

1977

Continuing

A. R. Ammons

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that before I went to sleep I looked out my window. Under the bright sky
I saw the trees begin to shake.

POETRY / AMMONS, McPHERSON, LUX,
McCORD, NELSON, ORLEN, TALARICO

Continuing / A. R. Ammons

Considering the show, some prize-winning
leaves broad and firm, a good year,
I checked the ground
for the accumulation of
fifty seasons: last year was
prominent to notice, whole leaves
curled, some still with color:
and, underneath, the year
before, though paler, had structure,
partial, airier than linen:
but under that,
sand or rocksoil already mixed
with the meal or grist:
is this, I said to the mountain,
what becomes of things:
well, the mountain said, one
mourns the dead but who
can mourn those the dead mourned;
back a way
they sift in a tearless
place: but, I said,
it's so quick, don't you think,
quick: most time, the mountain said, lies
in the thinnest layer: who
could bear to hear of it:
I scooped up the sand which flowed
away, all but a cone in the palm:
the mountain said, it
will do for another year.