

# The Orphans' Friend.

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## AUTUMN LEAVES.

Shadowed with russet and gleaming with gold,  
Brightened with crimson array;  
Loosed at the west wind's softest touch  
The leaves are floating away,—  
Beautiful leaves!  
Nature grieves  
Through days that are cold and gray.  
Falling in sunshine, falling in shadow,  
Rustling in twilights dim;  
Seeking a grave 'mongst the low, green grasses  
To a murmurous requiem,—  
To the cricket's plaint,  
In the grasses faint,  
Lone notes of nature's hymn.  
Knee deep do they lie in the hollows,  
They whirl through the open glade  
Like partridges startled from feeding,  
To settle again in the shade.  
Drifting leaves,  
Dying leaves,  
That the wild winds have betrayed.  
Already their beauty is fading fast,  
Their colors to russet turn,  
No longer with brilliance of raiment  
In crimson and gold they burn;  
Buried leaves,  
Forgotten leaves,  
Sleep 'neath the bramble and fern!  
—F. Hamilton.

## OLIVET AND BETHANY.

The one spot which the eye instinctively seeks from any elevation near Jerusalem is the Mount of Olives. It is not the most conspicuous feature in a view from the neighboring hills, and the stately domes of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the Mosque of Omar, far eclipse in those features which at first arrest attention. But the eye turns from them almost as soon as their glittering pinnacles have caught its notice. They are unmistakably modern and unmistakably artificial. But as one looks from whatever point at Olivet, its supreme charm is that it has no other adornment than nature.

True, there are a few scattered dwellings, and the ugly minaret of a species of dwarfed mosque near its summit; but these are hardly noticeable from a distance, and they do not greatly mar the simple unity of the whole picture. As I saw it, and as it has doubtless looked to thousands of other pilgrims, it was the very abode of grace and rest. There are few strong contrasts in Syrian landscape.

The soft gray stone of the houses, the hazy green of the olive groves, and (at any rate in the month of February) the delicate verdure of turf and shrub, just putting on their spring freshness, gave to the whole picture a cool and quiet hue, which art has often striven to reproduce, but which the eye must see for itself adequately to appreciate. How shall I describe the emotion of that Sunday afternoon on which, literally with an open Bible in hand, I climbed its peaceful slopes, recalling step by step, the sacred event and the divine footsteps by which it has been forever hallowed! Here, indeed, as everywhere, one's instinct of reverence, and one's sense of fitness are wounded and jarred upon by the presence of that alien race who, as conquerors of the Jew, have spoiled his holy places, and pitched their tents amid the very courts of his temple.

It makes one's blood boil sometimes to hear the condescending approval with which the Moslem speaks of "the Prophet Jesus,"

while scoffing at the Christian credulity which pays him divine honors.

It was with a very different feeling that we escaped from the precincts of the mosque, and passed through a cornfield to the little village of Bethany. I twisted my way down into the cave which is said to be the tomb of Lazarus, and visited also the house which is shown (by a coarse Arab virago, who "chaffed" our guide, and evidently thought the whole expedition an amusing farce) as that of Martha and Mary. The former (which is evidently a natural cave or tomb) may be authentic, but the latter as obviously cannot be. Either way I confess I found it impossible to feel any interest in details about whose identity there must needs be abundant dispute. But it is with quite another feeling that one takes in the village of Bethany as a whole situation there is something inexpressibly beautiful and touching. I suppose it is because so much of the human side of Christ's character and ministry are there disclosed to us, in His undisguised pleasure in the house of the two sisters and Lazarus, and in the depth and tenderness of His affection for the latter that we think of the village of Bethany with an interest so peculiar, and so different from that attaching to most other places associated with His earthly life.

And when one sees it, such feelings seem, somehow, to get at once their explanation and their warrant. For Bethany has the advantage of most convenient nearness to Jerusalem, and at the same time of peculiar and most restful isolation. We had approached it over the hill of Olivet, and by a by-path through such a cornfield as the Master passed on the Sabbath day when He and His disciples plucked and ate its ears of corn. But the usual road to Bethany is along to Jericho, which passes round the south shoulder of the Mount of Olives, and which, after a few turns, leaves every vestige of the Holy City out of sight. Lying thus on the eastern slope of Olivet, Bethany looks off upon the valley along which winds the road to the Jordan, and every feature of which is at once singularly restful and rural. And this, as it seemed to one seeing it for the first time, must needs have been always its supreme charm. It is at once so near to Jerusalem, and yet so utterly removed from it. It is not a suburban village overlooking the Holy City, nor even any most distant outskirts of it. As the eye ranges the winding valley and the distant hills, they afford the perpetual refreshment of absolute repose.

Was it not this which made it so welcome a refuge, when the day was done, to the weary feet of Christ? Here, it is true He found the tenderest sympathy, and the most loyal and loving devotion which poor human hearts could give Him. But here too He found what no human heart could give Him—the peace of comparative solitude, and the soothing influence of the infinite calm of nature. When the days were ended—those days of toil,

and often seemingly fruitless argument—above all, when the whole human heart and brain were weary and sad with those disheartening encounters with a priesthood and people who would not understand Him, there must have been a rare and blessed refreshment in turning one's back upon all the noise and bustle and clamor of the thronged city and its pressing multitudes, to rest for a while in that lowly village, where no sight or sound of the town intruded, and where that which spoke to eye and ear alike was the serene and soothing voice of nature. In such a home one can understand how the Master found a rest and peace which, amid the closing hours of His ministry, He could look for nowhere else.—H. C. Potter, D.D., in *Presbyterian*.

## LITERARY MEN.

Tasso's conversation was neither gay nor brilliant. Dante was either taciturn or satirical. Butler was sullen or biting. Gray seldom talked or smiled. Hogarth and Smith were very absent-minded in company. Milton was very unsocial, and even irritable when pressed into conversation. Kirwin, though copious and eloquent in public addresses, meager and dull in colloquial discourse. Virgil was heavy in conversation. La Fontaine appeared heavy, coarse and stupid; he could not speak and describe what he had just seen; but then he was the model of poetry. Chaucer's poetry was more agreeable than his conversation. Dryden's conversation was dry and dull, his humor saturnine and reserved. Corneille, in conversation, was so insipid that he never failed in wearying; he did not even speak correctly that language of which he was such a master. Ben Johnson used to sit silent in company, and suck his wine and their humors. Southey was stiff, sedate, and wrapped up in asceticism. Addison was good company with his intimate friends, but in mixed company he preserved his dignity by a stiff and reserved silence. Fox in his common conversation never flagged; his animation and variety were inexhaustible. Dr. Bently was loquacious, so also was Grotius. Goldsmith "wrote like an angel, and talked like poor Poll." Burke was enthusiastic and entertaining in conversation. Curran was a convivial deity. Leigh Hunt was "like a pleasant stream" in conversation! Carlyle doubts, objects, constantly demurs.

## BABIES.

Bless their dear little hearts!—the veriest little tyrants on earth, yet the most abused of all humanity. From the very first advent of baby does his reign commence. Grandpa and grandma are the first to give into his sovereignty, and become living victims to the little despot; then papa finds that he must tread softly, with slippers on feet, open and close doors carefully, and omit smoking his pet cigar lest the fumes should choke baby. He also must quietly submit to having his eyes dug out, nose scratched, his hair and whiskers pulled out by the roots, all by way of amusement of baby.

## SPARKS THAT MAY KINDLE.

FROM DR. THORNWELL'S LETTERS.

Education is the cheap defence of nations.

Learning, genius, and eloquence are feeble things to depend upon.

Take away the hopes of a blessed immortality and what wise man would desire to live.

Who would be content with heathen *fortitude* when the jewel of Christian *patience* may be won?

*Self-denial*, amounting to the crucifixion of the flesh, is indispensable to the enjoyment of religious peace and comfort.

All pain is ultimately due to sin; and the degree of pain which exists in the world may give us some notion of the extent to which God hates sin.

That all knowledge begins with the incomprehensible, and is bounded by the incomprehensible, is a truth which the arrogant disputers of this world are slow to apprehend. The longer I live, and the more I think, the more profound is my conviction of human ignorance. I can say too that I have a growing attachment to the great truths of Christianity. I feel that I am rooted and grounded in the gospel; that its doctrines are incorporated into my whole life, and are the necessary food of my soul.

## UNALLOWED RESIGNATION.

What a habit we have of crediting all our ills to providence! We are never willing to admit that our own inactivity, folly and self-love have wrought out the dire results over which we mourn. We only see the shipwreck of our lives, we only hear the voices of the storm, and instead of owning that it was our indifferent and unskillful navigation that brought our craft upon the rock, we fold our hands and cry out, blindly, "Strange and mysterious are thy ways, O Providence! It is well to have faith and trust. It is well to be resigned to trials that cannot be avoided; but it is not to hide our talents in a napkin, to take our fill of ease and pleasures, and bow down to the gods of pride and fashion, then shrink from the consequences and say that the work is none of ours."

Some of us really imagine that we are suffering the will of the Lord, because the flour barrel is empty and our coat is out at the elbows, when a little more self-denial, a little less folding of the hands to rest, would raise us out of the slough of poverty, and set us on our feet, crowned with the gift of a goodly heritage. We eat rich, unwholesome food, keep late hours, transgress all the laws of health, and when we pay the penalty with shattered nerves and broken constitutions, we wonder why we are not strong and vigorous as our neighbor who has lived moderately all his days. Because the neck and arms of our tender infants are soft and white and dimpled, we let them go bare and unprotected: then when some day we leave the little one out under the snow, we murmur that our Father hath been unkind. In too many cases, with a little more flannel the family circle might be kept unbroken for many a year.

## WOULDN'T BE CAUGHT.

The wise preamble to the old lady's famous recipe for cooking a rabbit was, "First catch your rabbit." Elephants, whales, and even those small whales called porpoises, are as bad game as rabbits (and rather worse) to cook, or count upon in any way, before they are caught. The *New York Times* tells this story:

The porpoises are extremely fond of the shallow sea in front of Cape May, for some reason unknown to the naturalist, and swim along the length of the beach, plunging in their usual gamesome style, in great numbers. One would imagine, to see them within the lines of the surf, that they would be carried to shore in spite of themselves by the force of the breakers. But they are an exceedingly wily and sagacious animal.

Some strangers of a speculative turn, who had observed how numerous they were in this locality, formed a company for the catching of the porpoise and the expressing of his oil, and they established works for the latter purpose. They made huge nets of the strongest materials, the ends of which were to be drawn in by windlasses. Then they laid their nets and waited developments.

That unlucky morning the porpoises were in full force, and when the operators thought proper to begin hauling in, there were more than one hundred in the toils. As soon as they felt the meshes they swam towards the shore rapidly, then, suddenly turning, they charged the net in a compact body, moving with inconceivable swiftness, and the unfortunate net of the speculators was broken to pieces.

One bold porpoise was stunned in the charge, and remained in the net when its remains were dragged to shore. It was eight feet in length, and the people that crowded to look at him were strangely impressed by the large blue eyes, shaped like those of a horse, that followed all their movements, and seemed almost human in their varying expressions.

"It's a shame to kill such a creature," observed a gentle lady. "Just look at those eyes."

"Just look at our net, marm," responded one of the porpoise company, "broken to smithereens, and the whole company 'busted.' It would be a deal more shame to let him live after the damage he's done."

So saying he dispatched the solitary victim, and the beautiful eyes soon became glazed and fishy. But the company came to the conclusion that porpoises were too smart to be taken that way, and as it would not pay to fish for them with the harpoon, they remain masters of the situation, and gambol along the line of the beach to their hearts' content, unmolested by any man.

The superiority of man to nature is continually illustrated in literature and in life. Nature needs an immense quantity of quills to make a goose with; but man can make a goose of himself in five minutes with one quill.