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class - B.A. I
Paper - II
Topic - Explanation,
'Ode to the West Wind'

Explanation-01 From whose, unseen presence the
leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an
enchanter fleeing.

These lines are taken from Shelley's
Ode to the West Wind. The poet says that just as a
magician drives away ghosts by means of magic
incantations. Similarly, the west wind, scatters
the dry leaves of trees in autumn. The magician's
power can only be felt in the effect produced,
but who is never seen. The leaves pale and
weathered are here compared to the ghosts and
the west wind to the exorcist. Note that Shelley
illustrates a concrete fact by means of a super-
natural and less familiar image.

Explanation-02

O thou who chariotest to their dark wintry bed
with living hues and odours plain and hill.

The poet, turning to the creative
aspect of the west wind says that it drives
the seeds underground, where they will lie
inert like dead bodies in a grave till they
are quickened into life at the advent of the
spring season, just as dead bodies are
raised on the Day of Judgement by the blast
of the trumpet of Doom. The wind in spring
is represented as sister of the autumnal
west wind and it awakens the earth from its
slumber in winter. And as a result of
this re-birth of Nature in spring season
flowers will bloom and cover plains and
hills with their colour and fragrance.

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