

“The snow had begun in the gloaming,
And busily all the night
Had been heaping field and highway
With a silence deep and white.

“Every pine and fir and hemlock
Wore ermine too dear for an earl ;
And the poorest twig on the elm-tree
Was ridged inch-deep with pearl.

“From sheds new-roofed with Carrara
Came chanticleer’s muffled crow ;
The stiff rails were softened to swan’s-down,
And still fluttered down the snow.”

Best of all, perhaps,—certainly the finest epic of old-fashioned winter weather ever written,—is Whittier’s “Snow-Bound.” “Epic” may not be the right word to use, and yet why not? It is “narrative,” and “heroic” adventures are achieved by the men and boys out-of-doors in meeting the snows and the winds; while within, mother and aunt and sisters weave together a web of home-life lovelier than anything to be shown by Penelope or Helen of Troy.

By such a fireside as that described in “Snow-Bound,” with the red blaze flashing up

“Until the old, rude-furnished room
Burst, flower-like, into rosy bloom,”

one might well be

“Content to let the north wind roar
In baffled rage at pane and door.”

It was worth a great deal to live around one of those deep log-heaped fireplaces. It was grand to hear how

“When a louder blast
Shook beam and rafter as it passed,
The merrier up its roaring draught
The great throat of the chimney laughed.”

There is also Emerson’s indoor view of a snow-storm:

“Announced by all the trumpets of the sky,
Arrives the snow, and, driving o’er the fields,
Seems nowhere to alight. The whited air
Hides hills and woods, the river and the heaven,