

Northern Messenger

VOLUME XL. No. 11

MONTREAL, MARCH 17, 1905.

40 Cts. Per An. Post-Paid

Wm Bronscombe 30205

The Quality of Mercy.

The best he could hope for was dismissal. To be allowed to go out of the office alone, disgraced, branded—this would be a mercy and forbearance. What limited another's fears was his hope; but then he had the dock in prospect, the curt and irritable magistrate, the penalty of embezzlement, the unending shame of the jail. Or perhaps the First Offenders' Act would return him to the hardened faces and condemning eyes of his world, a marked man, an offense against his class, a traitor to his family and friends.

Waiting in the ante-room till the senior partner should be ready for him, George Hanbury clenched his fists till the palms bled under his nails. He was ready to face his doom and to take what he had earned, if he could but have taken it alone. Since the discovery of his defalcations had become inevitable, and during the awful two days that had elapsed since the discovery itself had taken place, he had realized, blindingly, vividly, the responsibility for the happiness of others which depends upon every man. His father, his mother, his brothers and sisters! This struck at them all; this was aimed at their home, at the completeness of their lives and the root of their self-respect and happiness. His head swam as the picture of their misery, when the news should reach them, took shape in his mind.

Alone he could have borne it. He had himself in a tight hold. Two days before the manager had sent for him, and he found him with certain books open on his desk.

'Can you explain this?' the manager had asked, pointing to a page.

Hanbury looked, and knew at once that the blow had fallen.

'No, sir, he answered, quietly.

'Nothing to say?' queried the manager, closing the volume.

'Nothing at all,' was the quiet answer.

'Very well,' said the other. 'Mr. Burns will have to hear of this. Go back to your work.'

Then elapsed two days of terrible punishment. His fellows among the clerks knew nothing, and it cost a strong effort to keep a calm face in their midst and so escape remark. He was awaiting sentence from Mr. Burns, who came down to the office only occasionally, and whose very remoteness from the daily life of the business seemed to Hanbury to add another terror to his position.

The door of the inner office clicked, and the manager came out. Hanbury rose to his feet, biting his lip. The manager looked at him, gravely.

'Go in,' he said.

Hanbury entered. Old William Burns was sitting at a table. He was an old man, white haired, with a chin and cheek hidden in a fluff of white beard. Keen gray eyes looked out from under heavy brows; his face bespoke strength and resolution, but there was nothing of harshness in it. It was very grave, now, and perhaps sad; but not hard nor vindictive.

They looked at one another in silence for a moment, the strong old man who had succeeded, and the young man who had failed.

'I have been hearing details of an embezzlement which you have committed,' said the old man slowly. There was a country burr in his voice; Hanbury noted it with an odd sense of

having expected it. 'I understand you make no defense?'

Hanbury found his voice with an effort. 'None, sir,' he answered.

'And you know what you have incurred by this crime?'

Hanbury nodded, gulping.

'Very well,' said the senior partner, 'if you know that, we need not say any more about it. I shall not send you to prison.'

He waited for Hanbury to speak, but the young man could say nothing.

'If I permit you to return to your work, and to gradually refund the money you have misappropriated, shall I be safe? Can I so trust you?'

The clerk started and looked up. Old Wil-

liam Burns was watching him wistfully. 'Sir,' stammered the young man, 'I promise—I swear —' His voice failed him, and he struggled with rising hysteria.

'Very well,' said the senior partner, rising and speaking very gently, 'we will consider that arranged. No word of it will be said again by anyone.'

He held out his hand and Hanbury grasped it, feverishly.

'You are the second man who fell and was pardoned in this business, Mr. Hanbury,' said the old man, in a low tone. 'I was the first. What you have done, I did. The mercy you have received, I received. God help us all.'

They shook hands upon it, the two men who had been spared.—'The British Weekly.'



Life of World-wide Service.

To those who, eighty-four years ago, looked at the sightless little baby, made so at the age of six weeks through the mistaken treatment of some simple eye trouble, how unlikely would it have seemed that her name, the name of Fanny J. Crosby, would become a household word all over the English-speaking world, and that thousands upon thousands would find spiritual comfort and uplift through her simple Gospel Songs! Yet so it was to be, and now as this honored servant of the Master nears her eighty-fifth birthday (March 24), many churches and Sunday-schools are planning to pay their tribute of grateful appreciation by observing Sunday, March 26, as 'Fanny Crosby Day,' using her hymns for all the services, and devoting some time to the subject of hymns and their wonderful influence in the history of the Christian Church.

It would be well if the attention of the young were more often directed to the authors

of the hymns they are learning to love. Surely these men and women who have conferred so great a boon on the church deserve to be kept in grateful remembrance. Not only so, but often a little knowledge of the personality behind the hymn deepens our appreciation of the words, and enables us to enter more fully into the feelings they express.

This is emphatically true of her whose work we have now in mind. Fanny J. Crosby was born in the State of New York, March 24, 1820. Stone blind from her infancy, she was sent, at the age of twelve, to the Institution for the Blind in New York City, where for seven years she pursued her studies, and afterwards taught for eleven years in the same school. In 1858 she married Mr. Alexander Van Alstyne, a musician, a teacher in the same institution, and like his gifted wife, blind also.

Mrs. Van Alstyne retained, as her pen name, the one that she had been known by from her