

SUNDAY SCHOOL BARRER

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AND
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EASTERN SHEPHERDS.

Eastern Shepherds.

It has been well said that the best commentary on the Bible is the land of the Bible. The unchanged use and wont of the Orient makes the present costumes and customs of the people the best interpreter of the allusions and references of the Holy Scriptures. This is especially true of the allusions to the shepherd life and shepherd custom. The shepherd still goeth before them, and calleth his own sheep by name, and they follow him. He still carries the lambs in his bosom, and protects the weak and wandering. He still goeth after that which hath gone astray, and when he hath found it, beareth it on his shoulders rejoicing. The picture above given is one, doubtless, that would have been equally applicable to the shepherds on the first Christmas-eve as it is to-day. As

one witnesses those striking evidences of the truths of Holy Writ, there comes home with unwonted power the words of that sweet Hebrew idyll, the twenty-third Psalm, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want," and the tender words of our blessed Lord himself, "I am the good shepherd who gave his life for the sheep."

Now the tuning and the tension,
Wailing minors, discord strong;
Afterward, the grand ascension
Of the Alleluia song.

Now the training, strange and lowly,
Unexplained, and tedious now;
Afterward, the service holy,
And the Master's "Enter Thou."