Yea, the coneys\(^1\) are scared by the thud of hoofs,

And their white scuts\(^2\) flash at their vanishing heels,

And swallows abandon the hamlet\(^3\)-roofs.

The mole's tunnelled chambers are crushed by wheels,

The lark's eggs scattered, their owners fled;

And the hedgehog's household the sapper\(^4\) unseals.

The snail draws in at the terrible tread,

But in vain; he is crushed by the felloe\(^5\)-rim.

The worm asks what can be overhead,

And wriggles deep from a scene so grim,

And guesses him safe; for he does not know

What a foul red flood will be soaking him!

Beaten about by the heel and toe

Are butterflies, sick of the day's long rheum\(^6\),

To die of a worse than the weather-foe.

Trodden and bruised to a miry\(^7\) tomb

Are ears that have greened but will never be gold,

And flowers in the bud that will never bloom.

\(^1\) rabbits  
\(^2\) rabbit tails  
\(^3\) a tiny village  
\(^4\) a soldier who digs trenches  
\(^5\) rim of a wooden wheel  
\(^6\) a sickness shown by watery eyes and runny nose  
\(^7\) boggy land in which you might become stuck