

THE CANADIAN METHODIST MAGAZINE.

FEBRUARY, 1879.

THE HEART OF WINTER.

THERE is a robust and healthy enjoyment inspired by our cold Canadian winter weather that the languid dwellers beneath sultry skies never know. Its keen air braces the heat-enervated frame like some wondrous elixir, and stimulates to active exercise that makes the blood bound through the veins with health-giving vigour. Philosophers have remarked that not in the land of the palm and the vine, where perpetual summer smiles, and where nature pours out her treasures with unscinted hand, have either men or nations attained their noblest development; but in the land of the oak and the pine, where nature must be conquered by sturdy effort and wintry storms be braved. Where the bread-fruit grows upon the trees, and the climate demands slight clothing or shelter, and life is a perpetual holiday, you will find a listless, enervated people, who have neither name nor fame in history. Where bread must be toilfully gleaned from stubborn glebes, and long winters demand thrift and forethought and continuous energy, you have the dominant races, in thought and literature, and prowess and wealth, of the world. Old England and New England, Scotland, Germany, and our own great Northland, stretching for many a thousand mile beneath the grandest summer and winter climate in the world, are examples and attestations of this truth. Of the joys of winter weather we shall let the poets, the best interpreters of nature, speak.

The first snow-fall, that ever-renewed miracle of beauty that comes to us with a fresh charm every season, is exquisitely described by Lowell in the following lines :