WINTRY VISIONS

(Continued from First Page.)

INSPIRED WITH NEW LIFE.

(High School Credit.)

THE sound of the word "winter" tingles through me like the rich sound of a silver bell and makes fresh life vibrate through my whole system. I do not see how people can hug their fires and recite over and over again the "awful" condition of the weather and fret and worry because winter, the liveliest, pleasantest, best-natured season of the year, has come.

When the time draws near for the first snowfall I begin to feel much as I do shortly before Christmas, and in the midst of the merriment of anticipations I picture in my mind a jolly, rosy-faced man, resembling an uncle of mine, jumping aboard a train with a valise full of fun in his hand. When the first snow powders my yard I have been in the habit of announcing it to my relatives much as I would the coming of my uncle. And my listeners imagine they are cold even if it is as warm as midsummer where they are, and begin to tell each other about the long winter before them, while I go out and march about with the snow flakes, happy and yet not knowing why. I laugh because I cannot help it as I watch the fragments of a feather snow ball disperse themselves over my friend's head, and my heart leaps up to stay many degrees higher all during the winter time.

—Aleta Pearson,
Two Harbors, Minn.

Tenth Grade.

AS TO "TWISTFUL CHILBLAINS."

(High School Credit.)

Winter. Winter? Winter! There is no mistaking the word and its meaning. Webster gives as the meaning of this noun, "'the coldest season in the year." For me there is one vivid synonym for that frigid space of time—chilblains. Chilblains hot, itching, burning, biting, blistering bad and bothering. Chilblains, which have the power to make the feet in their clutch dance madly, even though they may belong to a church member. In summer the remembrance of the chilblains is only a frightful hallucination. In the fall it becomes an impending dread. When the first snow comes I feel like crying, for I know it insures my future discomfort and bars pleasure.

Oh, yes, I do not doubt but that there are cures. Turpentine, kerosene, snow, salt, hot water—I have tried them all and they have been weighed and found wanting. Winter is here. Chilblains are here. I am here. Here to rub my feet together till I scratch the "shine" off my shoes. Here to twist uneasily in my seat, here to French twist, Oliver Twist, cotton twist, woolen twist, any twist, every twist that is known to civilized man, and the "Virginia Reel" into the bargain. Therefore I do affirm that winter is here.

—Lucy J. White,
Luverne, Minn.

Ninth Grade.

THOSE DREADFUL TESTS.

(High School Credit.)

Winter is always the most unwelcome of any of the seasons to me. I suppose it is primarily because I have never been allowed to skate and I never like to hear the other girls talk "rink" for it makes me want to skate worse than ever.

The jolly sleighing parties with which every Junior is acquainted, are one of the most enjoyable things, barring the forbidden pleasure that winter boasts. There is as much enjoyment to be had from a sleigh full of robes and people as anywhere, providing the horses have not had a great deal of exercise for a couple of days. Then there is always a party at the end of the ride, but that serves only as a go-between for the return ride. Christmas and birthdays are other sources of pleasure, but just before Christmas are those "horrible" final examinations under which we are at present groaning. And it generally happens that the finals are the ones which one knows least about, while the half-yearly ones are not dreaded so. But if one happens to get through with a respectable mark it makes Christmas all the merrier.

North Dakota blizzards are a characteristic of the prairies and as sure as a blizzard comes along and shuts one up in the house for a day or two, there is never a doubt but that it is winter; for common as they are, a blizzard has never been known to make its appearance in summer. So taking all things into consideration, wintry suggestions are on the whole unpleasant to me.

—Augusta Newlander,
Grafton, N. D.

Twelfth Grade.

THE SONG OF THE WIND.

(Honorable Mention.)

Winter. There comes to my mind the memory of a terrible storm. The snow was blowing wildly and Jack Frost's presence was felt when a door was opened or one stepped outside. All day long the wind sang a song which did not improve the evening any. The next morning I was awakened by my sister who said that the snow was up against the door and the folk could not get out. So before breakfast we, my father, mother, two sisters and a brother, managed to force the door open, and after going out of sight two or three times in the snow drifts, reached the back door and shoveled the snow from it. Then we tied a string to my brother so that he would not be lost in the storm which was so bad one could hardly see. We let him go to the barn and my sister held the other end of the string. If he had any trouble he was to pull on it. He did so, and we found him almost buried in a snow drift and we speedily relieved him. That was winter.

—Eunice Loughridge,
Warren, Minn.

Seventh Grade.

SOWING GOOD DEEDS.

(Honorable Mention.)

'Tis winter and the snow lies deep upon the ground; the barns and leafless trees are artistically decorated with festoons of frost. The ponds and rivers are bridged over with a coat of mail. Large columns of smoke can be seen rising from every chimney, whirling upward farther and farther till at last they vanish among the low gray clouds of the dreary sky. The sociable "cheer up!" of the robin and the doleful tune of whip-poor-will are no longer heard. The delicate song birds have flown to warmer climes; only the hardy sparrow remains to fight this great king of the seasons, looking wistfully at our windows, waiting for the crumbs which he generally receives. The poor man in his lowly hut shivers when he hears the wind moaning and sighing through the naked trees. The poor widow wonders where she will get enough food and clothing to keep her little ones from hunger and cold. The merry jingle of sleigh bells and the shouts of happy skaters on the pond banish these dark thoughts.

Stir up the fire, and although the winter wind may sting, it is not unkind, and though winter days are dark, they can bring as many pleasures as the spring. If they do not bring the birds and blossoms they give us "the joys of indoor mirth," and all the "social home comforts" that Whittier loves to talk about. Winter speeds along with a steady step, sparkling eyes and smiling lips, for he is scattering good deeds broadcast over the land. He is leaving food for spring's blossoms and 'tis winter who helps heap up the harvest wagon. Did we but follow winter's example and perform half as many good works, what a bright smile all would wear and how much happier we would be!

—Helena Deary,
Prairie du Chien, Wis.

Eighth Grade.

SORRY WHACKS FOR TENDER HEADS.

(Honorable Mention.)

The word "winter" makes me think of the time I learned to skate. It was a cold winter day, and papa asked my brother, sister and myself if we wanted to go to the lake with him to get some ice. We said we did, and taking an old pair of skates we had we started. When we reached the lake papa took three packages out of the sleigh and gave one to each of us. We unwrapped them and found a pair of new skates in each bundle. We put them on and then the fun began.

As soon as I tried to skate my feet flew out from under me like lightning. I whacked my head and whacked my knees and kept sitting down on the ice harder than I preferred. At last I became so used to them I could keep on my feet. My sister and brother were rather afraid of getting their heads cracked, and did not keep it up as long as I did. Then I learned to take a stroke or two at a time. Then I found I could skate a little farther and a little farther until I could skate about a rod without stopping before papa said we had to go home. I was very proud of myself because I learned to skate first.

—Verna Vail,
Stewartville, Minn.

Sixth Grade.

MEMORIES THAT CHILL.

(Honorable Mention.)

Where, from their frozen urns, mute springs
Pour out the river's gradual tide,
Shrilly the skater's iron rings,
And voices fill the woodland side.

The word "winter" suggests many happy thoughts such as skating, coasting, Santa Claus and Christmas trees, but the first thing I thought of when I read the topic was the above verse from Longfellow's "Woods in Winter," which I read a short time ago. I was charmed with these lines as they are an almost accurate description of a scene in our woods in winter. The river runs through the woods and there is an ever running spring which makes a long, beautiful, tempting sheet of smooth ice, an ideal skating place for hosts of merry lads during this season of the year. What glorious sport for jolly, healthy farm boys to skate here on moonlight evenings! How our happy voices fill the woodland with shouts and bursts of laughter!

I have spent many happy hours on this frozen river, yet there is one incident connected with it that always recalls chills. Four years ago our hired men were getting ice on the river. I was skating around them and went too near the ice plow and was thrown into the water among large, floating blocks of ice. I screamed to the men and made desperate efforts to climb up on a block, but my mittens were wet and slippery, my heavy overcoat and overshoes soaked full of water which kept dragging me down until I was nearly exhausted when rescued by the men. I shall never forget this cold bath which might have been fatal.

—Joseph F. Russell,
Madelia, Minn.

Fifth Grade,
District 13, Ceresco.

TRINKLE'S TRIP ABROAD.

Trinkle lived where it is always summer. Her home was in a brook. She had a sparkling appearance and danced gaily along with her many brothers and sisters. Together they continually murmured a low sweet song.

One day Trinkle happened to be gliding along on the surface when she suddenly felt herself rising into the air. She struggled but rose steadily, meeting many others like herself, with whom she talked and wondered about their strange flight. Finally they joined a vast army and sailed through space with great swiftness. "Dear me, how cold it is!" shivered Trinkle, "I am freezing." "Never mind," replied Crystal, "Cold air gives us such lovely white mantles and we get used to the freezing." Trinkle soon found herself enveloped in a fleecy robe, and what fun they had chasing up and down! "You now have a new name," said Cold Air to Trinkle, "It is Snowflake." After awhile Cold Air cried, "Let's descend and surprise Old Earth. One, two, three—go!" "Hurrah!" they cried and away they raced to the dark ground. The children ran out to welcome them. "Oh, see," they cried, "the angels are shaking their wings and the white down is falling!"

"How beautiful to be spoken of in such a way," said Snowflake, as she fluttered down near a rosy cheeked lassie, "and how pleasant to rest quietly after such an adventurous journey."

At night when the smiling moon arose his radiance was reflected in Snowflake's happy face and in the faces of those about her till they shone like diamonds. And when in the deep stillness of the night the angels spread their shining wings and hovered over the enchanting scene, Snowflake's happiness was complete.

—May Thomson,
Huntley, Minn.

Ninth Grade,
Winnebago City School.

WITH ALL THE FOLK AWAY.

"I wonder," mused Fanny, as she sat near the bright fire one cold winter morning, "I wonder if there are any fairies in the winter time. How I should like to see one!" "Should you?" said a soft voice at her side, startling her. She supposed herself alone, as her father and mother had gone on a visit. Turning in the direction from which the voice had come, she beheld a tiny figure clad in white. This fairy like figure had beautiful white wings, a star-shaped diamond in her forehead and a light wand in her hand.

"I know you, Fanny," the fairy said, "and am now here to satisfy your desire to see a fairy. I am the snow queen and you may state one wish and it shall be granted." "Oh!" cried Fanny, clapping her hands joyfully, "Take me to your home!" "Come with me then," said the snow queen. Touching her with her wand, so that she should not feel the cold, she led her out to her pure white sleigh, which was drawn by two white swans. Taking their places they soared up and up, over mountains and even above the clouds. All this was new to the delighted Fanny, who could scarcely restrain herself. As they approached a beautiful ice palace, glistening in the sunlight, her delight was unbounded. Alighting from the sleigh the fairy led her into the palace, crowded with fairies, who gathered around to welcome them. Fanny was so very happy here that she forgot even her own home. But at length the queen said that it was time for her to go home. So again getting into the sleigh, they flew swifter than a bird down and down until at length she found herself sitting by her own cheerful fire.

—Emma Peterson,
Moorhead, Minn.

Tenth Grade,
Sharpe School.

GRANDFATHER MUSKRAT'S CALLER.

The word "winter" suggests to me thoughts of sliding, sleighing and skating, skating especially, because of so many things that have happened while I was doing it. Once as I was skating on the river with another boy I noticed that the ice was cracking and bending under me but I did not say anything to my companion about it. All at once the ice broke under me and I went down into about two feet of mud. I thought it was strange that I did not feel any water above it. I turned my head in the direction in which we had been going and I saw an old muskrat coming straight toward me. He scared me very much and I made an effort to get loose but I could not. The muskrat stopped when I moved. By that time my friend had found a board and was going to hand it to me when he spied the old muskrat looking at him. It scared him so that he ran away and I had to get out of the hole alone. When I had climbed out I saw that I had fallen into a muskrat run.

—Elvin A. Gruhlke,
Jackson, Minn.

Seventh Grade.

PRISONERS OF BOREAS.

My mother and I were riding on a train in Iowa during a blizzard. It happened that we were several hours late, and we were compelled to wait on a siding for the passing of a night express. When it whirled past we noticed that the train was covered from one end to the other with snow. When our train finally started we consoled ourselves with the thought that in a few hours we would be in Dubuque. False hopes, soon destined to disappointment! We had scarcely covered ten miles when our speed gradually slackened and we came to a stop.

Now ensued a scene which I can scarcely describe. There was practically no food, for the trains ahead of us had taken the provisions at all the stations and we were expecting to reach Dubuque in time for supper. What little food there was the children and a few of the women received, for all the men and many ladies refused to divide the children's food. Even then the young ones cried bitterly for food and all evening the cars were filled with the moanings of babes and the low lullabies of the patient mothers. That night it snowed steadily until near morning and the high wind piled drifts of snowy whiteness against the coaches. All day long the passengers suffered, some in silence, others in petulant complaining. About 5 o'clock, after repeated attempts the conductor and two brakemen broke through the drift and reached a farmhouse. Soon after a rotary plow reached us, and with plenty of food we rode on, contented and happy. This was several years ago, but the word "winter" brings to my mind the hardship of that long day and night of imprisonment in a snowbound train.

—William W. Barron,
Brainerd, Minn.

Twelfth Grade,
Washington School.

A DRAMATIC SITUATION.

The word "winter" suggests an incident that happened to me in the woods when visiting my cousins. One morning my cousin and I rose early and went into the woods to see if we could not shoot a couple of rabbits that we had seen running on the ice of the river. We took a shotgun and a 22 caliber rifle with us.

When we neared the river my cousin wanted me to go ahead to see if there were any rabbits around, so shouldering my rifle I started off. After a while I heard a light footfall behind me. Quick as a flash I turned around and cocked my rifle for instant use, and there—was a large wolf glaring at me as though he would eat me. I caught his gaze. Finally he began to back away and showed uneasiness. Now, I thought, was my time, and I raised my rifle, aimed and fired. The bullet struck the wolf in the shoulder. I began to reload but the wolf was upon me. I was going to hit him with my rifle, but it was knocked out of my

Who Comes Dancing O'er the Snow?

Who comes dancing over the snow,
His soft little feet all bare and rosy?
Open the door, though the wild winds blow.
Take the child in and make him cozy,
Take him in and hold him dear,
He is the wonderful New Year.

Open your heart, be it sad or gay,
Welcome him there and treat him kindly;
For you must carry him yea or nay,
Carry him with shut eyes so blindly.
Whether he bringeth joy or fear,
Take him. God sends him, this good New Year.

—Dinah Mulock Craik.

Northwestern Topics.

For Saturday, Jan. 10:

"COOKS AND CARPENTERS."

What have been your trials and tribulations, your successes or your failures while posing as cooks or carpenters? Choose an experience under one of these heads only, and then tell "all about it." The stories ought to be very good and very full of ginger, the "variety" that makes the editor's heart glad. The papers must be mailed so as to reach the office

Not Later Than Friday Morning, January 2.

They must be strictly original, written in ink on one side only of the paper, not more than 300 words in length, nor less than 100, marked with the number of words and each signed with the grade, school, name and address of the writer. The papers must not be rolled.

For Saturday, Jan. 19:

"THE QUALITIES THAT MAKE A FRIEND. WHY?"

Diogenes of old went about seeking an honest man. Men to-day are practically seeking the perfect friend. Suppose you could endow some human being with the qualities that make an ideal friend, what would they be? Why? This last question is very important and must be carefully and fully answered or a paper will not be considered in the contest. The papers must be mailed so as to reach the office

Not Later Than Friday Morning, January 9.

They must be strictly original, written in ink on one side only of the paper, not more than 300 words in length, nor less than 100, marked with the number of words and each signed with the grade, school, name and address of the writer. The papers must not be rolled.