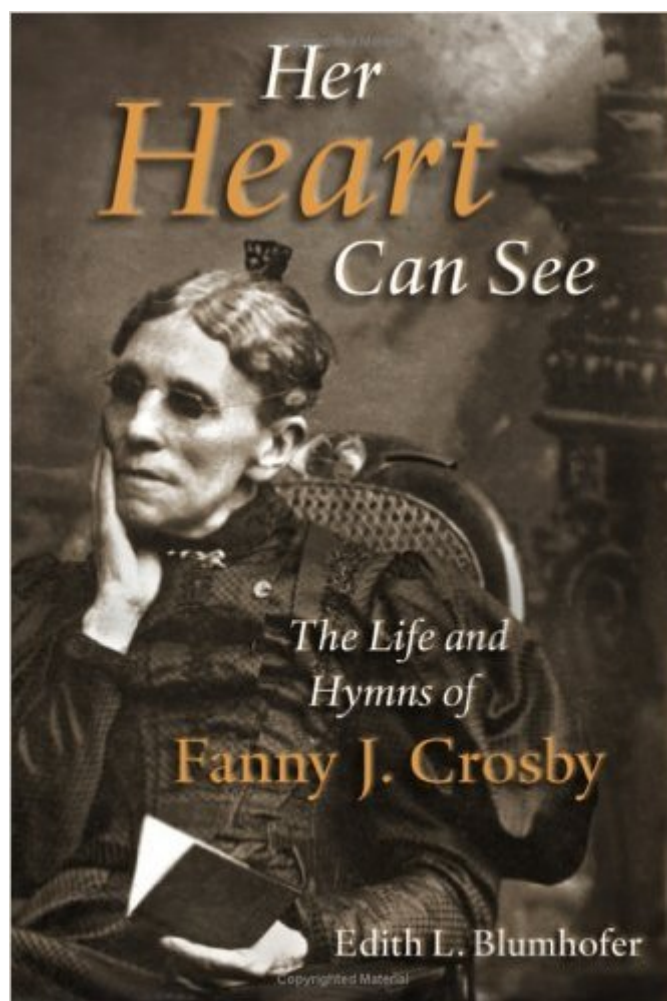


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Her Heart Can See: The Life And Hymns Of Fanny J. Crosby (Library Of Religious Biography (LRB))



Synopsis

Her Heart Can See offers an intimate, informed look at Fanny J. Crosby (1820–1915), the most prolific of all American hymn writers. Having lost her sight in infancy through a doctor's negligence, Fanny went on to compose more than 9,000 hymns, as well as various other songs, cantatas, and lyrical productions. Crosby's hymns, including such all-time favorites as "Blessed Assurance," "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior," "Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross," "Rescue the Perishing," "Safe in the Arms of Jesus," and "I Am Thine, O Lord," continue to be sung around the world. Celebrated in her own day for her gospel hymns, Crosby was also very publicly involved with New York City's rescue missions and with other benevolent efforts. She rubbed shoulders with the likes of Henry Clay, Grover Cleveland, Winfield Scott, Dwight L. Moody, Ira Sankey, Jenny Lind, P. T. Barnum, and many other famous figures who people these pages. More than two dozen black-and-white photographs depict the people and settings among which Crosby moved. Drawing on primary sources -- including thousands of unpublished Crosby manuscripts -- Edith Blumhofer sorts fact from fiction in the life of this remarkable woman. Blumhofer responsibly limns Crosby's life as a gifted nineteenth-century northeastern Protestant woman, in the process showing why "this diminutive woman" was -- and is -- so beloved.

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Customer Reviews

This excellent biography of one of the most prolific and well-known hymn writers in church history is

well researched, readable, educational and in many ways encouraging. Crosby was blind from early childhood but never let her lack of sight slow her down. She had an incredible ability to write singable poetry, some of which was political, patriotic, and sentimental. But she is known today for her many hymns (somewhere between 6,000-10,000) which reflected, and perhaps to some degree shaped, the evangelicalism of the 19th century. She lived 95 years (from 1820-1915), staying productive to the end, and died a national and Christian treasure. As with any good biography more is covered than merely the main subject. Blumhofer also carefully outlines the development and key changes in sacred music during the 1800s. Important individuals of the times, men and women most of us know little about now, were instrumental in shaping sacred music and their influence is evident to this day. Key players include musicians Lowell Mason, George Root, William Bradbury and Ira Sankey, as well as preachers such as Henry Ward Beecher, Lyman Beecher and D.L. Moody. All of these had a great impact on the life and music of Crosby. As for her personal faith, it was rooted in Puritanism, developed by Methodism, warmed by the Holiness movement, and nourished by her Congregationalist, Baptist, and Presbyterian associates (p. 279). And despite all these influences Crosby remained firmly anchored to the most basic tenets of the Calvinism of her childhood: God has a purpose, and disposition is a matter of choice (p. 344). Many of Crosby's hymns are still sung today including: All the Way My Savior Leads Me, Blessed Assurance, Close to Thee, He Hideth My Soul, More Like Jesus.

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