Relation of Thomson’s Seasons to Vergil’s Georgics

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Outline

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Virgil's indebtedness to others:  
Evidence of Thomson's acquaintance with the "Georgics":
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The Relation of Thomson's Seasons to English Georgics.

With the examples of Chaucer, Shakespeare and Tennyson before us, as perhaps the first borrowers in the whole range of English poetry it is impossible to say that a poet to be original shall not borrow. Who but the poet himself may fix the bounds of his genius and determine what is legitimate in the material which, shaped by the creative hand, and quickened into new life by the inspiration of the poet's soul, becomes immortal? Bacon, in his Philosophy of Literature, has well shown that he only is truly original who has given superiority of form to the substance used, whether it is his own or another's, and who has endowed the new product with the qualities of a free and exalted genius. If the master of English poetry borrowed, not only plots, incidents, and characters, but often ideas, and even the very words in which they were conveyed, without incurring blame, they have undoubtedly furnished ample excuse for imitators of subsequent time.

But it is not in the English
language alone that poets have been indebted to their predecessors. The Channels leading back to the "original fountain" are so many and so diverse that it would be presumptuous, indeed, for any one to say conclusively just where it is to be found. Occasionally these springs forth from the soil and unconscious genius like that of Burns, whose poems seem to gush spontaneously from the heart with scarcely a trace of foreign influence, but such instances are rare to find, and the vast majority of poets, Anglo-Saxon and Romantic, Latin and Greek alike, betray the influence of others' works upon themselves.

The poetical mind is peculiarly susceptible to the effects of classical learning, all that is beautiful, graceful, and noble in literature finding therein a ready soil which cannot but reproduce in some form the seed thoughts committed to it. This reproduction appears sometimes as a faint and delicate likeness, scarcely discernible to the most sympathetic mind, a likeness that results from the fullest assimilation of another's spirit, and which is expressed.
unconsciously by the poet. It is a reproduction of the atmosphere: the sunshine, cloud, or gloom that dominates a work and gives it its peculiar character. This kind of resemblance cannot properly be called imitation.

That is a less subtle likeness, which reproduces the imagery and feeling of another so distinctly that the analogy is readily apparent though expressed with such delicacy and originality that it might easily be a coincidence. W. E. C. Stedman in his essay on Tennyson and Theocritus gives several examples of imitations that seem to me to be of this type. One from the "Epitaph of Bion," supposed to have been written by Moschus, will serve for illustration:

"Thee Cyprius holds more dear than that last she gave Itonis as he lay dying."

The imagery and feeling have been most delicately repeated by Tennyson in " Tears Idle Tears":

"Dear as remembered kisses after death."

Notwithstanding the figure is uncommon the likeness would seem to be accidental if it were not possible to find as many other traces of the influence of Moschus upon Tennyson."
citizen who shares our language and culture. His presence in our neighborhood is a reminder of our shared ancestry and the importance of preserving our heritage.

The page contains a series of fragmented sentences and partial legible text. It appears to discuss a historical or political context, although the handwriting makes it difficult to extract coherent information. The text seems to be discussing the role of citizens and their contributions to society, potentially referencing a particular historical event or figure.
Stedmanson and Theodore's contains a state-
demonstration of the ways in which the work
of one poet may resemble that of
another which so much aids my
present purpose that I take the liberty
of quoting it entire: "Thus are," he says,
two modes in which the workman-
ship of one poet may resemble that
of another. The first, while not subjecting
an author to the charge of direct
inspiration in the vulgar sense of
plagiarism, is detected by critical anal-
ogy, and, of the two, is more easily
recognized by the skilled reader. This
the mode which involves either a symp-
thetetic treatment of rhythmic breaks,
jaunts, accents, alliterations; a core-
spondence of the architecture of the
two poems, with parallel interlaced
and effects, correspondence of theme,
allowing for difference of place and
period; or, a correspondence of scenic
and metrical purpose; or, fine a gener-
al analogy of atmosphere and tone.
The second, more obvious and common
place, method is that displaying im-
mediate coincidence of structure,
language, and thought; a mode which
in the hands of inferior men leaves
the sense at the mercy of their dulled uires.
Of the first class of resemblances indicated by Mr. Stedman, some of the "seasons" least may be shown to exist between Thomson's "Seasons" and Vergil's "Georgies," though more belong undoubtedly to the second division.

But Thomson had an illustrious example before him; for Vergil himself did not blush to use the Greek and Roman authors with the utmost freedom. He rather boasted of the fact, as when in "Georgies," ii. 176, he announced his intention of singing like Hesiod:

"Asceaeumque eam—Romana fer quadra camar"

And in the "Elogia," he plainly acknowledges his indebtedness to Theocritus (E. ii. 1) 2

"Sicelides Muses—Paulo majora panamus."

Also (E. ii. 1, 8) 3

"Prima Syracusan dignata est ludere versu nostia neque esubuit silvas habitaris Italia."

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1 And I shall sing the song of Asea through the towns of Rome.
2 Muse of Sicily, now shall I sing in more majestic stanzas.
3 My first muse desinged to adopt in Syracusan verse, now did she blush to sing a pastoral song.
Virgil not only states his intention of singing pastoral verse like his Sicilian model, but he makes use of the structure, the characters, names, scenes, thought, and situations, and even the exact words of the Idylle of Theocritus, interweaving sue and there a thread of Roman life, or Sicilian myth and landscape, and commingling all in a manner that results in utter incongruity, and gives the "Elegies" a wholly artificial character that is neither Roman nor Sicilian. That Virgil was a student of books for more than of men and things is at once apparent to the least critical reader of his three great works, all of which are adorned with an abundance of classical embroidery by a method which has been imitated by most of the poets from that time to the present. That the classical learning in which he delighted should manifest itself in his poems was inevitable; both because of the spirit of the Augustan Age, which accepted the most servile imitations with unreserved applause, and because of his shy, retiring nature, which compelled him to seek what he loved books for inspiration rather than to seek it among men. Mr. Conington in his
scholarly introduction to the "Georgics" tells us that "In possessing Theocritus, Sidonius, and Homer, we may feel that we possess, as it were, the existing causes of the Elegy, the Georgics, and the Aenid. They do not, indeed, represent all the literary influences which must have told on Virgil's genius, or disclose to us the origin of the peculiar manner in which she has conducted the work of imitation, but they show us what it was that in each successive case first stimulated his general conception of his subject — what it was that he admired in the literature of Greece and sought to reproduce among his own countrymen. They enable us to judge of him not only as a poet, but as a critic of the poetry of others." Besides these three chief sources (Mr. Conington shows that Virgil was largely indebted to Aristotle, Theophrastus, Alcman, Catullus, Varro, and Lucretius, and to others to a less degree). Notwithstanding it is quite patent that Virgil borrowed freely from a great variety of sources, his poems have the qualities of truth and sincerity and are so dominated by his own peculiar artistic genius that they have all the charm of originality.
But at present Vergil's imitations
sacrificed and his originality interest us only so
eighteenth as they are concerned with Thomson's
idea and relation to him. Living in the artifi-
cultural atmosphere of the eighteenth centu-
ry with its abounding literary activity
Thomson found himself in the
midst of influences that tended to
bear all individuality and freedom.
The critical spirit had culminated in
D'Alembert, who was Thomson's main friend,
advice, and critic. The domination of
style was absolute. Sense was sacrificed
to form, and thought and feeling were
far to seek in the striking antitheses
and daintily turned phrases that passed
for poetic excellence. Nor was Thomson
able wholly to resist the false spirit of
his time. He evidently seeks for
effective phrases and epithets, and
delights in bombastic language. In dif-
ference to the prevailing method he in-
dulges freely in paraphrase, allegory,
personification, apostrophe, and alliteration.
The love of detail that characterized
the age is everywhere manifest, and
like all the writers of his time, he makes
a display of classical learning.

Judging from all available
accounts he had the usual elementary
Training in the ancient classics, and several years' study at Edinburgh University, spending his time there from 1715-1725 in classical and philosophical studies and in preparing for the ministry. But if we had not the testimony of his biographers there is abundant internal evidence in his poems of his classical learning, which, readily assimilated by his sensitive mind, and modified by his exalted imagination, could not but impress itself on his works. Being a lover of the country, and a close and sympathetic observer of rural scenes and life, it was very natural that his mind should respond readily to the theme of Virgil's "Georgies," and that he should yield homage to the ancient poet of rural life by more or less conscious imitation.

Most of his biographers and critics have been strangely silent about his indebtedness to the "Georgies." Jamieson gives the subject a line: "Thomson's visible imitations of Virgil, his episodes inserted like a renewing of his invocations to Spring, to the muse, to Philosophy..."
All the relics of the conventionalisms of The college produce an incongruity. "Shairp, in his "Poetic Interpretation of Nature," says, he has a "composite style of language formed partly from the recollections of Milton, partly from Vergil's Georgies." And Minto, in the "Literature of the Georgian Era," tells us that "there are more frequent traces in his "Other Seasons" (than "winter") of deliberate imitation of Vergil's 'Georgies,' and deliberate search for good descriptive topics."

A careful study, however, of the subject matter, character, and structure of the two poems, with a minute comparison, line by line, of the thoughts and words reveals a large number of resemblances both in general atmosphere and in detail. The likenesses in general structure and method are too many to be accidental, and those in detail are so close, at least in some points, as to give the impression that Thomson must either have had a very retentive memory for pictures and words, or else he had a copy of the 'Georgies' before him when he wrote the 'Seasons.'

The "Memoir" of Thomson by Sir Nicholas Harris contains two letters of Thomson
that mention Virgil with reverence. In one to Bubb-Dodington, after expressing his desire to travel in order that he might "store his imagination with ideas of "all-beauties, all-great, and all-perfect" nature, he says: "These are the true materia poetica, the light and colors, with which fancy kindles up the whole creation; paint a sentiment and even embodies an abstracted thought. I long to see the fields where Virgil gathered his immortal honey." His acquaintance with the "Georgies" is indicated in a letter to his absent friend Pattison to whom he writes: "May your health, which never failed you yet still continues, till you have scraped together enough to return home and live in some sunny corner, as happy as the Georgies in Virgil's South Georgie, whom I recommend both to you and myself as a perfect model of the sweet happy life."

He formally acknowledged the likeness of his theme to Virgil's "Georgics" and admits Grecian influence upon Roman letters in Spring, 55–57: -- "Such themes as these, the rural Maro sung, To write imperial Rome, in the full height Of elegance and taste by Greece refined: Among the pleasures of Spring lie
describes the charm of reading the "Georgic" while reclining beneath a spreading
\textit{act} on a warm afternoon):

(Spring, $435 - 457$).

"There let the classic page thy fancy lead
Through rural scenes; such as the Mantuan swain
Paints in the matchless harmony of song."

In the winter by the sandy fiolede,
he would sit studiously,
"And hold high converse with the mighty dead;"
Among the great figures that through
his vision comes Virgil:--

(Homl, $580 - 588$).

"Behold, who wonder comes! in sober state,
Hail mild and strong, as is a revisit sun:
"Tis Phoebus' self, or else the Mantuan swain."

With these numerous evidences of
Thomson's acquaintance with the "Georgic"
and his reverence for Virgil, together with
the general resemblances to be observed in
the "Seasons," and the large number of
passages that are palpable imitations, we
are led to conclude that Thomson made
use of the "Georgic" rather than of the Greek
and Roman writers who provided Virgil
with material. The fact that Thomson
imitates so large a variety of passages that
are immediately traceable to so many
different sources strongly enfuiies this
view. That Thomson should have borow-
ed directly from Vindicius, Aratus, Lucius, and others. Of Virgil's sources we imply.

amid scholarship than we have any reason to think he possessed, especially
when all was so easily obtained at second hand from an avowedly loved
author. And we know also that in Thomson's other works he did not scruple
to make wholesale appropriations of all kinds of poetic paraphernalia.

While the "Seasons" and the "Georgics" are both poems on Nature, manifest-
ing a general correspondence in theme and arrangement, they differ essentially
in some features. The "Georgics" treat of the earth as subdued and
made productive by the toil of man. The "Seasons" describe the earth as the beau-
tiful abode of man. The one, to a greater degree, glorifies labor and treats incident-
ally of the beauties of nature; the main purpose of the other is to portray the
varied aspects of nature through the changing seasons, and incidentally to
deal with its relation to life, and
especially the effect of the contempla-
tion of nature upon the mind of
man. In both the human element is
strong. Both spell labor. And both
express the beauty and simplicity of
country life.

It cannot be claimed that the origin of the "Seasons" is to be found in and in the "Georgies". Each poem is a distinct conception prompted by the author's love of nature and his rural experience. In Vergil's Mantuan farm with its Stooks and grainfields, and in Thomson's English rose garden with its nightingales may be found some of the primary sources of inspiration. Each chooses a theme in harmony with his place and time, and modifies it according to his own character and experience. But when the main idea of the "Seasons" is once clearly conceived in the poet's mind, it is shaped and aided, or sometimes moved, by the introduction of many of the peculiar characteristics of the "Georgies", and of the very incidents and language.

Thus is general analogy that is less readily obviated than the immediate likenesses of thought and language, but which furnishes just as sure evidence of the influence of the "Georgies" upon the "Seasons". In noting this general likeness it is necessary to take into account the elements of time and place and the character and experience of the two poets. In making a comparison of the two
Thomson is more truly a descriptive poet than Virgil. The "Seasons" is of the essentially a descriptive poem, while the Georgics, prime motive of the Georgics is instruction, the descriptive elements being a poetic necessity. But it is this quality in the Georgics that appeals most strongly to Thomson's imagination, and he copies the pictures but does not attempt to adapt the facts of Roman husbandry to eighteenth-century English life.

There is however, a didactic quality in both forms of moral instruction. It deals with a great variety of topics, a few of which seem to be analogous. Both effort to religious observance, and to kindness to animals, to patriotism, and to the innocence of country life.

By way of introducing his description of the beauties of rural life Virgil invokes the muses to aid him in the study of philosophy, or if the golden bow could have tutored him he would be content to live ingloriously beside rural streams; Thomson concludes his dissertation on the advantages of the country with an invocation to "Nature to

1 S. II. 478-483, &c.
enrich him with the knowledge of all her works, but if the sluggish streams about his heart foiled that best ambition he would lie inglorious by the lowly brook and dream of Philosophy. 4. Beside this palpable imitation which occurs at the end of "Autumn" each of the "Seasons" contains towards its close a discussion of Philosophy in a similar tone. As this was a favorite subject with Thomson he might have introduced it into his work independently of Virgil, but he would not, except by conscious imitation, have given it a similar place and connected it directly with the description of rural life, which also reproduces the thought and language of Virgil at many points in almost the same order. Throughout the entire work there is discerned a philosophic tone which appears to a less degree in the "Georgics" but which may be felt here and there in connection with similar topics.

Scarcely less apparent is the religious element, which is introduced into the "Seasons" in the same manner as it appears in the "Georgics." Virgil in full sincerity calls upon the Roman divinities.

1 Summer, 1352-1378. 2 St., VI. 88. ETC.
for aid, Liber and Ceris, Pan and Pale, and
the nymphs and dryads; while Thomson,
in a Christian spirit, and with devout heart,
prays to his Maker and the Father of
Light and Life, and asks blessings upon
his work. Each feels man's dependence
upon a power higher than his own, and
urges the expression of thankfulness. The
idea of all pervading deity is brought
out distinctly in both; by Virgil in con-
nection with the divine intelligence of
bees, and by Thomson with the springtime
instincts of the living world. His
religion is not deistic as some of his
critics claim, but the influence of his
model betrayed him into some expressions
of a deistic nature. Popes influence may
possibly be felt here.

A strong general analogy appears in
invocations and addresses of the two
poems. I have already mentioned the
invocations to their own peculiar divinities,
which are made by both poets in each of
the four divisions of their works. As Virgil
directs Roman farmers to plough and to
cultivate the one, so Thomson urges the
Britons to renovate the plough and to

1 Winter, ii. 176, 17, 179-187.  3 Spring, 249-256, et al.
4 G. I, 218, 422, 36.  5 Spring, 67.
clothe the autumn fields with fruit.
Woodland deities, fauns, and sylvan maidens
are summoned to dance and joy with the
Roman poet, while the English bard,
re-captured with the springtime, calls upon
loves and maidens to go with him and
"read the morning dew."

Virgil sings,
"Salve magnis poenis fugaquis Saturnia tellis!
Then Thomson, "Hail, Britannia! ...
Rich is thy soil, and menful thy climate."
And both celebrate the glories of their
native land. Both address the sun as
the author of the year, and invoke his
aid.

Virgil calls upon Apollo; and
Thomson upon Inspiration! The two
great Roman patrons of literature, Aug-
ustus and Maecenas, are appealed to with
a tribute of praise, and Thomson dedicates
his poems to his patrons, "The Countess of Hert-
ford," "Bath Dodington," "Anslow," and Wil-
lington." In the address to Augustus
there is much that is mildly compli-
mentary, but it is given, perhaps, in a
semireligious spirit and is, therefore, execu-
table. The invocations to Maecenas have
a natural manly tone. But Thomson
takes the one to Augustus as his model
and loads his dedications with fulsome
flattery. Just as Vergil calls upon
Augustus to aid in a degenerate age
Thomson appeals to the Jacobites; the
Duke of Argyle and Duncan Forbes3 to
come to the assistance of his native
Scotland. In addition to these forms of
invocation, which are, in fact, nearly all
that Vergil employs, Thomson apostro-
phizes other friends, the Seasons, Nature
and Philosophy. He is generally, he
exaggerates his model.

This exaggeration is especially
noticeable in the digressions, which are
more frequent in the "Seasons" and usu-
ally extended to an undue length. Some
of them are occupied with topics that
resemble those of Vergil though may
have no parallels in the "Georgics."

As a rule they are rapid and thorough-
lly artificial. This is especially true of
the episodes, inserted, as Saine says,
"like a veneer" with as little excuse for
their presence as Vergil's stories of Ari-
taeus and Orpheus. And they are told
with far less skill. Celadon and
Amelia are designed to awaken sympa

1 S., I 478-573. 2 Autumn, 910-947.
as are Orpheus and Eurydice, but the
monstrosity of a virtuous maiden struck
by lightning by her lover's side shocks
the feelings, and fails to arouse the
pathetic interest that is felt in the
fate of Eurydice. The tale of Damon
and Musidora is utterly ridiculous; and
Lavinia and Palamon are no more Eng-
lish than the characters in Virgil's
stories are Roman. They are Ruth and
Boaz introduced into an eighteenth-
century grain-field and adorned with
Latin names. But the influence of Thom-
son's model is felt not in the likeness
of his episodes to those of Virgil, but in
the fact that he regarded it necessary
to include them as a part of the archi-
tecture which he had copied in so many
details. Other digressions in which the
influence of the "Georgies" is more strongly
felt are found in the "Praises of Britain,"
the description of the "Pilgrim, the account of
the Golden Age, and the rise of Industry,
and in the very close imitation of Virgil's
"Treatment of the Subject of Animal Life," and of chains of vital life, and the study

1 L. II. 186-176 + Summer 1440-1661.
2 L. III. 475-358 + Summer 1025-1100.
3 L. I. 121-137 + Spring 248-230 + Autumn 72-140.
4 L. III. 307-283 + Summer 614-1176.
5 L. II. 458-349, + Autumn 1235-1873.
of nature. All of Virgil's more important digressions have been utilized in some form except the neat description of the old man of Coney, whom Thomson elsewhere regards as "a model of the truest happy life."

The Roman poet sings the praises of Italy, and he is followed by the English admires with a eulogy of Britain, which has some features in detail like those of the model; though the chief resemblance is in the adaptation of the idea. This instance alone would have little significance, but, occurring in conjunction with other similar adaptations of Virgil's deris it is to be considered an imitation. Britain is great—according to the Roman idea of greatness, and best above all other lands. She is a peaceful land teeming with grain, wine, and olive. Numerous flocks and herds. A genial climate produces abundant fruit twice in a season. Stately cities rise with their trophies of human toil. Two seas wash her shores. She has beautiful lakes and fine harbors, and sea barriers that baffle the angry waves. She are mines of silver and gold. And chief among her glories is a long line of the famous men of Rome. Britain is the land of liberty, rich in her soil and merciful to all life.
Her guide is in her guardian oaks and
valleys golden with grain. On her
mountains flocks fleet numberless and
bellowing fields roar round their sides.
Her cities are full of trade and joyful
toil, and ports crowded with masts,
several commercial prosperity. Her youth
are praised in battle and on the sea.
And last is a long line of her "sons of
glory" from Alfred down, and a
tribute to the daughters of Britain. The
closing lines of the eulogy remind one of
Virgil's picture of the shores of Italy:

(Summer 1578-1601).

"Island of bliss! amid the subject seas
That thunder round thy rocky coast, set up,
At once the wonder, lust, and delight
Of distant nations; whose remotest shores
Can soon be shaken by thy naval arm;
Not to be shook thyself, but all assaults
Baffling like thy hour cliffs the broad sea wave."

Although I have not given a complete out-
line of these descriptions yet it is readily
seen that they have many topics in
common arranged in very nearly the same
order. And few are introduced into
either that are not common to both. The
analogy of theme and parallels in
detail can hardly be considered mere
coincidences.
The introduction of a pestilence is very natural in describing the doomed zone, and Thomson may have been entirely free from any influence of Virgil's vivid picture of the plague among animals, though from the great length and vividness of that account it could not but make an impression on the mind of the reader, and Thomson as if making a comparison says:

"An awful rage, the birds escape. Man is his destined prey."
And both give minute descriptions of the effects of the disease on their victims, and also upon inanimate nature, and assign the tainted atmosphere as the cause:

(2, III: 476-477).

"Hie quondam morte exaelestis industriae, hostem,
Tempestas, totaque autumni incendit aetate."

(Liburnia, 1052-1053).

"What need I mention those inclement skies Where, frequent over the sickening city, Plague, The fiercest child of Nemesis divine, Desends."

Both poets regret the loss of the Golden Age and praise the rise of Industry:

There once from the distemper of the skies A fitable Plague arose, and burned with all the heat of Autumn.
each varying his account in harmony
with his religious character and his theme.
Virgil tells of the age of Saturn when nature
of her own free will produced all things need-
ful. Man lived for the common welfare.
All noxious things were absent. But fate was
inviting that this state should continue,
so he sent fumeous animals destructive storms
and baleful plagues upon the crops, and
drove men to use their intellects in deriving
the means of subsistence; and bees, when
acorns in the woods began to fail taught
man the arts of agriculture. Thomson em-
phasizes the biblical idea of original man
in a state of innocence. Then the earth
produced spontaneously. The gracious clouds
dropped fatness down. Lions and lams
played together in gentle security, and
man had not learned to use animal
food. But innocence was lost and the
race degenerated. In mon times, vindic-
tive nature changed her course. The
deluge came to punish men for their
cries. And the seasons followed with
their own peculiar dangers. Thomson
does not in this connection tell how
man was driven to industrial life, but
the thought is taken up again in
"Autumn" 43-95, where he tells of primitive
man feeding upon acorns and shriving
in the words amid winter storms "Till Industry approached" and unfolded his faculties. The idea of the Golden age is a common heritage, and, like the Fustian, may have been introduced simply because of its peculiar fitness. I think, however, that this discussion also is made with the model in mind.

As there are in the subjects of universal lore and rural life so many close imitations I shall defer their discussion until I take up the more detailed comparison of specific facts.

Both poets describe remote regions they have never visited. Vergil with little regard for the facts of geography or natural science, describes the Libyans, shepherds; the Nile rising while dwell the colored Indians, and lying adjacent to Russia, and Scythia. While the Danube rolls his yellow sands, and Rhodos, stretching away under the dome, with everlasting winter, and continuous snows, and crusts forming suddenly upon swelling streams. Thomson with more knowledge of geography and science, and with that power which Matthew Arnold commends in a poet,
of writing as if he were actually holding what he describes, let his imagination roam o'er almost the entire globe. He encircles the earth in the torrid zone; paints the birds in fairest Thule and the Hebrides; and the notres of the Alps and the Pyrenees; traverses the whole of northern Europe, and the shores of Iceland and Greenland; then, passing the pole descends into the western hemisphere; thence the Muse leads him to the Tartar's coast andbleak Siberia, where the people dwell in caves; thence to Russia, whose great ruler commands the poet's admiration.

Although the indication of time by constellations was a conventional mode in Thomson's day, and he may have used it without the thought of his master, yet it seems probable that he was influenced by Virgil who employs this method more frequently than any other in the "Georgics." And Thomson near the beginning of each of his poems indicates the season in:

- Summer, 630-1102
- Autumn, 862-260
- Winter, 319-423
- Winter, 474-587
- Winter, 578-673
- Winter, 702-747
- Winter, 930-980
- Summer, 65-203
- Spring, 26: Summer, 43; Autumn, 23; Winter, 41; Etc.
This may, which shows that its use was not merely incidental, but according to a clearly defined plan. And this form of expression seems to be one of the many devices that collectively give the two works a similar tone. Since many of these features are clearly imitations (it is safe to conclude that all are that present a curious parallel. An instance is found in this connection in the remark of the autumnal equinox:

(2) p. 285-287."

"Libra die somnique pares vbi secesit horas,
Et medium lucem atque umbros iam dividit orum."

(Autumn, 24.)

"And Libra weighs in equal scales the year."

Other features that bear the impress of the classical school, and probably also woodland of Virgil are the invocations to the Muse, and the classic woodland furniture of Naiads, fanns, and Doric reeds, which are so incongruous in serious English verse as the Latin names of the youths and maidens in Thomson's tales. These were undoubtedly designed to be English though

Then Libra has made equal the hours of day and sleep and now divides the heavens in half between daylight and darkness.
such names as Damon, Musidora and
Palaemon at once suggest the bucolic
idyl of the eighteenth century. All the
fictitious characters in the Ireo bear
Latin names and one, after the fashion
of the ancient pastoral records her love
on the bark of a beech tree. But the
characters themselves are neither Latin
nor English. The effect of these classic-
al trappings is to give portions of the
work an artificial character, and to
detract from its general excellence and
suavity.

Thomson's love of epithets has already
been mentioned. It is manifested chief-
ly and with great originality in the
formation of effective compounds, but as
these combinations are not due to Latin
influence they will not be considered here,
although many of them contain Latin
radicals. I shall, however, notice the use
of words in their primitive Latin sense.
They occur chiefly as adjectives, sometimes
as obloquous nouns, and are often obscure
in meaning if the value of the
radical is not readily perceived. They
occur with sufficient frequency
to give the composition a distinct
coloring. A few examples will suffice
for illustration; as—"Latanissum"
(in the sense of industrious) 4 varied heart (changeful) 4 varied year (changed) 4 prime of days (first) 4 vale iniquitous (well-natured) 5 instant courage (ready) 6 will preventing will (anticipating) 6 sordid steam (soiled, or impure) 6 horrid heart (savage) 7 generous minds (noble) 10 generous state (honorable) 7. Some have been discovered that are clearly reproductions of epithets occurring in the "Georgics," as, alternate labors, which seems to have been suggested by "altēmis faciliis laboriis;" libelous hands, undoubtedly a reminiscence of "bibulae harena;" as also "formless wild" and "shapeless drift" of aggeribus nemicis informis; effusive south very delicately reproduces "Iuppiter uridus Aetris;" and Thulli bellows through her utmost isles and "fairest Thulli" seem to be the one, another expansion, the other a translation of "ultima Thulli." 18 Doubtless many more similar examples would be discovered by a closer examination.

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1 Spring, 98. 2 Spring, 267. 3 Winter, 1. 4 Winter, 116. 5 Winter, 1163. 6 Spring, 316. 7 Spring, 575. 8 Spring, 265. 9 Autumn, 818. 10 Autumn, 264. 11 Winter, 386. 12 Winter, 206. 13 Winter, 116. 14 Winter, 264. 15 Winter, 813. 16 Winter, 1163. 17 Winter, 316. 18 Winter, 267. 19 Winter, 818. 20 Winter, 386. 21 Winter, 206. 22 Winter, 1163. 23 Winter, 316.
Although these features that are dissimilarity common to both poems contribute to their general analogy, and considered in connection with the many parallels in thought and language, furnish indisputable evidence that Thomson was consciously influenced by the "Georgics," there are many characters of the two works that are unlike.

The difference in subject has already been briefly discussed. The motive of the "Georgics" and the "Seasons" is essentially different, the former being a didactic poem treating on the main, of agriculture, the cultivation of the vine, stock raising, and bee culture, while the latter is designed to give a description of the seasons in relation to rural man; for Thomson but very slightly graces upon city life. But both poems deal primarily with the country, and very naturally have some of the characters of pastoral poetry so that the likeness in motive is not so great as the titles would at first seem to indicate.

In metre and metrical structure there is no resemblance. Thomson wisely did not attempt the Virgilian hexameter but wrote the "Seasons" in unrhymed iambic pentameter, that is distinctively
his own. It does not have the movement of Milton's blank verse; for, though the same in mechanical structure, the regularity of it and the free use of alliterations, onomatopoeic forms, and singularity effective and musical compounds and epithets give his verse a softness and delicacy very unlike the grand organ swell of Paradise Lost; nor has it the variety and charm of the Virgilian muse, but moves along, for the most part, with an exceedingly musical effect that becomes monotonous because it is so steadily maintained, or, at times, the movement is heavy and labored which does not relieve the prevailing monotony. It has not the variety that is so constantly manifested in the Virgilian hexameter, and the effect on the ear is very different.

Each poet has his own peculiar style. Thomson is lost of detail, his rather Bombon sentence structure, and constant effort to produce a musical effect, give his work an entirely original character, the easy, brief, graceful style of Virgil being nowhere imitated. Even in the passages that are almost translations that it exhibited the distinctive genius of the English poet. It has already been observed that Thomson generally exaggerated his
his model in the adaptation of his device. This disposition is especially manifested in the fullness of his treatment of a borrowed idea or subject. If Virgil gives a thought a line Thomson will require two or three to express it, and a connected discourse will usually extend to several times the length of the original.

While these are the general features of likeness and unlikeness that pertain to the two compositions, there are many specific passages in the "seasons" that resemble parts of the "Georgics" and many that are undoubtedly imitations more or less consciously effected. Some are so close in thought and mode of treatment that one is almost compelled to suspect they are translations. This occurs more often in extended description, but sometimes in single lines. In other the likeness is exceedingly subtle, and often it is difficult to decide whether or not it is the result of imitation; and in the more minute comparison of the two works I shall doubtless point out some analogies that are wholly accidental, but all that seem sufficiently close to be imitations will be given. It will be the purpose of the remaining part of my work to cite the analogous passages found by a somewhat
careful examination of the two poems. Doubtless others would be discovered by a still more critical comparison.

This investigation is based on the text of Paget's 'Georgics,' edition of 1875, and D. G. Forsey's 'Seasons,' published in 1897. In this edition Mr. Forsey gives the variations of manuscript readings and of the editions of 1730 and 1788, which furnish further evidence of the imitation of the 'Georgics.' One of the most noticeable being a fuller description of the Golden Age, occurring after line 272, which combines the blessings of the Golden Age of the 'Georgics,' and those of the good times prophesied in the North Ecologe, from which the following lines are almost literally translated:

"The stately Ram,
Shone through the mead, in native Purple clad,
Or mildew Saffron, and the dawning Lamb
The vivid Crimson to the Sun disclos'd."

But these variations will not be considered here. The citations that follow will be presented in the order in which they occur in the 'Seasons,' beginning with 'Spring.'

This poem is introduced by a charming picture of the fertilizing spring rains that somewhat resembles the descent of Aether in springtime showers; it is suggestive also of the union of
heaven and earth in "Penigilium"(Venius"—
(§. II 324 - 327). 1
"Io. pater omnipotens fecundis imbibus Atthe
conjugis in gremium latae descendit et omnes
magnus alit magno commixa tis corporis fuitos".
(Spring, 1-4).

"Come gentle Spring—Ethereal mildness come;
And from the bosom of you dripping cloud,
While music makes around, veiled in a shower
Of shadowing roses, on our plains descend.

The likeness is a little close in this:—
(Spring, 119 - 182).

"But who can hold the shade while heaven descends
In universal bounty, shedding herbs,
And fruits and flowers, on nature's ample lap.?"

The melting of the snow on the
mountains, the softening of the soil in
the spring and the early flowering,
graphically imaged in the "Georgics" in
four lines are touched upon here and
there in a more extended description:—
(§. I 43 - 46) 2

"Nec nunc gelidus panic cum montibus umor
1 Then almighty Father Athor descends in
fertile rains into the lap of joyous earth, and
mingling his great frame with her nourish
all the embryos within).
2 In early spring when icy mates trickle
from hoary mountains, and the curb-
liguiset et japhyru fulic se gleba resolvit

depresso inceptat iam tum mini Taurus aratio

ingemere et sulae attititie splendescere somere.

(Spring, 15-17.)

While softest gales succeed, at whose kind touch

dissolving snows in kind torrins lost,
The mountains lift their green heads to the sky.

(Spring, 88-86.)

joyous the impatient husbandman perceivens

Relenting nature, and his trusty steers

Drives from their stalls to where the well-used plough

Lies in the furrow loosened from the frost.

(Spring, 41-48.)

Meanwhile incumbent for the shining shade

The master lends removes the obliterating clay,

Minds the whole work, and sidelong lays the glebe:

Both address the sun as the author

of the year:

(S, 5-6.),

"Ves s clavissima mundi

lumina, labentem caelo quale deusitio annum;"

(Spring, 51-52.)

"And temper all those worlds serenest sun,

ling glebe loosens at the west winds touch

then let the full groans with the impressed

plough, and the worn shade brighten in

the furrow.

1. Brightest lights of the world who

lead the gliding year in the heavens.
Man was innocent innocence) were unused to animal food, and knew not the arts of war. Thomson  
Goldage emphasises each detail of the picture:—  
(S., II. 586–590).  
"Ante etiam sceptrum Dictaei regis et ante  
insula quam coelis genos et supulata juvenis  
aureus habe vita in terris Saturnus agebat;  
medium etiam audierant inflati classyces medium  
impositos duris crepitare incidunt unus."  
(Sprin, 284–240).  
"But who their virtues can declare? Who  
with vision pure, into those secret stores  
Of health, and life, and joy? The food of man  
While yet he lived in innocence, and told  
A length of golden years, unfissed in flock,  
A stranger to the savage arts of life,  
Death, rape, savage, curse and disease.  
In the treatment of bees there are  
some analogous ideas such as their formation of a commonwealth, their industry  

1 Year even before the rule of the dictating king  
and before an impious race began to regulate  
itself on stolen bullocks, Saturn, ruler of  
the Golden Age led this life on earth.  
Nor did men yet dare to blow the martial  
trumpet, nor hammer out the sword on  
the stubborn anvil.
and forethought—"the favor with which the
tiny creatures fly their tasks, and the thyme-
scented honey; but these are all common-
places that naturally apply to bees. If
Thomson imitated Vergil's description at
all he wisely avoided all the unscientific
details that Vergil borrowed from the
ancient:"—

"Solae communes natos, consortia testa
urbis habent, magniique agitant aut legibus
et in ipsi solae et eutus nobiles Pernis;
venturaque hiemis memoriae aetatis laborem
esperiunt et in medium quasis refomunt
namque aliae nite invigilant et foedere pacto-
esperiunt aquis; tras in his sacra domorum
narcissi lacrimate et lentum de cortice glutin
primae: varias ponunt sumdinae, deinde Tenales
suspendunt ceras; aliae apem gentis adulesco
educunt felis; aliae fruissima mella

1 They alone have their children: ni common
have. Their dwellings associated in cities, and
protract their life under the laws and know
a native coming and permanent home;
and in the summertime, mindful of the
coming winter, they perform their work and
lay up store for common use. For some look
out for food, and toil, by agreement, in the
fields; some within the walls of the home
stipart, et liquido distendunt nectaris cellas. Quinta quibus ad portas ecceit custodia sorte, inque vicem speculatur, agras et muliebres, aut onera accipient, renientium, aut agnus fetus ignavum fucus fecus a palaeetibus ascen. Servet opus redolentiquaque thymo fragrantiis melis.

Spring 576-576

Here their delicious task the forest bees,
In swarming millions tend. Around, athwart,
Through the soft air the busy nations fly,
Cling to the bud and, with inserted tube,
Suck its pure essence, its ethereal soul.
And oft with bolder wing, they soaring dare
The purple heath, or, where the wild thyme grows
And yellow lead them with the luscious spire.

(Autumn) 1178-1179

place the nectarous tear and Claimy gum
From back of trees as the first foundation
For the comb, and thence suspend
The nectar cells; others lead out their young
The nation's hose; others store up the sweet
Honey, and distend the cells with liquid
Mead. These are some to whose lot has
Fallen the guardianship of the gates, and
Sin bin they match the water and the sky;
Or receive the burdens of those who are re-
Turning from their work, or form in battle
Line and keep back from the hire. The
Herd of lazy drones. The work grows hot and the
Fragrant honey smells of thyme.
"The happy people, in their wooden cells, basking in the sun's rays, and planning schemes of vengeance for winter poor, rejoiced to mark the full flowing sound, their copious store.

Virgil, in his vivid lines, has given a touching picture of the desolate nightingale mourning her vacant nest, every feature of which Thomson has used in a most exquisite bit of description, longer than the original, and more tender and beautiful, and made especially effective by the musical quality of the verses:

(II, IV. 511-515).

"Qualis Jopulae macrvnæ Philomela sub umbra amissos queritur fetus, quos dumque avator observans nidos inplumea detrapit; at illo fllet motem sermoque sedens miserabile canem integram et maestis late loca gregibus implet."

(Spring, 717-728).

"Oft when returning with her loaded bill, the astonished mother finds a vacant nest,

As the nightingale mourning in the poplar shade laments the loss young that, the headhunted ploughman beholding, has taken unfledged from the nest, but she weeps the night through, and sitting on a bough, renew's again and again her unhappy song and fills all the country round with the sound of her voice."
By the hard hand of immolating flames
Robbed, to the ground the vain illusion falls;
His pinions ruffle, and, low-dropping, scarce
Can bear the mower to the golden shade;
Whse, all abandoned to despair, she sings
Her sorrows through the night; and on the rough
Sole-sitting, still at every dying fall
Takes up again her lamentable strain
Of winding not; till wide around, the woods
Hark to her song and with her voice resound.

Each poet deals at length with the subject of universal love, Thomson, as usual with a more extended application and greater attention to detail. He takes these examples from the "Georgics" and adheres so closely to the original that they may be regarded as free translations:

(II, III. 213-236).

"Atque ides Taurus procull atque in sola lespurant
Pacava post mortem oppositum et trans flumen
Aut in his clauseae satira ad prolepso servat.
Carpit enim vires Paulatum mitque ordinem
Femina, ne memorem patiatur memini serbare

1 And for this reason they send the bulls far away into lonely pasture behind an afflating mountain, and beyond wide rivers or keep them shut up within their homes at their well-filled stalls. So the female proys little by little upon their strength and
munitam in locum inebrii, et sape superbis
comites intus se subiit desinere amantes.
Fasit ut magna sila formosa juventae:
ille alternantes multa in poelia miscent
vulneribus prebuit; carit atque corpora sanguis,
versaque eis obnixos irque cernit vasto
purn gemitus; reboant silvaeque et longo Olympus
nee mos bellantium arma stabulat, sed alter
victis abit longaque ignotia expers horrors oris,
multa gemen, ignominiam plagasque superbi
victoria, tum quos annuit multique amoros
et stabula aspectans regnique exessit aritis.

consume et when they see her, nor, indeed,
with her pleasant charms does she suffer
them to think of words or sweet grass, and
often she impels her haughty horses to stir
with one another with their horns. There is
the lovely heifer grazing in the great court
of silas: they engage in violent battle, now
one now the other, with frequent wounds;
dark blood falleth their forms, and with loud
bellowing they urge opposing horns against
the struggling enemy; the cords reel and
the heavens sound afar. Nor all the
raving rivals wont to dwell together in
the stable, but the conquered one goes far
away and lives in exile in unknown
regions, growing much over his disgrace
and the wounds of the haughty victor; then
"While thru the gentle tenants of the shade
Indulge their pure love, the rougher world
Of brute, below, rush furiously in ceaseless flame;
And fierce desire. Through all his baleful mists,
Unto the love he has lost unavenged; and
With one last look upon his stall he
Has left his ancestral kingdom. Then
He exercises his powers with every care,
And among hard rocks he lies the night long
Upon this motion bed, and feeds on
Flecked leaves, and sharp reed grass; and
He tries himself and learns to throw his
Horns in anger stirring with the trunk
Of a tree, and he challenges the wind
With blows and sends the sand flying
In prelude for the battle. Then, when
His strength is renewed, and his powers regained, he advances his standards,
And is borne headlong upon the
Needless foe."
The full deep scorched, the raging passion felt.
Of torture sick, and negligent of food,
She saw he made among the yellow broom.
While on his ample sides the rambling sprays
Liquoriant shoot; or through the mazy wood
Depicted mundane nor the enticing bud
Crops, though it presses on his faceless sense.
Irdoth in jealous maddening fancy wraught,
He seeks the fight, and idly buttling, feigns
His rival gored on every knotty trunk.

Anon should he meet the bellowing war begins.
Their eyes flash fury; to the hollowed earth
Whence the sand flies, they mutter bloody deeds
And groaning deep the impetuous battle mix;
While the fair heifer, salmy-breathing near
Stands kindling up their rage.

("St. 266 - 279.")

"Senecte ante omnes furor est insignis equorum,
Et mentem Venus ipsa dedit quo tempore laeu
Potnades malis membra absumpser quagigal
Illas duxit amor. Trane forasa succita asanem
Ascannium; superant mortes et flaminianis
Continuoque aridis ubi subdicta flamma medullis
Ver magis, quia fuerat rector passibus - illae
Ore omnes recesserin Ephysium tantus supibus
Exceptantque tere aubas et saepe sine nullis
Conjugiis rento gravidae - mirabile dieu
Zaga fer et seculiue et depressas convalle.

It is plain that the madness of war is
diffugiiunt, non, Ere, tuus neque solis adolus, 

in Dorean Caurnasque, ant inde nigerumque 

nascitur et fluvo contrita frigore callum.

(Using 805-828).

"The trembling steed.

With this hot impulse seized in every nerve, 

Now bears the rein nor heeds the sounding throng. 

Blows are not felt; but, rising high his head, 

And by the well-known joy to distant plains 

Attracted strong, all wild he bursts away; 

She roaks and birds and craggy mountains flee. 

And, neighing, on the aerial summits takes 

The exciting gale; then steep-descenting leaves 

greatest of all; it was Venus herself that 

made them so at the time when the 

chariot-steads of Glauceus wickedly tore 

his limbs to pieces. Love leads them over 

Pargara and sounding Ascaries. They speed 

over mountains, and swim across rivers, 

and straightway, when the flame has pen-

etrated deeply within—more in the spring 

than at any other time—all turned towards 

the west—wind stand on lofty cliffs and 

take the light-breeze, then.... strange to tell—

they flee down the rocks and crags and level 

valleys, not to the east or southeast but into the 

north and northwest, or whence the 

gloomy southwind rises and saddens the 

sky with its chilling rain."
The headlong torrent foaming down the hills,  
Even where the madness of the straitened stream  
Runs in black eddies round, such is the force  
With which his frantic heat and sinews swell."

Vergil's vision of Leander perishing  
in the Hellespont is just as vividly  
drawn by Thomson, with the omission  
of the one feature of the narrating  
sorrow of the parents; this gives  
Vergil's description greater pathos, but  
the rest of the images of the two pictures  
are the same, and they are expressed  
with equal energy:—

(L. III. 758-763)

"Quid juvenis, magnum cui reserat morsibus  
durus amor? nempe abruptis turbata processilis  
moete natae sacca serus finished, quem super ingens  
porta tonat oculis et scopulis in latis reclamant  
aquora; nee miseris fossant servare parentee  
nec mortuus super crudeli funere visgo."

(Sprin. 1064-1073).

"Through forests huge, and long unmilled heaths.

1What of the youth in whose soul burns  
The fire of love? Late at night he swims the  
dark seas Troubled with dangerous storms.  
Afore him thundered the great gale of  
heaven, and dashing waves short back from  
the sea cliffs. Nor can his unhappy parents  
eall him back nor the maiden who too will die  
because of his cruel death."
With devotion bowed, he wanders wastefully
In night and tempest-wrapt, or shrinks aghast
Back from the bending precipice, or wades
The turbid stream below and strives to reach
The farthest shore where he succeeds and sad.
She with extended arms his aid implores
But strives in vain: borne by the outrageous
To distance down, he rideth the ridgy wave,
Or whelmed beneath the boiling eddy sinks.

In "Summer" there are no very close imitations of specific passages in
the "Georgies". The likeness that is to be chiefly observed is found in the occurrence of similar invocations, and in the choice of analogous subjects as the plague, the praises of the poet's native land, and the discussion of philosophy. These features have already been indicated, and they will not be treated here. Several lines, however, have been selected that seem to present a slight resemblance.

The shepherd, driving his flocks
to the fields in the early summer morning while the dew lies on the grass
furnishes a likeness in thought rather than language. Thomson's description contains one thought of rare and delicate beauty: the shepherd drives his flock "to taste the verdure of the morn..."
"But the passage in Vergil is exquisite throughout, and is more complete and more vivacious:

(Strophe 12-13).

"It vero gephysus cum lacta vocantibus acetis in saltis utrumque gregem alque mi fueva, Luciferi primo cum sidere suggida rusa carpsamus, dum mane novum, dum gramina canunt, et ris in tenera pecori gratissimus herba."

(Strophe 6-8).

"Roused by the cock the soon clad shepherd, His mossy cottage, where with peace he dwells, And from the crowded fold, in order drives His flock to taste the verdure of the morn."

Lines 358-367 in the 'First Georgics'.

Floating, describing floating shaff and leaves and shaff and imitated very closely the 'Pinti' are leaves. Suggested in "Simmi" 1658-1660:

"Wide is the thistly lawn, as swells the breeze, Whitening shrubs of vegetable down Amusire floats."

In keeping with the preceding

"But when glorious summer with summer gephysus sends both the flocks into the woods and pastures, let us go forth into the cool fields with the first star of the dawn, while morning is new and the grass is white, and the dew on the tender herbs is most pleasing to the flocks."
ut silice visis abstineum crescebat ignem
 tame abnos primum fluresce sensee caratas;
atque alius latum funda iam reverbeream
 alto petens pelagoque alius trahit umidasina.
tum ferri rigor atque auge tal lamina serrae-
 num primi euneis seindebant fissile lignum
tum ravisce venere actae. labor omnia vicit
 infrobuis et durio usquens mi sebus egesta.
(Autumn) 72-129)

"Aequte of time! tell Industry approached-
And rouzed him from his miserable clothe;
His faculties unfolded: bounded out-
Where lanish nature, the directing hand
Of Art demanded, showed him how to raise
This leesle force by mechanic powers,
To dig the mineral from the vaulted earth,
for the grain stalk in the funrow and strike
out hidden fire from veins of flint. Then
first rivers felt the taste of hollowed alder;
and now one is lashing the broad ines with
his casting net, and seeking its depths, and
another drags his drifing meshes in the sea!
Thus came stubborn iron, and the blade
of the shrill-sounding saw — for men first
cut the fissile wood with wedges — then came
various arts. Hard labor-conquered all
Things and necessity that urges in adversity;"
The dome of the sky open and wide,
And stars and moons and planets rise.

And I see the rise of the wind and wide,
And rain and snow and hail and sun.

And I hear the sound of the sea and wide,
And thunder and lightning and thunder.

And I feel the touch of the earth and wide,
And mountains and rivers and hills.

And I smile the smile of the wind and wide,
And I dance and sing and play.

And I am the child of the sky and wide,
And I live in the heart of the earth and wide.
et gloria ingenti, sata laeta, bournge labores
diluit, implentus fossae et vara fluminia exausit
cum sonitu ferreique fulis spiantibus segetis.

(Autumn 31-34).

“Defeating oft the labors of the year
The sultry south collects a potent blast.

But as the aerial tempest fieller swells,
And in one mighty stream, invisible,
Immense the whole excited atmosphere
Impetuous rushes o'er the sounding world.

Exposed and naked to its utmost rage
Through all the sea of harvest rolling round,
The billowy plain (flata wide), no worm wide,
Through pliant to the blast its seizing force;
Or whirled in air, or into vacant chaff
Shook vast.

And sometimes too, a burst of rain
Swept from the black horizon, broad descends
In one continuous flood. Still overhead
The mingling tempest bears its gloom and
The deluge deepens; till the fields around
Lie sunk and flatted in the sordid wave.

Sudden the ditch is swell'd; the meadows swim
Red from the hills; innumerable streams
Simultaneous roar; and high above its banks
are filled and the hollow streams swell
with a roaring sound and the sea boils
in every foaming violet.”
The rice fields, before whose rushing tide
Heeds, flocks, and harvests, swarmed,
Rolling mingled down; all that the winds had
In one wild moment ruined; the big hopes,
And well earned treasures of the painful year.

In these descriptions the topics are arranged in very nearly the same order:
the wind rises, the growing grain is torn up and whirled in air; a sudden rain follows, with ever increasing cloud and storm, the ditches fill and streams suddenly rise, and the wild deluge sweeps away everything in its path. This fact, together with the closeness of resemblance in every detail, gives a suspicion of translation, and this suspicion is strengthened by the line, "Or whirled in air, or into vacant chaff
Shook waste," which appears to be a translation of the simile of the mine storm whirling light stalks and stubble, as this is understood by some of the commentators on this passage to be a part of the summer storm.

In "Autumn" there occurs a description of the chase, an enumeration of different kinds of mines, and a discourse on the springs that are the sources of all earth's

streams). These present only a slight re-
semblance to Vergil's chase, and his
discussion of mines and mine sources,
although these is sufficient to persuade
to the belief that their reason for being
is to be found in the fact that Vergil
treated of these topics. In the chase
Thomson pities the hunted hare and
stag, and, as if desirous of mentioning
all the animals Vergil named, directs
the huntsman to speak thus, let the
dogs or the motes, and with the dart
to pierce the wild boar "growing horrid.
Then, having disposed of the chase
according to Vergil's idea of it, he explains
that these animals are not found in
Britain, and concludes with a vivid de-
scription of the "true English fox hunt.
There seems to be no good reason why
motes beset by a pack of hounds, and
growing boars should be named at
all unless the poet had his model in
mind. In the treatment of mines, as
England is not a wine growing country
it was necessary to pass in fancy to
foreign countries while the wine flourished,
and, giving a brief description of the
vineyard, the subject closes with an
enumeration of French and Spanish wines, the great sires of earth rising in Cyrene, valley abode; furnished a suggestion for a long, semi-scientific treatise, on "the vast eternal springs," and "the wine in their infant beds," which contains many very effective phrases.

The description of the shores of rural life in "Autumn" 1833-1838, is largely

a Translation of the last part of the "Second Georgic," 456-548. There are few topics dealt with in either that are not found in the other, and they are arranged nearly the same order. Thomson introduces the subject with the farmer's festivities when the harvesting is completed, and closes with the invocation to Nature that she may teach him wisdom, while Virgil closes with the farmer's observance of festal days, and early in the discussion introduces the appeal to the Muse for knowledge. This fact of the work has already been treated on page 19, and will not be given here. The other topics will be presented in the order in which they occur in Autumn. The dependence of thought in the two passages is very nearly the same although the order of parts differs somewhat, and the
likeness in thought and language is strongest in those parts that occur in the same order. The holiday festivities of each show the customs of their own time and place; hence there is considerable diversity in the two descriptions.

"Ipse diee agitat festio fuisseque per herbam ignis ubi situ medio et socii evatia coronant, te, libane, sensee, vocat, pecorique magnitid
velocis jaculi certamina Jovis mi ulmo
 corporaque agresti mutand Jpsu
 autumn, 1221–1222."

"While loss er festive joy, the country round
laughts with the loud lincre of mirth;
shock to the mind their cares: the toil
by the filk sense of music taught alone.

The judge, villains, and the weaver loins.
Age to: shines out; and guineous reconts.
The feasts of youth. Thus they rejoice, no think
that, with tomorrow's sun, their annual toil
begins again the never-ceasing round."

The farmer himself stretched upon the grass of
seers the fateful days when with a fire in the midst
and a merry company of friends wreathing the bowl
he calls upon thee, Lensee, offering a libation, and sets
a mark in the elm tree for spearing matches among
the huskmen, and the country youths strip their
bodies hardened for the trundle."
O, fortunate nimium, sua si bona morint, agricolas, quisus ipsa Iseult discordibus armis, fundit humo-facilem victum, justissima eis.

("Autumn" 1885-1888).

Oh! knew he but his happiness, of men, The happiest he, who far from public sage, Deep in the vale, with a choice few-retired, Drinks the true pleasures of the rural life.

("II, 461-462.")

"Si non ingentiis foribus domus alta superibus manet salutantium totis vomita editibus undam.

("Autumn" 1839-1841).

"What though the dome be wanting whose proud Each morning vomits out the sneaking crowd, Of flatter'd false, and in their turn abused?"

("II, 463-466.")

"Nei variis inhaient fulchris testudine postes, intuisaque auro vestis Ephesiaque aera,

O, most-happy are the farmers if but they knew their blessedness, for whom far from discordant arms most-righteous earth pours forth plenteous sustenance from the soil.

If the lofty palace does not each morn- ing disgorge from its frownd gates a vast thing of flattering clients.

And if they do not gaze upon door postes inlaid with splendid tortoise shell, and rotes embroidered with gold, and...
alba neque Assyrio lucetur, sed annis
nee casia liquidi corruptur usque olivis;”

(Autumn) 1242-1267.

“Vile intercursu! What though the glimmering
Of every hue reflected light can give,
Or floating cloud, or stuff with massy gold,
The pride and gage of fools! offus his heart?
What though from utmost land and sea purveyed
For him each racee' tributary life,
Bleeds not, and his immediate fall, heaps
With luxury and death! what though his bowl
Flames not with costly juice; nor drunk in beds
Of gay ease, he takes out the night
Or melts the thoughtless hours in idle state?

(3, II. 4-47) 1

At secura quies et neceia fallere vita,
dives opum variarum, al-latis otea fundit
Speluncae, rivique locus et frigida Tempe,
magistisque bourn mollesque sub arbor sonitu

Cornithian bronze, and if their white wool
is not dyed with Assyrian drugs and
the use of the clear olive oil is not cor-
supled with cassea;

1. But they have quiet peace and a
life in which pretence is unknown;
riches of various kinds, and ease amid
the prospect of broad domains, grottoes
and natural lakes, and cool Tempe;

nor is the lowing of oxen wanting, and
non absunt: illie saltus ad lusta ferum et patiens operum spigque adsorta juventut
(Autumnus, 1257-1275).

Sure peace is his; a solid life estranged To disappointment and fallacious hope. Rich in content m Nature's bounty rich, In herbs and fruits; whatever greeds the spring. When heaven descends in showers, or sends the When Summer redden and when Autumn beams Of in the wintry gale whatever lies Concealed, and falling with the richest sap... These are not wanting, nor the milky dore, Bountiant: spread'res all the lowing vale; Nor fleeting mountains, nor the chide of stream. And run of bees, inviting sleep sincere Into the guiltless breast beneath the shade, Or thrown at large amid the fragrant hay; Nor rought besides of prospect grove or song, Dim grottoes, gleaming lakes, and fountain clear. Here, too, dwells simple truth, plain innocence. Unsullied beauty, sound unbroken youth, Patient of labour, with a little pleased.”

(St, II. 303-505).

Solicitant alii remis fields caeca, suentque

sweet sleep beneath the trees, here are forest glades, and haunts of wild beasts, and youth patient of labour, and accustomed to little.

1 Thus are seeking the gloomy sea with oars
in ferum penetrant aulas et limina regum;
hat petit epididis urbs miseraque Patatas.

(Autumn) 1276-1183).

"Let others fear the flood in quest of gain;
And heat for joyless months the gloomy wave.
Let such as deem it glory to destroy,
Rush into blood, the sack of cities seek;
Unpierced, expelling in the widow's wail.
The origin's shriek and infant's trembling cry.

(L. II. 870-578).

Laudent perfusi sanguine patrum
epiloge domos et dulcia limina mutant,
atque alio patriam quaerunt sub sole jacentem.

(Autumn) 1284-1256.

"Let some fardistant from their native soil,
Unged or by want or hardened arrive,
And other lands beneath another sun."

(L. II. 878-582).

"Fortunatus et ille, deus qui movit agestes!
Panque Silvanumque senem nymphasque sores."

and rushing upon the sword, or pressing into
halos and Portals of kings. One brings
ruin upon a city and its wretched homes.
Some cult in bating themselves in a
his theis blood and exchange home and
dear fireside for exile and seek a land
lying beneath another sun.

And happy is he who knows the rural
gods, Pan the aged Silvanus and the pater nymph.
illum non populi facies, non purpurae regum
flexit et infidos agitans discordia frater
aut conjurato descenderunt Sacer ad hæcat
non hoc Romanæ fortunæque regna: neque ille
aut doluit miserans in opem aut invidit hab.
Gnosce rami fructus, quos ipsa volentia scar
sponte Tiberis sua, carpsit nee fereae juræ
insanumque forum aut populæ tabula evit.

(Autumn 1891-1892).

"Let these

Immaculate the wretched in the toils of war,
Fomenting discord and perplexing right.
Assonance, race! and those of sight front,
But equal inhumanity in route;
Delusors, pomp, and dark festivals, delight;
Weathe the deep bow, diffuse the slyning smile,
And tread the weary labyrinth of state,
While he from all the stormy passions free

him the honors of the people do not move, nor
the people of kings, and discord embroiling
brothers in strife, or the sworn Dacian ally
descending from the Danube, nor the Roman
state and falling kingdoms. He never felt
the fangs of pity for the poor, nor envy of the
rich. What fruits the branches bear, what the
cheerful country of its own free will brings
forth, these he gathers, nor sees the injustice
of the own laws, nor the mad strife of the
forms, nor the archives of the people.
That restless men involve, hear, and but hear
A distance safe, the human tempest hoar,
Wrapped in close conscious peace. The fall of kings,
The rage of nations, and the Russo-Subates,
More not the man, who from the world escaped,
In still retreats and flowery solitudes,
To Nature's voice attends from month to month,
And day to day through the revolving year;
Admiring sees her miryng shape,
Feels all her sweet emotions at the heart,
Takes what she liberal giveth; nor thinks of more. 

(St. II. 486-489)

"O ubi campi
Sperchiusque et virginitibus Sacchara Laeensis
Faigygeta o qui me gelidis convallibus Haemi
Sistat, et ingenti ramorum spectat umbra?"

(Autumn, 1316-1319).

"In summer he beneath the living shade,
Such as del Tempê most to ware,
Or haemus cool, reads what the muse of thee
Perhaps has in immortal numbers sung."

(G. II. 523-524).

"Intrex dulces pendant circum vacillatnati.

1 For in the plains of Spercheus, and Tajjgeta traversed over in their revels by Spartan maidens, it
for one to set me down in the cool violet of
Haemus, and shelter me beneath the vast
shade of its boughs.

2 Meanwhile his sweet children are hanging
Casta pudicitiam servat domus,"

(Autumn) 1337-1344.

"The touch of kindness, too and love he feels;
The modest eye, whose beams on his alone
Ecstatic shine; the little strong embrace
Of prattling children, twined round his neck
And emulous to please him, calling forth
The fond parental soul."

(II. 532-548). 1

"Hanc olim veteres vitam coluere Sabini,
Hanc Remus et frater sic forte Etruria crevit
Silece et resum facta est pulcherrima Roma,
Septemque una sibi munus circumdedit aedes.
Ante etiam pectum Dictaei regis et ante
Inpia quam celest gens est epulata juventis,
on his lips and his chaste-browe preserve
its modesty

1 This life the ancient Sabines cherished.
in former times, and Remus and his brother.
This in truth Etruria grew strong,
and Rome was made the fairest city on
the earth, and surrounded her seven hills
with a single wall. Yea even before the
rule of the Ocean king, and before an im-
jurious race began to regale itself on slain
bulls, catch, Saturn, ruler of the Golden Age, led
this life on earth. Nor did men yet douse
to blow the martial trumpet—nor to hammer
out the sword—on the stubbon arrl.
Aureus hane vitam in terris Saturnus agebat; medio etiam audierant inflori classicae medio impositas duos creptitare incendibus eruere.

(Autumn) 1748–1767.

"This is the life which those who feel in guilt, And guilty cities, never knew; the life, Led by primoral ages incorrupt, When angels dwell and God himself, with man!"

Winter shows less of the influence of Virgil than "Spring" or "Autumn," but more than "Summer." Yet there are some passages that are without doubt conscientious imitations. The similar subjects are fewer in number, however, and usually short, there being only two that are sustained for any considerable length. The poems were published in the order of "Winter," "Summer," "Spring," and "Autumn," and Thomson in the first two did not commit himself so unreservedly to deliberate imitation as in the last two, though the same general features of resemblance are found in all, and in "Autumn," 67–55, 41, 77, various sentiments are given that are given in the "Gorgias," E., 357–392, but they are expressed in similar language and in nearly the same order.
The confused sound from the mountains and the roar of the sea are given first by Virgil; Thomson mentions the sound at the beginning of his account of the signs of storm, and describes it more fully at the close:—

(De I. 368-369)

"Continuo rotundis succinctibus aut lata fonti incipient agitata suspense et avidus altus montibus, audire frugor, auris resonantia longe litora miseris et memorum increberseque murmur."

(Winter, 68-71).

"And up among the loose disjointed cliffs, And fractured mountains wild the howling storm And care, grave, serious, send a hollow sound, Resounding long in listening fancy's ear."

(Winter, 149-152).

"While from the shore, At into carine by the restless wave, And forest roasting mountains come a Voice, That solemn sounding bids the world repair."

(Winter, 376-377).

"Quita lacus circumvoluris birundo."

"At once when the mind is rising the troubled inlets of the sea begin to swell, and a dry whistling sound is heard from the lofty mountains, or the shores, re sounding after awhile their roar and increase the murmur of the forest."

"Or the twittering swallow flutter round the pool."
(Winter, 81-83.)

"The wanderer of heaven,
Each to his native seat, save those that love
to take their pastime in the troubled air,
are skimming flutter round the dimly fool."

(C. S. 757-758.)

"Sic eliam emenest cum iam decedit Olympo
profecerat membrisse magis; nam easque vide-
ipsius in multo variis evarce colores:
caeruleus fluviarum denuntiat igneus Euros;
sin maculæ incipient rutilo immiseret igni;
onnia tunc, funtus cento simbrisque videbis
serere."

(Winter, 118-121.)

"When from the sable sky the sun descends
With many a spot, that is his gloomy sub-
Uncertain wanes, stained, red, fiery streaks
Begin to flush around."

(C. I. 427-427.)

"Luna, rectentes cum primum coligit ignem.

---

1 This too it will aid you more to remember
when he has finished his course and is descend-
ing from the sky; for often we see various color
wandering over his face; a dusky hue announces
rain, a fiery red east wind; but if the darkspots
begin to be mingled with ruddy fire, then you
see the whole universe sage with wind
and rain clouds.

2 If the moon when first she collects her
Si nigrae obscurae comprehenditur aera, longe
maximus agricola pelagoque paravit urbem
(Valerii 126-128).

"While rising slow,
blank in the leaden colored east, The moon
Wears a wan circle round her blunted horns."

(2. 1 366-367).

"Saepe etiam stellas recto inpendente videbis
praecipites caelo labi, noctisque per umbrae
flammorum longos atego albecere tractus;"

(Valerii 126-129).

"Seen through the turbid fluctuating air,
The stars obtain a shining ray;
Or frequent seem to shoot athwart the gloomy
And long behind them trail the whitening blaze."

(2. 1. 368-369).

"Saepe herem paleam et Ioni decus ceadere
aut summa nantes in aqua colludere pluma."

returning fires, include dark atmosphere
within the dim horns there will be brewing
a terrible storm for fameus and for the sea.

1 Often too when mind is near you will
see stars shooting headlong from the sky
and through the gloom of night whitening
long trains of flame behind.

2 And often you will see light shaff
and fallen leaves flitting about and
feathers dancing on the water's surface.
"Snatched in short eddies flaps the mithered
And on the flood the dancing feather floats."
(Li., 375-376).

"But lucula calum
Suspiciens patulis c Baptist nonibus ausus,"
(Winter, 132-133).

"With broadened nostrils to the sky uplifted,
The conscious heifer smiffs the stormy gale."
(Li., 390-392).

"Ne nocturna quidem carpentes pensa fulldae
Menseire te hiemem, te tua cum ardente siderent
Scintillare oleum et putris concussere fungös."
(Winter, 134-137).

"Een as the motion, at her mighty task,
With sensitive labour draws the slender thread;
The wasted taper and the crackling flame
Forebode the blast."
(Li., 381-382).

"Et postie decebund aegmine magno
Cororum merequit densis exspectis alta."

1. Of the heifer looking skyward, with its
broad nostrils sniffs the stormy gale.
2. And the maidens, drawing the threads at their
mighty tasks, can foretell the storm when
they see the oil sputter in the glowing lamp, and
crumbing coal form round the nick.
3. And returning in a great line from their
pitched an army of looks clamors loudly on
serried winos.
Kindness to flocks

*winter* 137-142.

"Retiring from the downs, where all day long they picked their scanty fare a blackening of clamorous rooks thickest urge their weary flight and seek the closing shelter of the grove."

Pity for the weak and suffering is felt by both poets; it is felt for toiling suffering man, and is very often manifested towards the creatures that serve man. This gentle sentiment pervades the "seasons" and imparts a tone of sadness. It appears here and there in the "Georgies" and gives a pathetie quality that adds much interest to the didactic poem. In both it is wholly spontaneous and natural. The pity felt for the bleating flocks in winter is so exceedingly natural that it can scarcely be regarded as an imitation, although there is considerable similarity:—

(D. III. 318-321)

"Ergo omni studio gelidum ventosque minores quos minor est illi cuvare mortalis aegeras, arcus xictumque ferreus et virgex lacteas fabula nici tota claudes familia brasma."

"Therefore shelter them with all zeal from ice and snowy winds; the less need they have of the care of man, and cheerfully..."
"Now shepherds, to your helpless charge be
Battue the raging year and fill their pens
With food at will; lodge them, below the storm,
And watch them strict."

In the description of northern
winters occur several closely analogous
passages which utilize about half of
all that Virgil says about Scythia. The
picture of the hunted deer floundering
helplessly in the newly-fallen snow is
repeated in all its details; the sudden
freezing of rivers is not so closely imi-
tated, and the convivial care dwellers
of the "Georgics" are, in the "Seasons," a
dull unjoyous race, who know not the
"sprightly jest no song." In no other
of his limitations has Thomson been
so felicitous as in the description of
the action of the frost. Virgil's state-
ment that "sudden crusts form on the
running stream" is the plainest of prose
in comparison with the exquisitely
poetical conception of Thomson:

*(P. 360)*

"Consecquent substrae euenti mi flumina crustae".

bring them food and fodder of bushwood, not shut
the hay loft the winter through.

1. Sudden crusts form on the running stream.
"An icy gale, oft shifting, 

Breathes a blue film and in its mid career

Arrests the tickering stream."

(Stow, 87-88)

"Interea tota non setius aëre minguat,

interdent feculce, stant circumfusa pruniis

corpora magna bourn, confixtique agmine

torment mole nova et summis ope cornibus ex

hos non inmissis canibus, non cassisu ullam

Romaeaeve agitant faridia, formidine pinnae,

sed frutia oppositum Trudentes pector montem

communis ostrianeant ferro gregisque sedentes

paeandum et magnolaeae clamore repertae."

(Stow, 126-128)

"There storm together pressed the trooping deer"

Meantime it snows none the less from

all the sky; the cattle feish; great forms

of open stand covered over with hoar-

frost; The deer microwd crowd prop grow-

Torpid under the weight of the new-fallen

snow, and scarce lift the tips of their horn

above it. The hunter has no need of dogs

or snakes, or of terrifying with the dread

of the crimson feathers; but as they push

their beasts against the mountain heap

in vain, near at hand (the hunter) cut them

down with the sword, and slay them following

pictously, then joyfully bear them home with

a shout of triumph."
Sleep on the new-fallen snows, and care his head
Raised o'er the heavy wreathe, the branching elk
Lies shivering silent in the white ashes.
The ruthless hunter wants no dogs nor toils,
Nor with the dread of sounding toe, he drives
The fearful flying race, with ponderous clubs
To seek against the mountain heaps they push
Their beating breasts in vain and pitiful prayer,
He lays them quivering on the enanguined snows
And with loud shouts rejoicing bears them home.

[Virgil, Aeneid, 3.36-38]

"Ipse in defossis spectatius secura sub alta
Otia regis terrae congestaque robora tectaque
Advolvunt foci semel nubitos ignique dedere,
Hic noctem ludo ducunt, et pocula laeti
Fermento atque acidis imitanties vitera sorbis.
Talis Hyperborea septem superbiae nectar
Genea effusa visum Rhipeos timidus Euro
Et pecudum fulvis remis corpora saevis."

"They pass the time in careless leisure in
Cares they have dug deep in the earth. They roll
Stores of oak and whole elms up to the fields
And give them to the flames. Here they spend the
night in sport and joyously imitate the wine cup
With balm and sour service berries. Such an unin-
hibited race of men exposed to the seven Hyperborean stars
Are ever buffeted by the east winds of Rhipeos,
And their bodies are clothed with the rough
tawny skins of beasts."
"Deep from the piercing season sunk in cares
Here by dull fires, and with enjoinous cheer
They waste the tedious gloom: immersed in fur
Dogze the gross race. Nor brightly jest no song,
Nor tenderness they know, nor sight of life;
Beyond the kindred baces that stalk without."

In this comparison of the two works we are forced to see that the greater part of the material received from the "Georgies" was not recalled at random, but was deliberately adapted from the original with the text at hand. Of the twenty-one hundred eighty-eight verses in the "Georgies", two hundred twenty-six, or more than one tenth of the entire poem, have been quoted as furnishing Thomson with images and words; perhaps another tenth have been referred to as furnishing analogous subjects and not quoted in full, so that the English poet utilized at least one fifth of the substance of the "Georgies", and he often employed it with such minuteness as to incur the suspicion of deliberate translation.

Traces of the Eclogues and the Aeneid are to be discerned occasionally, and also of other authors than Vergil, especially Milton, whose influence in
strongest in Winter. And then are some
passages that are reminiscences of Dryden
and Pope. It has already been said
that Thomson was unable to free
himself from the trammels of his
age. The conventionalisms of the
Society of his day stifle themselves
continually, and unmistakably
stamp the poem with the time of its
composition. The ornate forms of
expression that were approved by the
classical school are indulged in
with the utmost freedom, and the
modes of thought that prevailed
in society and the schools of his time
are frequently manifest.

But notwithstanding these
numerous influences to be discerned in
the Seasons, when the whole work is
considered with unbiased judgment
its originality is at once apparent. If
viewed with partial judgment, after
studying his indebtedness to Virgil,
Thomson appears as an unscrupulous
plagiarist; and, if the conventionalisms
of his age be sought he seems to be
much fettered by them. But, apart
from all these considerations, the
most cursory reading of the Seasons
reveals a spirit that is wholly
new in the interpretation of nature, a sympathetic treatment of the varying phenomena of nature as the seasons change, and a reverent mind that beholds God in every blossom, cloud, and birdsong, and that seeks to attune the soul of man into fullest harmony with all the forms of nature and their beneficent Creator. The qualities of truth and seriousness, which Matthew Arnold emphasizes as the essential characters of true poetry are the dominating qualities of the poem, and it is in those portions of the work that are freest from foreign influence that Thomson gives his most truthful descriptions and manifests the most ingenious seriousness. It is in them that his real genius has fullest scope. The most effective descriptions and most charming felicities of diction are not generally found in the imitations, although in some of them, as in the descent of spring rains, the lament of the nightingale, and the sudden freezing of streams, Thomson has far surpassed his model in delicacy and charm of expression. But what is most beautiful,
and most worthy in the "Seasons" is to be sought in those parts where his unhampered genius expresses itself. It is in the animating spirit of the poem, and in the distinctive character of his diction that Thomson is original. Thus had written about nature, but none had loved her so well in all her moods, and felt the vivifying influence of constant communion with her. It was because Thomson had a true insight into nature that he was able to describe her every phase with such wonderful distinctness and truth. He is singularly fortunate, too, in the adaptation of words to ideas, and many of his most effective images are accomplished by the use of a happy word or phrase which gives distinction to the whole picture. So the one who reads the "Seasons" for the first time there comes a series of surprises in the large number of felicitous expressions that he seems always to have known, and the discovery of their origin affords keen pleasure. Few poets have been quoted so freely without being named. Many of the gems of the "Seasons" have become commonplaces in literature.
The singular charm of Thomson's style is sustained throughout the poem, even in those portions that are close imitations of the Georgics, and upon every part he has left the impress of his own peculiar genius.

He is not a mere plagiarist but a true poet, the first to revolt from the false standards of his time, and the harbinger of a new era in poetry. Nor was he surpassed by any of the later poets of sentiment and nature who followed in his footsteps. Standing midway between two schools of wholly opposite tendencies he manifests some of the faults of both, but is honored as introducing a new method into poetry, and as giving to the natural world a prominent place among the subjects of poetry. Perhaps it is because of this place and this distinction that the critics differ so radically in their estimates of him. For the poem has glaring faults at the same time that it has excellencies. One will dwell upon the blemishes until his vision has become obscured to all its virtues. Another is so truly charmed with the many truly noble and exalted qualities of the poem that he...
is ready even to defend the parts that are reprehensible. When first published, the poems were enthusiastically received by the English people, and their author was sincerely loved. When his influence began to be felt in the literary world at large, France and Germany gave him their tribute of praise. The nineteenth century witnessed a decline of favor, and in the restless, hurrying world of today the readers of the long and often monotonous poem of the "Seasons" are comparatively few, though Thomson's best critic is a modern one. His life and works have recently been very exhaustively treated by Leon Mord, a French writer of rare discernment and sound judgment. Though not blind to the defects of the poet, he accords him high rank among the masters of literature as one who "gave the signal and the watchword of a revolution destined to renovate the literature of Europe." Why he disregarded the poet's indebtedness to Virgil in a work otherwise so complete is difficult to understand, unless he felt that Thomson in the adaptation of borrowed material had been so true to his own poetic nature that he was
abstained from all blame; even then because of the very marked influence of Virgil upon him, a chapter on the subject might have been expected in so extensive a work. That others in a brief criticism should dismiss the subject with a contemptuous word is not surprising. But after a somewhat careful comparison of the two poems I am not ready to regard Thomson's imitations of Virgil with disrespect. It is a question whether it would be an improvement to the "Seasons" if all traces of Virgil were removed, and it would be scarcely just to say that Thomson did not make a legitimate use of his model. He surely has borrowed no more than Virgil himself or most of the other masters in literature, and just as they have given distinction to other material, he has endowed all that he borrowed from Virgil, in the way of suggestion or substance, with the grace of his own peculiar genius. Thomson is not Virgil or Spenser any more than Virgil is Homer, Theocritus, or Theocritus. And although when the attention is directed upon upon the thoughts and language that are
such close imitations, we are prompted to call him a plagiarist; as soon as we have attained a just apprehension of the scope, the spirit, and the underlying harmony of the whole work, and have felt the charm of his descriptions, we are ready to accord the author of the "Seasons" a high place in literature, not indeed with the masters, for there are too many really serious faults to admit of that, but high rank among the poets of the second class, and the first place among the descriptive poets of nature.