

# THE PROVINCIAL.

HALIFAX, DECEMBER. 1852.

## DECEMBER.

THE year is faint and hoary. It has gone on step by step, from childhood to maturity, from ripeness to decay. And now, sad and desolate, it is lingering out its few remaining hours in December. The white snow is weaving a pall, and the lonely wind is chanting a dirge for the funeral hours of the perishing year. Bright and beautiful through its early days, how closely it resembles the life that is our own: leaping in smiles and sunshine, in the fresh exuberance of Spring; blushing with fragrance and beauty in the sweet delicious Summer; ripe with fruitage and harvest in the golden Autumn; and fraught with desolate decay in its dreary Winter, we sigh as we recall the features that closely mark the seasons in our cycle of existence. Yet it is not all sorrow: for nature has beauty even in her darkest days—

“The desolate and dying year  
Yet lovely, in its lifelessness,  
As beauty stretched upon the bier  
In death's clay-cold and dark caress:  
There's loveliness in its decay  
Which breathes and lingers on it still.

Beautiful in its glory, it is touching in its decay. The bare and barren hills may look dreary in the distance; the far stretching plain, bereft of its verdure and the voice of its melodious streams, may have little to attract the gaze; but there is golden sunshine yet to light up the hill-tops and gleam upon the swaying trees, from whose bending branches, here and there, a faithful leaf, brown and broken, yet quivers in the rushing breeze.

December is not all shadow, though it has less of beauty than any other month; for despite all that poets have said in disparagement of November, it has more charms and pleasures than its successor. Winter has now commenced his iron reign, and will hold fast the sceptre for many a coming day. He has come with his glittering frost and fleecy snow flakes—

‘Now on a keen December night, Jack Frost  
Drives thro' mid-air his chariot, icy-wheeled,  
And from the sky's cusp ceiling, star-embossed  
Whiffs off the clouds that the pure blue concealed.