

## WHEN GOD GIVES SLEEP.

By WILLIAM T. SAWARD.



WHEN God gives sleep  
 The hands are folded in a sweet embrace,  
 And the poor heart is still ;  
 The earlier peace shines in the silent face,  
 Not all the world could kill ;  
 And the poor soul that struggled with its lot,  
 Freed from the clogging now,  
 Lives, where the anguish and the tears are not,  
 Nor toil-stained, throbbing brow ;  
 Cease then, ye mourners ! wherefore do you weep,  
 When God gives, to His own beloved, sleep ?

When God gives sleep  
 The hands are laid across the silent breast ;  
 The labouring oar,  
 The yokèd oxen, and the sword may rest,  
 To toil no more ;  
 The pillowed earth is a more soothing bed  
 Than softest down ;  
 And sounder sleep the cold, untroubled dead,  
 Beyond the town ;  
 For hate and strife may tear the world asunder,  
 And none release ;  
 The storms may rive the mountains with high thunder,  
 The grave is peace.  
 The snowdrop and the violet may weep,  
 They die—there is no death when God gives sleep.

When God gives sleep  
 The hands are clasped as if for evening prayer,  
 Said silently ;  
 No sounds disturb the still devotions there,  
 Till, by the sea,  
 The last wave breaks upon the crumbling land,  
 And one loud cry  
 Summon the slumbering dead, where, on the strand,  
 Earth meets the sky  
 In one embrace ; deep calleth unto deep !  
 The choirs of Heaven awake from their refreshing sleep.

## HOW WE DID OUR LIVING PICTURES FOR 4/8½.

THE teacher was very young, not out of her teens. But sometimes youth is a decided advantage. It was so with the class about which this little detail of pleasant experiences is being penned. The teacher with her fresh, bright, earnest loving ways speedily became like the old woman who lived in a shoe, as the nursery rhyme tells. At least, in the one particular of having so many children round her, that she did not know what to do. Nearly all were as warm-hearted and enthusiastic as their girl-leader, and this is how the living pictures came about.

Every Saturday afternoon the majority of the Sunday class, and a few privileged ones outside, met in a kindly-granted lecture-room. Musical drill and action songs proved far more attractive than the common half-holiday pursuits, and the interest aroused was such, that the young gymnasts were besought to give an entertainment and exhibit their pretty movements at least to indulgent fathers and mothers, possibly even to the cousins and the aunts.

With sore misgivings on the part of the inexperienced trainer (whose instructions he it understood were simply the reminiscences of her own just-ended schooldays), the request was agreed to. Sandwiched in to the middle of a much more important evening's amusement, this class displayed their skill. It proved to be by far the most attractive feature in the night's programme. Perhaps it should have been clearly explained that no child was over

thirteen years of age, while fully three-fourths were very much below it.

A repetition was eagerly demanded, and to do the little ones justice, they were anything but unwilling for a second performance. But the rest of the items in the first arrangement could not be repeated, and hence arose a difficulty. Then the idea was started, could not such an experiment as living pictures be tried, and with the combination, occupy the usual hour and a half of a social congregational evening ?

How that idea was worked out in a very simple and crude (not to say "rude") fashion we need not tarry to tell. In several leading charitable institutions of the town where, as in many other places, concerts, readings, and even sales of work had been nearly played-out, "living pictures" had been tried as the latest novelty. The expense attending such an affair had proved the most formidable obstacle. Those at all accustomed to theatrical representations and stage properties, refused to assist unless robes, periwigs and all accessories were strictly *en règle*. In one case over five pounds had been lavished on a single dress, to be looked at, too, for less than five minutes. Any ordinary band of workers would feel extinguished at once. And for one insignificant children's class ! It was preposterous—just silly presumption !

But a necessity had arisen. The Sunday school of which this class formed a part, closed

its year with a deficit in its funds. And this young teacher volunteered substantial help, if only friends would rally round and support the performance of living pictures by these little helpers.

The choice of subjects came first in importance. Previous experience at the preliminary canter to which reference has already been made, justified the belief that "stage fright" would be mercifully an unknown quantity. The results fully justified that hope. The quickness of even the very tiny ones in understanding their character, and falling at once into the required pose, was really wonderful. And then they did so enjoy it ! The anxious ones were those behind the scenes.

All ambitious, historical or mythological groups were quickly set aside. Even the time-honoured Alfred and the burnt cakes, or the suppliant queen and the inhabitants of Calais. With the materials at hand, anything very ambitious seemed to the young manager the certain rock to sink the venture. Then, too, the unavoidable economy which must regulate draperies and dresses, forbade high flights. A few yards of cheap tarlatan, a box of spangles, gauze-wire and clever fingers ; no greater outlay would be wise, since this was altogether a venture. But still a preliminary and all-important item came to the front. How could there be pictures, without at least something resembling a frame ?

A kind friend at once volunteered to remove

an ancient canvas from a large and antiquated carved and gilt frame, that surrounded a venerable forgotten family group. On inspection it would not certainly have held more than two children, without any room for scenic effects. So, reluctantly, that offer was declined "with thanks."

Then one of those kind-hearted, really handy men who are the blessing of any hard-working, small-means community, came to the rescue. His own children were among the foremost in the band, and the scanty leisure from his own busy life he spent in his amateur workshop, and there with lathe and all necessary implements he turned out most satisfactory, even ornamental articles. He volunteered to make a large wooden frame, cover it with bright Turkey red, far more satisfactory than any gilding, hunt about for second-hand reflectors and lamps to do duty for footlights, and with indiarubber tubing connect the lamps with a gas-bracket in the rear of the intended stage. In fact, to give a good start.

Oh, what a splendid carpenter was spoiled when that handy man went off into a totally different occupation! He was as good as his word. The frame was perfection, the "footlights" drove the children fairly wild with satisfaction, the large wide roller-blind which was to do duty for stage curtain went up and down without a hitch, while, wonder of wonders, the entire bill was a few pence under ten shillings. That outlay is not included in the expense of this night, because the fixture is now congregational property, and may be used as occasion requires, so that it would not be accurate to charge it to this one entertainment. Some clever brother or cousin can lay our girls, who may desire to work out this idea, under similar obligation at small cost.

This difficulty surmounted so happily, the horizon grew brighter. An earnest investigation of old *Graphics* ensued, and in fact the manageress was open to offers, hints, contributions of every kind. After grave deliberation the following twelve selections were made. The dresses are given in each case that our girls may see how possible such an entertainment is, and to many, a hint is quite sufficient to start them.

The ordinary forms of the lecture-room, without backs and arranged steadily, made the required platform, and in front, resting securely on it, the bright red frame stood. The sides and back were well covered in by curtains borrowed from everywhere, dark in colour, and any startling variety judiciously hidden at the back. The top should not be covered, as the gas at the foot makes it very warm for the children. The lights in the lecture-room were of course lowered when the performance began.

The first picture was "Caller Herrin." Three little girls in blue serge (ordinary school frocks), stiff white linen arranged as caps, and pink pinafores turned up in front. Two bore between them in a large brown potato-basket (a creel would have cost money) some fresh herrings, the third held a stick with several threaded through the gills. The other children, invisible in the background, sang the old Scotch song beautifully.

"Fair Lady Disdain" came next in borrowed black velveteen, feathers and lace. She did not move even an eyelid while one verse of the old song, "No, Sir," was sung.

Next came "grandfather's likeness." A small boy, chalk in hand, draws a caricature of his venerable relative on a screen, to the grinning delight of his little sister. Grandpapa, dressing-gown, spectacles, wrath on every feature and stick uplifted, is the unsuspected witness. Every article for this was easily borrowed, and the scene came in for loud applause. A comic recitation was given, to fill up the pause necessary for the change of pictures.

"Washing day" followed from the *Graphic*. A huge tub, a pretty child with sleeves turned up and a cake of soap, and in the tub a real live water dog. He was used to his little mistress's touch, and at the necessary "full dress rehearsal" on the previous night, had been allowed to examine the foot-lights to his entire satisfaction apparently. He was kept quiet "in the wings" before he came on with biscuits, and sat in his tub when the curtain rose, composed as any Diogenes. He made no movement, not even when a very bad little boy in the audience sorely tempted him by a cry of "cats!" Only just as the curtain fell he gave one huge yawn, and darted back to resume his meal.

A pretty scene followed. A curly-headed chap, in Lord Fauntleroy velvet and lace, sat close to a lassie to match, holding one hand flirting her fan, and gazing tenderly up into her face. The curtain fell and rose again quickly, to exhibit the little pair, two feet apart and *dos à dos*, with every sign of mutual dislike. This was "we're engaged," and "broken off."

"Transformation" gave more trouble. The space inside the frame was made to look like a squalid London garret, where two lean, lanky girls stood, one bending over a wash-tub, the other blacking old boots. The curtain fell and rose again to show them fairies in a Christmas pantomime; short white frocks (tarlatan 2½d. per yard, spangles 6d. a packet, and roses out of crimped paper, 3d. a roll of six yards). They stood holding each an end of an arch-wire, cased in gilt paper (off Christmas crackers), and wreathed with similar roses. Glover's old duet, "Tell me where do fairies dwell," filled up the pause here.

The next one, more pathetic, was introduced by the strains of Moore's melody "The minstrel boy." A wounded soldier lay on his pallet, tended by the hospital nurse. The children's hospital supplied the scarlet jacket and palliase for the boy, while the sister most kindly lent a complete costume of her own. It was a little long, but she was perched on a stool, and the robes added dignity to the girl, who threw into feature and attitude a most irresistible pathos. "After the battle" fairly brought down the house.

"The fairies' revel" was the only real expense in staging, and gave most thought and trouble. The Queen "Titania" was robed in an out-grown white tulle elaboration of the stage manageress' school breaking-up days. Carefully ironed and with equally well-kept artificial garlands, the effect was exceedingly good, without being at all tawdry. Her wand was a hazel rod wreathed with flowers. But her wings—for fairies are nothing without them, and they are very difficult for uninitiated fingers!—were of bright wire, penny a long coil, and to be bought in any electric light depot. The wire was carefully threaded round the edges of fine clear white tarlatan, after, by a careful comparison of authorities, the correct shape and proper size had been settled. Probably thicker wire would answer better, as the wings must stand out stiff and straight. A little mite of five was arrayed in sea-green tarlatan (still 2½d. per yard.) The selvedges in every case were kept at the bottom of the short wide skirts, so as to avoid a thick or heavy appearance. Casing and drawing-string confined each at the waist, and the bodices were simply one long straight piece, draped and folded at the spur of the moment by one of the tasteful handy girl dressers, of whom there were five. The skirts and bodice strips were hung judiciously with spangles, sequins, glass icicles (remains of old Christmas-trees) and paper flowers. Another was pale blue, again one pink and the last yellow. The queen alone was in white. The wings over which the more elaborate decorations were lavished, as being certain to attract most notice, were

fastened at the back just between the two shoulders, and a pin invisibly inserted here and there secured the right sit. The dark curtains were hidden by large crumpled-up sheets of white paper, which gave a suspicion of moonlight effects, and brown paper fantastically twisted and heaped together, suggested caverns or hiding-places. The staging of this and the grouping of the children took up some time, and the audience were relieved by selections from "A Midsummer-night's dream." It proved the most popular picture of the twelve, and was loudly redemanded. The tiny five-year-old was quite equal to the occasion, and while waiting for her turn after being dressed, was only uneasy lest "somebody should touch my wings."

The endeavour in the selection had been to vary the characters as much as possible, so the next was very sombre but very effective—"Mary Queen of Scots in prison." A borrowed black *crêpe* dress, with the addition by clever fingers of rosary, ruff and ruffles, a becoming black velvet coif (copied from an old picture) thickly embroidered with pearl beads, 1d. a string, and a respected grandmother's long lace veil cunningly draped as a wimple, completed the picture. It well repaid some hours of trouble.

A seasonable one followed, "The Christmas fagot." Again the paper came in for background, with combed out cotton wool as flakes of snow, plentifully sprinkled with artificial frosting, 2d. a packet. A good-sized wheel-barrow well heaped with pea-rods was presented, wheeled by the stout urchin who had been "engaged" earlier in the evening, and the mite, who sat perched on top, arrayed in a bright scarlet opera cloak, and all well covered with flakes of snow, looked pretty.

Another grand scene came on, more ambitious, but for obvious reasons put near the last. "The witches, out of Macbeth," with selections read from Shakspeare. The three old crones were swathed in coarse black mourning cloth, the reminders of less happy occasions, but easy to borrow. The faces were touched effectively with burnt cork, the high conical black caps had a large white frill next the face, a toad, a lizard, and a beetle crowning the point of each. The result was a ghastly success. One of the witches, after the dressing-up was all accomplished, observed to her fellow with happy complacency, "Ain't we ugly, our own mothers wouldn't know us." An iron pot and long spoon was provided for one to stir, a toy cat sat as "familiar" by the side of the second, who with the third crouched over a fire basket, introduced at the last minute before the curtain lifted, filled with the red smouldering remains of shavings steeped in spirits of wine, and of course most carefully watched. This scene also gave a good deal of work to prepare. In fact, the most of one week was consumed in the making, alteration and ornamentation of the stage properties. But not one of the four chief helpers grudged time or trouble.

The last was appropriately "Good-night." Two of the tiniest were clad in white, much-befrilled *robes de nuit* (over their frocks), their long fair hair combed down their shoulders, one carrying a flat bedroom candlestick, the other hugging her dolly. In the background, unseen, the troupe sang softly the German cradle song, "Sleep, baby, sleep," and the curtain fell.

But the audience were not so easily satisfied. From all parts of the room rose a wish to see the little performers *en masse*. Not one of them fortunately had thought of unrobing, so again all were looked carefully over and then grouped in the most picturesque manner possible, considering the small space available. The tiny fairies with outspread wings were well

to the front, one lamenting that she was not "twice sure that her face could be seen." The graver, darker costumes made an effective background, and Mary Queen of Scots (on a stool) towered over all. Thus grouped, the curtain rose again, and the children brought the evening to a final close by singing God Save the Queen.

The expenses were, as has been stated, 4s. 8½d., not including the frame which was made and first used some months ago. As will be seen, the kindness of friends was taxed by innumerable borrowed gear, and raiment long laid by was disinterred and brought to light. To what better use could such hoards be put? To show the balance-

sheet would be telling tales out of school. Suffice it to say that the object aimed at was more than realised, and one if not more charitable institution will receive contributions out of the ten pounds, which is the pleasant result of this little enterprise by a very earnest "Young Helpers' League."

M. B. M.

## HER OWN WAY.

By EGLANTON THORNE, Author of "Aldyth's Inheritance," "The Studio Mariano," etc.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

FORTUNATELY they found the Signor at the hotel, and he received them in his private sitting-room. He had grown stouter and flabbier than before, and was more than ever conscious of his own importance. He was evidently astonished to see Juliet, and there was that in his manner of greeting her which caused her to colour deeply, and to feel profoundly thankful that Salome was with her. For she knew instinctively that he had heard of her leaving England with Algernon Chalcombe, and that he was regarding her with a kind of amused contempt. He addressed her in a lighter and more familiar manner than he had been wont to use.

"This is an unexpected pleasure, Miss Tracy. So kind of you to come and see me. And what do you think of this fascinating city of Paris? But you have come at the wrong season. You should have been here when the Opera House was open, and everything in full swing. And how goes the singing?"

Annoyed and confused by the indefinable change she discerned in him, Juliet felt her self-possession deserting her. She wished she had not come. When he paused and looked at her smilingly for a response, she forcibly conquered her nervousness, and said with dignity in a cold, high tone, unlike her own—

"Signor Lombardi, I have come to you now because I want you to be so good as to tell me exactly what steps I should take in order to have my voice thoroughly trained for singing in public."

"Your voice—thoroughly trained—for singing in public," he repeated slowly with an air of amazement. "Do you mean that you aspire to be a public singer?"

"Yes," said Juliet, with some hesitation, "I wish it. I think there is nothing I should like better."

"Then I am sorry to tell you, my dear young lady, that it is impossible."

"Impossible!" exclaimed Juliet, stung by the word. "Why, you have always told me I could do anything with my voice."

"I never said that you might become a public singer," he replied.

"Then I certainly understood you to say so," Juliet said with pain and indignation in her tone.

He lightly shrugged his shoulders. "Your vanity misled you, my dear young lady. I am used to being misunderstood

in that manner. It is wonderful to what illusions human vanity is prone."

Juliet looked as if she could not believe her ears.

"What did you mean then," she asked, slowly, "when you said that I could do anything with my voice?"

"I have no recollection of ever using those words," he replied. "When you came to me I understood that you wished to sing as an amateur, and as such I gave you lessons. I could not have encouraged you to dream of becoming a public singer, for till this moment I had no idea that you ever contemplated such a career. If you had consulted me I should have told you it was impossible. Now I will be quite candid with you. You have a fair voice; it is sweet; it is flexible; there are good notes in it; but—it would be lost in a concert-hall. It would do very well for drawing-room singing. You can study with that end in view; you might in time perhaps give lessons."

"Thank you," said Juliet sharply. "I have not the least desire to be a teacher."

He shrugged his shoulders again. "And you would need to learn a great deal before you were fit to teach," he said. "You are no musician, my dear Miss Tracy. Your knowledge of the science is very imperfect; you are no timist; you lack accuracy, delicacy, *finesse*; above all, the indomitable perseverance, which alone achieves greatness in art. Oh, yes, I know. You think it would be grand to be a *prima donna*; you crave the admiration, the applause, the renown. You desire to be set up yourself. But love of self is not the love of Art, nor can the highest success be won by its inspiration. It is not religion only that demands self-denial. No end worth having can be won without it. And Art itself becomes a religion to the true artist. I could tell you passages of my own history that would astonish you."

So far Signor Lombardi had spoken with growing earnestness. But now he suddenly checked himself in his fervency, shrugged his shoulders, made a comical grimace, and said, with a side-glance at Juliet—

"Bah! Why should I talk thus? How can a young lady like you, living only to amuse herself, understand the steep, rough steps by which the artist climbs? No, no. It is not your vocation to be an artist. You are a charming young lady, that is your vocation."

Juliet stood as one stunned. Her

mortification was so intense that she could not speak. She winced when Signor Lombardi told her that she was a charming young lady, conceiving that he used the words in scorn; but she had no retort to make. All her spirit seemed gone. It was Salome who interposed to end the interview.

"It is a disappointment to you, Juliet," she said, "but you must be grateful to Signor Lombardi for telling you the truth. We need not occupy more of his time."

"Oh, do not hurry away," said the Signor, flourishing his fat, white hands; "I am sorry my words have been so unpalatable, but I think it is best to speak the truth."

Juliet flashed an indignant glance at him. "I wish you had spoken it before," she said bitterly.

He shrugged his shoulders deprecatingly. "I have never spoken otherwise," he said. "Ah, my dear young lady, you are angry with me now; but some day you will be thankful that I saved you from the toilsome life of the artist who is fated to fail. For it is too late for you to dream of making your mark as a singer. Your training should have begun years ago. You are, I believe, twenty years old?"

"I am twenty-one," said Juliet.

"Just so. Well, you must be thankful that Providence has been so kind to you, that you are not dependent for a living on your musical gifts. Fate has, doubtless, in store for a beautiful young lady, like you, a far happier lot than that of the majority of singers."

Juliet turned in haste to go. His words seemed to her insulting, his presence, since he had so wounded her self-confidence, insupportable. When she presently found herself walking by Salome's side on the hot pavement, she had no consciousness of bidding him good-day or passing down the long staircase into the street.

Salome looked at her and held her peace. The girl's miserable, hopeless expression stirred her compassion; but she knew that Juliet could bear no word from her then. So in absolute silence they traversed the long, broad streets.

But when they reached the house a new and more sorrowful turn was given to their thoughts. A telegram had arrived in their absence; its brief, blunt message bid them both return home at once. Mrs. Tracy's illness had assumed a most serious aspect, and it was feared she could not live.

(To be continued.)