

WINTER.

BY MISS ELIZA COOK.

We know 'tis good that old Winter should come,
 Roving awhile from his Lapland home :
 'Tis fitting that we should hear the sound,
 Of his reindeer sledge on the slippery ground :
 For the wide and glittering clock of snow,
 Protects the seeds of life below ;
 Beneath his mantle are nurtured and born
 The roots of the flowers, the germs of the corn.
 The whistling tone of his pure strong breath
 Rides purging the vapours of pestilential death,
 I love him, I say, and avow it again,
 For God's wisdom and might show well in his train.

NATURE'S REST DURING WINTER.

The days of winter, are the days of nature's rest. In the preceding months she has been occupied in accomplishing the designs of God in labouring for the welfare of the creatures. How rich has the spring been in flowers. How many seeds has it developed! And what an abundance of fruits has the summer ripened, than we might collect them in autumn! Each month, each day, we receive some present from nature. Is there an instant in which she does not either cheer our sight regale our smell, or flatter our taste! And how often does she satisfy the whole at once! Like a good mother, she is busied from the beginning to the end of the year, in providing for favourites, the necessaries, conveniences, and comforts of life. Food, raiment, and delight have all been derived from her maternal bosom. For us, she has caused the herbs to bud; for us, she has loaded the trees with blossoms, leaves, and fruit; for us, she has covered the fields with corn; for us, the vine bears its invigorating fruit; and for us, the whole creation is adorned with a thousand charms. Wearied with so many labours, nature at present reposes; but it is only to collect new strength, which she will by and by employ for the good of the world. But even this repose which nature enjoys in winter, is a secret activity, which silently prepares a new creation. Already, the necessary dispositions are made, that the earth at the close of a few months may find the children she has lost.

If we consider appearances only, we might say, snow cannot be very useful to the earth; and should be rather led to believe, that the hurried cold imparted by it, might be injurious to trees and plants. But the experience of all ages should free us from this prejudice. By this we are taught, that in order to protect corn, plants, and trees from the dangerous influence of the cold, Nature could not give them a better covering than the snow. Although in itself it is cold, it nevertheless shelters the earth from freezing winds: it maintains the warmth which is necessary to the preservation of seed, and even contributes to delate them by the nire with which it is impregnated. Thus, in this early season, God prepares what is necessary for the support of the beings He has formed; and provides beforehand for our nourishment and that of an infinite number of other creatures. Nature is always active, even in the time when it appears to rest; and it renders us real services, even when it appears to refuse them. In this also, let us admire the tender care of Divine Providence.

In how, in the roughest season, Providence is employed for our comfort; and how, without our labour or assistance, it is silently preparing all the treasures of nature. With

such striking proofs of God's beneficent care, who can give himself up to anxiety or distrust? What God does every winter in nature, He also does daily, for the preservation of the human race. What appears to us at first useless or injurious, contributes in the end to our felicity. And often when we believe that God ceases to act for us, it is then that He is forming plans which are hidden from us; and which in being developed, work our deliverance from thus or that adversity; and procure us such blessings as we could not have dared to hope for.

But God has not only designed that the snow shall cover the earth; but that it shall fertilize it. How much care and labour do we use to give that quantity of manure to the land which is necessary? How easy is it for nature to accomplish this end to a certain extent! The snow possesses this virtue, is more profitable than the rain, and than all other manures for the preservation of seeds and plants during winter. When it is thawed by the sun, or gradually dissolved by the warm air, the nire which it contains, deeply penetrates the earth, and vivifies the various tribes of plants.

Here also, O beneficent Creator, we adore thy power and wisdom! The repose of nature, is not less interesting to us nor less worthy of entering into the plan of thy Divine Providence, than the activity which she manifests during the spring and summer seasons. Thou hast combined the different revolutions of the earth: thou hast established the most intimate relations between them: and, with an equal hand, hast distributed labour and rest. It is thou, who hast willed that each sun should vary the seasons of nature, in such times and ways as should be most proper for the perfection of the whole. If we have been so foolish as to blame any thing in the government of the world, we should ask pardon of God for our temerity! and be fully persuaded that all the arrangements of his providence, how contradictory soever they may appear to our feeble reason, are full of wisdom and goodness. Now, that we behold the earth covered with a mantle of snow which cools it, we should meditate upon the good which shall result from it; for, we could not promise ourselves either flowers or fruits, if nature did not enjoy some interval of repose! We could not expect to sing the Harvest Hymn, if now, under the snow, and under the ice, thou were not providing for the fertility of the seed! Yes, Lord! it is thou, who, in granting repose to the earth, enrichest man with a thousand blessings.—*Stevens' Reflections.*

POULTRY.

Poultry, from the French *poulet*. The term includes all the domesticated birds raised for the table; fowls, turkeys, geese, ducks, and Guinea fowls. All these fowls, may be made very profitable to farmers by proper care and feeding but not otherwise. In Canada fowl-yards cannot be made use of in winter, but they are necessary for the fowls during the spring, summer, and fall, and should be attached to every fowl-house. There are certain seasons that it is very desirable the farmer should be able to confine fowls, and this can only be done where there are suitable houses and yards. Fowls of every description, are much more profitable when provided with a fowl-house and yard, than when suffered to go at large. We submit the following selection made

from the article "Poultry" in the Penny Cyclopædia:—

"Those who intend to rear fowls or any kind of poultry should have a distinct yard, perfectly sheltered and with a warm aspect, well fenced, and secure from thieves and vermin, and sufficiently inclined to be always dry, and supplied with sand or ashes for the cocks and hens to roll in, an operation necessary to disengage their feathers from vermin—running water should be especially provided: for the want of water, of which all poultry are fond, produces constipation of the bowels and inflammatory diseases; and for geese and ducks bathing is an indispensable luxury. A contiguous field is also necessary for free exercise, as well as for the supply of grubs and grass to the geese. The fowl-house should be dry, well roofed, and fronting the South, and, if practicable at the back of a stove or stables; warmth being conducive to health and laying, though extreme heat has the contrary effect. It should be furnished with two small lattice windows, that can be opened and shut at pleasure, at opposite ends, for ventilation, which is frequently necessary; and the perches should be so arranged, that one row of roosting fowls should not be directly above another.

A house twenty feet long and twelve feet wide, may be made to accommodate 150 hens at roost. The plan is simply this:—The first roosting perch (rounded a little at the upper angles only, for gallinaceous fowls cannot keep a firm hold on perfectly cylindrical supporters) should be placed lengthways and rest on tressels in each end wall, six feet from the front wall, and at a convenient height, which must depend upon the elevation of the house from the floor, which may be formed of plank, that can be easily swept. Another perch should be fixed ladderways above this, but ten inches nearer to the back wall, and so on, until there are four of these perches like the steps of a ladder when properly inclined, but with a sufficient distance between the wall and the upper one, to allow the poultrymaid to stand conveniently upon when she has occasion to examine the nests, which it is her duty to do every day at least, once, and in the forenoon. The highest of those she can reach by standing on a stool, or step-ladder. By this contrivance the hens, when desirous of reaching the nests, have no occasion to fly but merely to pass from one stick or perch to another. If the size and form of the house permit, a similar construction may be made on the opposite side, care being taken to have an open space in the middle of the room, and a sufficiently wide passage for the attendant to pass along the walls. It is not at all required to have as many nests as hens, because they have not all occasion to occupy them at the same time; and besides, they are so far from having a repugnance to lay in a common receptacle, that the sight of an egg stimulates them to lay. It is however true that the most secluded and darkest nests, are those which the hens prefer.

The nests if built in the wall, are in tiers from the bottom to the top, the lowest being about three feet from the ground, and a foot square. If the laying-chambers consist of wooden boxes, they are usually furnished with a ledge which is very convenient for the hens when rising. But the best receptacles for the eggs are those of basket-work as they are cool in summer, and can easily be washed—they ought to be fastened not directly to the wall, as is generally the case, but to boards fixed in it by hooks, well clenched, and with a little roof to cover the rows of baskets. They will thus be insulated, to the great satisfaction of the hen,