I heard father and mother say it; I heard them say it quite plainly one day. 'She is one of those blessed ones whom Jesus Christ loves very much.' Oh dear! I wish the children weren't back so dreadfully soon."

Yes, the children and Anne had returned, and Harold had to say good-bye, and Charlotte herself had to retrace her steps homeward. But her walk had not been for nothing, and there was a new peace, a new quiet, and a new hope in her heart. The fact was, she just simply, without doubt or difficulty, believed the child. Little Harold Home had brought her some news. The news was strange, new, and wonderful; she did not doubt it. Faithful, and therefore full of faith, was this simple and upright nature. There was no difficulty in her believing a fact. What Harold said was a fact. She was one of those whom Jesus loved. Straight did this troubled soul fly to the God of consolation. Her religion from being a dead thing began to live. She was not friendless, she was not alone, she had a friend who, knowing absolutely all, still loved. At that moment Charlotte Harman put her hand into the hand of Christ.

CHAPTER XLVIII.—THE CHILDREN'S  
ATTIC.

It was one thing for Alexander Wilson to agree to let matters alone for the present, and by so doing to oblige both Charlotte Home and Charlotte Harman, but it was quite another thing for him to see his niece, his own Daisy's child, suffering from poverty. Sandy had been accustomed to roughing it in the Australian bush. He had known what it was to go many hours without food, and when that food could be obtained it was most generally of the coarsest and commonest quality. He had known, too, what the cold of lying asleep in the open air meant. All that an ordinary man could endure had Sandy pulled through in his efforts to make a fortune. He had never grumbled at these hardships, they had passed over him lightly. He would, he considered, have been less than man to have complained. But, nevertheless, when he entered the Home's house, and took possession of the poorly-furnished bedroom, and sat down day after day to the not too abundant meal; when he saw pretty little Daisy cry because her mother could not give her just what was most nourishing for her breakfast, and Harold, still pale and thin, having to do without the beef-tea which the doctor had ordered for him; when Sandy saw these things his heart waxed hot, and a great grumbling fit took possession of his kindly, genial soul. This grumbling fit reached its culminating-point, when one day—mother, children, and maid all out—he stole up softly to the children's nursery. This small attic room, close to the roof, low, insufficiently ventilated, was altogether too much for Sandy. The time had come for him to act, and he was never the man to shrink in any way. Charlotte Harman was all very well; that dying father of hers, whom he pronounced a most atrocious sinner, and took pleasure in so thinking him, he also was well enough, but everything could not give way to them. Though for the present Mr. Harman's money could not be touched for the Home's relief, yet

Sandy's own purse was open, and that purse, he flattered himself, was somewhat comfortably lined. Yes, he must do something, and at once. Having examined with marked disgust the children's attic, he marched down the street. Tremis Road was long and narrow, but leading out of it was a row of fine new houses. These houses were about double the size of number ten, were nicely finished, and though many of them were already taken, two or three had boards up, announcing that they were still to let. Sandy saw the agent's name on the board, and went off straight to consult with him.

The result of this consultation was that in half an hour he and the agent were all over the new house. Sandy went down to the basement, and thought himself particularly knowing in poking his nose into corners, in examining the construction of the kitchen-range, and expecting a copper for washing purposes to be put in the scullery. Upstairs he selected a large and bright room, the windows of which commanded a peep of distant country. Here his pretty Daisy might play happily, and get back her rosy cheeks, and sleep well at night without coming downstairs heavy-eyed to breakfast. Finally he took the house on the spot, and ordered in paperers and painters for the following Monday.

He was asked if he would like to choose the papers. "Certainly," he replied, inwardly resolving that the nursery should be covered with pictures. He appointed an hour on Monday for his selections. This day was Saturday. He then went to the landlord of No. 10 Tremis Road, and made an arrangement for the remainder of the Home's lease. This arrangement cost him some money, but he reflected again with satisfaction that his purse was well lined. So far he had conducted his plans without difficulty. But his next step was not so easy; without saying a word to either Charlotte or her husband, he had deprived them of one home, while providing them with another. No doubt the new home was vastly superior to the old. But still it came into his mind that they might consider his action in the light of a liberty; in short, that this very peculiar and unworshipful couple might be capable of taking huff and might refuse to go at his bidding. Sandy set his wits to work over this problem, and finally he concocted a scheme. He must come round this pair by guile. He thought and thought, and in the evening when her husband was out he had a long talk with his niece. By a few judiciously chosen words he contrived to frighten Charlotte about her husband's health. He remarked that he looked ill, worn, very much older than his years. He said, with a sigh, that when a man like Home broke down he never got up again. He was undermining his constitution. When had he had a change?

"Never once since we were married," answered his wife with tears in her eyes.

Sandy shook his head very sadly and gravely over this, and after a moment of reflection brought out his scheme.

Easter was now over, there was no special press of parish work. Surely Home's Rector would give him a holiday, and allow him to get away from Monday to Saturday night? Why not run away to Margate for those six days, and take his wife and three children with him? No, they need take no maid, for he, Uncle Sandy, having proposed this plan must be answerable for the expense. He would put them all up at a good hotel, and Anne could stay at home to take care of him. Of course to this scheme there were many objections raised. But, finally, the old Australian overruled them each and all. The short leave was granted by the Rector.

The rooms at the hotel which commanded the best sea-view were taken by Sandy, and the Homes left 10 Tremis Road, little guessing that they were not to return there. When he had seen father, mother, and three happy little children off by an early train, Sandy returned quickly to Tremis Road. There he called Anne to him, and unfolded to the trembling and astonished girl his scheme.

"We have to be in the new house as snug as snug by Saturday night, my girl," he said in conclusion. "We have to bring away what is worth moving of this furniture, and it must all be clean and fresh, for a clean new house. And look here, Anne, you can't do all the work; do you happen to know of a good, hard-working girl, who would come and help you, and stay altogether if Mrs.