

## POETRY.

## THE LOT OF WOMAN.

To make idols and to find them clay,  
And to bewail that worship--therefore pray.  
MRS. HEMANS.

It is woman's lot to smile,  
Though her heart may ache with pain,  
To forbear with cold neglect  
And the silence of disdain.

It is woman's lot to speak  
In a soft subduing tone,  
Though her voice more true had been  
In a sad and plaintive moan.

It is woman's lot to look  
Ever cheerful, kind, and gay,  
While the rising sigh's suppressed  
For the loved one far away.

It is woman's lot to muse  
On the future and the past,  
Though the clouds of sorrow's gloom  
O'er the present may be cast.

It is woman's lot to move  
With a mild and graceful mien,  
Though her manners, ill assumed,  
To her mind's depression seen.

It is woman's lot to watch,  
When the day-light disappears,  
For the well-known form and voice,  
Or the foot-steps ling'ring near.

It is woman's lot to weep,  
When the weary world's at rest,  
That the tears, in secret shed,  
May relieve her anxious breast.

It is woman's lot to hope,  
Though the phantom mock her care;  
Yet for happiness she hopes,  
In the unknown realms elsewhere.

## RESPECTABILITY.

(From the Friendship's Offering.)

"PRAY, what do you mean by 'respectability'?"  
Is it wisdom, or worth, sir? or rank, or gentility?  
Is it rough sound sense? or manner refined?  
Is it kindness of heart? or expansion of mind?  
Is it learning, or talent, or honor, or fame,  
That you mean by that phrase (so expressive) to name?"  
"No, no--these are not, sir, the things now in vogue;  
A 'respectable man,' sir, may be a great rogue,  
A 'respectable person,' may be a great fool,  
Have lost even the little he pick'd up at school,  
Be a glutton, adulterer, plung'd into debt,  
May forfeit his honor, his best friend forget,  
May be a base sycophant, tyrant or knave,  
(But a livery servant, at least, he must have);  
In vice he may vie with the vilest of sinners,  
But he must keep a cook, and give CAPITAL DINNERS."

AN IMPARTIAL ENQUIRY INTO THE MERITS  
OF WINTER, 13th FEBRUARY.

See, Winter comes to rule the varied year,  
Sullen and sad with all his rising train;  
Vapours, and clouds, and storms. Be these my theme;  
These! that exalt the soul to solemn thought,  
And heavenly musings.

Solemn enough, indeed! for who can help being solemn when his fingers are stiffened, and his teeth involuntarily chattering with cold? But for those heavenly musings the poet speaks of, where they are to be met with in the month of February, Thomson himself only knows. The good man would, doubtless, have had his readers believe, that his poem was penned under the immediate inspiration of Nature herself; but do not, oh ye lovers of truth! do not credit one iota of this; do not suppose, for one instant, that the muse of Thomson was ever invoked amidst east winds and icicles. Ah, no! had it, indeed, been so, he would have been far too much disgusted with his subject ever to have proceeded in it. But the true state of the case I take to be this; the worthy poet sat down properly accoutred in flannel waistcoat and worsted stockings, a fine fire blazing in his grate, and his warm study defended from every cold air which could intrude to check the flow of his imagination. Here it was that he vapoured about heavenly musings, and I have little doubt that had he put another Christmas log upon the stove, and kept himself awake to trim it, his poem would have been one continued panegyric upon the peculiarities of the season; but happening, good man, to prose a little, he fell asleep, and waking when his fire was out, and his frame shivering with cold, he forgot his former blessings, and exclaims--

The soul of man dies in vain boasting life,  
And black with more than melancholy views!

An observation much more germane to the matter; for surely, of all the strange, unaccountable whims which have ever entered the human mind, there can be none so perverse, so utterly irreconcilable with the dictates of common sense and right reason, as partiality to winter; and I freely declare, I hold all who profess such a doctrine, in utter contempt. For, ah! how gross--how unsusceptible of all that is lovely, must be the man who can look on Nature, in all her splendour of full dress--her flowers and dewy gems, and forbear shuddering, as he thinks of the dreary, dreary day, when she shall be stripped of her graceful attire, and appear in all the nakedness of her leafless branches and flowerless beds? Or, how shall we think of him who can listen to the concert of sweet sounds, which Summer ever affords, when every tree is an orchestra, and the very skies seem resounding with more than mortal music? Oh! what shall we say of the ear, or the feeling of one who can wish such melody hushed in the drear silence of winter? Can such a being be said to have music in his soul? No, truly--a hardy-gurdy were too good for him! And does not

the immortal Shakspeare, acknowledged to have a perfect insight into the human heart, does he not, in express terms, declare that such a one is fit for no earthly employment, but treasons, stratagems, and spoils! And shall I, or any other honest man, and useful member of society, keep company with such rascally fellows as these? No, as I would have shunned a Fawkes, a Ravalliac, a Thistlewood, a plague, pestilence, or famine, so will I ever avoid the cold-blooded lover of winter.

Being myself so confirmed a hater of cold weather, I take an amusement in gathering the opinions of my associates on this point, and examining the various reasons openly alleged, or obliquely glanced at, for this their defence of the Uncomfortable; and then (for I love to be methodical,) I will divide into two classes, the sturdy, and the sentimental. Under the first head may be ranked those who follow agricultural pursuits, (gentlemen farmers excepted,) sea-faring gentlemen of the old school, and all who, having passed their lives exposed to a great variety of climates, are become really hardened and incapable of feeling the inclemencies of winter. To those, more than to any other class of human beings, will I allow the privilege of praising the cold, for the fact is, they are so completely tough, so water-proof, and weather-beaten, that the rough scintillation of Auster and Notus, make not one wit more impression on them, than the soft Zephyrs of a July noon. But, while I tolerate their want of feeling, I must ever avoid coming in collision with such people. They seem to move in a cold, cold atmosphere of their own; it sticks about them, and every movement they make appears to freeze you; and then they talk with such a loud blustering voice, as if they had been conversing with old Aëolus himself, in one of his crosser moods, and knew not how to accommodate their tone to mortal ears; and all their jokes are coarse and vulgar, like their own sensations; and, then they will never shut the doors after them.

The sentimental lovers of Winter, as the name infers, are totally opposite to these--they take a very different, though, in my mind, a still more mistaken view of the affair. They are of the amiable race of mankind, persons full of snivility and moral reflections, and who prize themselves much upon their taste for domestic comforts; and, when they wish to be particularly charming, they talk about the delights of a long winter's evening, with a blazing fire, and the shutters closed, and the window-curtains drawn, and a cheerful family circle round the hearth; but, good reader, whenever you hear such opinions as these delivered, be sure that he or she that utolds them, has a right to custom primogeniture, or some such tyrannical reason, to the comersert by the fire-side; aye, and it may be, good easy chair too; for, if you will only take the trouble to mark the sentiments of your acquaintance on this subject, you will invariably find that, however large the family may be (and, by the way, the larger the more certain will you find my rule), there will never be more than two in it, who will take it upon them, to assert this opinion, inas much as it is an indisputable point, that there can be but two really comfortable places by any fire-side. And those of the amiable school, are the people who will sit all day long in their warm corners, shawled, and coated, and flannelled, till they look like lumps of animated fleecy hosiery; and when the snow is on the ground, and the ice in the gutter, will drive away their poor little sons and daughters, nephews and nieces, to take a "nice walk," eulogizing the cold starving atmosphere, as "charming weather for young people." Observe, that this sort of conversation is much in use, among certain gentlemen declining into the vale of years; albeit, the descent he made somewhat against their own inclination; meagre persons, with the scattering of grey hairs, which time has left them, carefully combed over the baldness of age; and these who, when in youth, would have shrunk from the chilly blast, will now, by way of appearing the hardest young fellows in the world, discourse mightily upon the invigorating influence of a fine frosty day, and commonly end in catching their deaths of cold, by creeping along one of these healthy days, without the addition of a great coat. Then there are some who praise the cold weather, more from habit than principle, and are led by the example of others; some because they want to sport a new coat, with a hundred caps; others again, because they are desirous of getting a ducking, or breaking their necks upon the Serpentine; and many, for no earthly reason whatsoever, but the direction of their own foolish imagination.

And if we inquire, impartially, into the consequences of this "fine healthy weather," what do we find but rheumatism, sore throats, and complaints on the chest in the elder part of the world; colds and chilblains amongst the younger. Do we meet three people out of four who are able to articulate intelligibly from hoarseness? And are we not continually in danger of having our most serious opinions, and, still more, our best jokes unnoticed, or mistaken, from the temporary deafness of our auditors? All the effect of this "nice healthy weather," I have heard cold weather extolled on this very account, that it brings with it a never-failing source of conversation; for, in whatever company you may chance to go, whether old or young, serious or lively, staid or agreeable, you are sure to have a subject entirely fitted to it, in inquiries after the cold of this person, or the rheumatism of that. And if, said the defender of Winter, the person you address should unluckily be himself free from illness of any sort, yet it can scarcely happen but that he has had some near relation, or dear friend, who has, or has had a prodigious cold, the symptoms of which will afford you copious materials for conversation. But should this resource even fail you (a thing scarcely possible), should his mother, his father, grandfathers, grandmothers, his nine sisters, his hundred and fifty cousins, be actually in perfect health, better still, as you may then expatiate, ad infinitum, on their wonderful good luck in escaping the effects of what has been so fatal to all your other friends, whose disorders, by the way, you may briefly touch upon, if necessary. But, for my own part, I look upon all this in a very different light, and can imagine few things more distressing than the sameness which is thus introduced into conversation; not to mention the everlasting sneezing, coughing, and nose-blowing, which assail

you wherever you go. I am loth to leave my subject which is, indeed, most fruitful to one who feels, as do, the miseries of this most miserable weather, without slightly reflecting on a certain description of persons, whose mode of conducting themselves, in their commerce with others, renders them an intolerable nuisance to people of my disposition. I mean those who, by way of displaying their own sagacity, or, as I sometimes suspect, for the malicious purpose of frightening their neighbours out of their wits, do invariably begin, about the end of October, or the commencement of November, to assert that there will be a dreadfully hard winter. This behaviour I positively object to; or, in the first place, it is my humble but decided opinion, that they knew nothing at all about the matter; and the next, I must take leave to observe, that if, by any unnecessary remarks upon the atmosphere, they should happen to have acquired an inkling of future suffering in the frost line, in the name of humanity let them keep their knowledge to themselves, and leave the uninformed to revel in happy blindness. "If ignorance be bliss, is it not folly to be wise?" I have the misfortune to number many of these soothsayers amongst my acquaintance--friends I will not call them, for nothing friendly ever came in the person of a prophet of frosts. Some of them shape their dark sayings, by the conduct of the birds of passage, from whose number and time of appearance, they will make calculations sufficient to freeze you to the very marrow. Woe to you if you have a sportsman among your associates, for he will talk as though he were grand minister of the snipes, and deep in the cabinet council of the woodcocks; long ere a beak, or so much as the tip of a tail, has been discovered by any other human being, he will bring you intelligence of the shoals he has seen of these messengers of evil. But this mode of judging is so evidently a remnant of the ancient Roman superstition, that I invariably turn a deaf ear to it; besides, I have heard the same story for the last twenty years, and the greater the number of birds so much the milder has been the subsequent weather.

Then there are other prognosticators, who go on a totally different scent, and foretell, not by the evolutions of the inhabitants of the air, but by the productions of the earth. They take Nature for their guide, and prophecy mighty frosts from the number of hips and haws that are to be found on the hedges; and thus the gay berries, which were wont to delight the eyes of the ignorant, are made a bugbear and a fatal warning of dreadful things to come. But an experience of their fallacy has made me reckless of their signs. I laugh at the birds, and scoff at their berries. This Winter, however, I have been assailed by a more formidable prophecy; for, not content with retailing their own observations, one or two of these infledged ravens have taken the field of terror under the broad buckler of a scientific name, and have given forth their predictions as those of one of the first chemists of the day, who they assert to have foretold, by calculations and deductions, all the more terrible to their auditors, as the second-hand retailers of the news are unable to repeat them, that this winter is to prove one of the most severe ever known in England. Triumphantly I reminded them, as the season advanced, that Winter was half over, and yet he had not appeared in his ugliest form. True, they replied, but we were not to experience the inclemency of the season till the departure of Christmas; then, say they, we shall begin to pile the hearth with the hoarded log, and the blood will stagnate, till the skin, losing all human semblance, shall rise in hideous puckers, like unto the flesh of geese, fifty years advanced in life, and it breaks and divides into deep furrows of pain and agony. Then shall Thames once more become a harmless monster, with fairs and bonfires on his back, rolling his sullen waters beneath a stiff canopy, of rebellious ice; thus, by deferring the execution of this sad sentence, do they secure to themselves a long reign of croaking, and by quoting the observations of Sir H. D., instead of those contained in the venerable pages of Moore's Almanack, escape all chance of being contradicted.

Alas! their prophecy is, I fear me, on the point of being fulfilled--a new moon and a hard frost, have entered, cheek by jowl; and even now its cold crescent is glimmering o'er whitened house tops, and kennels rugged with ice. The sight has chilled my fingers--the pen trembles within my grasp--a cold shiver has seized me--It steals through every vein--I feel it gradually wrapping me round like a wet blanket, till it settles on my devoted nose. I dare not longer meditate on our miseries, and can only add this final exclamation, "Would that I were a dormouse!"

## SELECTIONS.

UTILITY OF REPORTING.--The utility of reporting is as incalculable as its effects are universal; and, perhaps, that which is deemed the most humble of its class, is the most useful. The police report is the poor man's law book, and but too often his only code of morals in his worldly dealings. It imparts the most useful of legal information to the middle, and even to the upper classes; it is a source of the prevention and detection of crime above all contrivances of law and police; it is an astonishing type of the infinite aberrations of the heart and mind under every variety of circumstances and caprice of fortune; and, above all, it is the copious source of mercy and benevolence to the poor, for it acquaints the affluent with the unspeakable sufferings of the miserable, and teaches pomp to take physic, and to "learn to feel what wretches feel." Our police reports often reflect the highest honour upon our nature, for I have known them to exhibit the firmest integrity, the most tender kindness and generosity, and even the most sensitive delicacy, amidst a class whose habits and sufferings from poverty might well lead to a supposition that they were rendered impervious to all but coarse and selfish feelings. It is from this, and many other reasons, that I regret so often to see police

reports made the vehicle of ribbald jests and low buffoonery, in which the sufferings of the poor are turned to heartless ridicule. Vice is never forgotten in its wo, but the humorous and harmless peculiarities of the lower orders, the legitimate sources of wit and a fund of amusement, too often escape the obtuse reporter. It must be observed, that police reporters form no part of the aristocracy of the reporting corps. They are paid by the piece, at a penny or three halfpence, or sometimes at two-pence a line, and are seldom attached to the establishments of any respectable newspaper. They have no communication with the parliamentary reporters, and even the persons of each class are seldom known to each other. Perhaps the hauteur and jealousy of the different classes of reporters may remind the reader of Sheridan's joke of the quarrel between the ladies for the precedence, which was settled by the order in which the articles of their husbands' trades were put upon the dinner table, and in which "tobacco came last of all." But this mode of paying police reporters produces a singular feature in the profession. It acts as a bounty upon long reports, and engenders every vice of composition. The police reporter spins out his account of the proceedings before the magistrate to a length beyond conception, and multiplying his copies by the polygraph, upon the silver paper, they are sent to the different newspapers *ad captivandum*. Those that are so fortunate as to be purchased are then abridged, and the average proportion of length between the original, or "FLIMS," as it is called in the newspaper technicology, and the abridgment, may be stated at twenty to one. It is obvious, that the chances of the public not obtaining strictly accurate police reports are much increased by this system of business. In the courts of equity, and in the three superior courts of law, the reporting is generally performed, for the morning papers at least, by barristers, at from three to five guineas a week. The ecclesiastical courts are but little attended to. Trials at assize are reported by barristers, or by the parliamentary reporters, specially sent for the purpose by the newspapers from their respective establishments, during the vacations of Parliament. These persons are not permitted to charge above one guinea per diem, with their expenses of stage or postchaise hire; and, in cases where their established salary is not continued during their journey, their rate of remuneration does not exceed that of the lowest class of travellers for the lowest of the commercial houses. Almost all the community derive from newspaper reports, all the knowledge they possess of the laws of the country in which they live, on which all they possess is at stake. They are with many lawyers a principal, and with all a very material source of professional knowledge.--The next, and highest branch of the reporting business, is that of giving the people reports of the debates and proceedings in both Houses of Parliament. In this, reporting is carried to an astonishing degree of perfection. It exhibits, beyond all precedent or existing example, the excellence which is produced, as a matter of course, or in natural and almost unavoidable result, from competition in a free and open market. --Metropolitan.

SINGULAR ANECDOTE OF A SERPENT.--The beautiful Anaconda now exhibiting at Peale's Museum is perhaps the most gentle of its tribe; and rightly excites great interest by the attachment it evinces to its master, which can only be exceeded by its deep sense of unmerited wrong--of this latter he has lately given a most striking proof. The other evening a gentleman, either waitingly or for the want of thought, struck him with the ferule of his umbrella on the back, making some remarks at the time, and then proceeded to the other end of the room. The serpent became so agitated as to excite its keeper's attention, but still perfectly harmless, having more the appearance of terror than of revenge. After a while the offending party returned, and was again making some remarks, when the Anaconda, recognising his voice, made a spring direct for his face, which, however, he happily missed, and was then as gentle as ever. What makes the above the more remarkable is, that the animal was blind at the time, from some of the last year's skin obstructing its vision; so that it must have discovered its adversary solely by the sound of his voice.--New-York Traveller.

A surgeon on board a ship of war used to prescribe salt-water for his patients in all disorders. Having sailed, one evening, on a party of pleasure, he happened, by some mischance, to be drowned. The captain, who had not heard of the disaster, asked one of the tars, next day, if he had heard anything of the doctor? "Yes," answered Jack, after a turn of his quid, "he was drowned last night in his medicine chest."

LAONIC.--Why was my paper discontinued? Answer.--Because 'twas never paid for.

Printed and Published by D. E. GILMOUR, at the Star Office, Carbonar, Newfoundland, to whom all Communications must be addressed.--Subscription, ONE GUINEA PER ANNUM, payable half-yearly.