

And veils the farmhouse at the garden's end.
The sled and traveller stopped, the courier's feet
Delayed, all friends shut out, the house-mates sit
Around the radiant fireplace, inclosed
In a tumultuous privacy of storm."

If you have ever known what it is to be shut in with a happy household through a long, driving winter-storm, those last two lines will often be coming back to you, after you have read them, as one of the cosiest of home pictures. That "tumultuous privacy of storm," how deep and close and warm it is!

The beautiful phenomena of a "silver thaw," when each branch and twig is ringed with ice, and the woods flash like a diamond forest, is thus described by Bryant:

"But winter has yet brighter scenes,—he boasts
Splendours beyond what gorgeous summer knows;
Or autumn with his many fruits, and woods
All flushed with many hues. Come when the rains
Have glazed the snow, and clothed the trees with ice;
While the slant sun of February pours
Into the bowers a flood of light. Approach!
The encrusted surface shall upbear thy steps,
And the broad arching portals of the grove
Welcome thy entering. Look! the mossy trunks
Are cased in the pure crystal; each light spray,
Nodding and tinkling in the breath of heaven,
Is studded with its trembling waterdrops,
That stream with rainbow radiance as they move."

There is a dark and cheerless side to winter,—its treatment of the homeless and the poor, which is not to be forgotten even by the poets. Thomson has written of it, as you will find in the "Seasons." He draws a picture of a man lost in the snow so vivid as to awaken our sympathies very painfully.

To the very poor, who suffer for want of food and fuel, winter is anything but poetical. It is the privilege of those who are better off, to make it a pleasant season to them, and to supply the heart-sunshine and home-warmth, without which winter is bitter indeed. A little kindness goes a great way toward brightening dark days and warming up snow-drifts.

NOTE.—For the artistic engraving which accompanies this article we are indebted to the courtesy of Messrs. Scribner & Co., the publishers of *St. Nicholas*, the handsomest juvenile magazine in the world. It is offered with this magazine at greatly reduced rates. See advertisement.