

To Autumn

Oh, modest Autumn, stately, pensive maid,
Come tell me why
Thy mournful winds wail sadly in the glade,
Thy seared leaves fly?

Dost thou regret the days that are no more
When life wast young,
And Springtime held for Earth a golden store
Of love and song?

Or art thou sad, the warm, bright Summer hours
So swift have fled,
Leaving their fond delights and fragrant flowers
Among the dead?

Why weep'st thou, pensive maid, upon the ground
And heave'st those sighs?
Because no smiling violet can be found,
No linnet cries?

Know, modest maid, thy charms are fairer far
Than Springtime's green,
And more delectable thy raiments are
Than Summer's sheen!

The mad, enchanting pleasures of the Spring
Yield little gain;
And Summer's fiercer passions only bring
Intenser pain.

Thou dost serener, finer feelings give
To human hearts,
As thou true lessons teach'st them how to live
And act their parts.

Then as thy golden sunsets pass along
The well-spent days,
In tribute we will offer thee a song
Of grateful praise!

—S. J. W.