

THE EVE OF WINTER.

RST was the earth enshrined in beauty
 By the royal beams of the autumn sun,
 But her fresh lustre now is faded,
 And the vintage season its course has run.
 Then, shone the woods with varied sapphire,
 Amethyst crimson, brown, gray, green and red.
 All now is changed ; ash, oak and aspen
 Before the breeze their charms have shed.

The scarlet amber of our maple
 Fell piecemeal down from the pale, fallow limbs,
 The oak has lost her claret robing,
 And the alder dropped her ebon gems.
 Upon romantic dells and valleys
 Late glint the sun with fierce, unrivalled flash,
 Or over groves of fiery shamuck'
 Where now stands lonely yon sober ash.

The distant mountain, lately painted
 In vivid lines by Nature's kindly hand,
 Looms grim above the far horizon—
 The grassless hills seem ruddy dunes of sand.
 The blue-jay's scream has sunk to silence,
 The robin has his summer haunts forsook,
 We never hear on the still water
 The nervous whirl of the startled duck.

The squirrels frisk near the spacious barn,
 Far from their cozy and sequestered home ;
 Knowing well in the Winter nearing
 They no longer can free plundering roam.
 The swallow's chirp has left us lonely,
 We miss the caw of the vile, vagrant crow,
 While the snow-birds, our winter neighbor
 Awaits the fall of his favorite snow,

We hear no more at break of morning
 The sweep of the reaper's circling blade,
 Nor in the fold at the day's departing
 The soft soothing song of the milking-maid.
 The sullen sun of the Fall is shining,
 The hard hoar-frost crumples beneath the feet,
 A fringe of ice the shore is lining
 Of the dark pond where the streamlets meet.

The sky is gray, and overladen
 With a fleecy store that must soon descend,
 The beams of day full early fade in
 The night that brings their cold and gloomy end.
 The wolds weep their faded lilies,
 And sympathy the perished hill-tops show,
 The stripped earth whispers harking Heaven
 To loose her robe of mantling snow.