

Deep in stark, leafless woods, where no birds sing,
 As calmly limpid as a babe's bright eyes,
 Tall, white birch and grey ash-trees mirroring,
 The silent lake in placid beauty lies;
 Still by its reedy rim the tired sun dies
 When night's murk hosts their vasty shadows bear,
 To oust the flush from the fast fading year.

On tireless pinions through the upper sky
 The marshalled geese fly south with bodeful screech;
 They ken where tropical morasses lie—
 • Where brilliant noons still smile on bank and beach—
 Their guided flight those favored spots will reach,
 And end far from our Norland bare and sere
 Beneath the full flush of the mellow year.

By barren plain and mount the river swerves,
 But still reflects the outlines of the hills;
 Unfathomed, broad, resistlessly it curves
 By homesteads, towns, void fields and sun-browned mills:
 Foreboding frowns the mystery which fills
 Its opaque waves, when from the ridge and mere,
 Storms blot the garish flush of the wracked year.

Hitch'd to the weighty plow, the toiling team
 Each muscle strains, while, blithe, the plowman sings,
 And the raised sods beside the furrow gleam
 As toward the fallow them the plowshare flings.
 Belated crows anear spread famished wings,
 To dash upon the worm, then, cawing, veer
 Through the full flush of the fast fading year.

In joyous crowds the shouting children go,
 To gather kernelled nuts, in russet leaves
 Deep hid, or bend taunt branches low,
 To pluck the pungent fruit which to them cleaves
 On sumach trees; late evening's sunshine weaves
 A glowing mist their rheumy eyes to blear,
 Returning through the full flush of the year.