

WINTER.

BY J. W. THIRLWALL.

Winter is shaking his feathers of snow, From his outspread wings o'er the world below. And the wind is moaning ever; Moaning and shivering as if 'twere cold, Time slowly creeps, as if grown old, And the naked forests quiver.

The snow had fallen upon my head, From the winter of years that has o'er me sped. And care like the wind is plying; And every day becomes more bold, While friendship halting, waxeth cold, And hope on the waste is dying.

Snow on the valley, and snow on the hill, Snow on the woodland, and ice on the rill, Rude tempests rage and roar, Froezing the earth and each plant on its breast, Fretting to madness the ocean's unrest, As if 'twould calm no more.

But the snow will melt from the mountain's head, Sweet blossoms by spring o'er the earth be shed, Seas calm, woods teem with song, And the winter of age find peace and rest, In a far off land amid the blest, Where none can suffer wrong.

For the Favorite.

MRS. BAYLEY'S DINNER PARTY.

BY MRS. C. OHANDLER, OF MONTREAL.

It was a bright sunny morning in spring. Outside the birds were hopping and twittering from bough to bough, and inside Mrs. Bayley was hopping and twittering from room to room. She was a sharp-visaged, bright-eyed, fidgety little woman; her motions were brisk and blythe, reminding one of a bird, for who has not been sometimes struck by the resemblance of an individual to some animal?

Yes; Mrs. Bayley did resemble a bird, and on this particular morning was as busy as any little female robin building her nest, for a remarkable event was about to take place in Mrs. Bayley's hitherto monotonous quiet domicile—she was about to give a dinner party in honor of her son and heir, Timothy Algernon Bayley, who was to reach the age of six years in five days time; and as at each birthday anniversary some celebration of it had been struggled for by the fond mother, but never effected, Mrs. Bayley determined now it should come to pass, and not in a simple way of asking a few friends for the evening, but in a substantial dinner party.

"The Smiths had one lately, and why shouldn't we also," she said to her husband, Mr. Bayley, a tall, thin, placid looking man, who appeared old enough to be the father of his little wife.

"We are not as well off as the Smiths, my dear," he replied, "and we do not live in the same style as they do."

"I don't see that, Mr. Bayley. We have everything pretty good, and I will hire a man for the evening, and whatever is required I will get. I shall manage matters so that it shall be a nice affair and will scarcely cost anything. I will get a cheaper spring suit than I intended before, which will cover expenses."

"Have your own way, my dear," said her meek spouse; "but I certainly do not like the idea of it, and hope you will not be sorry for it."

"Oh! not likely, Mr. Bayley. As I have got your consent, I can set to work rapidly," and the little woman fitted out, and was soon "up to her eyes in wick," as she elegantly expressed herself.

In the first place, there was the spring cleaning to be done. Two helps were engaged to accelerate matters, and from morning till night there was nothing but peeping, beating of carpets, and splashing of soap-suds to be heard through the place. Mr. Bayley, when at home, took himself off to his little smoking-room at the top of the house, and begged not to be disturbed, and as he could give no instruction whatever in household matters, it was of no use troubling him.

As soon as the house-cleaning was terminated, Mrs. Bayley became in a greater state of perplexity as to how she should carry through the momentous affair she had undertaken in the most approved and à la mode style. All the most modern cooking-books were bought and overlooked, and Mrs. Bayley and Bridget consulted together as to the courses, entrées, &c., until they were bewildered.

Master Timothy was constantly shut up in the nursery by himself to get him out of the way, which he did not at all approve of, nor did he appear to appreciate the honor which was to be conferred upon him, for he kicked at the door and shouted, and was altogether very obstreperous, having to be quieted by sundry slaps and shakes, and finally pacified with such quantities of jam and bread that he was ill the whole night before the expected party, much to Mrs. Bayley's discomfiture.

Thus matters stood on this bright May morning in Rose Cottage. Why it here that same I

can't tell, as there were no roses to be seen anywhere, but it might have been so called because Mrs. Bayley, at the time of Mr. Bayley's purchasing it, some years before, had laid plans in her brain of gardens of roses, which were to eclipse every other garden in the vicinity, but those plans had not been brought out yet, nor were they likely to be, for Mrs. Bayley was too bird-like and fluttering to be steady at anything that required patience.

The eventful afternoon came. Mrs. Bayley went to lay the table herself, as she thought she could do it better than Bridget. As soon as she raised one side of the heavy flap of the dinner-table (for they did not have a telescope table), it having not been used for a long time previous, they having few friends to entertain, it was found that the bar which sustained it was broken off, and the table could not be increased.

"What shall we do, Bridget?" said Mrs. Bayley, almost in tears. "It is too late to send for a joiner to mend it. What shall I do?"

"There's nobody else but me, ma'am; all the others are gone out."

"Oh, dear! that is too bad. You know nothing of attending around a table, I'm sure. However, Bridget, the girl, will show you what to do, and—"

But here came an interruption of a vigorous peal at the door-bell, and Mrs. Bayley, feeling very red in the face, fluttered out to receive her guests, all smiles and chirps, as if nothing had happened to disturb her serenity that day.

First came the Smiths, all important—Mrs. Smith, fat and pompous; Miss Smith, all lace and ribbons, and Mr. Smith, stiff and starched as his white muslin cravat, which he always wore, despite of the change of fashion. Then came the Joneses and Selbys and Mrs. Bayley's cousins, two stiff old spinsters, who were not particularly interesting for a dinner party, but whom Mrs. Bayley did not like to offend, for they had a little money, and there was a hope of a legacy some day.



"GRANDPAPA'S DARLING."

"Oh! I know, ma'am," cried Bridget, overjoyed at the idea occurring to her; "there's them two pots of the old bedstead in the shed. I will saw them to the height and they will look like feet."

"Well done, Bridget," said Mrs. Bayley, as her "maid of all work" came in, laden with the pots, and placing them under the table, found they fitted exactly.

"But they may be pushed aside, Bridget," suggested Mrs. Bayley.

"I'll manage that, ma'am," and Bridget was soon hammering sundry pieces of wood around the feet on the floor, but not giving a thought that a little like security might be required at the top under the flap.

However, all was arranged to their entire satisfaction. The table glittered with cut glass, although the pattern was a little diversified.

"That did not signify at all," Mrs. Bayley said.

The dining-table groaned with vases of roses, as well as the parlor. What mattered that they were only paper roses?

"They looked just as pretty as natural," Bridget said, as she and Mrs. Bayley stood off a little distance to admire them.

The evening arrived. Mrs. Bayley was resplendent in a magenta poplin with black lace trimmings. Master Timothy was very smart in a new blue suit and gold buttons (he said). Bridget had actually combed her hair into smoothness, and looked quite natty with her little white apron and pink ribbon.

The confectionery came in; but, alas! much to Mrs. Bayley's horror, instead of a man who was comfitant, a raw, uncouth boy was sent.

"I don't wish you, my boy," said Mrs. Bayley. "Go back and tell them to send me a man who knows his business."

In came all the guests almost at the same time, for they were punctual to the seven o'clock mentioned in the invitation.

After all the guests were seated in solemn stillness around the parlor, Mr. Bayley came gliding in very softly and shook hands around with a quiet resigned air, which said as plainly as words:

"I am going through an ordeal which I am trying to bear patiently."

A few attempts were made in conversation, which quickly dropped, and silence ensued, which was broken by the ringing of a bell and the opening of the folding doors, displaying the welcome dinner-table.

It is astonishing how the sight of dinner brightens up individuals. The gentlemen rose briskly, and offered their arms in proper style to the ladies, and smiles and conversation began.

They were all soon seated, fifteen in number, and the dinner went on smoothly. However, soon the current changed. Bridget could not be seen. Mrs. Bayley grew fidgety. She called the boy, and whispered to bring in the entrées. He started off, and, much to her amusement, handed round oranges. Mrs. Bayley turned pale, and beckoned the "monster" (as she called him to herself) to come to her.

"Carry those back, Joe, and Bridget will tell you what to bring."

"Bridget isn't there. The little boy threw all the turkey gravy over his clothes, and he's gone to change 'em."

This he delivered loud enough to be heard half way round the table.

There were suppressed utters around, and Mrs. Bayley, feeling as if she would have been glad to have escaped through a trap-door in the floor, begged to be excused a moment, rose and went out to inspect matters. She soon returned, look-

ed and uneasy, and resumed her seat. Bridget came back to her post, and the dinner went on better.

With the puddings and pies came in Master Timothy, looking greasy in spite of all that Bridget could do. As the Bayleys were temperance people, no toast could be drunk, but kisses and "happy returns" went round, which the young "lion" of the day did not seem to care for, for all his thoughts were intent on the pudding.

Sented on one of the young ladies' knees, Master Tim began to chat away quite familiarly. "Do you see that boy there? That is the boy who brings us bread. Ma cut him to-day to help."

At this Mrs. Bayley tried to stop her hopeful son in his confidences, but to no purpose, for his disclosures became so important that at last Bridget was summoned and Master Timothy began off screaming.

Mrs. Bayley turned the color of a peony, and felt far from comfortable, while her placid helpmate looked as peaceful and contented as ever, chatting with his neighbor, Mr. Simpkins. The two cousins tossed their heads and looked quite disgusted. They all seemed weary, and commenced to shuffle about in their chairs.

Mr. Jones, who had been sitting in rather a confined position, moved his legs to make himself more easy, when, coming in contact with the false legs of the table, he gave them a great shove, and, alas! there was a crash—down came the flap, and all the dishes came tumbling down, along with glasses, vases and candlesticks.

There was a simultaneous rise of every one round the table.

There were exclamations from some and peals of laughter from others.

Mr. Bayley was roused from his apathy for once in his life, and said, "This is terrible," the greatest exclamation he had ever been known to make.

As for Mrs. Bayley, after casting a distracted look around, and finding nothing could be done, she fell back in violent hysterics, and was borne away from the room.

The guests, finding that the confusion was more than could be repaired that evening, put on their things and withdrew, and the spinster cousins were heard to say:

"It serves Maria Bayley right for being such a fool as to give a dinner party; she should have left that to her better."

Which speech, being overheard by Bridget, was of course brought to Mrs. Bayley for her comfort.

It was the first and last dinner party Mrs. Bayley ever gave. She would not go anywhere, saying she felt disgraced, and never let her husband know no more until he sold Rose Cottage and they unconsoled themselves in a barren-looking place in the other part of the city. And then Mrs. Bayley thought it advisable to send her young reprobate, Master Timothy, to a stricter hand than hers, and he was placed in a boarding-school, but it was some time before Mrs. Bayley forgot that unlucky day, and returned to her bird-like briskness and blitheness.

HABITS OF READING.

All young people read a good deal now; but I do not see that a great deal comes of it. They think they have to read a good many newspapers, and a good many magazines. They are very entertaining. But it is not always certain that the reader gets from them just what he needs. On the other hand, it is certain that people who only read the current papers and magazines get very little good from each other's society, because they are all fed with just the same intellectual food. You hear them repeat to each other the things they have all read in the "Daily Trumpet" and the "Saturday Woodpecker." I see no objection, however, to light reading, desultory reading; the reading of news-papers or the reading of fiction—if you take enough ballast with it, so that the light kites, as the sailors call them, may not carry your ship over in some sudden gale. The principle of sound habits of reading, if reduced to a precise rule, comes out thus: that for each hour of light reading—of what we read for amusement—we ought to take another hour of reading for instruction or improvement. Nor have I any objection to stating the rule backward, for that is a poor rule that will not work both ways. It is, I think, true that, for every hour we give to grave reading, it is well to give a corresponding hour to what is light and amusing. Now a great deal more is possible under this rule than you boys and girls think at first. Some of the best students in the world—who have advanced their affairs furthest in their particular lines—have not in practice studied more than two hours a day. Walter Scott, except when he was gnawed to death, did not work more. Dr. Howditch translated the great "Mécanique Céleste" in less than two hours' daily labor. But then it was regular as the movements of the planets if a day. It did not stop, for whim, or by accident, more than Jupiter stops in his orbit because a holiday comes round.

The following is an epitaph to be found in the church at Great Woodford, Warwickshire:—

"Here old John Randall lies, Ale was his meat, Ale was his drink, Ale did his heart revive, And if he could have drank his ale, He still had been alive!"