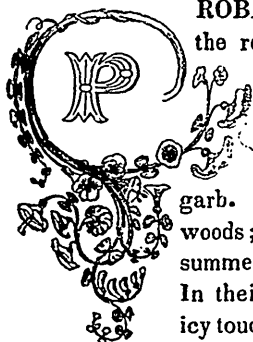


THE SEASONS IN CANADA.

THE WINTER.



PROBABLY before this meets the eye of the readers of the *Maple Leaf*, Nature will have put on her winding-sheet of snow; or, if not on the border of the great lakes, yet in the "back country," the woods will have assumed their winter garb. Farewell to the gorgeously tinted woods; farewell to the soft haze of the Indian summer, fading quickly as do all things bright. In their stead come the chilling blasts, the icy touch of the dreaded winter. Instinctively we shrink from his approach, curtailing so many highly prized pleasures. But yet we must not feel despondingly;—many are the bright spots in store for us, even in a Canadian winter. To many, the recreation of sleighing affords intense delight;—the merry music of the bells—the gay trappings of horses and sleighs—the buoyancy the clear bright atmosphere gives to those who can defy the cold, makes sleighing time one of most pleasurable excitement. To others, the fireside holds out still greater charms, with its in-door enjoyments—enjoyments heightened by the very dreariness of the aspect without. Yet, though generally speaking there is great monotony in the winter landscape, I have seen it arrayed in surpassing loveliness, when the trees, laden with hoar frost or snow, sparkled in the sun. I recall to mind one most singular and beautiful winter scene, which, I think, has not occurred more than three times in this part of Canada for some years—a frozen rain storm—the effect of which, though magical in beauty, was so disastrous both to shrubbery and forest, I should be sorry to have occur again. As we witnessed it, combined with the varied and picturesque scenery of Rice Lake, where each island forms a separate gem of beauty, it was, indeed, a scene not to be forgotten. The rain commenced early in the morning, and continued throughout the day, freezing as it fell, every drop forming an icicle. Soon, the more delicate trees, particularly the graceful boughs of the silver birch, showed symptoms of suffer-