

Quaint hamlet-alleys, border-filled
With purple lilacs, poplars tall,
Where flits the yellow bird, and fall
The deep eave shadows. There when tilled
The peasant's field or garden bed,
He rests content if o'er his head
From silver spires the Church bells call
To gorgeous shrines, and prayers that gild
The simple hopes and lives of all.

Winter is mocked by garbs of green,
Worn by the copses flaked with snow,—
White spikes and balls of bloom, that blow
In hedgerows deep; and cattle seen
In meadows spangled thick with gold,
And globes where lovers' fates are told
Around the red-doored houses low;
While rising o'er them, fold on fold,
The distant hills in azure glow.

Oft in the woods we long delayed,
When hours were minutes all too brief,
For Nature knew no sound of grief;
But overhead the breezes played,
And in the dank grass at our knee,
Shone pearls of our green forest sea,
The star-white flowers of triple leaf
Which love around the brooks to be,
Within the birch and maple shade.

At times we passed some fairy mere,
Embosomed in the leafy screen,
And streaked with tints of heaven's sheen,
Where'er the water's surface clear
Bore not the hues of verdant light
From myriad boughs on mountain height,
Or near the shadowed banks were seen
The sparkles that in circlets bright
Told where the fishes' feast had been.

And when afar the forests flushed
In falling swathes of fire, there soared
Dark clouds where muttering thunder roared,
And mounting vapours lurid rushed,
While a metallic lustre flew
Upon the vivid verdure's hue,
Before the blasts and rain forth poured,
And slow o'er mighty landscapes drew
The grandest pageant of the Lord:

The threatening march of flashing cloud,
With tumults of embattled air,
Blest conflicts for the good they bear!