

Autumn.

The year grows ripe to middle age:
All o'er the sober garden bed
The flaunting summer petals, shed,
Give place to that more fruitful stage
When seeds of healthy life grow ripe,
And pulpy fruits with juices swell,
And Nature from her rustic pipe
Draws music of the softest type
'Mid stream and woodland, mead and fell.

Only by chance outpipeth now
The robin, but, his note grown dear
Through rarity, more charms the ear
Than when he piped on every bough.
And foliage takes a richer green
And skies assume a warmer hue
And mellow from their azure to—
A golden-moated deep serene,
Of which the earth reflects the sheen
In autumn's sunny harvest hue.

And as the year, my spirit grows;
For lo! my life hath passed away
From summer with its blossoms gay,
Unto the seed time and the close.
The flowers of memory, thought and love,
Have ripened with the golden dust
Of rich experience, what in trust,
They held of fruitage from above;
And through my quickening spirit move
The vital throbbings of the must.

Quickened of wine of life in me!
Grow ripe within, thou wine of song?
That souls may drink and hearts grow strong;
For genuine art should ever be
Inebriating in such wise
That all of baseness reel away,
And fall as native clay on clay,
Leaving the nobler faculties
Untrammelled all, and forced to rise—
For very buoyance to the day.

FRANK WATERS.