

**THE BLIND GIRL,
AND OTHER POEMS**

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The Blind Girl, and Other Poems by Frances Jane Crosby

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FRANCES JANE CROSBY

**THE BLIND GIRL,
AND OTHER POEMS**

THE BLIND GIRL.



FRANCES JANE CROSBY

From Daguerreotype by Morand.

THE
BLIND GIRL,

AND OTHER POEMS.

Mrs.
BY FRANCES JANE CROSBY, ✓

Van Alstyne

A PUPIL AT THE
NEW-YORK INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND.

———"Who best
Bears his mill yoke, they serve him best; his state
Is kingly." MILTON.

NEW-YORK:
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1844.



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P R E F A C E .

In venturing the publication of the little volume containing the poetic effusions of one, circumstanced as the authoress is, great reliance is placed on the forbearing spirit of those who may bestow on it a perusal; but the friends, by whose advice it is now presented for the patronage of the public, feel that partiality does not altogether forestal judgment, when they say, that apart from other considerations, the following productions are fraught with much that entitles them to that reception, which a sympathetic spirit might alone dictate.

Those who have listened to the occasional recitations of the authoress, when appeals have been made before the public, either in behalf of the Institution of which she has for nine years been an inmate, or of those who, like herself, in early life were deprived of mental, as well as natural light, will recollect the emotions excited by the touching strains in which the advantages she there enjoyed were

pourtrayed ; and while the tear gathered in the eye, have experienced a higher sense of gratitude for the possession of that blessing, of which she, with those around her, were deprived.

That one, who from the earliest period of infancy has been deprived of sight, and whose entire knowledge of external objects, from which to paint with the imagination's pencil, has been derived from oral description, should be able thus faithfully to present scenes from nature, and in colors so vivid and true, as to render the reader incredulous as to the originality of the production, is a subject of surprise, as well as admiration. This, however, is a striking evidence of the effect of the culturing hand of education on this class of our unfortunate fellow-citizens, and none higher or more conclusive could be given, of the utility of that system, which has produced such happy results on her, and others like her, who have found an intellectual recompense within the walls of those Institutions, where it is so effectually brought to bear.

It is generally, and correctly believed, that the minds of those whose thoughts are not distracted by external objects, are capable of greater concentration, but it is not the less important that culture should open the avenue to thought, otherwise it must roan round its prison house, chafed with ideas indistinct and unsatisfactory, struggling for escape from a chaotic existence. The present age has felt the full force of this, and enlightened counsels have legislated most effectually to secure to this class and those deprived of the sense of hearing, means by which alone they can be efficiently

instructed in *all* the branches of education. Thus we find among the sightless, those who expatiate on "the glory of the moon and the stars which He has made," and among the mute those who unfold the mysteries of revelation.

Frances Jane Crosby, whose compositions are to be found in the following pages, was deprived of sight by illness at the early age of six weeks. She entered "*The New-York Institution for the Blind*" when she was fifteen years old, prior to which her opportunities for education were exceedingly limited; losing her father in her infancy, her remaining parent was left in indigent circumstances, to provide for herself, and therefore unable to bestow that care on her sightless daughter, which she so much needed.

Thus the dawn of her mental existence may be said to have commenced with her introduction to the Institution, from which period her intellectual powers have expanded, until her imaginative mind has been enabled to clothe its thoughts in language at once chaste and poetic.

Whatever merit the public may accord to these effusions, most of which were addressed to personal friends as occasioned by the incidents to which they refer, and were not designed for the press; it may rest assured that the several pieces are the unaided productions of the authoress. They were penned from dictation, with very little revision by herself, and less from any other source. Thus in many instances much of the spirit of the composition may have been lost by punctuation, which had it been done by the composer, would convey more justly the thought intended.