

and there remains scarce a trace of the green hue which made earth so beautiful
We feel now that

"The melancholy days have come
The saddest of the year."

at least they are presaged by the shadows of October.

But we have the bright fire to gather round, in the lengthening evenings. We have the books and the work so long laid aside for the dark hours. We have had our span of bright twilights and moonlight rambles; and it may be that many welcome the renewal of those winter occupations, with a freshened pleasure for the respite.

October is represented by the ancients as the month for vintage and revelry. His harvest is gathered in, and he makes merry over his treasures. In modern times he is a more respectable month, and makes less noise and wassail than of yore. October has no festivals of importance with us. The eve of the 31st day, All-Hallows, was wont to be observed with much ceremony in Scotland and England, but is very generally disregarded in our day. Burns has left us an amusing description of the pastime enjoyed by the 'country folk' at this festival. Many of the superstitions connected with it had great weight, with the ignorant, and Halloween was looked forward to by numbers as a period possessing great control over their fortunes and destiny. Matrimony was more specially connected with its rites, and nuts, in every form and variety, were symbols by which the order spoke. Diving for apples was also a favourite amusement, and this custom has even prevailed in our own Northern land. But we have grown wiser than our forefathers, and have discarded, with their superstitions and absurdities, the harmless frolics in which they indulged on festival occasions. The birds are taking their flight to warmer lands; pioneering with unerring care the families they have reared during their summer sojourn with us. The insects of every hue and form have left the scene of their birth and enjoyment. Inanimate Nature, with its brightness and beauty has also left us, and man stands alone amid the wreck of his former Eden, and surveys the scene before him. It is well that a bountiful providence has provided him with a refuge from the desolation; the bright shelter and cheerfulness of home, where children's voices ring out in laughter, and 'smiles light up the hearth.'

Autumn is essentially the season for reflection and revery. The poet's harp has kindled many a stirring lay beneath its enchantment; and its clear invigorating atmosphere has given birth to many a noble thought, which slept dormant beneath the sultry air of summer.

"Autumn! how lovely is thy pensive air,
But chief the sounds from thy rest woods delight;
Their deep low murmurs to the soul impart,
A solemn stillness."

Spring comes with joyfulness and hope,—Autumn with reflection and decay. As the flowers blossom and vanish,—as the voices of melody sound and are no