

Though golden-rods and asters strew the ground
 Where late the scarlet-cups and lupines shone,
 In earlier time have I not loved the growth
 Of blood-roots white and painted trilliums,
 And seen the shivering trees enwrap themselves
 In foliage that the birds might hide and sing ?
 And shall I now, tho' soon the wintry winds
 Will reel apace, forsake thy dying smile,
 Oh Earth, so weak that thou canst not put forth
 Thy weakest growth of grass or wayside weed ?
 Nay, but as at the deathbed of a friend
 Will I abide and catch thy murmured words,
 Faint and yet audible, because mine ears
 Are blunted not to spiritual sounds.

And so farewell, ye fluttering, fragile leaves !
 There was a time when tempest in his mirth
 Made you his harp that he might smite thereon.
 Now have ye danced under the sun enough,
 So long have insects made of you their food
 That worn with very weariness ye fall
 From parent unto parent as ye die—
 From tree that bore you, to the mother earth.
 And we shall pass from life to very death,
 One parent to another, tho' we cling
 With such sad force to life, as trembling leaves
 Unto the parent branch. Yet could we read
 The riddle of our fate, perchance it were
 As simple as the death of autumn leaves.