

# The Orphans' Friend.

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## AT THY SIDE.

A little traveler am I  
Upon a road that looks  
As pleasant as the flowery paths  
Beside the summer brooks.

I may have very far to go;  
No one can tell, they say:  
For some the way is very long,  
For some 'tends in a day.

I've gone a very little way,  
And yet I can't go back  
To pick up any thing I've lost  
Or wasted on the track.

And, if I careless pass each stone,  
I mayn't my steps retrace;  
And so I need a Friend all through  
To keep me by His grace.

For there are snares I do not see;  
I am a foolish child:  
Then, Jesus, I will ask Thee now  
To keep me undefiled.

My feet from falling keep, O Lord!  
My feet from wandering wide,  
Until, the last stone passed, I dwell  
Forever at Thy side.

## ABOUT EASTERN INNS.

"And she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn."—LUKE II. 7.

What sort of place could this have been which refused admission to God's own Son and His lowly mother? Every one knows about the stable and the manger, where, with the camels and asses and goats standing by, the little child Jesus first opened His holy eyes upon our sinful earth; but some of us, the little folk especially, have rather wrong ideas about the inn which stood by, and was so overcrowded that they could not make room for one more traveler. Some think it was like a little country hotel, where, though the rooms may not be very large, or grandly furnished, everything is clean and comfortable, and tired and hungry travelers receive a hearty welcome from a cheerful, obliging host or hostess.

But we must dismiss from our minds any comfortable house of that kind if we would picture to ourselves the inn to which the poor tired husband and wife begged for entrance. No landlady would welcome them at the door, nor would there be any clean rooms or refreshing meal awaiting them.

No; this inn was nothing more than a piece of ground—a field, inclosed by a strong wall, but without any roof. All round the inside of the wall were stone arches, each of which would be occupied by one party of travelers, and in some of the best inns the floor of these arches was a little raised above the level of the court-yard in the middle.

In the centre of the piece of ground was a fountain of spring water, some of which ran into a trough for the animals to drink from.

That was all; no tables, or chairs, or beds, except, perhaps, a heap of straw thrown down for the cattle; no landlady to show the travelers where to go, but each one as he came in would have to select for himself an unoccupied archway, and here, after unloading his horses or asses, and leading them to drink at the trough, he would spread his mat on the bare ground, and set to work to prepare his meal with no

other materials or cooking utensils but such as he had carried with him.

In very ancient times, while the Canaanites were still in possession of a great part of Palestine, there were no inns at all, but the chief man in each tribe or village was expected to entertain any travelers who happened to pass that way. It was considered an especial privilege to receive strangers, and the Arabs are famous to this day for their hospitality.

Although travelers were always sure of a kind welcome when they reached a camp or village, in many cases these settlements were so far apart that it was impossible to get from one to another without halting at least one night on the way. Traveling was slow in those days, for there were few roads, and those were very bad ones, and the camels or asses were heavily laden; the wandering tribes must needs take all their household goods on the backs of these animals, and their houses, too, very often, for they all lived in tents. So that, by degrees, some charitable Arab would set apart a piece of ground here and there, generally about eight or nine miles apart, and build a rough wall, or plant a hedge round it, as a refuge for travelers. The spot chosen would contain, if possible, a spring of water and a group of trees; and though the ground was bare and hard, and the sky the only roof, such an inn would be a great boon to the weary wayfarer, for here, at least, he could slake his thirst and rest, sheltered from the hot sun by day, and sleep in peace, undisturbed by alarms of robbers or wild beasts, at night.

As time went on, and travelers became more numerous, and their possessions more valuable, the walls were raised and properly built up, and a doorway made; instead of being, as at first, a loose heap of stones, piled up without any kind of cement and with no door, or opening of any kind, so that the traveler had to climb over a wall, or jump over a prickly hedge, to reach his resting-place. It was probably in a shelter of this kind that Joseph's brothers slept that night when they found the money in the sack's mouth; indeed, the first mention of an inn of any kind in the Bible is in the story of these brothers, and their journey up from Egypt.

Then a few more improvements crept in. It began to be considered an act of great piety, on the part of a prince, or any rich man, to provide such a resting-place, and after his death his refuge for travelers was kept up as a monument to his memory, his successors adding to, or improving it; so that gradually higher walls were built of blocks of stone, gates were added, and a row of arches built against the inner side of the wall, in which the lodgers might sleep, instead of lying down amongst their cattle. A trough was made, too, with a pipe from the well to fill it with water. These inns, or khans, as the Arabs call them, were a source of great pride to their builders, and the different tribes

viewed with each other in improving and enlarging them.

They were considered sacred in time of war, and though the hostile tribes would destroy houses and vineyards, and carry away the inhabitants into slavery, they never touched the khans; those being considered almost holy ground, and which it would be very impious to injure in any way.

The country of Palestine abounds in limestone rocks, in which are found innumerable caves; and in later days, owners of khans took advantage of these natural shelters to increase the accommodation, which had become too small for the ever-increasing stream of passers by.

A cave was generally used as a stable, and a piece of rock was cut away along the sides of it, so as to form a sort of shelf, on which the cattle and horses could rest their horsehair nosebags whilst eating.

Many of the eastern inns are to this day just of this description; and should the inn be full, the tired traveler is glad to spread his piece of carpet on this rocky ledge, to throw himself down on the straw-covered ground to rest amongst the cattle.

The inn at Bethlehem—the favored spot destined to be the birthplace of our Lord—was of great antiquity, and had had a strange and interesting history.

Thirteen hundred years before the birth of Christ, Boaz, the sheikh, or chief man of the little town of Bethlehem, had lived in this spot with his wife, Ruth, and it being his privilege, as sheikh, to entertain travelers, his house was always known as the guest-house of the neighborhood; and a very important and much frequented resting-place it probably was, for Bethlehem was the first halting-place on the way from Zion to Egypt. On his death, his possessions passed into the hands of his grandson, Jesse, who, no doubt, kept up the traditions of the house, and showed hospitality to all who needed it. He in his turn left the house, at his death, to his adopted son, Chimham, by whose name it was called for generations after. At the death of Chimham, instead of passing into the hands of strangers, the house which had so long been known as a resting-place for travelers was gradually converted into the public guest-house, the khan or inn of Bethlehem.

And so it came to pass that, generations after, the Galilean peasant and his betrothed wife, coming to Bethlehem to be taxed, and having no friends of whom to ask shelter, were fain to seek a lodging in the very house which had been the boyhood's home of their great ancestor David, and which was to be famous through all the world, as long as the world shall last, as the birthplace of the Saviour of mankind, of whom it had been prophesied centuries before, "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse." The site of it is a little below the town. It is now marked by the Church of the Nativity.—*Sunday Magazine.*

## PISTOL PRACTICE.

The slaying of a St. Louis lawyer by a prominent newspaper editor, and one of the largest funerals ever seen at the West, suggest that the pistol business is being somewhat overdone. There have been similar tragedies in Washington, Macon, New Orleans, San Francisco and other prominent cities. If a man say, or write, or print something you do not like, buy a pistol, carefully load it, watch your opportunity and shoot him. So we go back toward barbarism. There is, evidently, among certain educated and well-to-do men, an impression that they can right their wrongs by manslaughter. There are those who think it looks brave to carry a pistol. Now, I will undertake to say that any man who lives in a well-defended city, and is afraid to go out and come in without firearms, has not the courage of a sheep. If called to go out on the borders of civilization, or as an officer of the law, to explore the haunts of a great city, deadly weapons may be an appropriate accompaniment; but he who in peaceful times and in well-governed neighborhoods carries dirk or pistol, has the spirit of murder, whether or not he commit the crime. In all the history of the world slander was never baffled, nor was honor vindicated by taking the life of another. Newspaper abuse was never stopped by extinguishing an editor. In most cases of assassination the wrong man is killed. In the St. Louis instance both parties were worsted—the one by losing his life; and the other, afflicted with horrors at the fatal shot given. All the fracas come from what is called personal journalism. Colonel Slayback rushed into the office of the Post-Dispatch, of St. Louis, to destroy the editor for stigmatization. That is not the best way to answer newspaper abuse. Let them go on. Everybody comes to understand that it is a personality. An abusive newspaper corrects the harm it does by the reputation it gets for abuse. The most successful and honored men in State and Church are those which certain newspapers have attempted to annihilate. Every man comes to be estimated for what he is really worth. You cannot write him up and you cannot write him down. It is a rather unfortunate thing for a man to be abused only once by a newspaper, for then the public might be deceived in regard to him; but if the abuse go on for weeks and months and years, the people come to understand it as only the wreaking of some old grudges, and the charges fall powerless. Besides that, it is not now, as once, in towns and cities, that there was only one newspaper, and that could have things its own way. There are now scores of newspapers coming out day by day, and if one paper is unfair with you, other papers will do you full justice. But if there should come a case of defamation in which no newspaper column is open to set you right, you have the law, and a jury, made up of men who, like yourself, have reputation and family, and sense of right and wrong, will give you damages. But do not think that by violence you can adjust anything. Keep your heart right and your life right, and you are independent of the world's bombardment. Snap your swordcase and throw your derringer into the East River. What a chicken-liver instead of a heart you must have, that you have to be armed to walk Fulton Street or Broadway! There is a certain kind of man who ought never to have a pistol in his pocket, or under his pillow, or anywhere in the house, from garret to cellar, and that is the young man, or old, who has a violent temper. To say nothing of a revolver, it is dangerous for you to have so much as a percussion-cap or a ramrod. You carry a pis-

tel when suddenly, in a moment of insane fury, you may do something you may be sorry for through time and through eternity. With such a temper as you have, to carry a weapon of death is as unwise as to put gunpowder and lucifer matches in the same box. The orderly citizen in our orderly cities, in the next hundred years, will need no firearms. Ten lives are lost every year through the accidental discharge of firearms where there is one life saved by being armed. This compleat puppyism that cannot live without being armed with deadly weapons ought to be spanked and put to bed before sundown. It is an awful thing to take human life. Have nothing about you that in a moment of altercation may become, under the impulse of sudden temper, set on by the devil, the means of an appalling crime. So much for assassination in high life.—*T. De Witt Talmage.*

## ABOVE ALL, MAKE US STYLISH.

A little girl in Louisville was recently saying her prayers, and after going over the well-known verses, 'Now I lay me,' &c., she proceeded to ask God for various things she wanted. She prayed the Lord to 'bless mamma and papa and sisters and brothers,' and added, 'but above all, oh! God, make us stylish.' The dear little girl but gave expression to what was the supreme desire in that household. And, alas, in how many mouths, even of church members, would that prayer fit, although they do not venture to formally express it like the honest little girl! People want to be good, yes, it is well to be good, but to be 'stylish'—ah! that is something worth while, and worth striving for. Too much piety is sometimes inconvenient, but too much style—ah, that is impossible. Even if certain things are wrong, so they are fashionable, what matters it? People must enjoy themselves, and what is the use of being so careful always to do right? This is the spirit—'above all, make us stylish.' Character, righteousness, everything must be made subservient to style.

## THE BARREL.

The invention of the barrel, made of strips of wood and rendered tight and strong by hoops, finds in history no notice of origin or inventor. Pliny attributes it to the Gauls of the Po, in Lombardy. There is, however, good reason to believe that the barrel was in use before the Gauls reached Italy, perhaps before their existence as a people. In one of the inscriptions copied by Wilkerson from Egyptian monuments may be seen two slaves emptying grain from a wooden vessel, while a scribe keeps tally and a sweeper stands by to sweep up the kernels. Close by, a poor victim is undergoing the bastinado, or short measure or petty theft. The measure is barrel shaped, precisely like the *kage* of modern Egypt, and would apparently hold about a peck. The age of this inscription is not indicated.

Combat all thy discontent through prayer, every care through faith, every fear through hope.