

Autumn Dreams.

BY HAYARD TAYLOR.

When the maple turns to crimson
And the sassafras to gold;
When the gentian's in the meadow
And the aster on the wold;
When the moon is wrapped in vapour
And the night is frosty cold;

When the chestnut-burs are opened.
And the acorns drop like hail,
And the drowsy air is startled
With the thumping of the fall,
With the drumming of the partridge,
And the whistle of the quail;

Through the rustling woods I wander,
Through the jewels of the year,
From the yellow uplands calling,
Seeking her who still is dear!
She is near me in the Autumn,
She, the beautiful, is near

Through the smoke of burning summer.
When the weary wings are still,
I can see her in the valley,
I can hear her on the hill
In the splendour of the woodlands,
In the whisper of the rill.

For the shores of earth and heaven,
Meet and mingle in the blue;
She can wander down the glory
To the places that she knew,
Where the happy lovers wandered
In the days when life was true.

So I think, when days are sweetest,
And the world is wholly fair,
She may sometimes steal upon me,
Through the dimness of the air,
With the cross upon her bosom,
And the amaranth in her hair.

Once to meet her, ah! to meet her,
And to hold her gently fast
Till I blessed her, till she blessed me—
That were happiness at last,
That were bliss beyond our meetings
In the Autumn of the past.

LESSON NOTES.

THIRD QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF JESUS.

LESSON XIII.—SEPTEMBER 23.

THE DUTY OF WATCHFULNESS.

Luke 12. 35-46. Memory verses, 43, 44.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.—Matt. 26. 41.

OUTLINE.

1. Faithful Servants, v. 35-44.
 2. Wicked Servants, v. 45, 46.
- Time.—Winter of A.D. 29-30.
Place.—Perea.

LESSON HELPS.

35. "Let your loins be girded about"—To gird up the loins was, in Eastern habits and with Eastern garments, the symbol of active service. The "lights" are the lamps which the watchful hold in their hands.

36. The "wedding" or marriage feast was the most stately of all oriental festivities.

37. "Blessed are those servants"—The title "blessed," when used by our Lord, implies some rare and precious virtue in the one to whom it is given. "Shall find watching"—With house in readiness, table prepared, and ready to open the door at the first knock of their returning master. "Shall gird himself"—The allusion is to the Eastern custom of a host honouring his distinguished guests by performing some service done on ordinary occasions by servants. In heaven Christ will teach his faithful followers as chosen guests by serving them for ever. "To sit down to meat"—In the earthly wedding the Lord expects to find the table prepared for him by his servants, in the heavenly he prepares the feast.—Abbott.

38. "Come in the second watch"—The Romans divided the night into four watches—from six to nine, from nine to midnight, from midnight to three, and from three to six. The banquet would not be over before the end of the first watch; in the fourth the day would be breaking. Vigilance, therefore, is needed during the second and third watches, the still, weary hours of the night, when to watch is a task of difficulty and painfulness. The time of our Lord's coming is unknown. Our ignorance of it is a reason why we should maintain readiness.

39. "What hour the thief would come"—Christ changes the metaphor, comparing his coming to that of a thief in the

night. "Broken through"—Literally, digged through, for the walls of Eastern houses are usually of clay.

40. "Be ye therefore ready"—One cannot always watch his house; sleep is necessary. But spiritually he can live in a state of constant readiness. "An hour when ye think not"—Worldly men provide themselves against the uncertainties of the future. Fire and life insurance companies flourish because of this principle of forethought. God might have arranged that every one should carry in his own person an indication of the length of his life. He has



JOHN JONES HOUSE AT THE CREDIT, WHERE DR. RYERSON RESIDES.

left this uncertain, because otherwise men would spend most of life in sin.

41. "Then Peter"—A conception of the rewards mentioned in verse 37 deeply impressed the impulsive apostle.

42. "Faithful and wise steward"—The steward was a slave promoted for his intelligence and fidelity. "Portion of meat"—He distributed the allotted portions of food, grain, etc., to the servants, which they cooked for themselves.—Watson. Everything the steward had belonged to his master—the clothes he wore, the food he ate, the home which sheltered him. An account was kept of the goods committed to him, and in time the books would be balanced. This is our relation to God. We breathe his air, we bask in his sunshine, we tread on his earth. He gives us our living in trust for others.

43. "Blessed is that servant"—Exceptional fidelity to God in any position will not go unrewarded.

44. "Will make him ruler"—"The work of the faithful servant does not cease, either after his own removal from his earthly labour or even after the final consummation of the kingdom."—Plumptre. "All that he hath"—"That promotion shall not be like earthly promotion, wherein the emittance of one excludes that of another, but rather like the diffusion of love, in which the more earth has the more there is for all."—Alford.

45. "Say in his heart"—Thinking is just inward speaking. "My lord delayeth his coming"—"The expression denotes an eternal mocking frivolity."—Lange. "Drink, and to be drunken"—Self-gratification and severity to others often go hand in hand.

46. "The Lord . . . will come"—The



THE CREDIT VILLAGE IN WINTER.

wickedness of some professing Christians will not hinder his coming. "When he is not aware"—The life of profligacy will have a rude awakening, a bitter sequel. "Cut him in sunder"—This extreme bodily torment images the terrible inflictions of God's wrath upon unfaithful servants. "Will appoint"—Judgment cannot be evaded. "His portion"—He goes where he belongs. Our delights prophesy of destiny.

Drinking wine and strong drink makes people forgetful and watchful. Alcohol steals away a man's senses, so that he is not himself, and cannot watch and pray, cannot do right. Alcohol is our Master's enemy. "We must not let the enemy come in through the lips. The way to keep out of temptation is not to take the first step. The text says we must watch and pray that we enter not

HOME READINGS.

- M. The duty of watchfulness.—Luke 12. 35-46.
- Tu. Reason for watchfulness.—Matt. 24. 32-42.
- W. Be ready.—Matt. 24. 43-51.
- Th. Wise and foolish virgins.—Matt. 25. 1-13.
- F. Remember and hold fast.—Rev. 3. 1-6.
- S. Children of light.—1 Thess. 5. 4-11.
- Su. Watch and pray.—Luke 21. 25-36.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. Faithful Servants, v. 35-44. How shall Christians live?

into temptation. If you never take a sip of wine you will never drink a glass.



I WOULD RATHER SING.

An eight-year-old child, with a cut in her hand, was brought to a physician. It was necessary for the best results to take a few stitches with a surgeon's needle. While the physician was making preparations the little girl swung her foot nervously against the chair, and was gently admonished by her mother.

"That will do no harm," said the doctor, kindly, "as long as you hold your hand still," adding, with a glance at the strained, anxious face of the child, "you may cry as much as you like."

"I would rather sing," replied the child.

"All right, that would be better."

"What can you sing?"

"I can sing, 'Give, said the little stream.' Do you know that?"

"I am not sure," responded the doctor;

"how does it begin?"

The little patient proceeded to illustrate.

"That's beautiful," said the doctor; "I want to hear the whole of it."

All the while skilled fingers were sewing the wound the sweet childish voice sounded bravely through the room, and the only tears shed on the occasion came from the eyes of the mother.

It is, I believe, a fact that some expression of one's feelings tends to lessen pain. Since weeping and groaning are distressing to one's friends, how would it do for us all to try singing instead?

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