

## NEAR THE CLOSE.



WHEN dim October brings her dapple day,  
 Its scanty life reels on in flitting light  
 Acred with eastern breezes, and its ray  
 Bursts forth, at times, in almost pristine might,  
 To stay the swarthy hosts of ambient night,  
 And through hushed hours the listening sky doth wear  
 The last full flush of the fast fading year.

The misty morning dawns so crisp and cold,  
 In hoary sparkle clad, we, sighing, say :  
 "Wan earth is wrapped in Winter's ermine fold."  
 But fiery glares flame in the prime of day,  
 As if the hero sun, unto the fray,  
 Had faced about with many a golden spear,  
 To win again his birthright from the year.

Along the pathway to the outer wold,  
 Where the bare branches of the maples throw  
 Their images across the beaten mold,  
 Touched, here and there, by sunny flecks of glow ;  
 Black shades, like demon spectres, come and go,  
 And Summer's whilom haunts are clad in gear  
 Befitting to the death-bed of the year.

Among crabbed elders in the dank, raw swale  
 From a moss-clambered log the pheasant drums,  
 Blown grasses in the ledge-locked valleys pale,  
 Where no flower longer blooms or wild bee hums,  
 What day late, rustling Autumn to them comes  
 To blur their chromes, but bringing the good-cheer  
 Which shames the tarnished raiments of the year.