

CIRCUMSTANTIAL.

It was quite by chance that I happened to drop into that particular establishment. I had been spending a considerable part of the afternoon in the reference department of the British Museum, in connection with some literary work I had at that time in hand, and was feeling somewhat exhausted after the labor entailed in poring over the numerous tomes I had found it necessary to consult for my purpose.

I stepped into the first cafe that I came across on leaving the museum, in order to obtain what I considered necessary.

The room in which I found myself was a dreary little department, dimly lighted, with some too cleanly a look about it, and at the time I entered was entirely devoid of customers. The cup of coffee that I got proved a capital one, and I sipped it with a relish.

Having in due course finished my little repast, I was about departing, when the attendant, who had, as I thought, more than once eyed me rather closely, placed a small card on the table to front of me, and without any accompanying remark walked away.

It was about the size of a gentleman's visiting card, and peering at it in the uncertain light, I saw inscribed in small characters upon its surface the words, arranged just as I notice them:

LEAGUE OF THE LIFELESS MEN. 64 Delamere Street. To-night, 8.30. "Progress."

The affair afforded matter for more than a little speculation on my way home, and impelled by a growing desire to know what it meant, I resolved to visit Delamere street at the hour named, and try to find out.

I knew nothing of the "League of the Lifeless Men," had, in reality, never heard the strange name before—but that fact only served to make my curiosity all the greater.

I happened to know the direction in which Delamere street lay, and therefore experienced no difficulty in finding my way there. It was five minutes to the time specified on the card when I arrived at No. 64, and not having quite made up my mind as to the precise line of action to adopt, I stepped aside a moment to consider.

It was a rather large apartment, hung with heavy draperies, and in the centre stood a table upon which burned a couple of candles. Several chairs were arranged around the central article of furniture, one at the extreme end standing on a slight elevation above the rest.

At the moment of my appearance the chamber was quite empty, but the sound of approaching footsteps reached my ear almost directly. I had only just time to conceal myself in the folds of one of the curtains when several individuals entered and took their seats at the table. From my position it was impossible to see who they were or what they were like, but I listened intently in order to get some idea of them and their doings from their conversation.

In this I was only partially successful, for, speaking in low tones, the greater part of their utterances became inaudible to me. But what I did hear was sufficient to convince me that the "League of the Lifeless Men" was no trifle more or less than a secret assassination society and the present meeting was one called for the purpose of reporting on the details of their work.

As I did so a man, closely muffled came up, and without appearing to notice me, gave three sharp raps on the door. In response to his summons a query was uttered from within, which I failed to catch.

The answer to it, however, did not escape me. It was the word "Progress," the same which figure in quotation marks at the bottom of the card inadvertently given me at the cafe shop, and this demonstrated to me the fact—that I had indeed before me a man of some importance, for upon it being pronounced the portal immediately swung open and the stranger entered.

He came in, taking my cue from what I had witnessed, I too, knocked three times, and uttering in reply to the challenge from within the mystic word, was admitted without a word.

On entering I found myself in a kind of corridor, at the further end of which was a door opening on a room, in which I straightway entered.

As far as I was able to judge (for the indistinctness left a good deal to be imagined), each member was interrogated as to his work by an individual who, occupying the post at the head of the table, seemed to act as president of the murderous gang.

Each man's account of his doings was evidently listened to with brutal interest by his companions, and the substance of the various narrations I took it to be being jotted down in a book kept for the purpose.

Although I could not catch anything like a connected account of what was said in these ghastly recitals, such expressions as "Unhappy victim!" "Desperate defence!" "Frenzied struggle!" were sufficient to make me understand the nature of the terrible details.

When apparently all the members of this atrocious league had rendered accounts of their strictest stewardships, the blood well high curdled in my veins on hearing the question coolly asked, "Who is next on the list?" for I knew that it meant one more life for those refuse to take away.

"Colonel Crawley, 21 Rubicon street, W." And the announcement of it was followed by the words "To-morrow night at 9!"

The meeting subsequently breaking up and the members dispersing, I was enabled to take my own departure unobserved.

It was little I slept that night, the events of the evening keeping my brain far too actively employed to allow of any real rest, and it was a relief when daylight came and it was time to rise.

Colonel Crawley was not a gentleman with whom I was acquainted, although his name was perfectly familiar to me; therefore, when I sent in my card at No. 21 I was despatched with it a message that my business was of an urgent nature.

On being shown into the reception room I was confronted by a young lady whose bright eyes and handsome face were a pleasure to gaze upon. I asked to be allowed to speak with Colonel Crawley.

"Oh, you may freely talk your business to me," said the young lady in response to my request, adding in a charmingly artless

tone, "papa allows me to transact almost all his affairs for him."

"What I have to say affects Colonel Crawley so intimately," I answered firmly, but with all necessary politeness, "that it is essential that he should hear it himself."

"Is it so imperative?" queried the girl, "It is a matter of life and death!" I answered gravely.

Evidently impressed by my manner, the young lady left the room, and shortly afterward returned with an elderly gentleman, whom I rightly guessed to be Colonel Crawley himself.

"My daughter tells me you have something important to communicate," said the officer on his entry, motioning me back to the seat from which I had risen on his approach.

"Colonel," I said, as calmly as the seriousness of the case would allow, "it is my duty to tell you plainly, without mincing words, that your life is in danger!"

"My life in danger!" echoed the officer, with a tinge of derision in his tone, "impossible! I have carried it unscathed through half a dozen campaigns, and it cannot be menaced now! Besides, he added, with a cheery laugh, 'who cares for the life of a worn-out soldier?'"

"I can tell you of one who does," whispered the young lady on his arm, looking lovingly into her father's face.

"Now tell me, my dear sir, what you mean," said the old gentleman, "for you seem to be terribly in earnest."

"Sir," I replied, "I happen to know that a conspiracy is on foot to take your life and that the assassins mean to make the attempt this very night. For some reason of which I am quite ignorant you have incurred the hatred of a secret assassination society and the members of it have decreed your doom."

It is in order to warn you and prevent the execution of their foul designs that I have come here this afternoon."

I related the adventure which has formed the subject of my narrative, explaining everything in its minutest detail. As I proceeded I noticed the veteran's features gradually relaxing, and directly I had finished, to my intense chagrin, he burst into a fit of laughter that lasted several minutes.

"Excuse my rudeness," he said at the end of it, "but nobody enjoys a joke more than a soldier, and this is the best that I have heard for a long time. My dear sir, he went on, 'you have stumbled across a monstrous man's nest!'"

"The 'League of the Lifeless Men' is no more an assassination society than the Salvation Army, or any other similar confederation. It is simply a social organization chartered for the primary object of playing chess, and the only people its members are in the habit of slaughtering are the opponents against whom they happen to be pitted, for I give you my word as an investor chess player, that they are the most skillful manipulators of the 'lifeless men' I have ever seen."

"They are now about to play a series of games with a kindred club to which I have the honor to belong, and a meeting is arranged for at my house this evening at seven, when I anticipate we shall get a decisive beating. Their headquarters are at 64 Delamere street, and the meeting at which you so romantically assisted was doubtless one called to report on their last tournament."

"Now that I have explained it all to you and you see there is no cause for alarm," concluded the colonel, good-humoredly, "I must insist that you do me the honor of staying to dinner with us and smoking a cigar with me afterward. The man who is anxious to save the life of a fellow creature is entitled to know something of the person that life belongs to."

Stupid, however, as was the mistake into which I had fallen, I never regretted it for, by my acquaintance with Colonel Crawley and his charming daughter led to an engagement which ultimately resulted in a happy marriage.—Tit-Bits.

THE SWEET BYE AND BYE.

Its First Publication by Men Who Scored The Popular Hymn.

There recently appeared in a Western newspaper an article regarding "The Sweet Bye and Bye," containing many absurd statements. Now the interest in this song is awakened. I wish to make public the circumstances of its inception and subsequent publication and the way in which it became popular.

A. P. Webster, the composer of the music, was by no means unknown to the public at the time the song was published. He had won great popularity with his "Lorena," "Paul Vane," "Little Maud," "The Battle Cry of Freedom," and "The Battle Cry of Freedom."

These had been published at Chicago by H. M. Higgins, who, with the writer, then a boy of twelve years, created a sale for them by singing them to acquaintances and customers who came to purchase music. At that time, in the early sixties, Webster lived at the little town of Elkhorn, Wis., and about twice each year he would come to Chicago with a roll of manuscript songs. These were usually written with a pencil, and in a hasty, scrawling manner, though the notes were always legible. The songs he offered for sale at 25c each, and the publisher would select what he thought would sell, and either pay him or agree to pay royalty. My recollection is that "Paul Vane," "Lorena," and "Little Maud" were published on the royalty plan.

Webster's appearance as he came into the store was most uncommon. He wore his hair hanging to the shoulders. It was light brown, and his complexion was florid. He had clear blue eyes and heavy eyelashes. He was of medium height, rather slender, and walked with a gait that suggested humility. It has been said that Webster was temperate, and that he used to drink heavily, but I never saw him under the influence of liquor.

In 1866 or 1867 a young physician, Samuel Ellmore Bennett, then lately graduated from Ann Arbor University, had become an intimate friend of Webster. They were in fact almost inseparable. One day Webster came into his office in a most despondent frame of mind.

"What is the trouble now?" his friend asked.

"It is no matter," Webster answered with a sigh. "It will be all right by and by."

Like an inspiration the idea flashed upon Bennett, who had written several war poems, to write some verses, and he said; "Why not make a song of the sweet bye and bye?"

"You write the verses and I'll make the music," Webster answered.

Turning to his desk Bennett hastily scribbled lines after line, and in less than an hour the verses were completed. He then handed them to Webster, who raised his violin just as two friends entered. Not wishing to greet them he drew his bow and without any hesitation played the tune which since has been sung by millions. He hastily jotted it down on waste paper, and in less than ten minutes from the time he began the composition the four men were singing "The Sweet Bye and Bye." Thus originated the words and music of a hymn which has given consolation and hope to the whole Christian world. The characters in the drama are few and humble, the surroundings most simple, the poor dependent musician, the young physician, the friends, and a common office in a Western town.

The composer, with his manuscript songs under his arm, appeared in Chicago soon afterward. He hoped and expected to sell the manuscripts for \$25 each; this meant \$150 or \$200 to take home. He went to the music store of Root & Cady, who had made a fortune with "The Battle Cry of Freedom" and other war songs. They examined his manuscripts and took all except "The Sweet Bye and Bye." That they "did not think worth publishing."

Poor Webster! The song he had counted upon was rejected! He could not go to Higgins again, for Higgins had had his feelings hurt and had refused to publish any more of his songs. He finally thought of a new firm of young men lately from Boston, Lyon and Healy. They had treated him courteously, though they had published nothing of his. Thus he came to Lyon & Healy's store, where it was then in charge of the retail department. Having known him for several years, I greeted him warmly and at once took him out to Mr. Healy, who gave him his immediate attention. I remember so well the whole attitude of the man as he came in and approached Mr. Healy. He awakened a keen sense of pity for he was as it had lost all hope; and I think it was this feeling which moved Mr. Healy, after listening to the song on the piano, to offer him \$20 for it. This Webster accepted, and seemed thankful for. Little interest was shown toward the song. Webster's popularity had waned greatly and had been overshadowed by the enormous success of George F. Root's war songs. The composer of "Little Maud" and "Lorena" was no longer sought and little attention given him.

After Webster had gone Mr. Healy turned the manuscript of the song over to me, and I played it and hummed it with perfect indifference, not to say contempt, for its simplicity offended the little knowledge I had acquired by studying Johnson's "Harmony and Thorough Bass." Mr. Healy said with a sigh:

"Oh, yes! we'll have to get it out," and then added, "Poor fellow! I didn't have the heart to send him away without taking it."

So we got the song out with the least expense possible, the cheapest little page we could get made, and lettering so bad that we all felt ashamed to show it. I placed it upon the counter, and there it was permitted to lie friendless, for I never

recommended it, telling its poverty and insignificance in comparison with the gorgeous lithograph title pages and elegantly colored lettering of the other sheet music by which it was surrounded. Finally, without the sale of a dozen copies, it was consigned to the wholesale shelves, where Mr. Healy and myself mentally erected a tombstone inscribed "Sacred to memory of a poor musician." About a year past, when a Mr. Whitmore, a music teacher in the public schools of Chicago, came in and asked me if I thought Mr. Healy would let him use "The Sweet Bye and Bye" in a Sunday school book he was then compiling. I said:

"Certainly, without doubt for the song is of no use to us. It has no sale whatever."

He went out to the office and presently Mr. Healy called to me to give Mr. Whitmore a copy of the song. Nothing more was thought of the matter until nearly a year afterward, when we began to have calls for "The Sweet Bye and Bye." I remember my surprise the first time it was asked for. A little schoolgirl, not more than 12 or 15 years old, came in very timidly, evidently unused to trading "heretofore," and standing off from the counter as if afraid to come nearer, said: "Have you a piece of music called 'The Sweet Bye and Bye?' It's in Mr. Whitmore's book."

It is thus fair to state that to Mr. Healy's tender nature and to Mr. Whitmore's recognition of the merits of the song the world owes its knowledge of Webster's inspiration. Mr. Healy's and my own utter failure to see anything in it is only another instance of how human judgment errs, and this was, in my own case, most keenly emphasized when, after having passed four years abroad studying, I returned to be greeted in New York on the ferryboats, steamboats, and railway trains with the strains of "The Sweet Bye and Bye."

The last time I saw Webster was in Milwaukee, in the summer of 1877, at Hempstead's music store. He was then an invalid, the almost continual coughing being the serious nature of his disease. He asked me to play for him, as I had done when a boy, variations on his beautiful song, "Lorena," written by Lou Chas. This I did, to his intense delight. Then I gave him an improvisation on "The Sweet Bye and Bye," which I had played recently in concert. At the conclusion, when I turned about on the piano stool, I found Webster crying, and with a smile upon his lips he exclaimed:

"You have made me the happiest man in the world. I feel I have not lived in vain. Webster was one of nature's noblemen, tender-hearted, true, simple-minded, and honest. Music was to him the ready medium of pouring out his longings, his sorrows, and aspirations, and who shall say that the offerings of this great soul expressed in such an artless manner are not just as acceptable upon the altar of his God as those more elaborate works where art combines with frequently another's inspiration?—Silas G. Pratt.

What is the trouble now? his friend asked.

"It is no matter," Webster answered with a sigh. "It will be all right by and by."

Like an inspiration the idea flashed upon Bennett, who had written several war poems, to write some verses, and he said; "Why not make a song of the sweet bye and bye?"

"You write the verses and I'll make the music," Webster answered.

Turning to his desk Bennett hastily scribbled lines after line, and in less than an hour the verses were completed. He then handed them to Webster, who raised his violin just as two friends entered. Not wishing to greet them he drew his bow and without any hesitation played the tune which since has been sung by millions. He hastily jotted it down on waste paper, and in less than ten minutes from the time he began the composition the four men were singing "The Sweet Bye and Bye." Thus originated the words and music of a hymn which has given consolation and hope to the whole Christian world. The characters in the drama are few and humble, the surroundings most simple, the poor dependent musician, the young physician, the friends, and a common office in a Western town.

The composer, with his manuscript songs under his arm, appeared in Chicago soon afterward. He hoped and expected to sell the manuscripts for \$25 each; this meant \$150 or \$200 to take home. He went to the music store of Root & Cady, who had made a fortune with "The Battle Cry of Freedom" and other war songs. They examined his manuscripts and took all except "The Sweet Bye and Bye." That they "did not think worth publishing."

Poor Webster! The song he had counted upon was rejected! He could not go to Higgins again, for Higgins had had his feelings hurt and had refused to publish any more of his songs. He finally thought of a new firm of young men lately from Boston, Lyon and Healy. They had treated him courteously, though they had published nothing of his. Thus he came to Lyon & Healy's store, where it was then in charge of the retail department. Having known him for several years, I greeted him warmly and at once took him out to Mr. Healy, who gave him his immediate attention. I remember so well the whole attitude of the man as he came in and approached Mr. Healy. He awakened a keen sense of pity for he was as it had lost all hope; and I think it was this feeling which moved Mr. Healy, after listening to the song on the piano, to offer him \$20 for it. This Webster accepted, and seemed thankful for. Little interest was shown toward the song. Webster's popularity had waned greatly and had been overshadowed by the enormous success of George F. Root's war songs. The composer of "Little Maud" and "Lorena" was no longer sought and little attention given him.

After Webster had gone Mr. Healy turned the manuscript of the song over to me, and I played it and hummed it with perfect indifference, not to say contempt, for its simplicity offended the little knowledge I had acquired by studying Johnson's "Harmony and Thorough Bass." Mr. Healy said with a sigh:

"Oh, yes! we'll have to get it out," and then added, "Poor fellow! I didn't have the heart to send him away without taking it."

So we got the song out with the least expense possible, the cheapest little page we could get made, and lettering so bad that we all felt ashamed to show it. I placed it upon the counter, and there it was permitted to lie friendless, for I never

recommended it, telling its poverty and insignificance in comparison with the gorgeous lithograph title pages and elegantly colored lettering of the other sheet music by which it was surrounded. Finally, without the sale of a dozen copies, it was consigned to the wholesale shelves, where Mr. Healy and myself mentally erected a tombstone inscribed "Sacred to memory of a poor musician." About a year past, when a Mr. Whitmore, a music teacher in the public schools of Chicago, came in and asked me if I thought Mr. Healy would let him use "The Sweet Bye and Bye" in a Sunday school book he was then compiling. I said:

"Certainly, without doubt for the song is of no use to us. It has no sale whatever."

He went out to the office and presently Mr. Healy called to me to give Mr. Whitmore a copy of the song. Nothing more was thought of the matter until nearly a year afterward, when we began to have calls for "The Sweet Bye and Bye." I remember my surprise the first time it was asked for. A little schoolgirl, not more than 12 or 15 years old, came in very timidly, evidently unused to trading "heretofore," and standing off from the counter as if afraid to come nearer, said: "Have you a piece of music called 'The Sweet Bye and Bye?' It's in Mr. Whitmore's book."

It is thus fair to state that to Mr. Healy's tender nature and to Mr. Whitmore's recognition of the merits of the song the world owes its knowledge of Webster's inspiration. Mr. Healy's and my own utter failure to see anything in it is only another instance of how human judgment errs, and this was, in my own case, most keenly emphasized when, after having passed four years abroad studying, I returned to be greeted in New York on the ferryboats, steamboats, and railway trains with the strains of "The Sweet Bye and Bye."

The last time I saw Webster was in Milwaukee, in the summer of 1877, at Hempstead's music store. He was then an invalid, the almost continual coughing being the serious nature of his disease. He asked me to play for him, as I had done when a boy, variations on his beautiful song, "Lorena," written by Lou Chas. This I did, to his intense delight. Then I gave him an improvisation on "The Sweet Bye and Bye," which I had played recently in concert. At the conclusion, when I turned about on the piano stool, I found Webster crying, and with a smile upon his lips he exclaimed:

"You have made me the happiest man in the world. I feel I have not lived in vain. Webster was one of nature's noblemen, tender-hearted, true, simple-minded, and honest. Music was to him the ready medium of pouring out his longings, his sorrows, and aspirations, and who shall say that the offerings of this great soul expressed in such an artless manner are not just as acceptable upon the altar of his God as those more elaborate works where art combines with frequently another's inspiration?—Silas G. Pratt.

What is the trouble now? his friend asked.

"It is no matter," Webster answered with a sigh. "It will be all right by and by."

Like an inspiration the idea flashed upon Bennett, who had written several war poems, to write some verses, and he said; "Why not make a song of the sweet bye and bye?"

"You write the verses and I'll make the music," Webster answered.

Turning to his desk Bennett hastily scribbled lines after line, and in less than an hour the verses were completed. He then handed them to Webster, who raised his violin just as two friends entered. Not wishing to greet them he drew his bow and without any hesitation played the tune which since has been sung by millions. He hastily jotted it down on waste paper, and in less than ten minutes from the time he began the composition the four men were singing "The Sweet Bye and Bye." Thus originated the words and music of a hymn which has given consolation and hope to the whole Christian world. The characters in the drama are few and humble, the surroundings most simple, the poor dependent musician, the young physician, the friends, and a common office in a Western town.

The composer, with his manuscript songs under his arm, appeared in Chicago soon afterward. He hoped and expected to sell the manuscripts for \$25 each; this meant \$150 or \$200 to take home. He went to the music store of Root & Cady, who had made a fortune with "The Battle Cry of Freedom" and other war songs. They examined his manuscripts and took all except "The Sweet Bye and Bye." That they "did not think worth publishing."

Poor Webster! The song he had counted upon was rejected! He could not go to Higgins again, for Higgins had had his feelings hurt and had refused to publish any more of his songs. He finally thought of a new firm of young men lately from Boston, Lyon and Healy. They had treated him courteously, though they had published nothing of his. Thus he came to Lyon & Healy's store, where it was then in charge of the retail department. Having known him for several years, I greeted him warmly and at once took him out to Mr. Healy, who gave him his immediate attention. I remember so well the whole attitude of the man as he came in and approached Mr. Healy. He awakened a keen sense of pity for he was as it had lost all hope; and I think it was this feeling which moved Mr. Healy, after listening to the song on the piano, to offer him \$20 for it. This Webster accepted, and seemed thankful for. Little interest was shown toward the song. Webster's popularity had waned greatly and had been overshadowed by the enormous success of George F. Root's war songs. The composer of "Little Maud" and "Lorena" was no longer sought and little attention given him.

After Webster had gone Mr. Healy turned the manuscript of the song over to me, and I played it and hummed it with perfect indifference, not to say contempt, for its simplicity offended the little knowledge I had acquired by studying Johnson's "Harmony and Thorough Bass." Mr. Healy said with a sigh:

"Oh, yes! we'll have to get it out," and then added, "Poor fellow! I didn't have the heart to send him away without taking it."

So we got the song out with the least expense possible, the cheapest little page we could get made, and lettering so bad that we all felt ashamed to show it. I placed it upon the counter, and there it was permitted to lie friendless, for I never

recommended it, telling its poverty and insignificance in comparison with the gorgeous lithograph title pages and elegantly colored lettering of the other sheet music by which it was surrounded. Finally, without the sale of a dozen copies, it was consigned to the wholesale shelves, where Mr. Healy and myself mentally erected a tombstone inscribed "Sacred to memory of a poor musician." About a year past, when a Mr. Whitmore, a music teacher in the public schools of Chicago, came in and asked me if I thought Mr. Healy would let him use "The Sweet Bye and Bye" in a Sunday school book he was then compiling. I said:

"Certainly, without doubt for the song is of no use to us. It has no sale whatever."

recommended it, telling its poverty and insignificance in comparison with the gorgeous lithograph title pages and elegantly colored lettering of the other sheet music by which it was surrounded. Finally, without the sale of a dozen copies, it was consigned to the wholesale shelves, where Mr. Healy and myself mentally erected a tombstone inscribed "Sacred to memory of a poor musician." About a year past, when a Mr. Whitmore, a music teacher in the public schools of Chicago, came in and asked me if I thought Mr. Healy would let him use "The Sweet Bye and Bye" in a Sunday school book he was then compiling. I said:

"Certainly, without doubt for the song is of no use to us. It has no sale whatever."

He went out to the office and presently Mr. Healy called to me to give Mr. Whitmore a copy of the song. Nothing more was thought of the matter until nearly a year afterward, when we began to have calls for "The Sweet Bye and Bye." I remember my surprise the first time it was asked for. A little schoolgirl, not more than 12 or 15 years old, came in very timidly, evidently unused to trading "heretofore," and standing off from the counter as if afraid to come nearer, said: "Have you a piece of music called 'The Sweet Bye and Bye?' It's in Mr. Whitmore's book."

It is thus fair to state that to Mr. Healy's tender nature and to Mr. Whitmore's recognition of the merits of the song the world owes its knowledge of Webster's inspiration. Mr. Healy's and my own utter failure to see anything in it is only another instance of how human judgment errs, and this was, in my own case, most keenly emphasized when, after having passed four years abroad studying, I returned to be greeted in New York on the ferryboats, steamboats, and railway trains with the strains of "The Sweet Bye and Bye."

The last time I saw Webster was in Milwaukee, in the summer of 1877, at Hempstead's music store. He was then an invalid, the almost continual coughing being the serious nature of his disease. He asked me to play for him, as I had done when a boy, variations on his beautiful song, "Lorena," written by Lou Chas. This I did, to his intense delight. Then I gave him an improvisation on "The Sweet Bye and Bye," which I had played recently in concert. At the conclusion, when I turned about on the piano stool, I found Webster crying, and with a smile upon his lips he exclaimed:

"You have made me the happiest man in the world. I feel I have not lived in vain. Webster was one of nature's noblemen, tender-hearted, true, simple-minded, and honest. Music was to him the ready medium of pouring out his longings, his sorrows, and aspirations, and who shall say that the offerings of this great soul expressed in such an artless manner are not just as acceptable upon the altar of his God as those more elaborate works where art combines with frequently another's inspiration?—Silas G. Pratt.

What is the trouble now? his friend asked.

"It is no matter," Webster answered with a sigh. "It will be all right by and by."

Like an inspiration the idea flashed upon Bennett, who had written several war poems, to write some verses, and he said; "Why not make a song of the sweet bye and bye?"

"You write the verses and I'll make the music," Webster answered.

Turning to his desk Bennett hastily scribbled lines after line, and in less than an hour the verses were completed. He then handed them to Webster, who raised his violin just as two friends entered. Not wishing to greet them he drew his bow and without any hesitation played the tune which since has been sung by millions. He hastily jotted it down on waste paper, and in less than ten minutes from the time he began the composition the four men were singing "The Sweet Bye and Bye." Thus originated the words and music of a hymn which has given consolation and hope to the whole Christian world. The characters in the drama are few and humble, the surroundings most simple, the poor dependent musician, the young physician, the friends, and a common office in a Western town.

The composer, with his manuscript songs under his arm, appeared in Chicago soon afterward. He hoped and expected to sell the manuscripts for \$25 each; this meant \$150 or \$200 to take home. He went to the music store of Root & Cady, who had made a fortune with "The Battle Cry of Freedom" and other war songs. They examined his manuscripts and took all except "The Sweet Bye and Bye." That they "did not think worth publishing."

Poor Webster! The song he had counted upon was rejected! He could not go to Higgins again, for Higgins had had his feelings hurt and had refused to publish any more of his songs. He finally thought of a new firm of young men lately from Boston, Lyon and Healy. They had treated him courteously, though they had published nothing of his. Thus he came to Lyon & Healy's store, where it was then in charge of the retail department. Having known him for several years, I greeted him warmly and at once took him out to Mr. Healy, who gave him his immediate attention. I remember so well the whole attitude of the man as he came in and approached Mr. Healy. He awakened a keen sense of pity for he was as it had lost all hope; and I think it was this feeling which moved Mr. Healy, after listening to the song on the piano, to offer him \$20 for it. This Webster accepted, and seemed thankful for. Little interest was shown toward the song. Webster's popularity had waned greatly and had been overshadowed by the enormous success of George F. Root's war songs. The composer of "Little Maud" and "Lorena" was no longer sought and little attention given him.

After Webster had gone Mr. Healy turned the manuscript of the song over to me, and I played it and hummed it with perfect indifference, not to say contempt, for its simplicity offended the little knowledge I had acquired by studying Johnson's "Harmony and Thorough Bass." Mr. Healy said with a sigh:

"Oh, yes! we'll have to get it out," and then added, "Poor fellow! I didn't have the heart to send him away without taking it."

So we got the song out with the least expense possible, the cheapest little page we could get made, and lettering so bad that we all felt ashamed to show it. I placed it upon the counter, and there it was permitted to lie friendless, for I never

recommended it, telling its poverty and insignificance in comparison with the gorgeous lithograph title pages and elegantly colored lettering of the other sheet music by which it was surrounded. Finally, without the sale of a dozen copies, it was consigned to the wholesale shelves, where Mr. Healy and myself mentally erected a tombstone inscribed "Sacred to memory of a poor musician." About a year past, when a Mr. Whitmore, a music teacher in the public schools of Chicago, came in and asked me if I thought Mr. Healy would let him use "The Sweet Bye and Bye" in a Sunday school book he was then compiling. I said:

"Certainly, without doubt for the song is of no use to us. It has no sale whatever."

He went out to the office and presently Mr. Healy called to me to give Mr. Whitmore a copy of the song. Nothing more was thought of the matter until nearly a year afterward, when we began to have calls for "The Sweet Bye and Bye." I remember my surprise the first time it was asked for. A little schoolgirl, not more than 12 or 15 years old, came in very timidly, evidently unused to trading "heretofore," and standing off from the counter as if afraid to come nearer, said: "Have you a piece of music called 'The Sweet Bye and Bye?' It's in Mr. Whitmore's book."

It is thus fair to state that to Mr. Healy's tender nature and to Mr. Whitmore's recognition of the merits of the song the world owes its knowledge of Webster's inspiration. Mr. Healy's and my own utter failure to see anything in it is only another instance of how human judgment errs, and this was, in my own case, most keenly emphasized when, after having passed four years abroad studying, I returned to be greeted in New York on the ferryboats, steamboats, and railway trains with the strains of "The Sweet Bye and Bye."

The last time I saw Webster was in Milwaukee, in the summer of 1877, at Hempstead's music store. He was then an invalid, the almost continual coughing being the serious nature of his disease. He asked me to play for him, as I had done when a boy, variations on his beautiful song, "Lorena," written by Lou Chas. This I did, to his intense delight. Then I gave him an improvisation on "The Sweet Bye and Bye," which I had played recently in concert. At the conclusion, when I turned about on the piano stool, I found Webster crying, and with a smile upon his lips he exclaimed:

"You have made me the happiest man in the world. I feel I have not lived in vain. Webster was one of nature's noblemen, tender-hearted, true, simple-minded, and honest. Music was to him the ready medium of pouring out his longings, his sorrows, and aspirations, and who shall say that the offerings of this great soul expressed in such an artless manner are not just as acceptable upon the altar of his God as those more elaborate works where art combines with frequently another's inspiration?—Silas G. Pratt.