

AUTUMN.

For Dr. Bell.

With dearest Love,

From the Author

Oh, what a glory doth the world put on
 These peerless, perfect autumn days
 There is a beautiful spirit of gladness everywhere.
 The wooded waysides are luminous with brightly painted leaves;
 The forest-trees with royal grace have donned
 Their gorgeous autumn tapestries;
 And even the rocks and fences are brodered
 With ferns, sumachs and brilliantly tinted ivies.
 But so exquisitely blended are the lights and shades,
 The golds, scarlets and purples, that no sense is wearied;
 For God himself hath painted the landscape.

The hillsides gleam with golden corn;
 Apple and peach-trees bend beneath their burdens of golden fruit.
 The golden-rods, too, are here, whole armies of them,
 With waving plumes, resplendent with gold;
 And about the wild grapes, purple and fair and full of sunshine,
 The little birds southward going
 Linger, like travellers at an Inn,
 And sip the perfumed wine.
 And far away the mountains against the blue sky stand
 Calm and mysterious, like prophets of God,
 Wrapped in purple mist.

But now a change o'er the bright and glorious sky has come
 The threatening clouds stand still,
 The silent skies are dark and solemn;
 The mists of morning hide the golden face of day.
 And a mysterious hand has stripped the trees;
 And with rustle and whir the leaves descend,
 And like little frightened birds
 Lie trembling on the ground.
 Bare and sad the forest-monarchs stand
 Like kings of old, all their splendor swept away.

And down from his ice-bound realm in the North
 Comes Winter, with snowy locks, and tear-drops frozen on his cheeks;
 For he is the brother of Death, and acquainted with Sorrow.
 Autumn sees him from afar,
 And, as a child to her father runneth,
 She to the protecting arms of kindly Winter fleeth;
 And in his mantle of snow
 Tenderly he folds her lovely form,
 And on his breast she falls asleep
 Ere yet the storm-winds have loosed their fury
 Upon a white and silent world.

She sleeps unconscious of the sorrow that must be,
 And dreams perchance of sylvan music,
 And the splendor that was, and will again be hers;
 For Autumn dies not 'Tis as the Poet says:
 "There is no Death, What seems so is transition."
 All that is divine lives
 In some nobler sphere, some fairer form.

Helen Keller

Hulton, Penn., Oct 27th, 1893.