

To the informed soul of man the fall of the leaf speaks not only of a resurrection, but teaches him how decay is but a process of regeneration; destruction is the first half of improvement. When living nature has attained perfection in one type, it will not tolerate less, but each stage is made complete, and then the creature perfected after its kind, gives place to new perfection. As forests fall that more stately forests may rise, so human states fall that greater states may rise. Persia and Egypt sank into the tomb on which Greece built her temple; Rome propagated the civilization planted by Greece, and modern Europe rises on the ruins of Rome. Revolutions are but the fall of the leaf. Poland has rotted in the soil of Europe; but the Emperor sitting at Warsaw can no more forbid the unborn nation, than the vulture perched upon the fallen oak trunk can forbid the oak which is growing beneath his feet.

### XIX. BEAUTIFUL AUTUMN.

The sere and yellow leaf reminds us that another autumn is at hand. There is no subject in nature more beautiful to the contemplative mind than Autumn. When we go back in memory to the gay flowers of the vernal fields, the green foliage of the mountains, hills and valleys, and contemplate their beauty, their glory, their freshness, their grandeur and sublimity, we think of but youth and happiness. But when we see the ruddy hue of declining Summer deepening into the rich robe of Autumn—gathering like the pall of death upon all nature—we are reminded in her own emphatic language, that we, like the “leaves that fall in wintry weather,” must ere long, as they are nipped by the autumnal frost, be cut down by the strong arm of death, and gathered to the tomb of silence. It is the time for the mother to visit the lonely grave of her departed love, and weep over it the bright tear of sorrow—for the friend, the acquaintance, and the relative—to think of those who have closed their eyes forever upon the vanities of earth, and lie sleeping among the silent dead. At such a period the mind enters into untold enjoyment. There is a sweetness even in the deepest melancholy, which flows to the heart, touching every tendril with emotions of affection, sympathy and love. It is the time to abstract our thoughts from things perishable—to turn from the ephemeral charms of earth, the more sublime beauties which lie beyond the grave—to learn from the sober realities around us, that our days will have an autumn, that we cannot expect while here “our bright summer always,” though we may look forward to a time when the bloom of an eternal Spring will be known forever; where streams of happiness flow in tranquil beauty from a fountain which time cannot affect.—*Washington Irving.*

### PART III.

### POETRY.

#### I. THE ALMA RIVER.

(By the Very Rev. Richard Chenevix Trench, D.D.)

Though till now ungraced in story, scant although thy waters be,  
Alma, roll those waters proudly, roll them proudly to the sea!  
Yesterday unnamed, unhonoured, but to wandering Tartar known,  
Now thou art a voice forever, to the world's four corners blown.  
In two nations' annals written, thou art now a deathless name,  
And a star forever shining in their firmament of fame.