

CHAPTER XXVIII.—1903.

LIVING AND LEARNING STILL—THINGS “THEN”
AND NOW—FIRST RAILROADS—FIRST TELE-
GRAPH-WIRE—TELEPHONES—NEWSPAPERS—
THE MANY OTHER IMPROVEMENTS AND IN-
VENTIONS—A LIFE OF JOY AND SUNSHINE—
CONTINUALLY MEETING OLD FRIENDS—RESI-
DENCE IN BROOKLYN—REMOVAL TO BRIDGE-
PORT—“AS YOUNG AS WE FEEL”—NO “IN-
FIRMITIES OF AGE”—HOPE TO BE A CEN-
TENARIAN—WILLING TO GO, WHEN THE LORD
CALLS.

LIVING and learning still, in this year of
our Lord, 1903, I have again and
again to repeat the words that
were flashed over the wires in the very
first telegram ever sent: “What hath God
wrought!”

At the time I made my little excursion down
the Hudson River (narrated in a preceding
chapter), in search of physical light, there was
not a single locomotive in this country, and

Living and Learning Still.

no immediate prospect that there would ever
be any. There was just one little railroad,
four miles long: and that ran from Quincy,
Mass., to the ocean, and its cars were used for
the purpose of transporting granite from the
quarries to a landing, where it could be placed
upon ships, which should carry it to different
parts of the world.

It was not until 1827, when I was seven
years old, that news went through the country,
of two men having been sent to England, to
buy some locomotives! They were not very
“flush” with them, over there: but these mes-
sengers from the Western Republic succeeded
in getting three of the desired articles, for
use on the Delaware and Hudson Railroad.

And what queer little creatures they were,
as we remember the descriptions of them, and
compare them with what now exists!—al-
though they probably looked very large and
imposing, to people who had never seen any-
thing greater than wagons and carriages. No
doubt many of the automobiles of today are
larger and stronger than were those locomo-
tives, which had only four wheels apiece, and
were small in proportion.

But these were, so to speak, the progeni-
tors of others: a flock of them soon appeared.
In 1830, when I was ten years old, news came

Fanny Crosby's Life-Story.

that Peter Cooper, afterwards famous for the founding of the Cooper Institute, in New York City, had really built an engine of his own, at Baltimore, instead of sending to England for it.

He soon took the famous trip from Albany to Schenectady and back, on what is now a part of the great New York Central and Hudson River system: and a great contrast that little outfit (so well known by pictures of it) would be, to the swift and heavy express-trains that now rush along those tracks! "What hath God wrought!"

There are now, probably, over a hundred thousand miles of railway in this country, and considerably more than twenty thousand locomotives. It is something to have lived long enough to witness all this change and growth!

When I first went to school, in New York, and for many years afterward, there was no way of communicating with my friends at home, excepting by the mail-coach or by private messenger: and that took a long and tedious time, compared to present methods and facilities. Often, when friends and relatives lived at some distance from each other, one would be dead and buried before the other even knew that anything was amiss.

As railroads multiplied, the means for dis-

Startling and Portentous Changes.

seminating news became better and better: but it was not until 1844, that the first telegraphic message was sent.

What changes have taken place since, in that respect! Now we can send long communications in a few seconds, almost anywhere in the civilized world; now we can even throw our voices, through the wonderful ventriloquism of the telephone, hundreds and even thousands of miles; now people upon ships are communicating with each other and with people on the shore, by means of wireless telegraphy, all the way across the ocean.

Not only can intelligence be communicated to and fro with astonishing quickness, but the great events of the preceding day are spread before the people, as soon as they are up in the morning. Everybody that can read, has this luxury—from the millionaire in his mansion, to the workman going to his early morning task. "What hath God wrought!"

Thousands of other improvements I might mention—the absence and the beginnings of which, I can well recollect. The drawing-room car, the sleeping-car, the air-brake (by which many lives have been saved), the phonograph, the moving picture, the bicycle, the typewriter, the X-ray, the elevator, the sewing-machine, the parlor- and safety-match,

Fanny Crosby's Life-Story.

anæsthetics, the reaper and mower, the submarine boat, the type-setting machine (with which this very book is "set up")—all these, and many others, have been invented within the span of my lifetime.

During the past ten years, and up to the present time, my life has continued to be, for the most part, one of joy and sunshine. I do not write quite so much as in other days, but have not by any means laid my pen aside. From the vantage-ground of eighty-three years, I look back upon fair and peaceful valleys, plains, and hillsides, covered by flowers, interspersed with only now and then a thorn.

My health continues, as has been almost constantly the case for many years, good and sound; my spirits are every bit as light and gay as during my girlhood; my enjoyment of all the blessings of life, is more full and intense than ever.

Among my audiences at various places, during lecture-trips, I am continually meeting old acquaintances, who recall former scenes, and enable me to live them over again. I also meet many new friends, who profess themselves to have been for many years drawn toward me by my hymns.

Many words of love and appreciation are constantly falling upon my ears; and I feel that

Personal Habitations.

it is truly the Lord's hand that leads me.

It has been my privilege to visit the Northfield Convention, that famous institution founded by the late D. L. Moody, for several years' in succession; I often attend other summer conventions of the kind. In these, I am enabled to address large audiences, who always listen to my humble words with close and respectful attention.

It is an addition to the pleasure of these occasions, that I am thus enabled to hear some of the best orators and musicians that the world affords; and keep pace, as well as my poor abilities are able, with the thought and feeling of the centuries.

I had for many years lived in Brooklyn, which I found a very pleasant locality, and where I have many dear and treasured friends, whom I still visit from time to time; but three years ago it was considered best for my health that I remove to Bridgeport, Conn., and make my home with a widowed sister, who has been a lifelong resident of that city. I find that the change has been decidedly beneficial.

A great deal has often been said about "the infirmities of age", and "the decline of life"; but I believe that we are really "as young as we feel", and that while I continue to do good for the sake of it and for the love of it, the

Fanny Crosby's Life-Story.

sunshine of hope and gladness will ever attend my footsteps.

I believe myself still really in the prime of life: ready to take up any duty that suggests itself, and to do it with my utmost strength. I do not at this age feel any more fatigue from my frequent journeys and efforts before audiences, than I did thirty years ago. My work grows sweeter and grander to me each day; and I believe the public, in buying large numbers of this my Life-Story, will show that it means to encourage and sustain me in it.

I am often asked, "How long do you expect to live?" This question, of course, I cannot accurately answer: but am willing to stay as long as the good Lord has any work for me to do; and have "set the mark" at one hundred and three—the age at which my grandmother died—my mother living to be over ninety. My ancestors were Puritans; my family tree is rooted around Plymouth Rock; all my predecessors of lineage died at a good old age. Whenever the Lord calls me, I am willing to go; but if He chooses to leave me here until the above-mentioned time, or even longer, I shall continue to gather sheaves till the sun goes down, and to sing and write hymns to His praise.

THE END.

PUBLISHERS' AFTER-WORD.

THE first edition of this fascinating book has been received with great enthusiasm by the Christian world, and by the public generally. It encourages us to issue another and improved edition, which we are sure will gain from the public a still more cordial reception.

This may be considered as Fanny Crosby's last and only Autobiography, as she distinctly promised, and consented to the stipulation, that she should never give out another.

So her readers and admirers will readily see that this book is the only method of obtaining the last printed history *really by herself*, of this pure, truthful spirit.

Great encouragement has been given the work, by some of the most famous and discerning of people. For instance, here is this from one of the most distinguished Presbyterian clergymen in the world:

A thousand thanks, for the fascinating "Life-Story" of that wonderful Fanny Crosby, who has set more hearts and voices to praising God