October.

Gone down, the unchanging sea, and grey
Down these grey slopes upon the year-grown old
Adying with the autumn-scented haze
That hangs above the hollow in the wood,
Where the wind is bitter, ancient elms enfold
Worn church, long barns, track, and red-roofed
Wrought in dead days for men a long while dead.

Gone down, O love; may not our hands still meet
Now that we live today; forgetting-May;
Forgetting May, keeping October sweet.
—O, hearken, hearten! Though the afternoon
The grey tower sings a song old twangling time;
Sweet! sweet! and sad the tolling tablets last year's
Too salutate of life to strive with death! x

And we too — will it not be soft and kind,
The rest from life from patience and from pain?
The rest from bliss we knew not when we find?
The rest from love that never ended, can?
—Hark! how the time swells, that so still did
Last us love! ah cling close and ne'er move!
How can I have enough of life, and love?

I think I shall have to alter this couplet, there
is something too like it in Edmund—time,
try this:

Over the last days, when the year-may live,
Too salutate of life with Death to strive.

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J 152 'October' from 'The Earthly Paradise'
—fair copy draft by William Morris
in letter to Georgiana Burne-Jones
(n.d. but c. 1869)
about him when nearly drunk and when I am in an irritible humour; but I behaved very well, though I felt rather crushed among so many clever people, and didn't say much. Brown I thought a bit too genteel for a bachelor's party. I prefer the company when the Wiltshire element is absent. I am in short a narrow and more down to here—and being so will not bore you any longer. Good bye and stand as long as you can.

Your most loving friend

W.M.

[Note: Scramble page for October. Show it to Abe if he is with you.

Oct. 1869]