

knows no such words, as sacramental confession. Grounding her doctrine on Holy Scripture, she distinctly declares the full and entire forgiveness of sins through the blood of Jesus Christ to all who bewail their own sinfulness, confess themselves to Almighty God with full purpose of amendment of life, and turn with true faith unto Him."

Yours truly,

W. J. ANCIENT.

Rawdon, Dec. 14th.

## FAMILY DEPARTMENT.

### Christmas.

(Written for the Church Guardian.)

BY T. M. B.

It comes with its wondrous glory  
To gladden the closing year;  
It comes with its heavenly story  
Our human hearts to cheer.

It comes like the day-star rising  
To herald the blessed day,  
To chase with its beams of comfort  
The weary night away.

It comes with a touch as tender  
As the touch of a little child,  
To smooth the brow care furrowed,  
And make the stern heart mild.

It comes with the song of angels,  
That Song of rapture clear,  
That smote the watching shepherds  
With gladness and with fear.

It comes with the best Gift given,  
Since from his high estate,  
By God's just anger driven,  
Man was left desolate.

O Christ! we hail Thy Coming!  
Beside that MANGER-SHRINE,  
We kneel in trembling gladness  
To see Thee, Babe Divine.

Jesu! we hail Thy Coming,  
We offer at Thy feet  
Our best to do Thee honour,  
Gifts for the Master meet,

Our faith, our love, our sorrow,  
For the sins Thou cam'st to bear,  
Our service, loyal and steadfast,  
Our will Thy Cross to bear.

### TWO MARGARETS.

## A CHRISTMAS STORY.

(Written for the Church Guardian.)

BY T. M. B.

(CONCLUDED).

A knock at the door roused her, and a servant came to tell that a young person from Miss Spangles had brought her dress and wished to see her. New and costly dresses were not rare events in Margaret's life, but still, being a woman and young and pretty, she was not by any means indifferent to them, and awakening to the occasion, she desired the servant to show the young woman up, "and give me plenty of light, Jane," she added.

When Maggie Pardle was shown into the brilliantly lighted room she felt dazzled for a moment coming out of the twilight. The whole scene seemed more like a dream than a reality to one accustomed only to the sterner realities of life, and whose own home surroundings were of the dreariest kind. Standing in the full light was a slender girl with a very lovely face, crowned with

fair, curling hair. Maggie had a keen appreciation of the beautiful, and it gave her a distinct thrill of pleasure when she found herself face to face with this young lady.

Miss Pardell on the contrary was scarcely conscious of the young woman's presence, except as an emissary from that important person, Miss Spangles.

"You have brought my dress," she said, with a careless but not ungracious little nod, and looking with interest at the card-board box which the young seamstress carried. "Bring it here if you please."

Maggie placed it on a couch, removed the cover and displayed the lacy structure in all its attractiveness, while Miss Pardell examined it critically.

"It is very pretty and seems to be carefully made," she said, spreading out its folds, "but Miss Spangles promised to come herself."

"Miss Spangles sent me in her place, Miss, if you will allow me; she thought that as I made the dress I could judge whether it suited you, and she is very busy to-night."

"Ah, you made it yourself?" said Margaret, still without vouchsafing a glance at the patient face of the young dressmaker; "well, since Miss Spangles has sent you you can try it on."

She rang for her maid, and they adjourned to the young lady's bedroom, where Maggie was permitted to assist in the important ceremony of "trying on."

The lady's maid was inclined to treat the young woman from Miss Spangles with somewhat scant courtesy, but Maggie was unconscious of her disdainful glances, in fact was conscious only of the beautiful face, looking more beautiful than ever when set off by the delicate apparel which her own skilful fingers had constructed.

The lady's maid, perforce, expressed her unqualified approval, and Miss Pardell desired the young woman to tell Miss Spangles that she was quite satisfied; "and, by-the-bye," she said, as Maggie, with one more wistful look at the fair face, was just about to leave the room, "I want to pay Miss Spangles a bill which she sent me lately. Do you receipt accounts for her?"

"Yes, Miss, if you wish I can take the money."

Miss Pardell, still in that beautiful lace drapery which made her look so enchanting in the eyes that were looking at her with such perfect, unenvying admiration, crossed the room to a little elegant escritoire, and, having found the bill, without looking up, motioned to the young woman to come and receipt it. Maggie seated herself and wrote, as was her wont when receipting bills for her employer, her name in full, Margaret Pardell, then handed the receipt to the young lady. The latter looked carelessly at it, then with a sudden quickening of interest she looked again.

"Margaret Pardell!" she exclaimed, "why that is my name!"

"It is mine also," said Maggie, glad to have even a name in common with the young lady, who, now for the first time, was looking at her directly, even intently.

"How strange!" the young lady said—"Margaret Pardell, I have never known anyone of that name before; have you any relations here? I have always thought the name a peculiar one." She scarcely seemed to hear Maggie's answer; it seemed as though something in the face before her aroused her strongest interest, her eyes were fastened on it, while a flush of unwonted excitement coloured her cheeks.

"Benson," she said to the maid who still stood there awaiting her pleasure, "do—do you see no likeness between this young girl and myself?"

The lady's maid felt for the moment a sort of moral shock at such a supposition, but there was something in her young mistress' manner which checked the flippant denial and made her look intently also at Maggie, who, like her name-sake, felt a strange thrill of excitement. Yes, it was undeniable, although the one stood there dressed in the very height of fashionable elegance, while the other was clothed in poor, worn garments, without one touch of colour or shapeliness to set

off the gentle beauty of her face,—though one was the child of luxury and the favorite of fortune, while the other, almost from childhood, had been used to privation and the cold shadow of friendless poverty,—the likeness was more than noticeable, it was most remarkable, the young seamstress might have been taken for the twin sister of Miss Pardell.

Margaret was a creature of impulse.

"This is too extraordinary," she said, hurriedly—the likeness and the name—"it must be more than a coincidence. Do you not see it yourself?" she cried, seizing Maggie's hand and drawing her before a pier-glass; "take off your bonnet."

Maggie obeyed with trembling fingers, and then the likeness became yet more apparent, for the shabby little bonnet had covered a mass of soft, fair curls, like Margaret's own. The two young faces turned from the glass and towards each other, and they looked into each others eyes with the same strange look of yearning expectation.

"No, it cannot be an accident," Margaret repeated; "you must come with me to papa, that is if you will," she added, faltering.

Maggie could only signify her assent with a little mute nod.

"Here, put this round you; he will see the likeness better," and Margaret threw a pale blue wrap about Maggie's shoulders.

Maggie never could remember how they found themselves in the library, where Richard Pardell sat buried in an easy chair, his feet extended towards the glow in the polished grate; indeed all that followed seemed at the time like a dream. The start of wonder when Margaret's father saw the gentle, grave image of his daughter follow her into the room,—his profound agitation when, by questioning her, he found that she was the child of his only brother, "poor, shiftless Stephen," and that the latter had been dead—dead for long years!—the tears in Margaret's blue eyes—the tenderness which seemed to break forth as a flood towards this cousin, this girl of her own flesh and blood, who had never known the brightness of life which to her had seemed so natural, so necessary.

The drive back to Mill's Alley, not alone, but in company with the new-found uncle and cousin—the meeting with Sue—poor Sue, with the pale, pinched face and large, beseeching eyes, whom Margaret kissed so pitifully, while Richard Pardell, pacing with agitated steps up and down the poor, dim, cheerless room, passed his hand again and again over his eyes.

But what a Christmas it was when they all realized what had come to them! What a blessed Christmas! making them all feel as never before the meaning of the angel's message. What sudden growth of sympathy and tenderness—God's blessed gifts; what brightened faces under the roof which was henceforth to be the shelter of home to the two orphan sisters; what gratitude in the heart of its owner that he could now in a measure atone for the harshness to his poor dead brother, the memory of which had lurked like a haunting shadow in his life. Truly a happy Christmas.

### Christmas Thoughts.

ANOTHER year is closed with the golden seal of Christmas. All it has brought us of good and of ill, all that we have given it of ill or good, is shut away from us, not wholly hidden, but as from some strong perfume closed in a porous case, ever and anon a breath of fragrance is wafted, so memory will bring to us the odor of the past. We would not lose all that the year has bade Love give us; and, heaven-sent gift that it is, its sweetness is not dissipated, like that of earthly flowers, but remains, gathering strength as time passes. Nor would we altogether forget our sorrows, for in every tear some special, tender mercy of our Lord is mirrored. Is there anything this vanishing year has brought us we would wholly forget? Not its joys, for they increase in our remembrance; not our griefs, for they bring tender thoughts of our Consoler; not our burdens and