

THE SCHOLAR'S FOUR SEASONS.

Translated from the original of Weng Sen in the "Lute of the Little Learning"
BY JAMES BLACK.

Spring.

THE sunlight glistens on the wall, the brook goes murmuring by,
And o'er the earth that Spring has touched the scented zephyrs
fly.

Our friends, the birds, are twittering now on all the tree-tops near,
And on the surface of the pool the tinted flowerets rear.
Oh, who could miss the magic of such music and such light!
But ever in conning o'er his books the scholar takes delight.
The scholar cons his books with joy, a joy that has no bound,
Like the glory of the green that grows in the meadows all around.

Summer.

The bamboo boughs now press the eaves: there's mulberry every-
where,
And through the gloom of the student's room glitter the sunbeams
rare.

All day on the neighboring trees we hear the shrill cicada's cry,
And the shade of the night sees a flicker of light from the firefly
fluttering by.

As I lay by the window I dreamed a dream, that the Pearly Em-
peror came

To greet the scholar who rose to greet him first of the honored name.
The scholar cons his books with joy, a joy he only knows
In whose heart is the song of the jasper lute when the fragrant
zephyr blows.

Autumn.

Last night I heard a rustling when the leaves began to fall,
A crackling in the branches, and the cricket's parting call.
The voices of the forest came full blast upon the ear,
Like ten thousand flutes all piping that the autumn winds were here.
Beneath the genial sky no more we con the favorite page.
Back to the study's calm retreat we now attend the sage.
The scholar cons his books with joy. For his spirit can mount on
 high
To follow the path of the wandering moon across the frosty sky.

Winter.

The plants are gone, the springs are dry, the river-bank is bare,
And I have changed, as all must change, around the rolling year.
The lamp that dangles on its cord throws shadows on the wall.
Full half the night I read. Outside, the unceasing snowflakes fall.
But the cheerful water boils within. The pleasant fire ascends.
And ever to more congenial task the scholar joyfully bends.
The scholar cons his books with joy. What else of equal worth?
Not even the flower-like flakes that fly half way 'tween heaven and
 earth.