

To a Maple Leaf.

POOOR faded, dried and withered leaf,
Thy life has painful been and brief,
And now it ends,
Thy time is numbered not by years,
With only months it disappears,
When winter's chill thy vigor sears
And death-wind sends.

In spring appears thy tender green,
Where branches brown and bare have been.
Their sap gone dry.
In summer, 'mid companions bright,
Verdant and pure, the eye's delight,
Darkly above the grasses light,
Thy beauties lie.

September comes with altered tints,
And gold and scarlet hues imprints
Upon thy cheek.
Then, when the ruthless gales increase,
Thou fleest afar to find surcease
Of wearying usefulness, and peace
From tempests bleak.

But thou hast done thy ordered task,
And who is he who more could ask
Of leaf or men?
Without thy toil, the maple tree
Of grace and strength would cease to be.
Thou di'st; but thy works follow thee,
And live again.

Like leaves we live, like leaves we die.
Our brief existence passes by:
Our work remains.
Of leaves and men, the common lot
Is, after work, to be forgot,
Save by the one who fails us not
In all our pains.