

16 - Another winter came—another field,
 By force of arms was from the forest won;
 And we thus early were employed to wield
 Auxiliary steel; and life's long task began.

For implements of labor, we resigned
 Our bow and arrows and our fishing gear;
 But to the "gentle craft" we still inclined,
 And were indulged with two half-days a year.

The first was after hoeing of the corn,
 And just before we harvested the hay;
 The other after all the fields were shorn,
 And all their produce safely stow'd away.

Nor other sport than this we ever knew:
 To unrespited toil we grew resigned;
 And year by year our fields in number grew,
 And we in stature, but untutored mind.

Thus passed our days, in labor to obtain
 Wherewith to live—an all-engrossing theme;
 Life seemed commission'd only to sustain
 Its barren self, without a higher dream.

But in my bosom lurked a secret flame,
 A weed spontaneous in congenial soil,
 A thirst for something undefined by name,
 Some higher summit to be scaled by toil.