

Sunday Reading.

BLIND FANNY CROSBY.

The Writer of Many Sunday School and Revival Hymns.

According to a recent writer, in order to find the picturesque points of the great West, which he had so graphically described, he was forced to travel hundreds of miles, to endure discomforts innumerable and to rough it in camps pitched in the chaparral. The interesting is so deeply overlaid by the commonplace that an author must delve deep ere he can find the true metal.

So, in attempting to delineate the chief points in the life of any composer of popular hymns, it becomes a matter of some moment to select one to whom our sympathies turn instinctively, and most writers would think that they had found a jewel from the deep sea when they came to Fanny Crosby. Her full maiden name was Frances Jane Crosby, but she prefers to have all her friends call her by the old pet title even now.

"Jesus keep me near the cross," appeared in "Bright Jewels," 1869. Mrs. Frances Jane Van Alstyne, as she is recognized and honored now since her marriage to Mr. Alexander Van Alstyne in 1858, was born at South East, N. Y., in 1823. When she was only six weeks old she was made blind by improper treatment of a childish distemper: "A warm poultice laid on my eyes," says she in her quaint, bright, pathetic way, "did the mischief, and caused the loss of sight in a moment."

When about twelve years of age she was sent to the Institution for the Blind in New York city; she studied there seven years, and then became a teacher under the same roof for eleven years more. In the fall of 1851 she united with the Thirtieth Street Methodist Episcopal church, and has since lived in New York as one of the loveliest and best of God's afflicted children. It is touching to think of the happy and devoted couple as their home life rises on our imagination. Her husband is also blind; he was a teacher, likewise, in the institution where she was educated. He is quite a musician in his way; he makes tunes, and she makes words for him. They never saw each other; but they are lovers, comrades, and friends all the same.

"Safe in the arms of Jesus," 1869. Fanny Crosby from the beginning has possessed a wonderful readiness or fluency in composition. Many of her pieces are known to have been given out as if almost offhand. Mr. Doane used to come in with his energetic and frank summons, plant himself at the piano, start a fresh tune, say, "Fanny, I want you to write," and she would put the verses on paper while he waited. "Safe in the arms of Jesus," was written in twenty minutes. But the very fact of its spontaneity argues that the soul of the author was full to overflowing with the love of the divine Master, and that its sudden pouring forth was but natural. She has written more than two thousand hymns, most of which have been introduced into many collections in America and in Great Britain; and these links of the far-reaching chain of her life's great song serve to draw together the people who, through her melodious words, have come to know and love the very name she bears. Generous old Dr. George Duffield wrote to the publishers of his son's books, just before his death, this estimate of Mrs. Van Alstyne's work: "I rather think her talent will stand beside that of Watts and Wesley, especially if we take into consideration the number of hymns she has written."

"Pass me not, O gentle Saviour," we find in "Songs of devotion," 1870. Simplicity and earnestness are the main characteristics of this author's poems, and most of them have been put to music that will catch and hold the popular attention. "Pass me not, O gentle Saviour," is a great favorite in our prayer meetings. The cry of Bartimeus by the wayside has a never failing interest for the sinner and the saved. "Lord, that I might receive my sight," cry the sin-sick and blind of soul; and the answer of the redeemer of the world is received with the same eager longing by him who knows his salvation is assured, but longs for a repetition of the words of healing, "Thy faith hath made thee whole."

"Saviour, more than life to me," was written for "Brightest and Best," 1875, and is one of the most popular and beautiful hymns she has ever made. The secret of this woman's life is an open secret. She lives, as she here sings, "closer, closer, Lord, to thee" When she was fifteen years old, they told her that she was always to live in darkness thereafter. She then showed her pluck as she afterwards showed her piety. She went by herself and wrote a poem, of which we can give only one verse:—

"Oh, what a happy soul I am!
Although I cannot see,
I am resolved that in this world
Contented I will be,
How many blessings I enjoy
That other people don't!
When I weep or sigh because I am blind
I cannot, nor I won't."

"Come, O come, with thy broken heart," was published in "Calvary Songs," 1875. Heart always speaks to heart. In this lies the vast strength of Mrs. Van Alstyne's hymns. They sink into one's memory, and hold their place in times of utmost turmoil and tempest of pain. A pathetic incident was related by one engaged in missionary work in this city. Among those led not long since to the Saviour was a woman who was wont to use her tongue as a weapon when she was changed. For a while past she has been in the hospital, sick. For her recovery an operation was necessary. She was willing to undergo that, but, before an anesthetic was administered she prayed, "O, Lord, keep the door of my mouth." She feared lest she should say something unwise while unconscious, so strong had been the former evil habit.

"Did I say anything wrong?" asked the sufferer of the surgeons as she came to consciousness, after the operation was over. "No, indeed," was the reply; "the only words you have uttered were, 'Safe in the arms of Jesus.'" We felt that the salvation of this woman was a miracle of grace. So, indeed, is the salvation of any soul.

"Sweet hour of prayer! Sweet hour of prayer!" is one of the earliest, one of the weakest, and yet one of the most popular, of all Fanny Crosby's productions. She wrote it for Bradbury's "Golden Chain," 1861. It owes something to the music, but more to the taste of those that seem to like to sing mostly to sinners, frequently to things, and sometimes to God. The spectacle of one's singing out at the top of his breath, "while passing through the air," on the way to heaven, "Sweet hour of prayer!" over and over again, argues a much stronger attachment to conference meetings than modern congregations are apt to display.

Just now this honored and beloved woman has been making a few public addresses. She is an elderly christian, at least, about seventy years old. She dresses in good taste, as a delicate and refined lady might be expected to do; she speaks forcibly, for she is vigorous and perfectly unbroken still. Her face is pleasant, her voice is sweet, her manner is modest. Every one loves to take her by the hand; and each friend says as he departs, "The Lord spare her to us for yet many a year!" —[Golden Rule.]

THE LORD IS ALWAYS GIVING.

The Completeness of His Love as Shown by the Redemption.

God never lays up a superabundant supply in the world. He sends regularly enough to meet needs, and it needs of all were properly met little would ever remain as a surplus. "Take no thought for tomorrow," is His teaching; "sufficient unto the day," is the plan of His operation. The man who lives to accumulate millions, while poverty and suffering abound on all sides, is not working on the Divine plan. Selfishness grasps, but love gives, and "God is love," and, therefore, He is always giving. The Godlike man will not be able to rest with immense balances at the bank while the cries of widows and orphans, the poor and needy, the struggling and unfortunate, are ever sounding in his ears. We are here not merely to get, but to give; not to be selfish, but benevolent. The sweetest experiences, both in the present and the future, result not in grasping, but giving: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Our Lord is always giving; in it he takes delight. It is His very nature to do so. As He feeds His great family year by year His great heart grows big with infinite gladness, and the gifts of this year are a promise for the next. We may "trust, and not be afraid," for "God is love." He has not failed us yet, and he never will. Let us rebuke our murmurings, silence our fears, and "wait patiently for Him."

Pre-eminently is the truth of the text emphasized in Redemption. The whole scheme, from its inception to its completion, is one of love. This is the testimony of the manger, the cross, the tomb. No soul can linger at these spots, in contemplative, thoughtful mode, without being humbled, astonished, inspired, by the love revealed. It is the testimony of the priestly intercession. Jesus in heaven appearing dying "for us" no less than Jesus on earth dying "for us," proclaims the "wondrous love Divine." It is all love; deep, infinite, eternal. Redemption did not purchase the love of God for us, but the love of God gave us redemption. Redemption is only a great manifestation of love that has existed through the eternal ages: "In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him." God was not the angry; scowling one, whose love had to be purchased for us, as so fearful a cost as the life of His only Son; He loved us while we were sinners, and expressed His love in the gift of Jesus. The love was always in the Divine heart, and the redemption by Jesus Christ was the outward manifestation. —[REV. LYMAN ABBOTT.]

Messages of Help for the Week.

Sunday.—Exodus xxiii: 12: "On the seventh day thou shalt rest. xxii chapter 7: "Keep it holy."

Monday.—Proverbs xxii: 6: "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it."

Tuesday.—Ecclesiastes vii: 13: "Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight which he has made crooked?"

Wednesday.—Isaiah xxxv: 16: "Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read."

Thursday.—Isaiah xxxv: 4: "God will come, even God, he will come and save you."

Friday.—Isaiah xlv: 22: "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth."

Saturday.—Psalm i: 6: "The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish."

Call Him Father.

Boys, when you speak of your father don't call him "the old man." Of course you are older now than when you learned to call him "father." You are much more manly looking. Your clothes fit better; you have a more modern shape and your hair is combed differently. In short you are "fiver" than you were then. Your father has a last year's coat and a two-years old hat, and vest of still older pattern. He can't write such an elegant note as you can and all that—but don't call him "the old man." Call him father. For years he has been bustling around to get things together; he has been held to the thorny path of uphill industry for years, and the brightest half of his life has gone from him forever. He loves you, though he goes along without saying much about it, and if he knew you were bad it would be the heaviest burden he has to bear.—Ex.

The 2,803 baptist churches in Great Britain report a membership of 337,409, and 487,301 Sunday scholars. There are 1,858 pastors and 4,369 lay preachers.

NEWS AND NOTABILLIA.

The converts of the Jewish Mission in Montreal now number 28.

Abdur Rahman Effendi, an Egyptian of wealth and position, is now at New York in the character of a missionary, to convert Americans to the Mohammedan faith. He is organizing Koran classes, which promise to be largely attended.

There is a man in Cincinnati employed by a minister to wander about the town and report to him queer incidents that he may find. These are then weaved into the preacher's sermon. He is able to speak of surprising phases of life, and his congregation wonder how he gets time to do so much.

Take good care of disagreeable duties. Attend to these first. Never select the things that you want to do, and shirk upon others the things that you do not want to do. Wherever you are, choose the disagreeable things. You will get your pay in manhood. You cannot grow in any other way so fast.—H. W. Beecher.

The Japanese Government is now closing the schools it has established for the higher education of girls. Missionaries think this retrograde movement is largely due to the fact that polygamy is sanctioned by the Government, which fears that if the Japanese women become at all educated and emancipated they will rebel against a custom so degrading to themselves and their children.

The South African Wesleyan conference report 36,367 full members, 15,219 on trial, 7,412 juniors—which is an increase of 6,699 in the classes for one year and nearly double the membership of ten years ago. The Missionary Society of the colony has an income of £5,000, which will need increasing, as the British grant is reduced over £3,000 in three years. In Natal alone there are 475,000 native heathens.

A good story is attributed to the Rev. G. Furness Smith, who recently addressed a meeting of the Church Missionary Society Younger Clergy Union in England. Mr. Smith said that the Turkish authorities at Constantinople refused to allow the circulation of the Epistle to the Galatians, supposing that it was a letter addressed to the people of Galata, a suburb of Constantinople. When corrected on this point, to make sure they demanded the certificate of St. Paul's death!

The Bible which came from England to America in the Mayflower in the year 1620 and was used on board of the historic ship, is to be placed on exhibition at the World's Fair. This venerable book is the property of Mr. and Mrs. James L. Gates, of Milwaukee. Wis. Mrs. Gates comes to possess it through her father, John G. Meade, of Northwood, New Hampshire, who obtained it from his father. Its successive owners have been the Winthrops, Moultons, Howlands, Hiltons and Meades, and now it is the property of Mrs. Gates, a direct descendant of these well-known families.

The Religious Tract Society shows in its ninety-fourth report figures which are stupendous. The total circulation from the home depot including books, tracts, periodicals, cards, and miscellaneous issues, has been upwards of fifty million, nearly twenty millions being tracts. The issues from foreign depots amount to fifteen millions, making a total issue of more than sixty-five millions. What a seed sowing in one year! The new publications of the year numbered 639, of which 171 were tracts. The Society has published 209 languages, dialects, and characters.

The Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions of New York has received a letter from one of its missionaries in Siam which says: "Yesterday a Siamese noble came to ask for a girl to go and teach English to a princess. I told him we had no girls advanced enough except our own teachers. That was not our only reason for refusing such a request, for we have no strength or money to waste in training girls and educating them to send out to the temptations and difficulties of a life in the king's retinue of wives and children. Only last Saturday I refused a request of the Queen for some girls to go and assist at the palace in some ceremonies soon to occur. It is rather hard to say 'No' to royalty in such a trifle. But it seemed best."

Recent discoveries in Palestine have added fresh confirmation to biblical records, and have given strong proof of the advanced civilization, particularly in its industrial phases, which was attained by Jews at a very early date. The latest discovery has been made by Mr. F. L. Bliss, a member of the Palestine Exploration Society. For some time excavations have been in progress on the site of the ancient Lachish in Judea, and the remains have there been found of an iron blast furnace, evidently constructed on the most approved iron methods. In other words, the Jewish iron worker was using the hot-air blast in the days of the Judges, 1,400 years before Christ, though hot-air furnaces only came into use in modern times since Newton's invention in 1828. This discovery, like a number of others in the past five years, gives proof that the beginnings of arts must be moved back far earlier than has been hitherto supposed.

In the Duryea presbyterian mission, Brooklyn, N. Y., a dozen or more young women have been selected by the pastor to act as ushers as well as youthful and that each has already distinguished herself for devotion to church work. The pastor says: "Our young men do not seem to take the interest in church work that they should, and I am trying to devise some method that will increase their attendance. My suggestion that some of our young women should act as ushers has met with much favor." The N. Y. Sun characterizes this innovation as "a vulgar device," and says that "it is like having pretty barmaids and pretty waiter girls to stimulate the custom of saloons and restaurants, and is not intrinsically different from the theatrical displays of feminine grace presented for the attraction of men. It is making confession that the church cannot stir masculine religious emotions, and must resort to tricks, and make use of the power of feminine beauty as the magnet. It may not be sinful, it is not sinful; but it is not congruous with a church which should appeal to the spiritual part of man. It is vulgar, and consequently injurious to the pretty girls who are put to use as decoys, with the distinct understanding and the published announcement that they are employed for that purpose."

The Church and Sunday Observance

The Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury recently resolved to postpone the consideration of the following report of a joint committee of both Houses till the next group of sessions:

"1. That this House desires again to press upon the clergy the duty of warning the rich and leisured classes against the increasing misuse of Sunday for purposes of mere amusement, as (a) tending to impair both for themselves and others the sacred character and distinctive value of the Lord's day, and (b) involving addition to the Sunday labor of those who are called upon to minister to such amusement. 2. That it is the duty of the church to remind the people of England that the foremost privilege of the Lord's day is the privilege and responsibility of worship, and that this must be safeguarded at whatever cost. 3. That since it is evident that an increasing number of persons, for whom Sunday is the only day of leisure, find the reasonable use of libraries, picture galleries and museums on that day to be wholesome and profitable, it is necessary in the highest interest both of visitors and attendants that Sunday opening should be safely guarded against unfairness or misuse. 4. That in no circumstances ought any library, institution, gallery, or recreative resort to be permitted to be open on Sundays for payment. 5. That, if these conditions be observed the cause of true religion has, in the opinion of this House, nothing to fear from the reasonable and careful extension of the system of Sunday opening described in the report."

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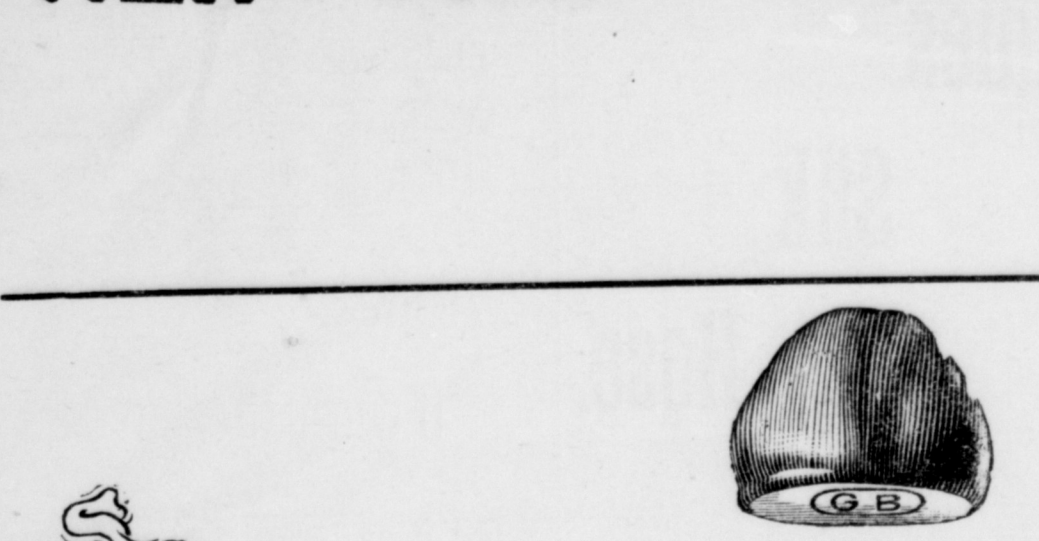
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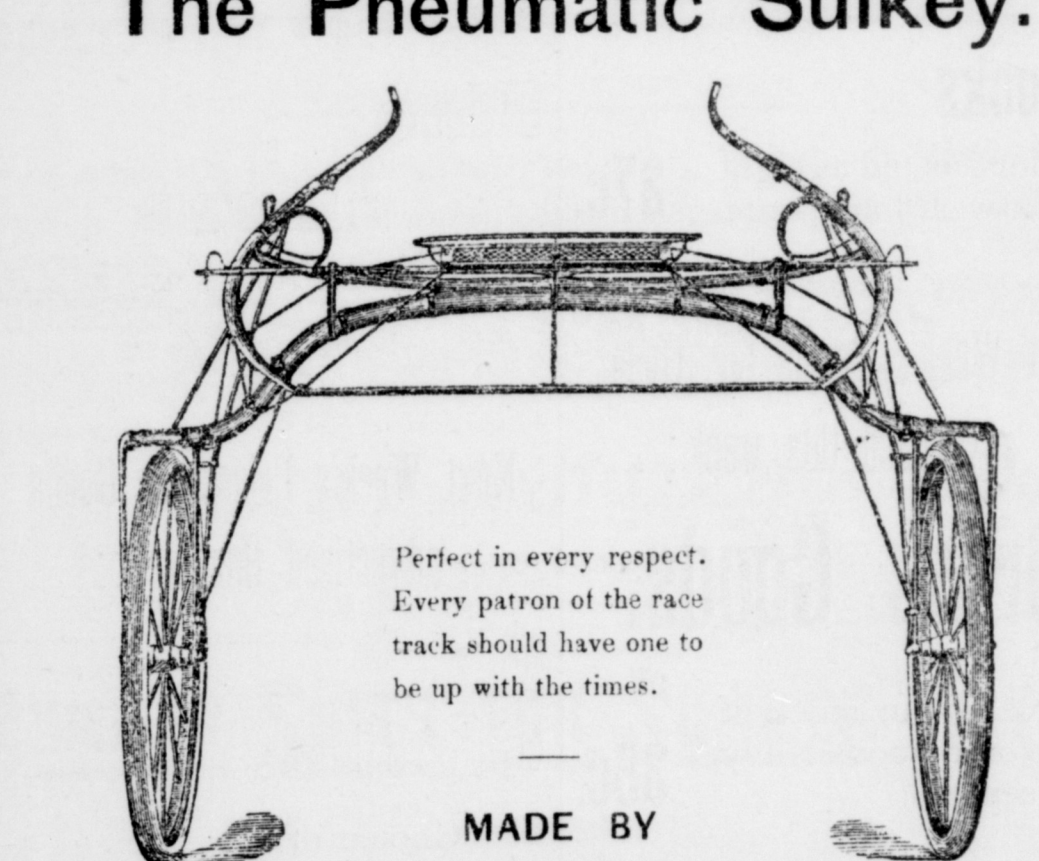
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No. of Members.	Balance in Bank.	No. of Members.	Balance in Bank.
Oct., 1882, 1,134	\$1,145 07	July, " 1893, 20,450	\$204,514 86
Jan., 1883, 1,134	2,709 58	Jan., 1891, 18,466	283,977 20
July, " 1,737	7,582 80	July, " 28,894	337,718 71
Jan., 1884, 2,216	13,670 85	Jan., 1892, 32,303	408,798 15
July, " 2,390	19,815 28	Feb., " 33,155	411,648 39
Jan., 1885, 2,558	29,992 30	March, " 34,106	418,054 56
July, " 3,046	28,636 93	April, 1892, 36,118	433,285 03
Jan., 1886, 3,648	31,982 52	May, " 37,171	435,591 75
July, " 4,628	44,220 75	June, " 37,915	452,295 27
Jan., 1887, 5,804	60,325 01	July, " 38,500	462,098 45
July, " 6,921	71,284 40	Aug., " 38,945	479,010 40
Jan., 1888, 7,811	86,102 42	Sept., " 39,714	500,637 51
July, " 8,548	96,104 53	Oct., " 40,256	520,511 74
Jan., 1889, 11,908	117,599 87	Nov., " 41,092	535,633 42
July, " 14,286	169,110 76	Dec., " 41,923	557,822 24
Jan., 1890, 17,927	188,130 86		

Membership May 1st, 1893, about 52,000. Balance in Bank, \$625,000.

The total number of applications considered by the Medical Board for the month of April, 1893, was 1500; and for the year ending 31st December, 1892, was 18,247, of whom 17,028 were passed, and 1,219 rejected.

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