"Salve!" retorted the Widow Wright, indignantly, and elbowing her way through the crowd. "Here's the Nommernis-stortumblin', none of your twaddle, the genewine tippee, caustic and expectorant, good for bruises and ails in the vitals."

"I've got some plums that Siah picked under the tree that blow down in the storm," said Mistress Hatch; "I guess the gal would like them, and if anybody else would eat, they are welcome."

"Bring um along, Dorothy," said Mistress Tapley to her little daughter. "A platter of nutcakes. The chimney tumbled in while I was fying um, and they is a little sitty, but if the gal is hungry, they'll eat well."

Provisions of a different description were furnished from the Tavern, of which the multitude partook freely. People from the village also sent up quantities of fruit, cakes, etc. But they could not tarry, they must hasten to the child's home. They went up the hill, Margaret erected on the shoulders of the young men, escorted as it would seem by half the town, all wild with joy. Puck was in transports; Obed laughed and cried together all the way up the hill; Hash was so much delighted, that he drank himself nearly drunk at the Tavern. When they came in sight of the house, a new flourish of the horns was made, three cheers given, hats and green twigs swung. Chilton, when the good news had already reached, was seated in a chair outside the door; Bull, unable to move, lay on the grass, wagging his joy with his tail; Brown Doll took to spinning flax as hard as she could spin, to keep her sensations within due bounds; the little Isabel leaped up and down spattering her hands. Margaret was conveyed to her mother's bed. Dr. Spoon examined her wounds, and pronounced them not serious, and all the women came in and examined them and gave the same decision. Parson Welles suggested to the preacher the opportuneness of a prayer of thanksgiving, which the latter offered in a becoming manner. A general collation was had in which the family who had tasted of nothing since the noon before, were made glad participants. Chilton, to express his own transport, or to embody and respond to the delight of the people, called for his violin. Playing, he wrought that effect in which he took evident pleasure, moving the parties in a kind of subservient union, and gliding into a familiar reel, he soon had them all dancing. On the grass before the house, old and young, grave and gay, they danced exuberantly. Parson Welles, the preacher and Deacon Hadlock looked on smilingly. Deacon Ramsdil's wife declared Margaret must see what was going on, had her taken from the bed, and held her in her lap on the door-sill. There had been clouds over the sun all day, and mists in the atmosphere, nor did the sun yet appear, only below it, while it was now about an hour high, along the horizon, cleared away a long narrow strip of sky flashing with golden light. Above the people's heads still hung grey clouds, about them were green woods, underneath them the green grass, and within them were bright joyous sensations, and through all things streamed this soft colored light, and in all shone a pensive irradiance, and their faces glowed more lustroosly, and their hearts beat more rapturously. Deacon Hadlock, stirred irresistibly, gave out, as for years he had been accustomed to do in Church, the lines of the Doxology—

"To God the Father, Son, And Spirit, glory be, As I was, and is, and shall be, To all eternity."

which Chilton pitching on his violin and leading off, they sang with great emphasis. When they were about breaking up, Deacon Ramsdill said, "Shant we have a collection? We have had pretty nice times, but strippins after all is the best milk, and I guess they'll like it as well as any thing now. We shall have to feather this creeter's nest, or the bird will be off spin. Here's my hat if some of these lads will pass it round."

A contribution was made, and thus the night of the morning became a morning at night to the Pond and the people of Livingston.

CHAPTER XVII.

WINTER.

An event common in New-England, is at its height. It is snowing, and has been for a whole day and night, with a strong north-east wind. Let us take a moment when the storm intermits, and look in at Margaret's and see how they do. But we cannot approach the place by any of the
ordinary methods of travel; the roads, lanes and by-paths are blocked up: no horse or ox could make his way through those deep drifts, immense mounds and broad plateaus of snow. If we are disposed to adopt the means of conveyance formerly so much in vogue, whether snow-shoes or magic, we may possibly get there. The house or hut is half sunk in a snow bank; the waters of the Pond are covered with a solid enamel as of ivory; the oxen and the cow in the barn-yard, look like great horned sheep, in their fleeces of snow. All is silence, and lifelessness, and if you please to say, desolation. Hens there are none, nor turkeys, nor ducks, nor birds, nor Bull, nor Margaret. If you see any signs of a human being, it is the dark form of Hass, mounted on snow-shoes, going from the house to the barn, the green hemlocks and pines, and fir, green as in summer, some growing along the flank of the hill that runs north from the Indian's Head, looking like blossoming in mid-winter, and nodding with large white flowers. But there is one token of life, the smoke coming from the low grey chimney, which, if you regard it as one, resembles a large, elongated, transparent balloon; or if you look at it by piece-mail, it is a beautiful current of blush-white vapor, flowing upward unendingly; and prettily is it striped and particolored, as it passes successively the green trees, the bare rocks, and white crown of the hill behind; nor does its interest cease, even when it disappears among the clouds. Some would dwell a good while on that smoke, and see in it out-shows and dolmectomies of spiritualit: others would say, the house is buried so deep, it must come up from the hot mischief-hatching heart of the earth; others still would say, the whole Pond laid in its wind-sheet, and that if they looked in, they would behold the dead faces of their friends. Our own sentiment is, that that smoke comes from a great fire in the great fire-place, and that if we should go into the house, we should find the family as usual there; a fact which, as the storm begins to renew itself, we shall do well to take the opportunity to verify.

Flourishing in the centre of these high-rising and broad-spreading snows, unmoved amid the fiercest outsets of the storm, comfortable in the extremity of winter, the family are all gathered in the kitchen, and occupied as may be. In the cavernous fire-place burns a great fire, composed of a huge green back-log, a large green forestick, and a high cob-work of crooked and knotty refuse-wood, ivy, hornbeam and beech. Through this the yellow flame leaps and forks, and the bluish grey smoke flows up the ample sluice-way of the chimney. From the ends of the wood the sap fries and drips on the sizzling coals below, and flies off in angry steam. Under the forestick great red coals roll out, sparkles a semibrief, lose their grosser substance, indicate a more ethereal essence in prototypical forms of white, down-like cinders, and then fall away into brown ashes. To a stranger the room has a sombre aspect rather heightened than relieved by the light of the fire burning so brightly at mid-day. The only connection with the external air is by the south window-shutter being left entirely open, forming an aperture through the logs of about two feet square; yet when the outer light is so obscured by a storm, the bright fire within must anywhere be pleasant. In one corner of the room sits Piuck, in a red flannel shirt and leather apron, at work on his kit mending a shoe; with long and patient vibration and equinoxe he draws the threads, and interludes the strokes with snatches of songs, banter and laughter. The apartment seems converted into a workshop, for next the shoe-maker stands the shingle-maker, Hass, who with fierce in one hand and mallet in the other, by dint of smart percussion, is endeavoring to rivé a three-cornered bit of hemlock, on a block. In the centre of the room sits Brown Moll, with still bristling and grizzly hair, pipe in her mouth, in a yellow woolen long-short and black petticoat, winding a ball of yarn from a widdle. Neater the fire, are Chilton and Margaret, the latter also dressed in woollen, with the Orbis Patris, or World displayed, a book of Latin and English, adorned with cute, which the Master lent her; the former with his violin, endeavoring to describe the notes in Dr. Byles's Collection of Sacred Music, also a loan of the Master's, and at intervals trilling on the lead of his father in some popular air. We shall also see that one of Chilton's feet is raised on a stool, bandaged, and apparently disabled. Bull, the dog, lies rounded on the hearth, his nose between his paws, fast asleep. Dick, the grey squirrel, sits swinging listlessly in his wire wheel, like a duck on a wave. Robin, the bird, in its cage, perched on its roost, shrugs and folds itself into its feathers, as if it were night. Over the fireplace, on the rough stones that compose the chimney, which day and night through all the long winter are ever warm, where Chilton has fixed some shelves, are Margaret's flowers; a blood-root in the marble pot Rufus Palmer gave her, and in wooden moss-covered boxes, pinks, violets and buttercups, green and flowering. Here also, as a sort of mantel-tree ornament, sits the marble kitten which Rufus made, under a cedar
twig. At one end of the crane in the vacant side of the fireplace hang rings of pumpkin rinds drying for beer. On the walls are suspended strings of dried apples, bunches of yarn, and the customary fixtures of coast, hats, knapsacks, &c. On the sleepers above is a chain-work of goblets, loaded and knapped with dust, quivering and glowing in the wind that courses with little or no obstruction through all parts of the house. Near Hash stands the draw-horse, on which he smooths and squares his shingles; underneath it and about lies a pile of fresh, sweet-scented, white shavings and splinters. Through the yawns of the back door, and smoky rents in the logs of the house, filter in, unweariedly, fine particles of snow, and thus along the sides of the room rise little cone-shaped, marble-like pilasters. Between Hash and his father, elevated on blocks, is the cider barrel. These are some of the appendages, inmates and circumstances of the room. Within doors is a fixed noise of lipstone, malt, swift, fiddle, fire: without is the rushing of the storm. Pluck snip-snap with his wife, cracks on Hash, shows his white teeth to Margaret; Chillon asks his sister to sing after his playing; Hash orders her to bring a coal to light his pipe; her mother gets her to pick a snail out of the yard she is winding. She climbs upon a stool and looks out of the window. The scene is obscured by the storm; the thick driving flakes throw a brownish myzzy shade over all things, air, trees, hills and every avenue the eye has been wont to traverse. The light sifts of snow lies like arrows as they slant by. The leafl ess Butternut, whereon the whoop willow used to sing, and the yellow warbler make its nest, sprawls its naked arms, and moans pitifully in the blast; the snow that for a moment is amused upon it, falls to the ground like a harvest of alabaster fruit. The Peach-tree, that bears Margaret's own name, and is of her own age, seems to be drowning in the snow. Water drops from the eaves occasioned by the snow melting about the hot chimney.

"Something of a storm, ain't it, Molly?" said Pluck, looking up, at the same time strapping his knife on the edge of the kit. "As much as you are a cobbler," rejoined Brown Moll, "keep us wet the whole time; can't step out but our shoes let in all the snow that falls and all the water that makes." "Glad to hear you speak of water," said her husband. "It reminds me that I am getting very dry. — Who did the Master tell you was the God of Shoemakers?" he asked, addressing himself to Margaret. "St. Crispin," replied the child.

"Guess I'll pay him a little attention," said the man, leaving his bench and going to the rum bottle that stood by the chimney. "I feel some interest in these things, and I think I have some reason to indulge a hope that I am among the elect."

"He wouldn't own you," said his wife tartly.

"Why so?" inquired Pluck.

"Because you are not a man; you are not the thum or rag of a man. scrape you all up, and we shouldn't get lint enough to put on Chillon's foot." "Look at that," said her husband, exposing his bare arm, flabby and swollen; "what do you think of that?"

"Garbage!" replied the woman. "Grand grease, try you up, run you into cakes, make a present of you to your divinity to rub into his boots. The fire is getting down, Meg, can't you bring in some wood?"

"You are a woman really!" retorted Pluck, "to send the child out in such a storm, when it would take three men to hold one's head on."

"Ha, ha!" laughed out Brown Moll, withdrawing her pipe to spit. "You must have stretched your own on; I don't wonder you are afraid.—That is the way you lost your car, trying to hold on your head in a snow-storm, ha ha."

"Well," rejoined Pluck, "you think you are equal to three men in wit, learning, providing, don't you?"

"Mayhaps so."

"And weaving, spinning, coloring, reeling, twisting, cooking, clinching, hen-pecking!—Well I guess you are. Can you tell, dearest Maria, what is Latin for the Widow's Oiled red hair?"

"No. But I can for the maggot that makes powder-post of our whole family, Dodymus Haiti."

"Well done!" said Pluck with a laugh, and staggered towards his bench.

"I knew we should have a storm," said his wife, "after such a cold spell; I saw a Bully's Eye towards night; my cows have been pricking more than usual; a flight of snow-lurds went by day before yesterday. And it won't hold up till after the full, and that's to-night."

"And I thought as much too," answered Pluck. "Bottle has emptied fast, gums been growing darker in the face, windle spun faster, cool potatoes for dinner, hot tongue for supper."

"You shall fetch some wood, Meg, or I'll warm your back.
half barrel was rimmed about with a broad round moulding of ice, and where the water flowed off, it had formed a wary cascade of ice, and under the cold snows the clear cold water could be heard babbling and singing as if it so whit cared for winter. Her great summer gobbling turkey attempted to mount the edge of the eisern to drink, but the wind blew, his feet slipped, and back be fell. She took a dish and watered her porosity. From the corner of the house the snow fretted and spirited, in a continuous stream of spray. While she looked at this, she saw a flock of snow-birds borne on by the winds, endeavoring to tack their course, and run in under the shelter of the house, but the remorseless elements drifted them on, and they were apparently dashed against the woods beyond. One of the birds was seen to drop, and Margaret darted out, waded through the snow, caught the luckless or lucky wanderer, and amid the butting winds, sharp snow-rack, and smothering sheets of spray, carried it into the house. In her Book of Birds, she found it was a snow-bunting, that it was hatched in a nest of rein deer's hair near the North Pole, that it had sported among eternal solitudes of rocks and ice, and come thousands of miles. It was purely white, while others of the species receive some darker shades. She put it in the cage with Robin, who welcomed the traveller with due respect.

That day and all that night the snow continued to fall, and the wind raged. When Margaret went to her loft, she found her bed covered with a pile of snow that had trickled through the roof. She shook the coverlet, undressed, laid herself on her thistle-down pallet—such a one had she been able to collect and make—to her sleep. The wind surged, swelled, puffed, hissed, whistled, shrieked, thundered, sighed, howled, by turns. The house jarred and creaked; her bed rocked under her; loose boards on the roof clappered and rattled; the snow piled her window-shutter. In such a din and trussle of the elements lay the child. She had no sister to nestle with her, and sang her up; no gentle mother to fold the sheets about her neck, and tuck in the bed; no watchful father to come with a light, and see that she slept safe. Alone and in darkness she climbed into her chamber, alone and in darkness she wrapt herself in the bed. In the fearfulness of that night she sung or said to herself some words of the Master's, which he, however, must have given her for a different purpose—for of needs must a stark child's nature in such a crisis appeal to something above and
superior to itself, and she had taken a floating impression that the Higher Agencies, whatever they might be, existed in Latin:

"O sanctissima, O perennis, Dea Isis Virgo Maria, 
Mater amata, memerata! 
Ora, ora pro nobis!"

As she slept amid the passion of the storm, softly did the snow from the roof distil upon her feet, and sweetly did dreams from heaven descend into her soul. In her dream she was walking in a large, high, self-illuminated, marble Hall, having flowers, statues and columns on either side. The top or roof of the Hall was never covered nor open, but seemed tiled in a sort of opaline-colored invisibility. The statues, of clear white marble, large as life, and the flowers in marble vases, alternated with each other between the columns, whose ornamented capitals merged in the shadows above. There was no distinct articulate voice, but a kind of low murmuring of the air, a sort of musical pulsation, in the place, which she heard. The statues seemed to be for the most part marble emblems of pictures she had seen in the Master's books. There were the Venus de Medicis; the Apollo Belvedere; Diana, with her golden bow; Ceres, with poppies and ears of corn; Hesiodus, "with sweet and lovely countenance;" Fortuna, with her hand on a pillar; Temperance, pouring water from a pitcher; Diligence, with a sickle and sheaf; Peace, and her crown of olives; Truth, with "her locks serene, pleasant, courteous, cheerful and yet modest." The flowers were such as she had sometimes seen about the houses in the village, but of great size and rare beauty—cactuses, purple dahlias, moss-roses, carnations, high nodding geraniums, large pink hydrangeas, white japonicas, calls fliers and others. Their shadows waved on the white walls, and it seemed to her as if the music she heard issued from their cups. She went on till she came to a marble arch, or door-way, handsomely sculptured, and supported on caryatides. Thus opened to a large rotunda, where she saw nine beautiful female figures swimming in a circle in the air. Those stared on her as she passed, leaves and flowers, of amaranth, angelicas, myrtle, rose, thyme, white jasmine, white poppy, bluebell, bitter-sweet nightshade, acacia and eglantine; and spun round and round in silken silence. By a similar arch, she went into another rotunda, in the centre of which was a marble monument or sarcophagus, arising from which were two marble youths with wings, and also above them she saw two butterflies with tri-colored wings, flying away. Through another door-way she entered a larger space, opening to the heavens. In this she saw a woman, the same woman she had before seen in her dreams, with long black hair, and a pale beautiful face, who stood silently pointing to a figure far off on the rose-colored clouds. It was Christ, whom she recognized. A little distance from him, on the round top of a purple cloud, having the blue distant sky for a background, was the milk-white Cross, twined with evergreens; about it, folding one another's hands, she saw moving as in a dance, four beautiful female figures, clothes in white robes. These she remembered as the ones she saw in her dream at the Still, and she now knew them to be Faith, Hope, Love, and their sister, who was yet of their own creation, Beauty. She tried to speak, but could not. Then she returned through the Rotundas and Hall, and at the door she found a large green bullock, with great goggle eyes, having a ponderously saddled to his back. She seated herself in the cup, held by the gold threads as a pome, and the frog leaped with her clear into the next morning, in her own little dark chamber. When she awoke the wind and noise without had ceased. A perfect cone of pure white snow lay piled up over her feet, and she attributed her dream partly to that. She opened the window-shutter; it was even then snowing in large, quiet, moist flakes, which showed that the storm was nearly at an end; and in the east, near the sun-rising, she saw the clouds bundling up, ready to go away. Pluck and his wife were just out of bed; a dim, dreary light came in from the window; Chilton, who unable to go up the ladder to his chamber had a bunk spread for him of the pallets of wild beasts, near the fire, still lay there. Under a bank of ashes and cinders, smoked and whitened the remains of the great back-log. Bull rose and stretched at her feet; Dick pawed round his tread-mill in fresh morning glee; Robin chirruped faintly and wistfully. Little heaps of snow that had blown in during the night, and other rubbish about the room, her mother set her to sweeping out with the green spruce-twig broom. Pluck with the slice raked open the ashes, drew forward the charred log, which cracked and crumbled in large deep crimson, fine-grained, glowing coals, throwing a ruddy glare over the room. He dug away the ashes, as if he were laying a cellar-wall, and with the aid of his wife
and Margaret and divers prynes and pushings, he rolled in a fresh green log, at least four feet long, and nearly two thick. Hash came lumbering down the ladder, thrusting out one arm then the other hunting on his coat, and calling the name of God over Margaret, for hitting his saw with the frow—a kind of family prayer she was quite accustomed to—and then putting on his snow-shoes he went to the barn. Miss- 

sness. Hart went about getting breakfast, not putting on the tea-

kettle, for she had none, and only at rare intervals did they drink tea or coffee—but a pot of potatoes, which served alike for family, hens and the pig. After breakfast Margaret opened the front door to look out. Here was raised a straight and sheer breast-work of snow five feet or more in height, nicely scarring the door and lintels. Pluck could just see over it, but for this purpose Margaret was obliged to use a chair. The old gentleman, in a fit of we shall not say any un-

common good feeling, declared he would dig through it. He went round by the back-door, waded through the snow breast-
depth to a spot in front of the house, where the whirring

winds had left the earth nearly bare, and commenced with a shovelled his sublunary work. Margaret saw him disappear under the snow, which he threw behind him like a rabbit. She waited in greatest frolicickness imagineable his coming in sight at the door, hallowed to him, and threatened to set

dog on him as a thief. Pluck made some gruff unusual sound, beat the earth with his shové; the dog growled, and thrust violently at the snow; Margaret laughed. Soon this mole of a man poked his shovel through, and straightway fol-

lowed with himself; all in a sweat, and the snow melting like rain from his hot red face. Thus was opened a snow-tunnel, as good to Margaret as the Thames, two or three rods long, and three or four feet high. Through this she went to the hollow beyond. The storm had died away; the sun was

struggling through the clouds as if itself in search of heat from what showed us the white, radiant, warm face of the earth; there were blue breaks in the sky overhead; and far off, above the snow-strnmed western hills, lay violet-fringed cloud-drifts. A bank of snow, reaching in some places quite to the eaves, covered the front of the house, and buried many feet deep the grass, mallows, dandelions, rosebushes, flowerbeds, henscoops.

The Chestnuts shone in the sun with their polished, shining, craggy limbs, a spectacle both to pity and admire. The evergreens and other trees drooped under their burdens like

full-blown sunflowers. The top of Indian's Head was nearly bare; its sleek and solid summit being scathed and polled by the storm, and the peeled and naked old hemlock or Feather stood up a stunted and derivative monument of the desolation of the race to which it was contemptuously supposed to appertain. The dark, leafless boughs and twigs of the taller trees around looked like bold delicate netting or linear embroidery on the blue sky, or as if the trees, interrupted in their usual method of growth, were taking root in mid-winter up among the warm transparent heavens. Pluck came out and began play-
ging with Margaret, throwing great armfuls of snow that burst and scattered over her like rocks of down, then suffering himself to be fried at in turn. He set her aside the dog who romped and bounced, and pitched her into a drift whence her father drew her by her ankles. As he was going in, stooping under the tunnel, a pile of snow that had formed itself on the house and jotted over, fell, and breaking in the roof of the frail passage-way, completely buried the old man in the ruins. He gasped, floundered and thrust up his arms through the superincumbent mass, like a drowning man. Margaret leaped with laughter, and Brown Moll herself coming to the door was so moved by the drollery of the scene as to be obliged to withdraw her pipe to laugh also. Bull was ordered to the rescue, who, doing the best he could under the circumstances, wallowing belly-deep in the snow, seized with his teeth the woollen shirt-sleeve of his master, and tugged away, till he raised the old man's head above the drift. Pluck, unchilled in his humor by the coolness of the drench, stood, sunk to his chin in the snow, and laughed as heartily as any of them, his shining bald pate and whispy red face streaming with moist-
ture and shaking with merriment. At length both father and child got into the house and dried themselves by the fire. Margaret took her book to study, but her mother called her away, and set her to picking over butternut, prach and maunch leaves, and other coloring stuff. Chilios likewise demanded attention; his foot pained him; he grew swollen and inflamed. Margaret bathed it in rum; a poultice was applied, and she held it in her lap, and soothed it with her hand. A preparation of the Widow's was suggested. Pluck would not go for it. Pluck and his wife could not, and Mar-
garet must go. Bull could not go with her, and she must go alone. She was wrapped in a hood, mittens, and mortins-
skin tippet; her snow-shoes, a pair that she had often gone on the snows with, were fastened to her feet. She mounted the
high, white, lufly plain; a dead and unbounded waste by all about her. She went on with a soft, yielding, yet light step, almost noiseless as if she were walking the clouds. There was no road or path, no guide but the trees; rus, gullies, holes, ditches by the way-side, knolls, stones, were all one uniform level. She saw here and there a slightly raised mound, indicating some large rock she chambered over in summer. The beautiful bordering of wild flowers on either side of the road was invisible; and the ever-smelling and universally diffused aromas of the sweet fern was smothered and blighted. Here and there appeared above the snows the black dead spikes and seed-heads of the goldenrod, mullein, tall aster and wild sunflower. The shrubs, ivies,alders, sumach, the grape-vines running over thorn bushes and witch hazels, seems to have been contending with the storm, and both to have yielded at the same moment, the snow hugging upon them in broken branches and tatters, and their branches bending down stiffened, motionless. About the trunk of some of the large trees was a hollow pit reaching quite to the ground, as if the snow had walled it round and round the tree, and laid itself back to rest; or as if the flakes had been caught in a maelstrom and been devoured as they fell. Wherever there was a fence, pile of brush or heap of stones, thiller had the storm taken itself in full flooding force, and around, above and alongside, were erected mountain-like embankments, impenetrable dikes, and inaccessible bluffs. As she entered the thicker woods that lay between her house and the Widow's, Margaret saw the deep, unfeigned beauty of the storm; the huge giant flakes that fell in the morning, had dressed, furled, tossed over every limb and twig, each minute process and filament, each aglet and thread, as if the white spirits of the air had undertaken to froth the trees for the marriage festival of their Prince; or as if an ocean of pure foam had suddenly subsided in the region. The slender white-birches with silver bark and chon boughs that grew along the path, were bent over; their arms met intertwined; and thus was formed a perfect arch, snow-wreathed, voluptuous, dream-like, glittering, under which she went. There was the clear bright shining of the sun, its light both softened and heightened, spread and reflected through all the wood. All was silent as the Moon; there was no sound of birds, or cows, sheep, dinner-horns, axes, or wind. There was no life, but only this white, shining, still-life wrought in snow-marble. No life! From the dusky woods darted out those birds that bide a New England winter; dove-colored nuthatches, she suddenly heard, quink quanking among the hemlocks; a whole troop of titmice and woodpeckers came bustling and whirring across the way, shaking a shower of fine tiny raylets of snow on her head; she saw the graceful snow-birds, our common bird, with ivory bill, slate-colored back and white breast, flying about and perching themselves on the dead tops of the mullen and other flowers, and pecking out the seeds. Above all, far above the forest and the snow-capped hills, saw cawed the great black crow. All at once too, as she was going along, directly in front of her, by the side of the road, came up through the snow a little red squirrel, who sat bolt upright on his hind legs, gravely folded his paws, surveyed her for a moment, as much as to say, "How do you do?" and in a trice with a squeak shot back into his hole. She found the brook, Cedron, like everything else buried in snow, bridge and water alike indistinguishable, only she could hear the gurgling of the latter as in an alys below. Approaching the Widow's, she crossed the Porta Salutantis and all the scrawls of the stump fence, without touching them, on a mound of snow that extended across the garden, half covering the side of the house, wholly hiding beds of sage, saffron, baysous, and what not, and nearly enveloping the bee-hive, where, on the paradoxical idea that snow keeps out cold, the bees must have been very cozy and warm. Reaching the door, she stopped down to find the handle, but Obed, who espied her coming, was already on the spot, opened her, and banded her down from the snow as he would from the back of a horse. The Goddess of the Temple very curiously received her in her adytum, that is to say, the kitchen. She was divested of snow-shows, hood, &c., and sat down to take breath and warmth, by the fire. The Widow was all attention, and her son all humility. What with the deep snow-banks without, the great fire within, and the deft and accurate habits of the lady of the house, they were neat, snug and comfortable as heart could wish. A kettle over the fire simmered like the live-long singing of crickets in a bed of brakes in August, and there was a pleasant garden perfume from numerous herbs dispersed through the room. On the walls and ceiling hung various kinds of medicinal plants; and on boards and the hearth were spread out roots, stalks, leaves, berries and flowers, drying. In a corner of the room, tier upon tier, were piled small wooden boxes. On the table were an iron pestle and mortar, graters and a pair of scales. 15
The Widow asked her son to read sundry scraps of writing she had, for Margaret’s particular edification. “You see,” she said, “he’s as smart and polite as any on us. His natural parts are equal to the Master’s, and he only needs a little edification tea to be a great man. There’s a good deal in the way of bringing children up, Peggy, you’ll know when you have been a mother as long as I have. He won’t play the back-gate tea nobody, the Lord knows he won’t; they don’t put their hooks into his gills, not by a great sight. There has been a poopy considerable mutiny goin’ on ’mong the doctors ever sen the Nommernirstortumbug come out; Dr. Spoon looked dismal as snakes the first time he seed me. I am goin’ tea put up the price tea and penny happenes a box. It’s worth it. It’s none of your slush, it’s genuinee scientifikal, it cures people. They’ll pay for’t tea, and they ort tea. The more you ask the sooner it’ll cure. And it’s a downright gospel marcy tea hitch on a good price. How many hare I sold, think, sen the Master was here? Nigh forty boxes.”

After having sufficiently enlightened Margaret in these matters, she promised her some more of which she was in quest, provided she would help Obad awhile in pasting labels on the boxes. These she had sent to Kidderminster to be printed, black type on a red ground.

When Margaret left for home, the sun had gone down, and the moon rose full, to run its high circuit in these winter heavens. The snow that had melted on the trees during the day, as the cool air descended on the plain, and against the cold slush from the branches, and the woods in their entire perspective were tricked with these pendants. It was magic land to the child, as a swiflful dream, and she looked for welcome faces up among the glittering trees, and far off in the white clouds. It was still as her dream too, and her own voice as she went singing along, echoing in the dark forest, was all she could hear. The moon tinged the icicles with a bright silver lustre, and the same pure radiance, more faint, shone from the snow. Anon she fell into the shade of the Moon on her left, while at her right, through the dark boughs of the evergreens, she saw the Planet Venus, large and brilliant, set on the verge of the horizon in the impelled pathway of the Sun. She thought of her other dream at the Still, of Beauty, fair sister of three fair sisters, and she might have gone off in waking-dreams among the fantasies of real existence, when she was drawn back by the recollection of her brother, to whose assistance she hastened. It was very cold,

her breath showed like smoke in the clear atmosphere, and the dew from her mouth froze on her tippet; but the snow settling, and her path becoming more compact and hard, she trod on with an easier step. All at once there was a glare of red light about her, the silver icicles were transformed to rubies, and the snow-fields seemed to bloom with glowing scarlet flowers. It was the Northern Lights that shot up their shafts, snapped their sheets, unfurled their flaming penons, and poured their rich crimson dies upon the white lustrous earth. She thought the Winter and the World were beautiful, her way became more bright, and she hurried on to Chilino—for whom day by day, hour by hour, she labored and watched, assiduously, tenderly; till his foot amended space, though it never got entirely well.

One morning Obad called for Margaret to go with him to the village. There had been a rain the day before, followed by a cold night, and the snow was glided over with a smooth hard incrustation. They both took sleds, Margaret her blue-painted Humming Bird, which she received as a Thanksgiving present awhile before. Obad wore a reddish butternut-colored coat with very long and broad skirts, buck-skin breeches, grey yarn stockings; and a bright red knit woollen cap, that came down over his ears, and fitted close to his head, having a high pointed top surmounted with a tassel. Under his shoes was fastened a pair of dogs or creepers, a strap of iron armed with points to prevent slipping. Margaret was guarded against the ice by mocassins drawn over her shoes, and against the cold by her hood, tippet and muffins; and wore her ordinary winter dress, a yellow flannel short-gown, and skirt of the same material. It was a clear bright morning, and the sun and the earth seemed to be striving together which should shine with the greatest strength; and they appeared to serve as mirrors respectively in which to reflect one another’s rays. As Margaret and Obad went on, the light seemed to blow and glow through the forest like a blacksmith’s forge, and one almost expected to be enveloped in hot flames as he advanced. Now sliding down pitches, now dragging their sleds up ascclivities, they emerged so far from the woods as to overlook the village and open country beyond. A steam-like vapor arose from the frozen River, diffused itself through the atmosphere, and hung like a blue thin veil over the snowy summit of the Mountain. A long band of white mackerel-buck clouds garnished the sky. They came at length to Dea Hadlock’s Pasture. Here the scattered trees were all foaming with ice, and the rain having
candied them over, trunk, branch and twig, they shone like so many great candleabras; and the surface of the lot in all its extent, burnt and glared in the singing sunbeams. Here also they encountered a troop of boys and girls coasting. Some were coming up the hill, goreing and scratching the crust with their iron corks, others wheeling about and skimming away through the bright air, the ups and downs forming a perfect line of revolution. Margaret and Obad, joining the current, mounted their sleds, and scudded away down the smooth glassy slope, with a rapidity that would almost take one's breath away.

At the foot of the hill and lower end of the Pasture, which bordered on Grove Street, surmounting the fence, was a high drift, or broad bank of snow; over which some of the sleds passed into the road beyond, some came to the top and halted, some with a graceful recurve turned off salient, while others with less momentum going up half way ran backwards, and striking some obstruction, reared, and threw their riders heels over head; and up they jumped for a fresh fling. Margaret, elevated in feeling as she entered this scene flowing alike with joy and light, made a bow on the drift, and mingled with the moiling merry-hearted ups. There were trees scattered through the lot, and small Judah, just rounded off with snow, and larger ones with a pitch in front, and diversities of soil that gave a wary hucklebacked character to the entire field. The boys wore sheep-crowned caps like Obad's, some knit, some made of strips of black and yellow cloth; the girls were dressed both in short and long gowns. Their sleds had various names, Washington, Napoleon, Spitfire, Racer, Swallow. The downs whooped by, some dogging among the trees, some shot through and dispersed the line of the ups, some sprang many feet off the rocks. Some were astride their sleds, some lay on their breasts with projecting behind guiding their course with their toes, some knelt on one hand, making a rudder of the other foot. It was a youthful, exhilarating, cock-brained, winter, New England dithyramb.

"This is music," says one boy.

"Something of the broomstick order—a fellow gets thwacked most to death," says a second.

"There goes Judah, Weeks, his trottets are getting up in the world," says a third.

"Old Jud. is rather hard upon him," rejoined the second boy.

"He always is upon the boys, but dun him, we'll get some fun out of him at any rate," added the first.

"Spitfire is as skittish as the Deacon's sorrel colt; Judah might have known he would have got cast," interposed the third.

"I declare, how they ache," said Judah, blowing his red snow-dripping fingers, as he joined the ups.

"Clear the coot!" cried all hands, "here comes a straddlebug." But the rider, it happened to Obad, losing his balance, his sled bolted directly in front of them, raking and hacking the crust, and scattering the bright particles on every side, and he rolled over at their feet.

"Hurt, Obad?" said Margaret.

"No," replied he, picking up himself and his sled, and joining the upward track; "but I shall take it knee-bump, next time."

"No, I wouldn't," said one of the boys.

"Try belly-gut, you'll like that better," said another.

"Does your Marm know you are out?" asked one of the large boys.

"Yes, she said I might come!"

"Do you know what will cure cold fingers?" asked Judah.

"Take garlic and saffron blows, and bile am an hour and drink it just as you are gittin' into bed, and it'll cure any cold that ever was, Marm says," replied Obad.

"There go Washington and Napoleon!" cried several voices, "Old Bony'll beat as true as guises; she's all-fired swift."

"Peggy's Hummin' Bird'll beat anything," said Obad.—

"She'll go like nutcakes," an allusion, we should remark, he was in the habit of making founded on a favorite dish his mother cooked for him every Saturday night.

"Guess Racer'll give her a try, or anything there is on the ground," answered one of the larger boys, Seth Penrose, son of the Deacon's. "Pox me! if these Injus put their tricks on me as they do on daddy."

"Sh! sh! Seth," rejoined Judah, "you didn't talk so when you was diggin' her out of the woods. We don't have such a time as this every day. Let us all make the best of it."

"Ho ho, hoop ho!" exclaimed all voices, as they reached the top of the hill. "They are coming!" Below were seen two large sleds, each drawn by five or six boys, coming up the lot. "Now for a race!" "Hoora for the Old Confederation!" shouted one party of the observers. "Hoora for the Federal Constitution!" shouted the other, as the objects of their attention drew near. These were sledges or pungs, 15*
coarsely framed of split asplings, and surmounted with a large crockery crate. The boys, in whose the strong political feeling of the time could not well fail to develop itself, had planned an adventure, and were about to test and signalize their respective merits and capabilities, by a race with sleds, named according to the existing party distinctions. These ark-like vehicles were turned round and loaded, the crates filled with boys, and several seated in front to steer, while others did the like office behind. They started off at the same moment, those in the crates standing up, swinging their caps, and echoing the cheers of the spectators. They skewed, bristled and bumped along, the crates wobbled and warped from side to side, the riders screamed, cross-bit-frumpéd and hooted at each other; they lost control of their course, their bows struck, they parted with a violent rebound; one went gliding round and round, fraying and spattering the snow, and dashed against a tree; the other whirled into the same line, plunged with its load headlong into the first. It was a regular misshap; some of the boys were doused into each other, some were jolted against the tree, some sent grabbing on their faces down the hill, some plumped smack on the ice, some whisked round and round, and left standing. There was a shout from the top of the hill, and a smothered response from below, then a clearer shout, and at last a full-toned hoor. None were seriously hurt; who was ever hurt sliding down hill? Yet what with their lumbering gear staved to atoms, splinters, nails, and the violence of the concussion, it was a wonder some were not killed. The cry was now for a single race, to which all parties agreed. The sleds were drawn up in a line evenly as the nature of the ground would permit, twenty or thirty of them, Margaret and Obed, and all who cared to enter the lists. The fence at the foot of the Pasture was the ordinary terminus of their slides; but they sometimes went further than this. Crossing Grove Street, and the fence on the other side, passing through an orchard, and emerging between the Court House and the Jail, they came out on the Green; to gain, by methods unimpeachable, the farthest point on which was the stake, and comprised a distance of nearly half a mile. The girls sat with their skirts tucked about their ankles, and the boys took postures as they liked best. The signal was made, and they flushed away. Soon separating, some went cranking, sheering, sidewise of the hill; some were tossed in somersets from the rocks; some ran into each other, and turning backwards channeled and ripped their way through the hard crust; on, on they went, skittering, bowling, dance-like, wave-like; Margaret curvetted about the mounds, she leaped the hollows, going on with a ricochet motion, pulsating from swell to swell, humming, whizzing, the fine grain glancing before her and freezing her face and neck; her hood fell back over her shoulders, her hair streamlined boards in the wind; she rein'd her sled-rope as if it had been the snaffle of a high-spirited horse;—she passed the first fence, and the second—others were near her—some lodged on the fences, some dropped in the street. Three or four sleds were in full chase through the orchard, they gained the Green, near the centre of which their speed exhausted itself. Margaret was evidently foremost and farthest.

"You hitched," said Seth Penrose, somewhat angrily.

"No I didn’t," said Margaret, somewhat excited.

"She didn’t hitch," said little Job Luce, who had been bumbling about the hill all the morning watching the sport, and at the race, crept to the Green to see them come in.

"I thought Spitfire was up to anything," said Judah Weeks, jumping from his snow-despattered sled; "but she is beat now."

Margaret had indeed won the race, and that without a miracle. Chillon, her mechanical genius, had constructed her sled in the best manner of the best materials, and shed it with steel. In her earliest years, he insured her to the weather, haled her on the snows before she could walk, made her coast as soon as she could sit a sled, graduated her starting points up Indian’s Head, so that she became equal to any roughness or steepness, and could accomplish all possible distances.

"Who beat? Who beat?" asked a score of breathless voices rushing to the spot.

"Little Molly Hart," roundly answered Judah.

"No, the wicked Injin didn’t beat nuthin’," rejoined Seth.

"Yes, she did beat two," interposed Obed, coming forward among the late rear: "I know she did."

"How do you know she did, Granny?" said Seth.

"Cause Hummin’ Bird can beat anything, and I know she did," replied Obed.

"You are done for," said one or another to Seth.

"No I ain’t done for — she hitched," answered the sturdy rival.

"I guess she didn’t hitch," said little Isabel Weeks, who was of the number, cause Ma says good children don’t cheat;
and she is good, cause Ma says good children helps their ma’s, and she helps her ma.”

“I know she didn’t,” repeated Job, “cause I was here and saw it.”

“Bosh! Ramshorn!” said the indignant Seth, thrashing about and by a side-trick knocking Job on the hard crust.

“Come, pick him up,” said Isobel; “Jude, take hold of his feet.

“I’ll help you,” said Margaret.

“Don’t touch him!” exclaimed Obed, addressing Margaret.

“He’ll kill you, he’ll pizen you, he’ll give you the itch. He’s a ghost.”

“No he won’t hurt you,” replied Isobel, “its only little Job Luze with a crook in his back, Ma says; and it’s handy to lift by. Up with him.”

They placed him on Margaret’s sled, who with Isobel drew him towards his home, leaving the rest of the company to their own affairs. They went on the crust, with the road two or three feet below them, straight and narrow, flatted through the solid plane of the snow. Two or three sleighs or cutters passed them, large and heavy, with high square backs like a settle, and low square foot-boards, without hurdles, near skin or blanket, and painted red and green. They took Job to his mother, who received her son with thankfulness toward the girl, but without surprise as regarded the boy. Mistress Luze, a wan, care-worn, ailing looking woman, yet having a gentle placid tone of voice, was binding shoes. The bright sun-light streamed into the room, quite paling and quenching flames and coals in the fireplace. A picture hung on the walls, an embroidery, flow on white satin, representing a woman leaning mournfully on an ura, and a willow drooping over her. On a small round table, together with the shoes she was at work upon, lay open-spread a bible. Job was seated in a low armed rocking-chair on the hearth. He had always been an object of sport to the boys, and not unfrequently suffered from their wantonness.

“Poor boy!” ejaculated his mother with a sigh. “He grows worse and worse — we did all we could for him.”

“Won’t he grow straight and stout?” asked Margaret.

“No,” answered the woman. “A whoopoorwill sung on the willow over the brook four nights before he was born; — we had him drawn through a split tree, but he never got better.”

“Whipoorwill sing every night most at the Pond in the summer,” said Margaret.

“I have heard them a great many times,” added Isobel.

“Ma says they won’t hurt people if they are only good.”

“I know, I know,” responded the woman, with a quick shuddering start.

“Ma says they only hurt wicked people,” continued Isobel.

“Ah, yes,” said the woman with a melancholy respiration.

“I always knew it was a judgment on account of my sins.”

“What have you done?” asked Margaret anxiously.

“Oh, I don’t know,” answered the Widow, “only I am a great sinner; if you could hear the Parson preach you would think so too. I just read in my Bible what God says, ‘Because you have sinned against the Lord, this is come upon you.’”

“I saw Job at the Meeting one day,” said Margaret, “he recited the catechism so well. Do you know what it meant?” she continued, turning to the boy.

“No, I don’t,” replied Job, “but Mammy does — but I know the whoopoorwill’s song.”

“Do you?” asked Margaret, “can you say it?”

“No, only I hear it every night.”

“What, in the winter?”

“Yes, after I go to bed.”

“Do you have dreams?”

“I don’t know what it is,” replied the boy, “only I hear whoopoorwill. It sings in the willow over the urn, and sings in here,” he said, pointing to his breast. “I shall die of whoopoorwill.”

“Oh dear, yes, O Father in Heaven!” sighed out his mother, struggling yet with an air of resignation, “it is just.”

“It sings,” added the boy, “in the moonshine, I hear it in the brook in the summer, and among the flowers, and the grasshoppers sing it to me when the sun goes down, and it sings in the Bible. I shall die of whoopoorwill.”

“How he talks!” said Isobel. “I guess Ma wouldn’t like to have me stay, only Job is a good boy, she says his prayers every night, and don’t kill the little birds, like the other boys, and Ma says he will go to Heaven when he dies. I wish they wouldn’t tease him so.” A horn was heard, and Isobel said it was her dinner time, and Margaret must go with her.

“Good bye, Job,” said Margaret, “in the summer I will come and see you again, and you must come up to the Pond, I will show you my Bird-book, and you shall sail on the water.”
Eeq. Weeks, who lived nearly opposite the Widow Luce's, was an extensive farmer. Mistress Weeks was the mother of fourteen children, all born within twenty-three years, all still living, and cherished under the same roof.

"A new one to dinner, hey, Miss Belle?" said her mother.

"So, so, just as your Pa always said, one more wouldn't make any difference. Take your places—I don't know how to cut the pudding downwise, crosswise—one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven. Eleven, where are they all? Don't I count straight?"

"John, Nahum and the men have gone into the woods, Ma," said Bethia.

"I am sure I had fifteen plates put on," said the mother.

"Washington hurt his hand, and Dolly you said wasn't old enough to come yet," said Bethia.

"Yes, yes," answered the mother, "I forgot. I don't remember anything since we had so many children. Lay to——"

"Michel hasn't anything," said Helen.

"What, can't I get it right?" said the mother. "Girls I tell you all, study arithmetic. If I had known what a family I was going to bring up, I should have learnt mine better. Arithmetic is the best thing in a family, next to the Bible."

"And a good husband," interposed Eeq. Weeks.

"That's fair," replied his wife. "But girls take to your arithmetic, numeration, addition, subtraction, division and all the compounds, practice, tare and trett, loss and gain. And you've come all the way from the Pond, Miss Margery. How is your Ma?" I really forgot to ask. It's pretty cold weather, good deal of snow, comes all in a bunch, just like children. And you like to have been killed in the tornado? If it had been our little Belle how we should have felt?"

"And me too!" asked the little Michel.

"Yes, you too, can't spare any of you. Only be good children, be good children, eat all you want. Zebulon is crying, I forgot to nurse him——"

After dinner Margaret said she would go and see the Master, and Isabel went with her. At the Widow Small's, the Master's boarding house, they were told he was over the way, at the Parson's; whether they directed their steps. The house of Parson Welles stood on the corner, as you turned from South Street up the Brandon, or No. 4 road. Isabel leading the way, they entered without knocking, and made directly for the Parson's study. The Parson and the Master were sitting near the fire, with their backs towards the door, smoking long pipes, and engaged in earnest conversation, so much so that the Master only nodded to the girls, and the Parson, who was a little deaf, did not notice them at all. Isabel held her breath, and made a low curtsey to the Parson's back, while Margaret stood motionless, looking about the room, and at the persons in it. The Parson, whose hair was shaved close to his head, wore a red velvet cap, and had on in place of his public suit of black, a long, blue-brown linen dressing-gown, which his wife had probably worn for him at some by-gone period. The room had small windows, was wainscotted and painted a dark green, and rendered still darker by tobacco smoke. There were book-shelves about the apartment; on the walls hung pictures in dark frames similar to those Margaret saw at the Master's; the sand on the floor was streaked in whimsical figures, and on a black stout-legged table lay paper, ink and some manuscript sermons of the dimensions of four by six inches.

"Touching objections, Master, Elliman," continued the Parson, laying his pipe on his hand, "fourteenthly, it is calamitously asserted by the opponents of divine truth that on this hypothesis, God made men to damn them; but we say God decreed to make man, and made man neither to damn him nor to save him, but for his own glory, which end is answered in them some way or another."

"Whether they are damned or not?" said the Master.

"Yes," said the Parson, "inasmuch as that is not the thing considered, but the rather the executing of his own decrees, and the expression of his proper sovereignty, who will be glorified in all things. The real question is, whether man was considered in the mind of God, as fallen or unfallen, as to be created or ceastable, or as created but not fallen. But the idea of things in the Divine mind is not as in ours. God understands all things per se, we understand them per analysis. Hence going back into the Divine mind, aborigine, we first seek the status quo of the idea. In that idea came up a vast number of individuals of the human species as ceastable, some as fallen, others as unfallen. He did not create them to cause them to fall——"

"But he made them fall that they might be created——"

"Now this idea considered as an active volition is God's decree, and this decree going into effect creates man on the earth; some predestined to everlasting life, some to everlasting death. And here the Universalists do greatly err, not perceiv-
ing that God is equally glorified in the damnation as the salvation of his creatures: so St. Paul to the Romans, ix. 17, 18, 19. My pipe is out, and we must apply to King Solomon to help us in this matter."

"Yea, verily," responded the Master.

This King Solomon, we should explain, was a large silver snuff-box, with a mother-of-pearl lid, on which was carvèd the interview of the Queen of Sheba and the afore-mentioned king, which Parson Welles carried in his deep waistcoat pocket, and of the contents of which he and the Master partook freely in the intervals of smoking.

"Why should man reply against God?" continued the Parson.

"That would in truth be very unreasonable," interposed the Master.

"The riches of God's mercy do alone save us from the infernal designs of reprobate men. Those who oppose the divine decrees would soon have Satan in our midst."

The Master sensible that some attention was due his little pupil, here broke from the Parson, called Margaret, and introduced her.

"Margaret Hart, yes," replied the Parson. "Of the Hart family in Litchfield, I knew her grandfather well. He was an able defender of the truth."

"She is from the Pond, sir," added the Master. "Didymus Hart, alias Pluck's daughter."

"Yes, yes, of the Ishmaelish race," responded the Parson, laughing. "If she could be baptized and jine the catechizing class; appointed means whereby the Atenement is made efficacious. Isabel," he continued, addressing the companion of Margaret, "you are sprung of a godly ancestry, and the blood of many holy persons runs in your veins. See that ye despise not the Divine goodness."

The Master took Margaret about the room, and showed her some of the books and pictures. Of the former were the writings of the most distinguished Divines on both Continents; there were "Prey taken from the Strong, or an Account of a Recovery from the Dangerous Errors of Quakerism;" Thatch-
er's Sermons on "The Eternal Punishment of the Finally Impenitent;" "An Arrow against Profane and Promiscuous Dancing, drawn out of the Quiver of the Scriptures;" "Owen on Sin;" Randolph's "Revision of Socinian Arguments;" &c. &c. The latter were chiefly faces of the old clergy; some in large wigs, some in long flowing curls, some in skull-