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WINTER IN A HILLY VILLAGE.

By Leo Steckel, Freshman Scientific.

As early as the month of November the winter sets in with great violence in the hilly village. The mercury falls to about 20° below the freezing point. The snow falls to a depth of about five feet, and sometimes it snows for many days and nights, so that the snow reaches to the eaves of the one-story, little wooden cottages. The storms and blizzards oftentimes prevent the inhabitants from leaving their houses for many weeks. The frost that sweeps through the woods and forest presents many different paintings on the window panes.

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The children there gather themselves around the hearth which is built at the side of the fireplace for that purpose. There they repeat their school lessons, telling stories to one another, making different structures with tiny blocks of wood, preparing sleds for sleigh-riding and playing all sorts of indoor games. They also question their mother as to when they may go outside.

The birds have wandered away to the warmer countries, so that the sweet songs of the canaries are not heard anymore in the neighboring groves, and only the loud howl of the wolves can be heard as they run through the deep snow-covered thickets.

The cattle and sheep are kept in little stalls, made of joined logs, near the cottage. These cattle and sheep, although with warm skins over their bodies, still suffer greatly from the severe frost that attacks them.

The brooks and streams are frozen as hard as rocks. The people, having no other way to get water, are obliged to cut out a little place in the frozen streams, large enough for the water pail to be dipped in to obtain the water, and when the storm is very severe snow is melted for the use of water.

The extensive forests afford cheap fuel, of which the people prepare enough to last during the winter term. They also supply themselves with plenty of dried meat which is made from young

lambs; corn-meal, which makes up the greater part of their food, and potatoes, cabbage, beets and other vegetables.

When the storm and snowing stops and the temperature is endurable, the boys and girls dress themselves in warm mantles made of sheepskin and in long leather boots, ready for outdoor sports. The outdoor sports are skating, sliding down the hills with small sleds, throwing snow-balls, wading in the snow and erecting different monuments of snow.

The sleigh bells are heard in every direction, as the horses are galloping along on the smooth roads. The cows are also driven out on the hills for a little exercise, and these hills they find to their surprise, are covered with white, sparkling snow instead of green grass.

But this weather does not last long, as the storms and blizzards soon begin again, and keep on in their former manner until the month of April.



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