

Where erst the jay, within the elm's tall crest,  
Made garrulous trouble round her unfledged young ;  
And where the oriole hung her swaying nest,  
By every light wind, like a censer, swung.

Where sang the noisy martins of the eves,  
The busy swallows circling ever near—  
Foreboding, as the rustic mind believes,  
An early harvest and a plenteous year ;

Where every bird, that waked the vernal feast,  
Shook the sweet slumber from its wings at morn,  
To warn the reaper of the rosy east ;  
All now was sunless, empty, and forlorn.

Alone, from out the stubble, piped the quail ;  
And croaked the crow through all the dreary gloom ;  
Alone the pheasant, drumming in the vale,  
Made echo in the distance to the cottage loom.

There was no bud, no bloom upon the bowers ;  
The spiders wove their thin shrouds night by night,  
The thistle-down, the only ghost of flowers,  
Sailed slowly by—passed noiseless out of sight.

Amid all this—in this most dreary air,  
And where the woodbine shed upon the porch  
Its crimson leaves, as if the year stood there,  
Firing the floor with its inverted torch ;

Amid all this, the centre of the scene,  
The white-haired matron, with monotonous tread,  
Plied the swift wheel, and, with her joyless mien,  
Sate like a fate, and watched the flying thread.

She had known sorrow. He had walked with her,  
Oft supped, and broke with her the ashen crust,  
And in the dead leaves still, she heard the stir,  
Of his thick mantle trailing in the dust.

While yet her cheek was bright with summer bloom,  
Her country summoned and she gave her all ,  
And twice war bowed to her his sable plume—  
Re-gave the sword to rust upon the wall.