

Fanny Crosby's Life-Story.

up in our school, concerning the different people of distinction who visited us: and President Polk's ancestry was ventilated from "way back." When we found that the original family in Ireland was named "Pollock", we immediately wondered whether he was not some relation to Robert Pollok, author of "The Course of Time"—which we had heard read with great interest. Our genealogical enthusiasm was, ere long, somewhat dampened by one of the teachers' discovering that the distinguished Robert was a Scotchman, and spelled his name without a "c." I have since learned, however, that there are Scotch-Irishmen and Irish-Scotchmen; and that names are occasionally modified in other countries, as well as our own, on their way through the generations.

CHAPTER XXI.—1848-1850.

NAPOLEON'S FAITHFUL MARSHAL, BERTRAND—
A POEM OF WELCOME—HOW HE WATCHED
BONAPARTE'S LIFE EBB AWAY—LAURA BRIDG-
MAN, AND HER SWEETNESS OF MAGNETISM—
JENNY LIND COMES AND SINGS TO THE BLIND
STUDENTS—HER GENEROSITY—THE GREAT
AND ONLY BARNUM—ALICE CARY—A POEM
FROM FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

GENERAL HENRI GRATIEN BERTRAND, on his trip to this country, made a visit to our Institution at about this time. We were all very much interested in him, because he was one of the few surviving men who knew and were near the person of Napoleon Bonaparte, during a large portion of his career.

Bertrand was one of the bravest and most faithful of the "Little Corporal's" aids, and in any ordinary war or series of wars, would have shone forth preeminent. But it took more-than-giants to do that in the vast Napoleonic conflicts, and Bertrand never ranked among the Neys, the Murats, and the McDonalds.

Fanny Crosby's Life-Story.

We remembered, however, the fact that he had worked his way up from a captaincy of engineers, had been an efficient and constantly growing soldier through the Italian-Egyptian campaigns, and had participated in the beams of glory that came flashing upon the French at Austerlitz. We knew that after the disastrous battle of Aspern, he restored the passage across the Danube for the French troops, and did much toward saving the Emperor's army; and that for this service he was made count, and governor of Illyria. We had heard that at the battle of Waterloo he helped restrain Napoleon from rushing into certain death; and that when his chief was exiled to St. Helena, he went with him, stayed there till he saw him die, and afterwards helped bring his body back to Paris, when, as Victor Hugo said, "an exiled coffin returned in triumph." He now lies near Napoleon in the gorgeous tomb at the Hôtel des Invalides, Paris, under the famous gilded dome: many of my readers have no doubt seen his name there.

When Bertrand came to see us, I was as usual deputed to write a poem of welcome; and had the honor of reading it before him. In it I depicted him as sitting pensively with his head bowed upon his hands, seeing Napoleon's life ebb away.

A Watcher at Napoleon's Death-Bed.

"How did you know that?" he asked me, referring to those lines, during our short conversation. "How did you know that I was in that position?"

"I did *not* 'know' it", I replied: "I merely imagined it."

"It was just the way I *did* sit, through all that fearful night, until I saw Napoleon's eyes close, and knew that he was gone", replied Bertrand.

He seemed somehow to have detected in the poem a little higher praise of himself than of his royal master; and perhaps felt more resentment than gratitude at the fact. He asked me if I were not an admirer of Napoleon. "I admired him *as a soldier*", I replied, and stopped, only telling half the truth. He did not press the question any farther, and the interview soon came to an end.

Indeed, while I recognized the bravery and faithfulness of General Bertrand, I could not help wishing all the time that his efforts had been put forth in the service of some better chief; and it may be that fragments of that thought became mingled with the poem.

From the contemplation of war and warriors, the step to dear sweet Laura Bridgman is a long one, but most grateful. I well remember

Fanny Crosby's Life-Story.

the first time I met her. It was in Washington: and I had heard so much about her and her wonderful achievements, that she seemed to me fully as much of a curiosity as anybody in the great national capital. I knew that at the age of two years she had lost her sight, her hearing, and her speech; and that the senses of touch and smell were also considerably impaired. She was given her first instruction at the age of eight, by the well-known Dr. Howe. He could communicate with her only by the touch of the fingers; and his first effort was to make her understand the analogy between objects and the words representing them. She finally commenced to understand what was wanted, and to recognize the words, produced in raised letters. Then the letters were disarranged; she was taught to put them back in their proper places, and in this way learned to spell.

It took her some time to realize that here was a means through which she could communicate with her fellow-beings, but when she did, her happiness is said to have been pathetic. After this she soon learned the manual alphabet, and by degrees acquired as much miscellaneous knowledge as most people whom she met. She took lessons on the piano, and became a skilful performer; could do fine

Laura Bridgman and "Little Fan."

needle-work, and attend efficiently to many household duties.

A girl who, though deaf, dumb, and blind, could do all these things (and many others, of more importance) was certainly a wonder: and in whatever circle she moved, Laura Bridgman was "the observed of all observers."

She was fully aware of these facts, for everything said about her was faithfully reported by her comrades in the party, through the means of their nimble and talkative fingers; but she continued as modest and sensible as ever, and did not show the least undue pride in her success as a public character. She soon became very intimate with many of her New York friends, and one of my sweetest recollections is of her, sitting upon my lap, twining her arms around my neck, and then spelling out for me the name, "Little Fan"—to distinguish me from another one of our band, who bore the same given name as myself, and was larger in size.

But words, with us, were hardly needed: we could almost understand each other's thoughts by the magnetism that flashed between us. I do not remember a sweeter personality than Laura Bridgman's.

When Jenny Lind came to this country, in 1850, one of the first places she visited, was our

Fanny Crosby's Life-Story.

Institution; and a very pleasant memory is the beautiful music and the cordial hand-shakings she gave us. She had already conquered Europe with the melody of her voice and the goodness of her heart; and all America was wild to hear her. The first concert at which she appeared in New York netted her \$10,000; and she immediately donated the entire sum to charity.

This, of course, made her much more popular than ever; for there are few things that people like better, than to get value received for their money, and then have it paid back to them.

We tried hard to induce the gentle cantatrice to make us a speech; but this she declined to attempt, although having a very good command of English. She sang for us, however, again and again. And such singing!

Of course, during this particular time, wherever Jenny Lind went, the great and inevitable Barnum followed not far behind. I knew him exceedingly well, and can say that with all his shrewdness, he had many kind and generous traits of character. This conundrum used to be printed and reprinted in the newspapers of that date:

"Why are Jenny Lind and Barnum well calculated always to agree, and never have any

Poem from Frances Ridley Havergal.

difficulty?—Because one is always for giving, and the other is always for getting!"

But Barnum made many munificent donations—which were of no less benefit to the world, though partly advertisements.

Among the sweet memories of the past, is that of Alice Cary, with whom I corresponded for a time, and from whom I had many a pleasant word of cheer. I used also to have letters from Frances Ridley Havergal; and well remember how delighted I was, once, at receiving a poem from her, dedicated to me, which read as follows:

AN ENGLISH TRIBUTE TO FANNY CROSBY.

Sweet blind singer over the sea,
Tuneful and jubilant, how can it be
That the songs of gladness, which float so far,
As if they fell from the evening star,
Are the notes of one who never may see
"Visible music" of flower and tree,
Purple of mountain, or glitter of snow,
Ruby and gold of the sunset glow,
And never the light of a loving face?
Must not the world be a desolate place
For eyes that are sealed with the seal of years,
Eyes that are open only for tears?
How can she sing in the dark like this?
What is her fountain of light and bliss?

Fanny Crosby's Life-Story.

Oh, her heart can see, her heart can see!
And its sight is strong and swift and free;
Never the ken of mortal eye
Could pierce so deep and far and high
As the eagle-vision of hearts that dwell
In the lofty, sunlit citadel
Of faith that overcomes the world,
With banners of hope and joy unfurled,
Garrisoned with God's perfect peace,
Ringing with pæans that never cease,
Flooded with splendor bright and broad—
The glorious light of the love of God!

Her heart can see, her heart can see!
Well may she sing so joyously!
For the King Himself, in His tender grace,
Hath shown her the brightness of His face;
And who shall pine for a glow-worm light
When the sun goes forth in his radiant might?
She can read His law as a shining chart,
For His finger hath written it on her heart;
She can read His love, for on all her way
His hand is writing it every day.
"Bright cloud", indeed, must that darkness be,
Where "Jesus only" the heart can see!

Her heart can see, her heart can see,
Beyond the glooms and the mystery,
Glimpses of glory not far away,

Frances Havergal's Tribute.

Nearing and brightening day by day:
Golden crystal and emerald bow,
Lustre of pearl and sapphire glow,
Sparkling river and healing tree,
Evergreen palms of victory,
Harp and crown and raiment white,
Holy and beautiful dwellers in light;
A throne, and One thereon, whose face
Is the glory of that glorious place!

Dear blind sister over the sea,
An English heart goes forth to thee!
We are linked by a cable of faith and song,
Flashing bright sympathy swift along;
One in the east and one in the west,
Singing for Him whom our souls love best;
"Singing for Jesus", telling His love,
All the way to our home above,
Where the severing sea, with its restless tide,
Never shall hinder, and never divide.
Sister, what will our meeting be,
When our hearts shall sing and our eyes shall
see!