

What the Lichens Sang

I heard the lichens singing
One cold and frosty morn;
When all the leaves had vanished
From tree and bush and thorn.
When the hills were brown all over,
And the fields seemed desert sands;
When the summer flowers were sleeping
'Neath the dead leaves' folded hands.
I heard the lichens singing
And the mosses sweet and clear,
Joined in the fairy concert,
As I hushed my breath to hear.

"If it were always summer
And the land were filled with flowers.
What eye would mark the lichens
That bloom in wintry hours?
What hand would pluck the mosses,
That make the old wood gay,
And who would come to bear them
Like precious gems away?
We are the winter's jewels
He hides us in his breast;
And only those who love us,
May find us 'neath his vest."

~ *Tacie Townsend Purvis* ~