

Makers of Canadian Literature

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Editor

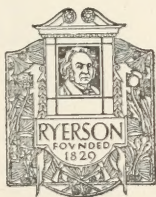
Victor Morin
Associate Editor
French Section

Dedicated to the writers of
Canada - past and present -
the real Master-builders and
Interpreters of our great
Dominion - in the hope that
our People, equal heirs in
the rich inheritance, may learn
to know them intimately; and
knowing them love them; and
loving follow

WILLIAM KIRBY

by

WILLIAM RENWICK RIDDELL



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TO THE MEMORY
of the

UNITED EMPIRE LOYALISTS

who kept their faith and scorned an alien name,

This Book

on the last of them is dedicated by the

AUTHOR

INTRODUCTION



IT HAS been a delightful labour of love to study again the works of William Kirby, F.R.S.C., poet, scholar, patriot. His place in the roll of writers is secure; and I am glad to be permitted to make him better known, especially to Canadians. I have to thank Miss Janet Carnochan, Mr. A. C. Caselman, the staffs of the Toronto Reference Library, the Congressional Library at Washington, the Parliamentary Library at Ottawa, the Legislative Library at Toronto, the Libraries of the University of Toronto, and of the Sulpician Library, Montreal, and the Public Libraries of Boston, New York, and London, for information and assistance.

WILLIAM RENWICK RIDDELL.

Osgoode Hall, Toronto,
June 20, 1923.



Mr Kimbry

BIOGRAPHICAL

WILLIAM KIRBY



WILLIAM KIRBY¹ was born at Kingston-upon-Hull, an ancient and important town in the East Riding of Yorkshire, England, October 13, 1817.

On the father's side, he was descended from the old family, Kirby of Kirby Wiske, the members of which were inconspicuous but valuable members of society, such as have for ages formed and still form the backbone of England and the British Empire. On the mother's side, he was descended from the Watson family of Hull, several of the members of which were famous in their time, but who are now known only in the biographical dictionaries. Thomas Watson (1513-1584) was a profound scholar. A graduate of Cambridge, the friend of Roger Ascham, he wrote a play, "Absalom," which Ascham said was one of the two English tragedies which could stand the true touch of Aristotle's pre-

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cepts. He was declared by Ascham to be one of the scholars who "put so their helping hands as that universitie and all students there, as long as learning shall last, shall be bound to them." Taking Holy Orders, he became a celebrated preacher, and at length, in Queen Mary's time, Bishop of Lincoln, the last Roman Catholic to occupy that seat. He was deprived of his bishopric under Queen Elizabeth and imprisoned, and he died in close confinement at Wisbech Castle, 1584.

Another Thomas Watson (1557-1592) was a poet, although he was a student of law for a time. He translated Petrarch's Sonnets, Sophocles' Antigone and Tasso's Aminta into Latin, composed a few original Latin poems, and also wrote several poems in English. A friend of Spenser, his death was mourned by the better-known poet under the name of "Amyntas, floure of shepheard's pride forlorn." A direct ancestor of Kirby's was Thomas Watson, also a poet, Puritan member of Parliament during the Commonwealth.

William Kirby came with his parents to Cincinnati when still a child, and received most of his education under Alexander Kinmont, a well-known Scottish teacher who conducted

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a Classical and Philosophical Academy of great reputation which was frequented by many students. Kirby undoubtedly profited by the instructions received at this famous school. His knowledge of Latin and French was accurate and extensive, he acquired German, Swedish and Hebrew as well, while his English is unexceptionable in vocabulary and rhetoric. In 1839², "after seven years of schooling and work in the city of Cincinnati," he resolved to move to Canada. He says:—"I had a tincture of U. E. Loyalist blood in my veins and the spirit of it in my heart, that quickened my resolve. My great-grandmother was a Virginian lady who returned with her family to England, driven out by the Revolution. I only knew of her through tradition and have heard her described as a large, comely dame sitting in her old age, as became the wife of a tobacco planter of the James River, with a lighted pipe always ready beside her, as she knitted and talked of people and events of the old Dominion. She hated Washington, whom she had known, for his disloyalty and animosity towards all who opposed the Revolution; and 'these were the best people in Virginia,' she used to say. Her dislike was accentuated by

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the fact that Washington's family and hers had originally sprung from neighbouring districts in Yorkshire and Durham."³

The year 1839 was a troublous year for loyal Britons on this Continent: The Rebellions of Mackenzie and Papineau had indeed been suppressed, but all along the United States frontier were "Hunters' Lodges" and "Sympathizers" who looked to further attempts to tear Canada from under the British flag. War with England was freely talked of and seemed not unlikely; loyal "British residents in the United States were profoundly agitated by this state of things." Many, including Kirby, "came to a resolution to go to Canada and aid in the defence of the Provinces."

Kirby agreed, with two other loyal young Englishmen⁴, to start for Canada together. The others, however, were unable to carry out their proposed plan, from sickness and family reasons, and Kirby started alone. He travelled by the Ohio River and Canal to Cleveland, thence by Lake Erie to Chippawa, near Niagara Falls, taking a full week on the journey—his whole baggage being a long western rifle, a trunk filled with classical books, and a wardrobe. It was with a loyal

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heart and glad that he set foot in Upper Canada, "being the last, almost . . . of the U. E. Loyalists who came in. . . I saw the Union Jack flying and . . . recognized my own country's symbol and hailed it as the true flag of freedom, justice and Christian civilization." The voyage on the canal, with the odd instances of squabbles between the mulemen and boatmen, reminded him of the memorable trip of Horace "from Rome to Brundisium on a boat drawn by mules along the fetid canal of the Pomptinian marshes."⁵

At Chippawa, he saw the ruins of the Episcopal Church burned by the incendiary marauders; and at Slater's Hotel, at which he stayed, he saw opposite him at the supper table "the widow and daughter of Captain Ussher⁶, who had lately been murdered, shot through the window of his house near Chippawa by 'Sympathizers' from the opposite shore." After viewing the Falls, he went on to Queenston, then through Stamford, where he saw the ruins of Danby House, the residence of Dr. Mewburn, also burned by the "Patriots."

The Brock Monument, destroyed a few months later, was also visited, and at length he arrived at Niagara, "a busy, flourishing

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place in those days," where was stationed a regiment of Regular troops. Here he stayed one day, "quite unconscious that my future wife⁷ was living near the town; and not in the least did I think that here was to be my home for the rest of my life." From Niagara he crossed to Toronto on the Steamer *Transit*, which, like all other Canadian steamers, was armed; "racks of pikes and muskets were standing on the deck, ready to repel attacks from the 'Sympathizers' on the American side."

He stayed a few days in Toronto, where the 93rd Highlanders were in garrison. He visited Gallows Hill, the scene of the miniature battle of December, 1837, and saw the spot near Montgomery's Tavern where Colonel Moodie was shot.⁸ Then, in the latter part of July, he set sail down the Lake and River to Montreal, on his way to Quebec. He saw the Windmill at Prescott where Von Schoultz⁹ had been defeated and taken prisoner a few months before; and also, lying in one of the bays, he observed an armed vessel commanded by Capt. Drew who had taken and destroyed the *Caroline*.¹⁰

At Montreal he formed an acquaintance with

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an English gentleman, intelligent and sympathetic, who agreed to accompany him to Quebec; and about the last of July they boarded the new steamer *Lady Colborne*, then setting out on her first voyage. Sir John Colborne and his staff were on board; and Kirby "looked admiringly at the brave old warrior who, at the head of his regiment, outflanked the Imperial Guard of Napoleon in their last grand charge upon the British line at Waterloo and put them to flight, helping to decide the battle." The travellers arrived late at Quebec, the steamer having run on a raft in the dark.

In Quebec, Kirby and his friend put up at the Albion Hotel,¹¹ on Palace Street, where they were awakened "at the reveillé of gun fire and of drums and bugles from the Citadel and Jesuits' Barracks." Under the guidance of Hon. John Neilson and John Richardson, of St. Roch's, they made a tour round the city.¹² Next day, they visited the Plains of Abraham and other points of interest; and what is especially important, "on Buade Street they gazed up wonderingly at the tablet of the Chien d'Or on the façade of the old Philibert House." Kirby asked, but no one could tell him, its

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origin or meaning; and he did not think, that day, that he "should ever help to solve the mystery of 'The Golden Dog'."

After a two days' visit they left for Montreal, where Kirby lounged about for some six weeks. He was present at the trial of Captain Jalbert for the murder of Lieutenant Weir¹³ of the 32nd, which resulted in a disagreement of the jury *de medietate lingue*, half English and half French. A disgraceful scene took place in Court on the announcement by the foreman of their inability to agree; the French applauded, the English attacked them. An ink-bottle struck the foreman of the jury, a rebel "Sympathizer," felling him to the floor; the Judges fled from the Bench; the English cleared out the court room, and, chairing the English jurymen, carried them through the City till morning with torches and cheering.

Undecided whether to go to Quebec or to Upper Canada, he tossed a coin; heads came up and Upper Canada won. He returned to Niagara, where he was to spend most of the remainder of his long but singularly uneventful life. He is known to have spent some time in St. David's, and he became editor of the *Mail* in Niagara early in the sixth decade of

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the nineteenth century. This paper he conducted until 1871, when he was appointed Collector of Customs at Niagara by Sir John A. Macdonald, a position which he occupied until his resignation in 1895.

He died at Niagara, June 23, 1906, and lies buried at St. Mark's Church in that town¹⁴ by the side of his wife, whom he survived fifteen years. He was under arms in 1867 in the Fenian Raid in Lower Canada. He had two sons, both now deceased, John Colborne, of Toronto, and Eugene Guildford, of Calgary, Alberta. Two grandsons proved themselves worthy of their lineage by service in the Great War, one making the last sacrifice.

Kirby was one of the original Fellows of the Royal Society of Canada in 1882, and retired in 1894.

¹ Much of the following sketch is common property; most of such parts as are novel I owe to the kindness of Miss Janet Carnochan, of Niagara, long a colleague of Kirby's on the Library Board, Niagara-on-the-Lake, and an enthusiastic fellow-worker in patriotic measures. Kirby was also an active member with Miss Carnochan of the Niagara Historical Society, one of the best, if not the best, of local historical societies in Ontario, and whose publications are a credit to it and to Canada.

² The quotations are from Kirby's "Reminiscences of a Visit to Quebec, July, 1839"; the inner title is "A

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Reminiscence of Two Days in Quebec, July, 1839, by Wm. Kirby. Dedicated to Sir James M. LeMoine." It is dated Niagara, January 12th, 1903, and was sent to the *Quebec Chronicle* through Sir James M. LeMoine, who prefixed a letter of appreciation. I owe a copy of the reprint to the kindness of Miss Janet Carnochan.

3 As many places have been given for the place in England from which John Washington, George Washington's great-great-grandfather, came to Virginia, as for the birthplace of Homer. "The genealogical researches of Mr. Henry E. Waters seem to have established the connection of the family with the Washingtons of Sulgrave, Northamptonshire, England" (Ency. Brit., *sub voc.*, Washington, George), and that origin is now accepted with practical unanimity.

4 John Sinclair, who fell sick of a fever, and Fred Winter, who was not able to leave for family reasons.

5 The interesting and amusing Sat., lib. 1, 5. Kirby had not the advantage (or disadvantage) of a "comes" like "Rhetor Heliodorus Græcorum longe doctissimus"; but he had the advantage of a water-trip all the way and probably avoided the "teterrima aqua" such as Appia furnished to the companions of Horace.

The "squabbles between the mulemen and boatmen" are described in vv. 11-17:

"Then the slaves began to abuse the sailors and the sailors the slaves. 'Bring that boat to shore.' 'You are putting three hundred on board,' 'That's enough from you.' Then the fare is demanded, then the mule is hitched up, the time is up, the infernal mosquitoes and swamp frogs drive away sleep, while the sailor, soaked with flat wine, sings of his girl and the mule driver vies with him." (The modest Anthon omits the verses describing how Horace, the utter fool (*stultissimus*), waited in vain till midnight for his deceiver of a girl, (*mendacem puellam*), and the result).

I presume that nowadays few remember much of this Satire, except "Credat Judæus Apella, non ego."

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The route to Cleveland from Cincinnati was by way of the Ohio River and the Ohio Canal, opened to Akron in 1827 and to the Ohio River in 1832.

6 Coventry, in his "Concise History of the Late Rebellion," 17 Ont. Hist. Assn. Papers, Toronto, 1919, pp. 149, 155, 159, speaks of "Captain Ussher, an active officer," and on p. 163, of a red-hot ball falling near him and a bullet going through his dining-room. Three members of the Canadian Militia were killed in the operations in 1837-8 on the Niagara Frontier.

7 Eliza Magdalene, only daughter of John Whitmore and granddaughter of Capt. Daniel Servos. Kirby wrote an account of both the Whitmore and the Servos family, which appears in the Niagara Historical Society's publications No. 8, Niagara, 1901. The original Servos was a Protestant Refugee from Hungary who settled in Alt Wied. One of his descendants, Christopher, came to America, 1726; his son Daniel, a valiant U.E. Loyalist soldier, came to the Niagara frontier in Upper Canada.

The Whitmores were also U.E. Loyalists from New Jersey, of English origin. John Whitmore, when a child, was taken captive by some Americans, Indians and white, 1779, and rescued after a time by Daniel Servos. A sister, Mary, ten years older, was captured at the same time. John when a man of nearly eighty saw her again for the first time at the Long Sault in 1851.

Daniel Servos adopted John, brought him to Canada and gave him Magdalene, his daughter, in marriage, with a fine farm adjoining his own.

8 Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Moodie, a veteran of the Peninsula and Queenston Heights, having heard of Mackenzie's march against Toronto, went with two companions, Capt. Hugh Stewart and Mr. Brooke, toward Toronto from Richmond Hill to warn the Government and the people. In front of Montgomery's Tavern they were called upon to halt. Moodie drew his pistol and fired; several guns then answered and Moodie fell mortally wounded; he was carried into the tavern and died in a short time. It is not

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known who fired the fatal shot. This was the first blood shed in the Rebellion, Monday, Dec. 4, 1837.

Gallows Hill is about a mile north of Bloor Street.

9 The Battle of the Windmill, near Prescott, at which Von Schoultz and many of his men were taken prisoner, was fought Thursday, November 15, 1838. Von Schoultz was hanged with a number of other prisoners, December 8, after conviction by a Court Martial at Kingston, being defended by John A. Macdonald, afterwards Prime Minister of Canada. Von Schoultz pleaded guilty—there was no doubt of the facts or of his guilt—and he threw himself on the mercy of the Court. He was a man of high character and honestly believed that Canadians were under the heel of English tyranny.

10 The *Caroline* was a small 46-ton steamer which was in use between Navy Island and the mainland. She was captured by an expedition from Canada under the command of Captain Drew; fire was put to her and she was set afloat. She did not go over the Falls, as stated by Mackenzie and as generally supposed. This thrilling adventure took place during the night of December 29-30, 1837. See the account by Coventry, *op. cit.*, pp. 161, 162 and notes.

11 The Albion was for many years the leading hotel in Quebec; I remember staying there in 1869. It became the "Victoria" under the management of M. Lazare Trudelle, and was destroyed by fire, December 14, 1902.

12 Hon. John Neilson, M.P. for the County of Quebec, 1818-1834, was born at Donald, Scotland, 1776, and died at Dornald, Cap Rouge, 1849. He was editor of the *Quebec Gazette*, a leading Reformer and a friend of Gourelay and Mackenzie. John Richardson was a leading merchant of Quebec, owning mills in the suburb of St. Roch. Richardson Street, Quebec, was called after him.

13 Lieutenant Weir, of the 32nd Foot, was sent from Montreal to Sorel with despatches, November

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22, 1837. Stopped by a patrol of the Rebel forces, he was taken to Dr. Nelson's house and by Nelson given in charge to Captain Jalbert. In an attempt to escape he was killed, and Jalbert was tried at Montreal for murder, September, 1839. Ten of the jury were for acquittal and two for conviction. Those for acquittal were attacked by the English, but received police protection. Jalbert was not re-tried, but after a comparatively short imprisonment was set free.

14 A white marble tablet in the church has the inscription: "In memory of William Kirby, F.R.S.C., for twenty-four years Collector of Customs for Niagara, the author of "Le Chien D'Or, the Golden Dog," Canadian Idylls and other works of just repute. A true man with the loyalty, courage and spirit of his race. Born at Hull, Yorkshire, the 13th of October, 1817; died at Niagara the 23d of June, 1906; also in memory of his dear wife, Eliza Magdalene Whitmore, U.E.L., born in Niagara Township, 11th of August, 1817, died at Niagara the 5th of June, 1891."

Kirby is described by Sir James M. LeMoine, who knew him well, as "a large man, handsome, *aux allures courtoises*, a little reserved." He was a devout Christian, a sincere member of the Church of England; and he was a constant reader of the Scriptures, ranking the Psalms and Isaiah the highest in all literature. After these sacred writings he placed Homer, Shakespeare, Milton and Dante, and in that order. Vergil he did not value highly.

Lord Tennyson was a frequent correspondent. Kirby at the urgent request of friends, gave away many of the Laureate's letters—to his lasting regret.

EARLY POETICAL WORKS

EARLY POETICAL WORKS

ON LORD METCALFE



F his newspaper productions we should look only at such as Kirby himself thought worthy of perpetuating in permanent form. To the *Niagara Chronicle* of December 31, 1845, he contributed a poem of 167 verses, unrhymed iambic pentameters, "On the Sickness and Retirement of His Excellency Lord Metcalfe from the Government of Canada. November, 1845." This is a good example of his style, and gives a key to his politics:—

"O! Thrice ennobled in Canadian love,
Metcalf, the wise and good, the sure defence
And bright adornment of our northern land!

.

Metcalf! Thy precious words of coinèd truth,
Stamped with true British effigies, henceforth
Shall be the hoarded treasure and the best

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And noblest circulation of our land,
Or, winged with high and soul-inspiring
thought,
Like covering cherubim, shall watchful sit
Upon the holy ark of liberty,
Our answering oracle in every need.
Harsh were the discords that untuned the land,
And hot aspirants in the senate bold
Usurped the sacred temple of the laws
By Sydenham, the social builder, raised,
And from its dedication strove amain
What deity therein behoved to reign—
Whether the democratic God, whose head
With cloudy vapour circled, and whose eyes,
Purblind with envy and vainglory, stare
With evil aspect on all great and good,
Or whether slumbering tyranny oppress
The bending throne, callous in strength, I
ween,
And heedless or of murmurs or of praise.
When noble Metcalfe rose, whose master hand
Cast down the unshaped idols worshipped
there,
And, 'mid the people's glad, exultant cries,
The goddess bright of British freedom led
And high enthroned her in the glorious fane.
Preserver of the laws! With grief sincere,

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Mourns Canada the iron stroke of fate
That takes thee from her ever grateful arms.

.

As for a father, she laments thee gone."

Of course, the quarrel of Metcalfe with Baldwin and Lafontaine has two sides.

"Responsible Government" was interpreted differently by the antagonistic parties; and the Governor believed that his function was to govern. Canada had not yet attained her present position of popular government, and Kirby well expressed the views of his political party. That he, in 1888 and 1894, thought it well to reprint this poem of 1845, gives testimony of the principles he firmly held and gloried in.¹

¹ No better or more effective defence of Metcalfe's actions can be found than Dr. Ryerson's "Sir Charles Metcalfe Defended Against the Attacks of his late Counsellors," published at Toronto, 1844. William Lyon Mackenzie's copy, with his annotations, is in the Riddell Canadian Library at Osgoode Hall. See also Kaye's "Life and Correspondence of Charles, Lord Metcalfe," London, 1858, Vol. II, pp. 330, sqq.



THE U. E.



THE U. E.

A TALE OF UPPER CANADA



IN 1846, Kirby wrote his first sustained poetical production; it was printed and published at Niagara in 1859, at the *Mail Office*.

It contains an introduction, followed by twelve cantos; these are formed of fifty-eight stanzas of from twelve to thirty verses each, over six thousand verses in all. The metre, heroic couplet or rhymed iambic pentameter, is varied by a very occasional iambic hexameter or Alexandrine. Of these, however, there are not more than a score altogether; and only once does one close a stanza. As to the story, it is long, but not very complicated.

Walwyn lived with his two sons, Ethwald and Eric, the former about sixteen, the latter much younger, in Yorkshire, England—

“Upon the grassy banks of winding Swale,
Their ancient homestead graced the pleasant
dale.

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Its walls with honeysuckles overrun,
Its lattice windows shining in the sun,
Its tiled roof with gables pointing o'er
The carved lintels and inviting door,
With well-worn threshold.”

The home had been occupied by Walwyn's
ancestors,

“Since mighty Edward led his northern wars.”

Walwyn experienced hard times:

“In vain he toiled, and every art applied;
His farm no more increasing wants supplied.
The wealth laid by in happier days before
Grew daily less and dwindled more and more.
With summer's drought and autumn's drench-
ing rains,
His blackened crops lay sweltering on the
plains;
Contagion seized his flocks, and one by one
His murrained herd expired with piteous
moan,
While taxes, scarce in plenteous years sus-
tained,
Swept from his fields the little that remained.”

These taxes were due to the Napoleonic wars,

THE U. E.

“When half the world to Gaul submission made.”

England alone

“ . . . maintained the holy cause
Of justice, liberty and social laws.”

His wife Hilda being dead, Walwyn determines to emigrate. Constance, who is affianced to Ethwald, is left behind in the valley of the Swale. A storm at sea is vividly described; the sails are driven upon the reeling mast and the peril is imminent when,

“Defying death, a gallant sailor sprung,
And on the whirling spars he climbed and clung.
His hair streamed in the wind, his sparkling
eye
And compressed lips declared his courage high;
With lion's grasp upon the point he springs
And draws his knife and cuts the tangled
strings.”

The ship is saved, but the gallant sailor is drowned.

The Gulf Stream is reached. They pass

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Gaspé, Tadousac, the Saguenay, Cap Tourment, and then

“Afar Quebec exalts her crest on high;
Her rocks and battlements invade the sky,
The pride of Canada, her strength and head,
England’s assurance and Columbia’s dread.

.

Where gallant Wolfe led his devoted band

.

And noble Montcalm! Well thy honored bier
May claim the tribute of a British tear.”

But

“Soon Quebec fades like a glorious dream;”

and up the St. Lawrence sail the immigrants.

“Still on and on they pass, till voices call—
Behold the distant towers of Montreal!
The Royal Mountain, throned upon the plain,
Looks proudly down on all his wide domain.”

Not everything is lovely—

“Men walk estranged and factious, foul
debate,
Despising quiet, disturbs the peaceful State,

THE U. E.

And in these modern times renews the rage
And social jars of England's Norman age;
While Gallic vanity and Saxon pride
Alike in fault, alike the blame divide."

Up the St. Lawrence they sail, past

" . . . Glengarry's shore, where every face
Strong lined and grave, proclaims her High-
land race;"

past St. Regis and the Thousand Islands,
which

" on either beam
Glance like the happy isles of Mirza's
dream;"

past Fort Henry, which

" . . . guards the Midland classic
ground,

Where ancient Frontenac first raised its walls
And loyal Kingston built her stately halls,"

to Toronto, where

"In academic groves there Learning draws
Our generous youth to study Wisdom's laws.

.

There Legislation holds her high debate
And Freedom stands the guardian of the State;

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In spotless ermine Justice sits supreme
And lifts the scales of law with even beam,
While rich in future hopes, in memories past,
Toronto's glorious destiny is cast;
Mid rival cities of our land, I ween,
Is hers the Crown and she the rightful Queen."

They travel westward to Hamilton—

"There fresh in youth, with oaken garland
crowned,
A rising city spreads her robes around;
Her suburbs still advancing, she again
Extends her arms and grasps the vacant plain;"
past Stony Creek,

"Where our Leonidas, at dead of night,
Brave Harvey led the patriotic fight;"

and finally the destination near Niagara is
reached:

"Hard by a gushing spring, the waggons staid;
Unyoked, the oxen graze amid the glade,
And soon the nimble youths a fire prepare
And spread upon the ground their simple fare."

A stranger, "Ranger John," (drawn from a

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real person, Mr. John Clement) then appears and welcomes them:—

“His looks beamed truth and kindness as he stood

Like some old giant warder of the wood;
And seventy winters' storms had thickly shed
Th' unmelting snows of time upon his head.”

In Canto Fourth he tells his story. Dwelling in the Mohawk Valley, he had married and was blessed with three children. On the outbreak of the Revolution,

“I sought but truth and right; I was a man
When first those loud complaints of wrong began.

I loved my King and boldly dared despise
Their factious tales and base, disloyal lies.
For we had lived an honest country life,
Apart from towns and politics and strife,
Felt no oppression and perceived no ill
That peaceful means might not redress at will.”

He took arms for the Crown, joined Sir John Johnson, and

“ backward drew
Till on Canadian hills our standards flew.”

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Returning with Johnson, Butler, Brant,

" dread of his foes,
Great chief at whose command six nations
rose,"

they reached the Mohawk; but Ranger
John's wife and children had been burned,
with his dwelling, by the Rebels under Wood-
worth. Crazed with grief, he joined the In-
dians and killed and scalped Woodworth. He
fought to the end of the war, and when

" Peace at last approved the
Rebels' cause

And gave them rest and independent laws,"

he came to Canada. Then

"In time, again I wed a virtuous wife
And led with her a long and happy life,
With children blessed"

The next day sees a logging-bee; and

"An ample cabin in the clearing stood."

Then a wrestling match culminates in
Ethwald's defeat of Hugh,

" . . the youngest born of Ranger John,
Who long had lived a disobedient son,

THE U. E.

Seemed prone to ill and frequent left his home,
And vagrant round the country loved to roam.
Dark feature marked him and a vicious eye,
Keen, bold and selfish, seemed to defy."

Hugh refuses to take Ethwald's hand and announces his departure to the United States to renounce his allegiance, but finally he is pacified. His father, however, sends him off and he left.

'But seasons come and go," and
'Now seven times Aries had clambered nigh
The equal boundaries of the vernal sky."

Walwyn had succeeded, his sons were "to youth and robust manhood grown." Ethwald returned to Yorkshire to wed Constance, returning with her to Upper Canada, and after another year, they were blessed with a child. A runaway negro gives the tidings of an intended raid on the country.

'Last night in Tonawanda's woods I lay
And heard them counsel till the break of day;
A band of armed men, whose chief I knew,
Known to the south as Desperado Hugh—
A dark conspiracy they had in hand,
Combined with traitors in your slumbering
land,

WILLIAM KIRBY

And from their speech, I gathered 'twas their
aim,
Soon as burst forth Rebellion's sudden
flame,
Amid the wild confusion, like a flood
To sweep your shores with rapine, fire and
blood."

[Did ever runaway negro slave use such
language?]

Ranger John, who now must have been
nearly ninety, and a troop of horsemen draw
near. The news has come from Toronto of
the outbreak of the rebellion, and Walwyn and
his sons join the loyal force. Ranger John is
told the news brought by the negro, and deter-
mines to prevent the crossing of the con-
spirators. They pass Lundy's Lane,

"Whose thirsty sands once drank the reek-
ing gore
Of dense battalions from Columbia's shore."

Opposite Grand Island they stop and dis-
mount.

"With rapid search a log canoe they reach,
And launching forth upon the rippling tide,
With skilful paddles o'er the waters glide.
In silence reach they thus the woody strand."

THE U. E.

They spy upon the conspirators and hear
the boastful "Renslaer,"

"The great Bombastes of the mingled brood,
A pompous knave with little wit to guide
His bold assumption and unmeasured pride."

" . . . brave Von Schoultz; what
madness drove thee on
To band with thieves and make their crimes
thy own?"

Hugh, Ranger John's son, is there. With
difficulty his father is prevented from toma-
hawking him on the spot. Then, finding
themselves betrayed by Roughwood, whom
they send over the Falls, the conspirators
abandon their scheme. Hugh discovers the
Canadians and shoots his elder brother Her-
man; the rest escape to Canadian shores.

Renslaer determined

" . . . to cross the strait to
Navy Isle;
There, fortified 'mid the waters, he would
stand
Defiant of FitzGibbon and his band."

A feverish summer passed (1838). Hugh

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took part in the raid at Prescott. Among the loyal troops,

“Came Ranger John, leading a gallant band
Of hardy yeomen from Ontario’s strand.”

The camp of the invader is stormed:

“With courage worthy of a better cause
Stern Hugh from post to post incessant goes,
And to the storm of battle bares his breast,
Like some broad shield to shelter all the rest.”

Hendrick, Ranger John’s son, is killed, and soon Ethwald receives a bullet in “his manly breast.” He dies in his father’s arms, commending Constance and his boy to Walwyn and Eric.

Hugh and his father meet face to face: Hugh begs forgiveness, which his father refuses, and he is about to kill his son when

“A treacherous shot from Hugh’s retreating
band

Stretched their bold leader bleeding on the
sand.

‘Forgive me now!’ his lips imploring said,
And at his father’s feet, his spirit fled.”

“Walwyn and Ranger John, in friendship dear,
Console each other’s grief—and year by year,

THE U. E.

In summer shade or by the winter's fire,
Hold converse on the themes that never tire:
The tender memories of the fallen brave
Who gave their lives to vindicate and save
This loyal heritage of England's crown,
This noble land that Britons call their own,
This golden cup of Freedom, void of flaw,
That pours the sacred stream of equal law;
This land of forests, rivers, lakes and plains,
And earnest men, whose proud ambition
 strains
The leash of Hope, with filial love to stand,
Britannia's worthy sons, adult, at her right
 hand.

As Time still passes by with noiseless tread
He wafts a blessing on each silvered head.
Old John sits in his porch and robins sing
Amid the apple blossoms, while a ring
Of children's children cluster round his knee,
Filled with the spirit of the old U.E.,
Learning to guard, like him in days of yore,
England's proud Empire, one for evermore."

This work is an epic both in form and in substance. The verse is heroic; the poem begins in true epic manner, and we are reminded of Homer singing the wrath of Ach-

WILLIAM KIRBY

illes, or of Vergil beginning "Arms and the Man," or of Milton with his "Man's first disobedience" and "Recover'd Paradise to all mankind." But there is a difference; Kirby gives us the *locus*, not the subject, of his verse.

"In lone Canadian woods I raise my song,
Where lingering suns the summer days prolong,
And rugged oaks their lengthening shadows fling
Athwart the sunshine of the silent spring,
While blue Ontario, sparkling through the trees,
With grateful breezes fans the hour of ease."

And he rather repudiates the thought of epic, for he addresses Vergil thus:

"But glowing Maro! Unto thee belong
The might and majesty of epic song,
And thine with power and grandeur to rehearse,
In all the pomp of pan-harmonic verse,
Gods and their works, and on the lyre unbar
The mighty symphonies of men and war.
Thee Chief of Song! Let circling halos blaze
Around thy head and crown immortal bays;

THE U. E.

For me a wreath of modest cedar still
May haply bloom on some Canadian hill.
Then come, my woodland muse, and fire my
tongue,
And let my lips the moving strain prolong,
Till, warm with life and radiant from above,
My lay be worthy of my country's love!"

This whole introduction has a Horatian rather than a Vergilian flavour; and Kirby, throughout his poetical writing, exhibits a love for Horace. In later life he seems to have lost some, at least, of his admiration for Vergil.¹

The characters are non-historical, although Ethwald seems to have been drawn in part from Kirby himself. The Rebellion in 1837 and the Battle of the Windmill in 1838 are, of course, historical; but there is no record of any such occurrence as the previous conspiracy to invade Upper Canada by Van Rensselaer. As a whole the work is creditable in design and elaboration, and it was clearly a labour of love with the last of the United Empire Loyalists.

¹ In a conversation with Miss Janet Carnochan, in April, 1905, he placed Homer after the Psalms and Isaiah; then, "No, not Vergil after Homer, but Shakespeare, Milton and Dante."

I am not sure that an intimate acquaintance with the Old Testament and the older writers is not the best education for one intending to write serious and creative poetry.



CANADIAN IDYLLS



CANADIAN IDYLLS



IT WILL be convenient to consider the remaining poetical works of Kirby in the form in which he placed them last, that is, the second edition, 1894, of his "Canadian Idylls". I refer to this edition throughout.

The first part of "Canadian Idylls," namely, the "Prelude" and "Spina Christi," dated January 1, 1881, appeared in Rose-Belford's *Canadian Monthly and National Review*, Volume VI., April and May, 1881, pp. 414-423, 511-17. "Interlude First," "The Bells of Kirby Wiske" and "The Lord's Supper in the Wilderness" appeared in Volume VII, March and April, 1882, pp. 281-291, 370-9. The whole, with other poems, was published in one volume, 1888, and a new edition in 1894.

The first part is a continued poem, "The Queen's Birthday," which contains the five parts already mentioned. That is followed by "The Harvest Moon," "Pontiac," "Bushy

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Run," "Stony Creek," "Dead Sea Roses," "The Hungry Year" and "The Sparrows." Following these are some translations from the German of Arndt, the French of Berenger, and certain short poems.

THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY

This is in the heroic measure or iambic unrhymed pentameters, and begins with a Prelude, which describes the beautiful morning of a Twenty-fourth of May, a typical Queen's Birthday:

"The sun was rising seaward of the point
Of a low promontory thick with trees,
Which, like the sacred bush by Moses seen,
Were all ablaze with unconsuming fire.

.

Landward the orchards were in bloom, the
peach

In red and pink, the apples white and red,
While every bush, after its kind, in flower,
Wrought once again the miracle of spring,
And showed God's wisdom, love and power
divine.

. 'Twas a morn
to feel

CANADIAN IDYLLS

The heavens unladen and on earth poured
down

The treasures of the inner world, where are
Things in their essences.”

The fishermen had gathered on the beach
on the Queen’s Birthday:

“Strong, hardy men with neck and face and
hands

Tanned to a brownness—else as fair of skin
As any born of purest English race.”

They cheered.

“That royal name, revered in every clime
The round world knows, is honoured to the
height

Of chivalry beneath the clear blue skies
That cope the boundless plains of Canada,
The home of loyalty from days of old
Fought for and kept! A crowned Dominion,
fit

For freest men to live the noblest lives!”

Their leader announced a holiday; he had
heard Toronto’s guns booming o’er the Lake.

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“We, too, will pass the day in gaiety,
And, as our Queen would wish it, soberly,
With wives and children, friends and neighbors all.”

It was so agreed :

“The fish shall have a holiday and swim
Free as they will—only the tribute due
Our feast claim we from them—one haul—no more !”

So said, so done. They met by Fort
Mississauga, cast and drew a seine, and

“ See, the lines are taut
Of one good thousand whitefish in the net,
All leaping, struggling, flashing like a mass
Of quicksilver.
Themselves, of all that swim, the daintiest,
Most beautiful and best! Yea! Catius
missed

The choicest thing e’er lay in golden dish—
The Addikameng of Ontario!”¹

The meeting is at Paradise Grove:

“ well named,
With leafy lanes, to love and musing dear;
It overlooks the high and abrupt banks
Of cliff and landslides, wooded at their base,

CANADIAN IDYLLS

And filled with wild flowers, that, save by the
bees,
Unrifled, bloom all summer. . . ."

Clifford, the master fisher, had a manuscript
"of faded ink and yellow paper," and read
from it to the

" . . . crowd of merrymakers, seated
round
In careless ease, listening with eager ear."

The manuscript had been written by a youth
now dead:

"He came among us from the Motherland,
In search of health, for he was thin and pale
From overstudy or some deeper cause—
A youth, yet grave enough to be a man:
Than most men wiser; pensive, somewhat
shy,
A gentleman with hands unused to toil;
A student, poet, painter and what not."

He sickened, and when came

"The swallows back, bringing new summer in,
New life to many, but new death to him,
The cycle of his time on earth was run;
He died amid the sunshine and the flowers."

WILLIAM KIRBY

Clifford's favourite niece, May,

" a rosy maid,
The same who waited with her milking pail
In russet gown and kerchief, but who now
In style and stuff of fashion's newest mode,
Was dressed like any lady of the land,
As is the wont of our Canadian girls,
Bearing themselves with native grace and
ease,
The old refinement of an epoch rare
Of honour, loyalty and noble deeds,
Which gifted them with beauty's heritage
And all the charming ways of ladyhood,"

directed the course of his selections. The first piece read is entitled:

SPINA CHRISTI

It is the story of the thorns, formerly called "French Thorns," growing on the plains of Niagara near the Grove of Paradise. The poem is in three parts of thirteen stanzas each; and every stanza is composed of ten verses. Of these verses, the first three and the sixth, seventh and eighth are iambic heptameters;² the fourth and ninth iambic tetrameters; and the fifth and tenth

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iambic trimeters. The fourth and fifth also make an iambic heptameter, as do the ninth and tenth. The rhyming verses are the first and second, the third, fifth, sixth and seventh, and the eighth and tenth. There is also an internal rhyme after the first dipody of the fourth and ninth verses.

The story begins with the departure, in June, 1750, from Avignon, of the Rousillon Regiment for Canada:

“The city walls of Avignon are built of
stone, and high
The houses stand with balconies above the
streets that lie
Around the old Cathedral, whose sweet bells
were ringing clear
A merry tune, one day in June
Of Seventeen hundred year,
And half a hundred years beside, while
crowding far and near
Beneath the flags and tapestries, the people
loudly cheer—
The regiment of Rousillon is ordered to the
war,
A thousand strong, the pick among
The mountaineers of Var.”

WILLIAM KIRBY

The Count of Bois le Grand is going with the Regiment; and bids his bride of three months farewell, kissing her beneath "the holy thorn of the old Celestine," which

"Pope Clement brought with blessings fraught and planted it between

The wall and wall beside the cross, where he was daily seen

To kneel before it reverently. It came from Palestine,

A plant from that which cruelly the crown of thorns supplied

Christ wore for me, when mocked was He And scourged and crucified."

The Count plucked "a spray acute with many a sting and placed it on his plumed cha-peau"; and then bade his "Provence rose" a fond farewell. The regiment marched away, sailed from Bordeaux and soon reached Quebec. Then the order came to go farther west; "A hundred leagues and many more towards the glowing west,"

to the Niagara Fort

"To close the port, and guard the fort, And keep it for the king."

CANADIAN IDYLLS

Near Niagara,

"Count Bois le Grand sought out a spot of loveliness, was full
Of sandwort's silvered leaf and stem, with
down of fairy wool.
Hard by the sheltering grove of oak he set
the holy thorn,
Where still it grows and ever shows
How sharp the crown of scorn
Christ wore for man, reminding him what
pain for sin was borne."

War came on, but

"Remote amid the trackless woods and waters
of the West,
No enemy had broken yet Niagara's quiet
rest."
"A fleet of swift canoes came up, all vocal
with the song
Of voyageurs, whose cadences kept even time
among
The dipping paddles, as they flashed along
Ontario's shore,
Past headlands high and coasts that lie
In mistiness—and bore
A bevy of fair wives who love their husbands
more and more,

WILLIAM KIRBY

Who could not bear their absence, and, de-
fiant of the roar
Of forests and of waters, came to comfort
and caress
As women may—and only they—
Man's solitariness."

Bois le Grand became infatuated with one
of these, Madelaine,

"A dame of charms most radiant—the cyno-
sure that shone
Amid the constellations of Quebec's mag-
netic zone—
Drew him with force and held him fast, a
captive with her eyes,
Which, dark and bright as tropic night,
Loved him without disguise;
And he remembered not the thorn he planted
by the Grove
Of Paradise, where he forgot, in his forbidden
love,
The chatelaine of Bois le Grand, the purest
wife and best
Of womankind he left behind,
And ventured, with the rest,
To sport with woman's loveliness, as for a
passing jest.

CANADIAN IDYLLS

His heart was very lonely, too, while all beside were blest,
Like Samson in Delilah's lap, his locks of strength were shorn;
He loved again, despite the pain
And stinging of the thorn."

One day, hunting on the Marais Normand, the present "Swamp," Madelaine accidentally shot him, mistaking him for a deer:

"She waited on him night and day; plucked off her silken glove
With self-accusing grief and tears—lamenting as a dove
Bewails her wounded mate—so she, and in her bosom wore
A spike of thorn which every morn
She gathered—nothing more."

The English come, "Prideaux's stout army."
"The palisades are red with fire, the ramparts red with gore;
Its brave defenders on the wall die thickly more and more,
'Mid rack and ruin overwhelmed, no help above, below,
The few remain, not of the slain,
Surrender to the foe."

WILLIAM KIRBY

Bois le Grand lies helpless, attended by
Madelaine:

"The last day came, and Bois le Grand beheld
with misty eyes

The flag of France run down the staff and
that of England rise.

It was the sharpest thorn of all that 'neath
his pillow lay.

'O Madelaine!' he cried, 'my men!

My Rousillon so gay!

Fill graves of honour, while I live to see this
fatal day!

But not another! No!' he cried, and turned
as cold as clay.

She kissed his mouth, the last long kiss the
dying get alone—

'O Spina!' cried—fell by his side,
And both lay dead as stone."

This elaborate, ingenious and romantic poem, with the Introduction already reviewed and a short "L'Envoi," formed the first instalment published, April and May, 1881. "L'Envoi" consists of three stanzas, of fifteen, twenty-one and twelve verses, respectively, in unrhymed iambic pentameter.³ The next

CANADIAN IDYLLS

instalment followed, March and April, 1882, the first part being called

INTERLUDE FIRST

This interlude is composed of nine stanzas in the same unrhymed heroic measure.

By this time the sun is past the meridian; so May, who had wept over the French thorns, then put grief aside and joined the dancers. At length she returned from a walk with her beloved,

“ flushed and happy,
with disordered hair

She shook into its place, with arm half bare
She covered blushing, rejoined the few
Beside her uncle, who sat book on knee,
And bade her choose a tale and read it too.”

Clifford himself tells of Beebe⁴ the “Sympathizer,” who was killed at Navy Island, December, 1837; and whose bones, however often and however carefully covered, always were cast up by the indignant mother earth:

“ my own eyes have seen
How an uneasy rebel—killed and laid
In Navy Island—could no quiet find

WILLIAM KIRBY

Even in his grave. No rest had Beebe's
bones;

Oft as men buried them and beat them down,
Earth cast them up again! Year after year
His bleached, disjointed frame next morning
lay

Upon the grass beside his open grave,
Which seemed not dug, but scratched by
demon claws,

As if the great arch-rebel, Lucifer,
Had claimed his own. A weird, uncanny
tale!

Beyond the wit of any to explain!"

May selected and read—

THE BELLS OF KIRBY WISKE

Temp., Geo. IV, 1820.

It is a piece of local folklore that a native of the Parish of Kirby Wiske, in the North Riding of Yorkshire, should he hear, when far away, the chimes of the bells of Kirby Wiske, recognizes that as a premonition of impending death. This short piece rests upon that theme. It is also in unrhymed heroic measure, with about 350 verses in all.

CANADIAN IDYLLS

John Ashby came a pioneer to Balsam Lake
and settled on the free land, where

“ The wild grapes hung
In purple clusters. Acorns, uncupped, fell,
With mast of beech, upon the leafy ground;
While, far as eye could see, the maples blazed
Like distant campfires in the piny woods.

. The glassy lake,
Dotted with rocky islets overgrown
With mimic forests, each a Fairy land
And Empire of itself, for Fancy's dreams
Held in its bays the vast migrating flocks
Of wild geese, swans and mallards, with a
clash

Of wings and trumpeting. High up the
stream,

In solitary pools, the beavers worked
With quiet industry”

A missionary from England was visiting the
settlement on the Sunday:

“A Sabbath such as never had been seen
In these new settlements;
And for the first time in this wilderness
Set out the holy table of the Lord
For blest communion of the Sacrament,
In memory of Him Who died for all.”

WILLIAM KIRBY

John Ashby's two daughters, on the preceding Saturday, were preparing for the sacred occasion:

“ . . . Eve, eldest of the twain,
Bright chestnut-haired, with eyes cerulean
blue,
Clear as the sky of Asgard—tall and lithe—
With features sculptured by a master hand,
Straight as Iduna's, who with apples fed
The Eddic gods of her ancestral race,”
and Hilda, the younger.

Eve had lost her affianced Lionel,
“ . . . ‘Who that summer eve,
When Wiske was rippling by our lingering
feet,
Heaven's countless stars for witness, pledged
his love
With this betrothal ring again to come
At Christmas-tide, the gladdest yule to be
For both of us! Which came—but never he!
Alas the day! when Swale, in winter flood,
From fells and moorlands overflowed his
banks
And buried all the fords in deluge wild.

CANADIAN IDYLLS

And he, for love of me, rode rashly in
To keep his word and set our wedding day.
Ah me! his lifeless body, stark in death,
His lips sealed with a smile as hard as stone,
With open hands that seemed to say, farewell,
Was all they brought me of my Lionel’ ;”

Eve and Hilda sitting together,

“Eve Ashby held her sister’s hand, and sat
With far-off look and parted lips, intent
To catch a haunting sound from memory’s
depths
That floated up, and in her startled ears
Reviewed the music of the bygone years.
‘O listen, Hilda! Hear ye not?’ cried she,
With lifted hand that touched her startled ear,
‘That old familiar chime float in the air?
The bells of Kirby Wiske are ringing—ring-
ing—
Have in my ears all day been ringing low—

 our ancient church, gray
with the ages,
That in the nook of its old massive tower,
As loving as a mother holds her children,
Keeps safe the graves of all our kith and kin,

WILLIAM KIRBY

The solemn bells above them chiming
sweetly,
Ever repeating till the judgment day:
“Blest are those servants whom the Lord
finds watching
When He shall come.” His servants! blest
are they!’

.

‘Twas always said, you know, my darling
Hilda,
To hear those bells, in dreams or fantasy,
Was certain sign that God was calling in
Some weary soul to rest from earthly labour,
As they to-day are haply calling me.’ ”

Then Eve called to Hilda:

“ ‘Come, sister, come! We must prepare the
things
Are needed on the Sabbath day, and deck
With evergreens our upper rooms. It will
Be more than filled with people come to see
Their ancient pastor, wearing robe and stole,
Repeat the sacred prayers, and after years
Of spiritual fast, receive from him
The sacrament ordained by our dear Lord.’ ”

CANADIAN IDYLLS

Hilda hastened,

“ for, like Martha, she,
Housewifely to the core, and proud of it,
Was cumbered with much serving, more
than Eve,

.
But ever Eve was conscious of the bells
That rang forewarningly, and she was glad,
And whispered under breath ‘His will be
done!

My Lord is calling me to enter in
His Kingdom, where my heart has gone be-
fore

Where he awaits me ’ ”

Then follows the Sacrament:

THE LORD’S SUPPER IN THE WILDERNESS

This part is in the same unrhymed metre
and is composed of about 500 verses.

“John Ashby’s house, broad windowed, on
the lawn,

Stood like a tabernacle for the feast
Of Christ’s Communion. Willing hands had
decked

Its timbered walls with evergreen of fir,

WILLIAM KIRBY

Balsam and cedar. All without—within—
Was purity and cleanliness, akin
And next to godliness, shown by the sign
And miracle of water turned to wine.”

Eve’s hands and Hilda’s all things had pre-
pared
Were needed for the Supper of the Lord—
Wine, bread and linen, finest of their store,
White as new-fallen snow, as conscience clear
Which God has cleansed. . . . ”

“The people gathered in by families,
From their sparse settlements from far and
near,

.
The people gathered in before the sun’s
Grand dial in the heaven pointed noon.
Hilda and Eve, with hospitable care,
Provided rest, refreshment for them all.

.
The aged minister stood up, and all
Rose with him as he read the primal law
Of our salvation and God’s mercy. ‘When
The wicked man turns from his wickedness
That he hath done, and doeth what is right
And lawful, he shall save his soul alive.’ ”

CANADIAN IDYLLS

The Communion service is described in beautiful and reverent language:—

“The solemn rite went on in ancient wise—
The bread was sanctified to holy use,
And broken in remembrance of the Lord.
The cup was blessed in thankfulness, that He,
Who shed His blood of this New Testament,
Has shed it for redemption of us all.
Then reverently their pastor gave the food
That feeds the soul, and in the act they knew
That Christ dwelt in their hearts, and sancti-
fied
Their lives henceforth to live for Him alone.

.
Eve Ashby, kneeling motionless, her face
Uplifted, with clasped hands beneath her
chin,
Beheld, with opened eyes and vision cleared,
The inner world of life, substantial, real.

.
She still knelt motionless, with fingers clasped
Across her heart, listening in silent joy
To melodies of sweet celestial airs.
The bells of Kirby Wiske ring out again.

.
None heard them else—for her alone they
rang.

WILLIAM KIRBY

She listened eagerly, but made no sign
Save by the spirit. Then her vision cleared
Still more and more, till she an angel saw
In sapphire robe and golden sandals dressed,

.

A shining one, in youth's eternal bloom,
Who swiftly came and knelt down by her side
In the Communion.

. and still she knew
him not,

Until the aged pastor bade her take
And eat Christ's body in the Sacrament.
The angel's hand touched hers upon the dish
And by the broken bread was instant known.
The veil of mist that held her eyes was rent
As by a lightning flash, and Eve beheld
The loving face of her own Lionel.
Out of the depths of heaven he came, to fetch
His bride, long waiting, and she heard his
voice,

.

'Rise up, my love! My fair one, come away!'

.

At that dear voice she stood in spirit up,
And gave her hand with perfect faith and
trust

CANADIAN IDYLLS

To go with him wherever he should lead.
Again the bells of Kirby Wiske rang clear
Their aerial chime—and nearer than before—
A joyous peal as on a marriage morn.”

So she died. Her father held her lifeless
form in his arms, while her sister was dis-
tracted with grief—

“ until the pastor’s
voice,
In loving sympathy and power divine,
Invoked a blessing on the blessed one,
Thrice blessed in dying with the Sacrament
Of Christ upon her lips. A dove flew in
The open window, and a moment sat
Upon the table, as Eve waved adieu,
And hand in hand with Lionel went up
The golden stairs and vanished into light.”

These two pieces constitute, in my judgment,
the most finished of Kirby’s poems. The mys-
ticism is no more than the subject requires,
while the fervour and reverence with which
they are saturated must recommend them
to all who can sympathize with their senti-
ments. I do not envy anyone who can read
“The Bells of Kirby Wiske” and “The

WILLIAM KIRBY

Lord's Supper in the Wilderness" without tears in the heart, if not in the eye.

L'Envoi of some forty verses completes the original poem.

¹ Many times I have seen more than a thousand fish caught in one haul of a seine—chiefly herrings in my part of the country.

Kirby is not too enthusiastic or encomiastic over the Niagara whitefish; neither the sole of England nor the turbot of Ireland can compare with it in delicacy of flavour.

Catius was the Roman gourmet celebrated by Horace in Satire, Lib. ii, 4. The commentators do not agree as to whether he was imaginary or the real Catius of Quintilian. He knew all about eggs, veal, chicken, country vegetables, oysters, scallops, shrimps, fruit and wines; but he never tasted a Niagara whitefish.

² Of course, an occasional tribrach is allowable.

³ The preceding were published in pamphlet form, with coloured paper covers, in 1882, by the Rose-Belford Pub. Co., Toronto. The pamphlet is now rare. A copy is in the Riddell Canadian Library, Vol. 52, Pamphlets.

⁴ This was Nelson Beebe, who had been a gunner in the United States Forces. He was buried at the south-east corner of the island, and in 1846, Kirby, with a friend, saw the grave open and the bones lying on the ground. It is believed that certain Loyalist families on the Canadian shore could have explained the mystery if they had thought fit. But, *quien sabe?*

CANADIAN IDYLLS

THE HARVEST MOON

This poem was originally published in 1883. It contains "Interlude Second," and then the two parts of "The Harvest Moon." The first of these, containing "Interlude Third" and "L'Envoi," consists of some 1,200 rhymed or unrhymed iambic pentameters, together with a ballad, sung by May, of twenty anapæstic¹ tetrameters, which rhyme in couplets, with the refrain: "Bonny is the brier bush, bonnier the rose."

In the Interlude, Clifford tells of his six sons, who

" when our Queen,
God bless her! called for men to go and take
Sebastopol, and fight for England, who
So often fought for us, joined
the ranks

Of our Canadian regiment and wreathed
The British colours with the maple leaf.
And now today they wear the royal red,
And sentinel Gibraltar for the Queen."

May turns over the yellow manuscript and reads the tale of how

"A clever girl of Croyland had her way."

WILLIAM KIRBY

Ada Gay was born in Croyland dale; she was an heiress, the only daughter of a wealthy farmer, "Roger Gay, in Lincoln born and bred,"

'A girl, just perfect to the finger nails,
From top to toe of every charm possessed
Which woman wishes for and man likes best.
A figure shapely—face a little round
With constant smiling; waist—a ribbon bound
It tight, two spans about; her skin was fair
As silver water lilies, and her hair,
Eyebrows and eyes were dark, of lustre full
And endless witcheries that never dull;
Her dress—not silk—was always modish,
neat,
And showed at once and hid her dainty feet;
Well shod, well stockinged, ankles trim and
clean,
And with a springing footstep like a queen."

She had half a score lovers, and, of course,
she scorned them all:

"Many she liked, but only one she loved;
And he the only one she seemed to shun
Encounter with."

CANADIAN IDYLLS

Old farmer Gay desired that she should marry, but he hated idlers and was hard to please.

“There were two manly fellows and good friends
Who scorned to gain unworthily their ends;
They were in love up to their very ears.”

Randal Blake and Simcoe Lake were the lovers:—

“Now Randal Blake was active as a hare,
And strong of limb and purpose as a bear;
Good natured very, good at work or play
And ready for adventure any day.
He was besides quite rich in house and goods,
Broad fields well tilled, orchards and noble
woods,
Fat oxen, horses, sheep and all the clack
Of feathered fowl, of which he had no lack.

.
A farmer to the marrow of his bones.”

Old farmer Gay favoured Randal, but Ada was of another mind.

“‘If Randal Blake be his first choice,’ she said,
‘’Tis Simcoe Lake alone whom I shall wed!

Him and none else, unless I change my mind,
Which is the right divine of woman-kind'."

Her choice was not ill-placed:

"Now Simcoe was a yeoman, handsome, slim,
Lithe as an Indian and as straight of limb,
With hair brown as an otter's, foot as spry
As ever drew a girl's admiring eye;
Good-natured, clever, rich in every way—
But he felt not quite sure of Ada Gay.

.

Now Simcoe Lake was of the good old stock
Of true Canadians, firm as granite rock."

He had of books a few,

"Not richly bound, but priceless."

"Interlude Third" here intervenes; but it contains nothing of interest, and the second part of "The Harvest Moon" proceeds immediately. One evening, old farmer Gay, when both suitors are visiting, devises a plan to decide who is to marry Ada. He has himself cradled seven acres in a day, and thinks it fair for the young men to determine who is

CANADIAN IDYLLS

the better man by a cradling match. He has
"two fields of golden wheat:"

"I now say this, that reaping shall decide
Which of you two win Ada for his bride.
These two fair fields of equal acres found,
Each one shall cut and bind and on the
ground
Set up his sheaves, and he the prize shall win
Who reaps the fastest"

Ada was eaves-dropping and heard the
scheme. She went early in the morning to
see her bosom friend, Molly Bland,

" blue eyed and fair,
Composed of all the spices, lovers swear
They find in woman. "

She was second cousin to Simcoe Lake, but
loved Randal Blake, as Ada knew.

The two concoct a simple, but ingenious
scheme to obtain the objects of their love.
In the match, the young men cradled all
day:

" nor would they rest
A single minute, but with fiery zest

WILLIAM KIRBY

Outwrought the sun, and when the day had
 flown

No one could tell which of the two had mown
Most acres, swathes or strokes, for to a
 straw

Their work was equal and the match a draw."

The wheat was still unbound and lying in
the swath at night, but in the morning,

" shouts of wonder
 greet

The waking house—that bound was Sim-
coe's wheat!"

The girls had bound it and set it up in
the night; and Simcoe won. But Randal
was not without consolation:—

"Randal took Molly's hand and whispered
 low

Something that set her features all aglow.
What I know not, but shyly she looked up,
And drank his words, as from a silver cup
One drinks good wine. Said she, 'I did not
 bind

The sheaves for Simcoe! Truly no! My
 mind

CANADIAN IDYLLS

Was not on him, but through defeat to score
For you a victory which will ever more
Requite you for the loss of Ada Gay!
For I love you, my Randal, night and day.'
She raised her rosy lips. He kissed her then,
And Randal Blake was happiest of men."

L'ENVOI

L'Envoi shows that May was the grandchild of "stout Simcoe Lake and Ada, her grand-dame." Randal joined Brock on the invasion in 1812:

"Among the first he fell on Queenston Rock,
Beside Macdonald² and heroic Brock,

.

Young Simcoe bore him from the field of fight
Where he lay bleeding on the stony height,
And in his arms he died.

Molly remained a widow till she died.

Simcoe and Ada are both here to-day

With children half a score, as tall as they."

May, talking to her uncle Clifford, is interrupted by a rush of bounding men, some white, some red, playing lacrosse; and this leads to the mention of a story interpreted out of the Indian tongue to the dead poet by

WILLIAM KIRBY

a Chief among the stately Chippewayans. The story is

“ as true
As wampum wrought with beads of white
and blue
That never lies, however books may do.”

PONTIAC

A.D. 1763

A poem of about 1,000 unrhymed iambic pentameters, first published at Niagara by Kirby in 1887. It contains the well-known story of the treacherous attempt of Pontiac to take the fort at Detroit in 1763; and the devotion of the Indian woman to Gladwyn, which saved the fort from surprise and the garrison from massacre. It is supposed to be told to Clifford by White Ermine, an Algonquin Chief, and Clifford

“ the Chief's remarks
interpreted
For the sake of May and all the eager ears
That listened round, to learn the stirring tale
Of things not far that happened long ago.”

CANADIAN IDYLLS

Quebec had fallen, and then Detroit:

"Then rose a storm of wrath within our tribes.
Chief Pontiac in secret fanned the flame,
Held midnight councils to retake Detroit,
And all the forts throughout the western
wilds.

Master of eloquence, his tongue could
charm

The beasts in human breasts; his bitter foes
Of hostile tribes he reconciled and brought
To fight his battles and their own, against
The English garrisons which held them down.

.

Implacable, ungenerous to a foe,
Yet full of softness by his own lodge fire,
And in the councils of his tribal kin,
Was Pontiac—but nervously alive
To every touch his bare, bronzed bosom felt
Of inborn hate against the Saganosh."³

He disclosed his plans to a chosen few; Detroit, Venango, Presqu' Isle, Mackinaw, Niagara, Duquesne—all were to be taken:—

"And every English fort throughout the West
Was doomed to dire destruction. One by one
The chiefs took up the sable belt and pledged

WILLIAM KIRBY

Each one his clan to follow Pontiac—
Accepted as his own the bloody plot
At every Post to play Bagataway.”⁴

All the forts were taken but Detroit, where
Pontiac was

“Foiled by the stubborn English and their
chief,

The gallant Gladwyn, warned in timely hour
Of his great danger by an Indian girl

. on the eve
Before the day set for the fatal blow,

A thousand warriors came before Detroit
And pitched their lodges by the river side.

Their stalwart limbs, like statuary, bare,
Agile as antelopes and strong as stags,
Lay stretched around their fires awaiting day
That was to open with Bagataway.”

But the plot was to fail, for

“An Indian girl, evading eyes that watched
And ears that listened sharper than a wolf’s,
Under the cloud of night, from brake to brake,
Silent as her own shadow, swiftly ran
Towards the walls of old Detroit, where slept
The English Commandant who held her heart

CANADIAN IDYLLS

Fast in his keeping—faster than her love
For Pontiac or all her dusky kin.

.

‘Gladwyn,’ she cried, ‘you sleep unto your
death!

Unto your death and mine, for Pontiac
Will set to-morrow morn a thousand men
To play Bagataway for all your lives!’ ”

The Commandant believes her. She was
to be the prize, ostensibly, of the winner of
the game:

“He kissed the girl, but would not let her rest
So near the break of day. She left the tent
And crept back to her lodge, unheard, unseen.

.

‘He now will love me always!’ murmured she,
‘If I shall save Detroit and save his life,
Far dearer than my own’ ”

The oft-told story of the game of Lacrosse is
told again in picturesque and effective
language. Pontiac offers to give the girl to
Gladwyn, but before he can do anything,

“The girl
leaped down and ran,

WILLIAM KIRBY

Throwing her mantle off as little worth,
And stood with panting breath and pleading
eyes

Before the Commandant whom she had saved.
She sought protection from him not in vain,
For Gladwyn on her shoulder laid his hand,
Gently and lovingly, and with kind words
Set her before them all and kissed her cheek,
Declaring her the saviour of their lives,
Whom they were bound to thank for ever-
more."

Pontiac is sent away, cursing the girl:

"He spake in his own language. For reply
The girl said nothing; but with both her hands
Clasped Gladwyn's arm, looked at the Chief
and laughed.

He stamped upon the ground in mortal wrath
His well-moccasined feet, and stalked away
With proud slow steps towards the distant
camp,

Where all was wild commotion, fear and
noise

Of thousand voices. . . . "

CANADIAN IDYLLS

L'ENVOI

In "L'Envoi," we have the story told of the siege of Detroit by Pontiac to

" slay the Saganosh
And burn the traitorous Indian girl with fire."

This lasted for "a year or more" till relief came and saw

" Gladwyn in
the front,

Beside the Indian girl, to welcome them
With one last sally from the opened gates
Upon the savage hosts, which in dismay
Fled from the field, to seek the forest shades
Of distant Wabash and of Illinois."⁵

BUSHY RUN

A.D. 1763.

This poem, first published by Kirby at Niagara in 1887, along with "Pontiac," is composed of about 800 unrhymed iambic pentameter verses. The theme is an incident of a traditional character, connected with the signal victory of General Henry Bouquet over the Indians, chiefly Shawnees and Delawares, at Bushy Creek, or, as Bouquet calls it, Bushy

WILLIAM KIRBY

Run, a short distance from Fort Pitt, in July, 1763.⁶

After the victory, the Indians are called upon to give up their captives:

“The great chief of the Saganosh proclaims
That on a day, upon the Muskingum,
He will march in his army to receive
All English captives, taken far and near,
Of every age and sex, however long
They have been held or joined by Indian law
In marriage or adoption, bond or free—

. every one
From every corner of the Indian land,
From every nation

.

The captive children said they would remain
And never see their English homes again.”

A year and a day passed and the English
camp was pitched at Muskingum to receive
the captives:

“A train of wagons, drawn by twos and fours,

.

With men and women, followed hard upon
The English march. From all the waste
frontiers

CANADIAN IDYLLS

The kinsfolk of the captives came to claim
Their own lost children of the years of war."

.

They brought the captives in by ones and
twos,

For recognition by the eager crowd
Of kinsmen waiting with such open eyes.

.

Eyes blue or black, the shape of nose or chin,
Figure and face and forehead, tint of hair,
Each trait and form and motion, gestures full
Of old familiar memories of their homes,
Were scanned, and when discovered, suddenly

A woman's scream was heard—a rush to see
If she was right—a name, of all names dear,
Cried wildly from the unforgotten past,
A grasp of hands, a kiss, a fond embrace—
An old pet name of long and long ago,
Repeated and repeated, till it woke
Response out of the widely staring eyes,
A flash of recollection, like the sun
Returning on the long dark polar night.
And then a cry of Indian women rose,
Oft as their foster-children turned to kiss

WILLIAM KIRBY

Their natural kinsfolk, and then bade farewell,
Farewell forever, to their forest life."

At last, led by a "chief still halting from his wound," came

"A fair-haired, blue-eyed girl, lovely of face,
Slender and supple as the rush that stands
Out of the mirror of the placid pool,
Among the water-lilies—not less fair;
English, they said, but no one knew her birth
Or blood or breeding in her cradle land,
And every word of language she had known
Except the Indian tongue, was lost, and blank
Was every memory of her native home;
An Indian girl in heart and heart's desire.

.

Clasping her foster-father's hand, she came
Before the General modestly, and looked
With calm indifference at a woman's face,
Who scanned her closely with devouring eyes,
With hands outstretched and foot advanced,
as if

To spring towards her, but who stood in check
At sight of the repulsion in the looks
Of the white captive girl, who gave no sign

CANADIAN IDYLLS

Of wish to know her; nay, indignantly,
At last, turned from her with a glance of
scorn.

The woman claimed her as her Gertrude,
snatched

“Out of her baby cradle in the raid
Made by the wild Miamis and the French,
When Braddock⁷ bravely chose to die among
His gallant soldiers ambushed in the wood
Beside Monongahela’s rocky flood.”

The girl continued obdurate, not recognizing
her mother, and firm in her determination to
remain with the Indian. Then the General
bade her sit down and rest her face and hands
on the woman’s breast. The girl obeyed and
the mother sang a lullaby, crooning

“ her cradle song again,
The long forgotten strain of long ago.”

Recollection awakened:—

“ lay the sobbing girl
In agony of knowledge. She, upon
Her mother’s knees, looked upward and her
eyes

WILLIAM KIRBY

Were caught, as by a talisman, and held
By something she remembered to have seen,
A silver bauble, set with coral, hung
Suspended on her mother's breast, a toy,
With subtle thoughtfulness of mother's love
Placed there. She knew it! touched it!
kissed!—and as

The cradle hymn flowed in her eager ear,
The words less strange and still less strange
appear.

One word of it she caught, and in her heart
Interpreted, and rising on her knees,
Flung both arms round her weeping mother's
neck

And kissed her, and, with voice all heard,
cried out,

'My mother! Oh, my mother!'—nothing
more.

She knew but that one word of childhood's
lore,

That comprehends all love of earth and
heaven—

Yes, she remembered now her English
tongue!

'Mother! My mother!' and it was enough.

.
All were delivered up—man, woman, child—

CANADIAN IDYLLS

To the last one; and then the books were
shut.

.

The General to his tent, with heart to feel
For both, that all were human and, alike,
Were equally God's creatures—white and
red—

Sat down and with his friends
. . . . talked far into the night of good
deeds done,

And less of slaughter than of lives were saved,
And most of all the triumph of to-day,
The great Deliverance of the Bushy Run."

L'ENVOI

L'Envoi is composed of about sixty verses
of the same metre; it terminates "The
Queen's Birthday."

"The sunlit tower of old St. Marks still shone
Above the sombre pines, while all the bells
Broke out in harmony—a charming peal
That filled the air with music all the way
To close the revels of the Queen's Birthday."

And

"Old Clifford closed the book and read no
more."

WILLIAM KIRBY

¹ Instead of the anapæst, an iambus is frequently found. The metre is very irregular, as is proper in ballads.

² Of course, Macdonell is meant.

³ The English.

⁴ Lacrosse.

⁵ Parkman's "Pontiac" gives a full account of the remarkable and memorable siege of Detroit, 1763.

⁶ A reasonably full account of the action is given in Kingsford's History of Canada, Vol. V., pp. 56, *sqq.*

⁷ Braddock's defeat and death took place in 1755: this would make the maiden about nine years of age.

THE SEASON POEMS



THE SEASON POEMS



IN the collection "Canadian Idylls," Kirby published four poems entitled "Spring," "Summer," "Autumn" and "Winter." They are all in the same unrhymed heroic measure. The first is

SPRING

STONY CREEK

This poem, first published in 1880, contains some 1,200 unrhymed heroic verses, and is divided into four parts. It narrates the story of the sanguinary battle of Stony Creek, fought in June, 1813; the theme is the love of Basil, of the King's Regiment—the 8th Foot—and Isa, with her

" . . . fair girl's face, so lovely
and refined,
Canadian of an English stock . . .
. . . Her maiden cheek—
Wild roses not more delicate of hue—

WILLIAM KIRBY

. Her sunny smile,
The brightest ever flashed from woman's
face—

. . . laughter unreprieved escaped
Her sweet, half-opened and expectant lips;
Her hands more shapely than the sculptor's
art

E'er carved in Parian marble. "

She lived in

" a country mansion, broad
and low,

Where Lake Ontario lays his stately head
In the broad lap of hills, that stretch away
To the broad slopes of Flamboro', forest clad
With oak and beech and many a spiry pine,
Fast rooted on the crags, in high survey."

.
"Old Newark¹ was assailed. The hostile fleet
That erstwhile ravaged York, but failed to
hold

The capital, had sailed again to land
An army of ten thousand on our shores."

Full well Isa knew

"Where hottest raged the battle on the shore
Would one be found who loved her
. Young Basil of 'The King's'."

THE SEASON POEMS

And

“Loyal to their very garment’s hem
Were our Canadian women in those days,
As they are now, and will be evermore.”

At length to the waiting women,

“ . . . Evening came and night,
. . . morn returned. . . .
Then horsemen spurring came, all blood and
mire,
With news: ‘The foe had landed. Newark¹
town
Was in their hands. . . .
. . . . Sullenly,
Retreating mile by mile to Burlington,
Our troops fall back, to rest and spring afresh
Upon the host which follows them. . . .
The men of Flamboro’ are safe.’

The next day came Isa’s father and brothers:—

“And one more came, . . . Basil, of
‘The King’s,’
. . . . he had been
A very Paladin in deeds of arms

WILLIAM KIRBY

Throughout the bloody fray at Newark. . .

.

A handsome youth, indeed; strong, straight
of limb,

Tall, tawny haired, with face that got its
bloom

Where salt sea breezes overblow the shores
Of that fair land of old—Deira² called—

.

A man to love, and Isa loved him well:

.

Nature had moulded him a form to use
Of all things good and true, and yet at heart
He was a heathen. Only things, he saw
And felt and weighed and measured by the
rules

Of science and what seemed philosophy,
Believed he. Perfect in the sense of things
Material; but in things above the sense
That man has common with the birds and
beasts—

The supersensual, spiritual, divine,
Discreted in the soul of man, and fenced,
As was Mount Sinai when God spake the law—
In these believed he not. ”

THE SEASON POEMS

He had read

“ . . . the old leviathans of doubt,
Lucretius, Hobbes, Voltaire and Boling-
broke,
With others still more earthly of our times;”
but he was a patriot, and

“ . . . underneath
The gorget of a loyal soldier, beat
His heart with all the instincts of his race:
Courage and honour, love of truth and more
Than common love for his dear country. He
Was proud of her renown in art and arms,
Empire and Freedom, crowned from ancient
days
With regal splendour ‘by the Grace of God.’ ”

The love making of Basil and Isa partook
much of philosophical and religious discussion,
which we may here pass over.

Part Three begins with the sunset of June
5, 1813:

“The sun was sinking on the verdant hills
Of Ancaster, thick wooded to their tops.
The English camp lay visible afar.

.

WILLIAM KIRBY

A fleet of warships the horizon filled,
Steering a western course in close array,
To flank their army's march along the shore,
Where it pressed inland, with loud beat of
drums

And waft of banners, as of conquest sure."

A night attack is planned:

" that same day
Bold Colonel Harvey, in a farmer's garb,
Driving an ox-team, with a load of hay,
Had visited the camp at Stony Creek,
Explored its strength and weakness and laid
down

A plan for its destruction; and to-night
The General says, 'The bold deed must be
done'."

Done it was:

"There was no *reveillé* of drums next morn—
No enemy at Stony Creek—no camp—
But a wild wreck of all things that had been.

.
Basil had fallen, wounded, in the dark,
Just as the camp was carried. He was seen
By every man the foremost in the ranks
That led the assault. Amid the hot melee
He must have fallen, no one yet knows where.

THE SEASON POEMS

Isa seeks him out and finds him; she,

“ without a thought
Of her own danger, bearing in her hand
A lighted fackel, plunged into the wood
Through which had streamed the conflict,
sought and found,
Beneath a barberry, that still hung red
With last year's corals, like fresh gouttes of
blood,
Her hero lying in his gore.

Help came at once—good help, men of
‘The King’s’
And officers, begrimed with powder. They
With pity, as of woman's tenderness,
Laid Basil on the litter. Shoulder high
They bore him softly, safely, to the camp,
While Isa walked beside them, watchful that
No stone to stumble at lay in the way.
.

But he was maimed forever! Rise or walk
Without man's help or woman's, never more
Would Basil ”

He lay some weeks in mortal pain, watched

WILLIAM KIRBY

and tended by Isa, who with him read the Word. At length,

“ a great calm
Fell on his troubled spirit, such as stills
The ocean waves at sunset.
. Then Basil was at rest.
Her loving voice had reached his heart, and
made
An easy way for truth to enter there.
The Gospel now was read, of choice St. John,
That witness true, whom Sophists rage to kill,
Of God revealed in Christ—the Word made
flesh,
The Way, the Truth, the Life. The mystery
Of man insoluble, but now made plain—
These formed loved themes of converse to
the end.”

The end came soon:

“Upon the heights of Burlington, among
The grassy graves in ranks of comrades dead,
Who side by side had stood in ranks of war,
They bore young Basil with slow march
and sad
Of muffled drums, and trumpet’s wailing
sound,
And laid him in the soft and kindly mould,

THE SEASON POEMS

With ringing volleys for a last farewell.

.

So Basil died, and Isa loved him still.

In years to come—and many came ere she
Rejoined him in the mansions of the blessed—
The grassy grave at Burlington she kept
With her own loving hands, that never tired
To deck with flowers. As every season came
She silently renewed her heart's young vows,
And waited till Christ called her to come in!
So Basil died, and Isa loved him still."

Then follows

SUMMER

DEAD SEA ROSES

This poem is composed of about 300 unrhymed heroic verses, and was first published in 1878. The title is taken from the so-called Dead Sea Roses, which, apparently dead, revive when put in water; the theme is the course of change on the Niagara frontier:

"A mark for half a world of savage woods;
With war and siege and deeds of daring
wrought.

.

WILLIAM KIRBY

Then came a day of change. The summer
woods

Were white with English tents, and sap and
trench

Crept like a serpent to the battered walls.

Prideaux lay dead 'mid carnage, smoke and
fire

Before the Gallic drums beat parley—then

Niagara fell, and all the East and West

Did follow; and our Canada was won."

A generation more and the United Empire
Loyalists came, who

" . . . fast and true, impassioned stood
In love and loyalty, for brotherhood
And unity of empire. . . . "

A generation passed:

"The sword was drawn again; and many fell.
The blood of Brock, made Paschal in defence
Of our dear land, entrusted to his care,
Reddened forever Queenston's hoary height."

In another generation or more the Civil War
broke out:

"God wrought a marvel no man thought to see:
The stone hewn, the empire broke in twain,

THE SEASON POEMS

And in the strife that rent the Union
And filled the land with blood and wail of woe,
Warring to keep unbroken all their States,
Men learned to honour the old Motherland,
Who fought like them to keep her empire one,
For sake of all the hopes were set thereon."

Perhaps this is the weakest of the four Season Poems, while the next is in some respects the best and strongest.

AUTUMN

THE HUNGRY YEAR

This poem, which first saw the light in 1877, is composed of about 600 unrhymed iambic pentameters. The theme is the death by starvation of husband and wife during the Hungry Year, 1787; the poem begins with a description of the United Empire Loyalists which, in my judgment, is the most appreciative of all that have been given:

"The war was over. Seven red years of blood
Had scourged the land, from mountain top
to sea

(So long it took to rend the mighty frame
Of England's empire in the Western World).

.

WILLIAM KIRBY

Rebellion won at last, and they who loved
The cause which had been lost, and kept
 their faith
To England's crown, and scorned an alien
 name,
Passed into exile, leaving all behind,
Except their honour and the conscious pride
Of duty done to country and to king.
Broad lands, ancestral homes, the gathered
 wealth
Of patient toil and self-denying years
Were confiscate and lost. . . .

Not drooping like poor fugitives, they came
In exodus to our Canadian wilds;
But full of heart and hope, with heads erect
And fearless eyes, victorious in defeat.
With thousand toils they forced their devious
 way
Through the great wilderness of silent woods
That gloomed o'er lake and stream, till
 higher rose
The Northern Star above the broad domain
Of half a continent, still theirs to hold,
Defend and keep forever as their own;
Their own and England's till the end of time."

THE SEASON POEMS

The Hungry Year, 1787, came on:

“Corn failed, and fruit and herb. The tender
grass

Fell into dust. Trees died like sentient things

And stood wrapped in their shrouds of
withered leaves,

That rustled weirdly round them, sere and
dead.

From springs and brooks no morning mist
arose;

The water vanished, and a brazen sky

Glowed hot and sullen through the pall of
smoke

That rose from burning forests, far and near.

The starving cattle died, looking at man

With dumb reproach, as if the blame were his—

. . . man looked up to heaven

In stern-lipped silence, or in earnest prayer

Besought relief of God, or, in despair,

Invoked the fiercest storms from tropic seas

To quench the earth with rain, and loose the
claws

And teeth of famine from the scorching land ;”

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"The famine for a year has scourged the land ;"
and a man lay dying in a house of mammoth
logs, near the sedgy Chenonda (the Chip-
pawa):

"Delirious words dropped from his fevered lips,

.

A hunger feast of fantasy and love
That haunts the starving with illusive joys.

.

Beside his couch, in passionate despair,
A woman knelt, clasping his hand in hers,
With kisses and endearing words, who bade
Him rouse to hope of life, for she had brought
The food for lack of which he dying lay.
Tall, lithe and blooming ere the Hungry Year
Had wasted her to shadow of herself.
She still was beautiful—a lady born
And nurtured in the old Colonial days."

Food was on the way; batteaux were coming,
hastened on by Prince Edward, Duke of Kent.
The woman went to Niagara and saw the
Prince:²

"The Prince knew well of no one but the King
Or in his name would these proud Loyalists

THE SEASON POEMS

Receive a gift. 'But this,' he earnest said,
'Was not a gift, but royal debt and due
The King owed every man who had been true
To his allegiance.'"

She returned, and found she was

"Too late, alas! for one had outstripped her.
Death, like a phantom, had run on before
And entered first and smit down whom he
would.

The faithful servant lay upon the ground,
Dead in his master's service; worn and spent
With hunger, watching, sickness and a care,
Not for himself, but those he loved and
served—

A faithful man and loyal to the last."

Her husband was lying unconscious and delirious, but soon

"The hunger fever left him, and he lay
Awake, resigned and calm, to meet the end
He knew was nigh, but feared not. . . ."

And after hearing of the Prince's bounty
and blessing him, he died, whispering
to the devoted wife:

" ' there is naught to fear,
Though fall between us the mysterious veil

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Which hides from mortal eyes the life beyond
The veil that is not lifted till we die.'

.
She heard, but only in her inward ear,
His dying whispers, as she speechless lay,
Kneeling beside his couch. "

And when the stars shone, a sight was seen:
"A sight that melted human eyes to tears:

.
Now still forever—all was silent else—
True man and loving woman both were dead.
The Prince's messengers came quickly, but
Too late to save, and found them as they died,
With hand and cheek together—one in death,
As their fair love had made them one in life,
The last sad victims of the Hungry Year."

WINTER

THE SPARROWS

This is a short poem of about 150 unrhymed heroic verses. It was written after the poet had seen a flock of English sparrows at his door on the shore of Lake Ontario, December 10, 1876; and he published it at Niagara in the same year. The poem, Kirby says, expresses

THE SEASON POEMS

his religious feelings better than anything else he had ever written.

It is a moralizing poem, teaching trust in God; it will be sufficient to quote the final stanza:

“Wait, humbly, then, placing thy hand in His,
To lead thee from the dark up to the light!
Although the floods beat high against thy
house
And earthly clouds obscure thy mortal sight,
God sits upon the flood, a King for ever,
And in those clouds at last shall be revealed.
Build on that rock, thy soul’s foundation firm,
And thou shalt stand unshaken in the storm.
The sparrows trusted thee—trust thou the
Lord.”

¹ An anachronism—Newark had become Niagara some years before the War of 1812. Fort George and Niagara were taken by the Americans, May 27, 1813. There were 300 Canadian militia in the defending force, five companies of the King’s Regiment, the 8th Foot.

² An anachronism—Prince Edward came no higher than Montreal in 1787: he came to Niagara in 1792, to visit Simcoe, the first Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada. In a very interesting pamphlet, “Canada Seventy Years Ago; or, Prince Edward’s visit to Niagara: Dedicated to the Visitors at Niagara Falls; by J. P. Merritt;” third edition; St. Catharines, Ont., 1860, the author tells of Simcoe in Council at Navy Hall:

“Where naval men before resort,
In Council grave the Governor sat,
Nor had the Council raised yet,
Debating on the new Land Grant.”



TRANSLATIONS



TRANSLATIONS



IRBY gives us translations: one from the German of Ernst Moritz Arndt (or Arnt, as he prints the name); two from the French of Laurent-Pierre Berenger; one from the German of Ludwig Bechstein, and one from an unnamed Swedish poet.

Upon the completion of his university course, Arndt wandered through Europe. Returning homewards up the Rhine the sight of castle after castle in ruins along its banks, moved him to intense bitterness against France. The selection, "Das Lied von Schill," was written by Arndt, "the most German of all Germans," in 1813. Its subject is Ferdinand von Schill, the valiant Prussian who, in 1809, collected a small band in the hope of freeing his country from the French yoke, and who, after several successes, was killed at Stralsund, May 31, 1809.

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Schill's motto was :

“Lieber ein End mit Schrecken
Als Schrecken ohne End.”

Kirby calls his translation

THE GALLANT¹ SCHILL

It is headed with the first verse of Arndt's poem :

“Es zog aus Berlin ein tapfer held.”²

The translation contains thirteen stanzas, each composed of four verses. As in the original, the verses are in rhymed couplets; but while the metre of the translation is strictly iambic tetrameter, the iambic measure of the original is varied by anapæsts.

The translation omits three stanzas of the original, the sixth, seventh and ninth; and it differs from the original in interjecting “Juch he!” between the first and second, second and third verses, and in adding the refrain, “O Schill! thy sabre strikes sore!” which, after the first eight stanzas, is changed to “O weh!” and “O! Schill thy sabre struck sore.”

The translation catches the spirit of the original, and while not literal, is very near it in language. It begins :

TRANSLATIONS

"Marched from Berlin a Captain stout—

Juch he!

He led six hundred horsemen out,

Juch he!

Six hundred troopers staunch and good,

All thirsting for the Frenchmen's blood,

O! Schill, thy sabre strikes sore!"³

A literal translation reads:

"There marched out of Berlin a hero brave;

He led six hundred horsemen into the field—

Six hundred horsemen with righteous wrath;

They all thirsted for Frenchmen's blood."

Schill was victorious at Dodensdorf, Doemitz⁴
and Pomerania, where

"The French 'Qui Vive'⁵ is heard no more."

He allowed himself to be cooped up in Stralsund. Here Kirby omits the stanza:

"O wehe dir, Schill! du tapferer Held!

Was sind die für bübische Netze gestellt!

Viele ziehen zu Lande, es schleicht vom

Meer

Die Däne, die tückische Schlange, daher."

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Schill is slain:

“Out spake a Frenchman, shame unbound,
O weh!

He shall be buried like a hound!
O weh!

Or like a felon, hung to feed
The carrion crow and raven’s greed.

O! Schill! Thy sabre struck sore!”

And the poem ends:

“But lo! A horseman reins his steed,
O weh!

And with his sword points to the deed,
O weh!

He yells and cries: ‘O, Schill! O, Schill!
Thou shalt have vengeance on them still!’

O! Schill! Thy sabre struck sore.”

Perhaps this stanza scarcely has the spirit
of the original:

“Then saddles a horseman his fleet steed,
And brandishes a horseman his glittering blade.
He cried out with passion, ‘Herr Schill, Herr
Schill,
I will avenge thee on the French.’”

TRANSLATIONS

The translations from Berenger are of the well-known "Leipzig" and "Poland."

LEIPZIG

The translation is in six stanzas, each composed of eight iambic pentameter verses alternately rhymed. The theme is the death of Joseph Antony Poniatowski, Commander-in-chief of the Polish army, who joined Napoleon in the invasion of Russia. In 1813, at Leipzig, while covering the retreat of the French, he was drowned in the Elster. His cry "Rien qu'une main, Français! Je suis sauvé"⁶ became proverbial. The translation begins:

"What! do you fly, proud conquerors of the
world,

From Leipzig, left of Fortune's smile and beck?

A mine is sprung, the bridge in air is hurled,
And all the stream is cumbered with the
wreck.

Men, horses, arms, shattered in fragments,
fly,

'Mid shrieks of death, so oft and proudly
braved,

While from the Elster rings a drowning cry:
'Reach me a hand, Frenchman! and I am
saved!'"

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No help is given and Poniatowski drowns:

“No help for thee, brave prince! On Elster’s
shore

The foes encamp beside the silent reeds.

Those times are past, yet thrill they more
and more;

His words incite again to gallant deeds.

O God! grant quick relief—or Poland dies!
Her flag is up for freedom! and has waved
’Mid seas of blood, and now again she
cries:

‘Reach me a hand, Frenchman, and I am
saved!’ ”

She cries as never nation cried before,
For as she poured her blood as free as rain,
Now gashed with wounds and choking in
her gore,

She shrieks for help, her freedom to regain—
Even as the noble prince, who, pierced with
balls,

Expired for France and glory’s signal waved.

So now, on ruin’s brink, his nation calls:
‘Reach me a hand, Frenchman! and I am
saved!’ ”

TRANSLATIONS

The other translation from Berenger is his

POLAND

It contains six stanzas of eight verses each, written in iambic tetrameters, in four cases catalectic. The rhyming lines are the first and fourth; the fifth and seventh; the sixth and eighth; and in the third verse the two dipodies also rhyme.

It is Berenger's call to glory in assisting Poland,

"Hâtons nous! l'honneur est là bas."⁸

"If I were young and valiant,
My blonde moustache I'd smartly curl
And ride to war a bold huzzar
In uniform so brilliant!

Speed on, my horse, to Poland, speed!
We'll snatch a nation from despair.
While cowards stand and see her bleed—
Make haste! Make haste! For honour's
there!"

Then follows a translation from the Swedish:

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A DIALOGUE

Between a Tired Poet and His Muse

There are seven stanzas of nine verses each, somewhat irregular in metre. The first seven verses are allotted to the Muse and the other two to the Poet:

“She

“His way to the north
Old Winter now takes;
The sun dances gaily
On ice-cruled lakes.
Hail to the Spring!
Northlander sing—
Sledges go slow.”

“He

“Oh!

And rough, roaring March but beginning to
blow!”

Then follows a translation of the beautiful poem of the Thuringian poet, Ludwig Bechstein:⁹

EXALTATION

This consists of six stanzas of eight verses each. Of these the first seven are in heroic

TRANSLATIONS

measure, and the eighth is an iambic tetrameter. The couplets rhyme; the first stanza reads:

“To Him who made the heavens, the earth
and sea,
Who is, who was, and evermore shall be,
Whom countless spheres applaud in choral
throng—
To Him, my God, I lift this mortal song.
Where He, enmantled in His glory, stands,
Too bright for vision, I lift up my hands.
My cloudy doubts are melted in His rays.
God is my praise.”

¹ “Gallant” was a favourite word with Kirby: nearly every one of his heroes and demi-heroes is “gallant.”

² Thus in Kirby’s work. It should read: “Es zog aus Berlin ein tapferer Held.” The proof-reading of French and German in this work is equally bad.

³ I am familiar with only one version, that to be found in the new and revised edition of 1840, Leipzig, Weibmann, “Gedichte von E. M. Arndt,” pp. 196-8. It may be that earlier versions contained the refrains given by Kirby.

⁴ The translation makes this “Dormitz.”

⁵ In the original “Kiwi.”

⁶ Kirby heads his translation with this verse, the proof-reading very bad.

Arndt’s poem written in 1813, “Die Leipziger Schlacht,” deserves to be better known than it is.

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⁷ This was written during the Polish insurrection under Kosciusko, who was killed in 1817:

“And Freedom shrieked when Kosciusko fell.”

⁸ Misprinted—

“*Hatons nous! l’honneur est la’ bas!*”

Let us make haste—honour is there.

⁹ Misprinted: “Beckstein.”

THE SONNETS



THE SONNETS



KIRBY has written eighteen sonnets on various subjects. In all, the octave is regular and the rhythm adopted is that of Milton—*a b b a a b b a*. He does not employ the

Shakespearean *a b a b a b a b*, or the Draytonian *a b a b c d c d*, and his sonnets are without Wordsworth's vagaries. He employs six forms of the sestet: *c d c d e e* occurs six times; *c d e c d e* four times; *c c d e e d* thrice; *c d d c e e* thrice; *c c d e d e* once, and *c c d d e e* once. Kirby rigidly adheres to one form in the octave, but allows himself freedom in the sestet; and this is the most approved course.

There are two sonnets on Queen Victoria: I, "On the Jubilee of Her Majesty's Reign, 20th June, 1887"; and XVIII, "On Her Majesty's Providential Escape from Assassination, 2nd March, 1882." Two are on the Marquis of Lorne, Victoria's son-in-law: XI, "On the

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Marquis of Lorne's Visit to the Canadian North-west, Autumn, 1881"; and XV, "On the Departure of His Excellency the Marquis of Lorne and Her R.H. the Princess Louise from Canada, Oct. 27, 1883." One, XIII, is "On General Gordon's Death." One, XVII, is on "Brock's Seat," a large boulder which had fallen from the river bank on which it stood, down upon the beach at Niagara, and which was removed later, in November, 1893, and placed in St. Mark's Churchyard, Niagara. There are two religious sonnets: VI, "For the Hairs of Your Head are all Numbered"; and XII, "Ut Arborum Folia, sic Vitæ Nostræ, 1888." Two are addressed to Herbert M. Price, Quebec, VII and VIII, "Montmorency, No. 1" and "Montmorency, No. 2." One, IV, is dedicated to (Sir) J. M. Lemoine, Spencer Grange, Quebec"; another, X, is entitled "Spencer Grange, Quebec, 30th May, 1882." The others are of a more familiar character. Of these, XVI, "A Night Vision, 2nd January, 1892—Vidi cœlum apertum"—is, *me judice*, the most touching:

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"I saw heaven opened.

'Is this a dream or real?' aloud I cried
Upon my lonely couch, once shared and
blessed

By my dear wife, who to her saintly rest
Had gone before. Within my chamber wide
A sudden light illumed, and I descried
A beauteous form in snowy vesture dressed—
My wife, no longer old and silver-tressed,
But raven-haired again, and radiant eyed,
In youth's florescence, came and meekly knelt,
And drew with gentle hand the sheet away,
And bared my face and stooped as if to kiss
My very soul's own lips. As meteors melt,
She vanished then—and long entranced I lay,
And knew it was no dream; but real—this."

One, III, on "Winter Roses on the Children's Faces," is worth quoting to show the liberties Kirby allows himself (rarely, indeed) in the octave:

"Winter roses, oh! to see them glowing
Warm upon the children's happy faces!
Cheeks and chins the north wind pats and
places
There his ruddy kiss as he goes blowing

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Over snowhills, where toboggans flowing
In an avalanche of maddest races.

Boys and girls with flying locks and laces,
Furred and muffled, down the slides are going,
Shouting, laughing, holding fast each other,
Mutual help the moment's present duty,
Gladdening hearts of father and of mother,
While the frosty air nips into beauty
Fresher, redder, ever newer graces
Winter roses on the children's faces!"

One, II, on "The Waxwing Found Frozen in
a Snowdrift at Niagara, 27th February, 1886,"
is of a moralizing character:

"A day of vernal sunshine clove in twain
'Mid-winter's storms, and in its brightness
flew

A little waxwing, fresh as morning dew—
Red sealed and golden tipped, and sang a
strain

Of triumph over winter's vanished reign.

It sought the bush had reared it, found it
too,

And said: 'Together we will build anew,
My mate and I, our little nest again.'

But soon the storms returned, and frozen, lo!

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The pretty warbler found I in the snow.
The fate, alas! of all who dare to sing
Untimely songs—too early or too sweet.
For birds or poets, it is death to bring
Their summer lays into the winter street."

"A Lady Portrait" (of Mrs. Hope Sewell, Quebec), and "On a Photograph" (of Mrs. J. M. Lemoine), IX, may go together, neither of great merit.

OTHER POEMS

In addition to the somewhat elaborate lines "On the Sickness and Retirement of His Excellency Lord Metcalfe," already mentioned, Kirby wrote two very beautiful, if simple, short poems. The first of these is

"In Memory of Augusta Servos, aged 11 years:
Obiit, Nov. 13th, 1846":

"Siste viator! Ere you pass
This marble stone, and drop a tear.
A flower, the fairest ever was
Plucked from its stem, is lying here.
A spirit from a brighter sphere,
She seemed just lent to us, not given,

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To draw our thoughts away and bear
Them to her dwelling place in heaven.

She was the flower and pride of all,
Too fair, too good for earth below;

She heard her Heavenly Father call
And vanished like the April snow.

Our wintry winds ungenial blow,
And such sweet blossoms do not spare;
But this in Paradise will grow
And bloom to full perfection there."

The other is "In Memoriam Filioli Mei Carissimi Qui Obiit, 23rd February, 1849" (in Memory of my dearest little son, who died February 23rd, 1849); it is in two stanzas, each of eight iambic tetrameters, with alternate rhymes.

The last poetic effort published in "Canadian Idylls" is

CANADIANS FOREVER

A NATIONAL SONG

This is in eight stanzas of ten verses each. The first four and the seventh are iambic tetrameters: the first and third verses rhyme, as do also the second, fourth and seventh;

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the fifth and sixth are rhyming iambic dimeters while the last four verses constitute the refrain or chorus:

“Canadians forever!
No foe shall dissever
Our glorious Dominion—
God bless it forever.”

The first, sixth and last stanzas will suffice to quote:

“Give thanks to God for all the grace
Bestowed by His Almighty hand;
Of France and England’s martial race,
He planted us with firm command—
To do and dare
And guard with care,
This Canada, our native land.
Canadians forever!
No foe shall dissever
Our glorious Dominion—
God bless it forever.

.

“Our axes in the forests ring,
Our rifles mark the hunter’s track,
Our boatmen blythe in cadence sing
Upon the rapids’ foaming back.

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'Tis freedom gives
The joy that lives
Beneath the glorious Union Jack!
(Refrain).

.

Then deck Victoria's regal throne
With May flowers and the maple tree;
And one for all and all for one
The watchword of her Empire be,
And heart and hand
United stand,
Confederate and great and free,
Canadians forever!
No foe can dissever
One glorious Dominion—
God bless it forever."

This can scarcely be called a great poem
or a great song: Kirby seems out of his
element in this field.

¹ Occasionally the verse lacks the first syllable,
as in III. Some verses are catalectic, as in III. (copied
in the text). It will be remembered that Petrarch's
sonnet had the octave in fixed form with two rhymes.

PROSE WORKS



PROSE WORKS



DO NOT propose to say anything of the political writings of Kirby, and therefore pass over his "Counter Manifesto to the Annexationists of Montreal, 1849;" "The Broadside and Welland Electors' Companion," published in collaboration with (Senator) Josiah Burr Plumb, at Niagara, June, 1863; "Memoir of Hon. J. B. Plumb" in "Representative Canadians," Toronto, 1886; and his editorials on political matters.

THE GOLDEN DOG

The work by which Kirby is best known is his "Golden Dog." The sub-title, "A Romance of the Days of Louis Quinze in Quebec," expresses its real character. It is a romance and not a historical novel, which, in the ultimate analysis, is history and psychology moulded into the form of fiction; this

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romance makes use of historical names and personages, but does not use the facts of history. In a historical novel, the main events, and chiefly and inevitably the denouement and catastrophe, are historical; in "The Golden Dog," nothing turns upon historical fact and the denouement and catastrophe are wholly imaginary.

On the Rue Buade, in the City of Quebec, stood a large stone edifice having on its façade a tablet of a dog in gold; and above and beneath the figure of the couchant dog, gnawing at the thigh bone of a man, is graven the weird inscription, cut deeply in the stone:

JE SVIS VN CHIEN QVI RONGE LO

(figure of a dog)

EN LE RONGEANT JE PREND MON REPOS
VN TEMS VIENDRA QVI NEST PAS VENV
QVE JE MORDERAY QVI MAVRA MORDV

(I am a dog who is gnawing the bone (l'os);
While gnawing it, I am taking my repose.
A time will come which is not come
When I will bite who has bitten me.)

Kirby saw this tablet on his visit to Quebec in 1839; but, as he says, he did not then think

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that "he should ever help to solve the mystery of the Golden Dog."

He tells how he was led to write the story, in a letter to (Sir) James M. LeMoine:

"I happened to be in Quebec in 1865, my business being to attend to a Bill then pending in Parliament—and read your story² of 'Le Chien d'Or,' which took my fancy very much. Sulte³ and I were sitting in the window of the St. Louis Hotel one day and I asked him to write it out, saying jestingly that if he did not I would. Sulte said 'No,' and I thought no more of it, till my return home, when I found it was sticking like a bur to my imagination—and I wrote the story as I got time."

The manuscript had some vicissitudes,⁴ but finally the story saw the light in 1877, and at once attracted much attention. Translated into French, it has had great vogue in French-speaking Canada, and in the original language it continues to have many English readers.

The romance begins in 1748, when Canada was still French; Louis XV was King of France; Rolland Michel Barrin, Count de la Galissonnière, soldier, scientist and statesman, was Governor of New France; and François Bigot, of whom history and tradition say

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much, but little that is good, was Intendant. "The Grand Company of Associates Trading in New France," called by the people in their plain Norman, "The Grand Company of Thieves," favoured by Bigot and Mme. de Pompadour, was grinding the Canadians between the upper and nether millstones of low prices for furs and other productions of the country, and high prices for goods supplied from their warehouse, familiarly called "La Friponne" (the swindle). This swindle was somewhat held in check by Nicolas Jacquin Philibert, a Quebec merchant, a "Bourgeois," the proprietor of the house of the "Golden Dog." Such is the *mise en scène* of the romance, and it is mainly historical.

Philibert was nobly born, but a younger son and therefore engaged in trade. His only son, Pierre, a Colonel in the French army, had just returned to Nouvelle France, and was attached to the Governor's staff. The young man loved and was loved by Amélie de Repentigny, niece of Lady de Tilley; Amélie's brother, Le Gardeur de Repentigny, was madly in love with Angélique des Meloises, a very beautiful, selfish and ambitious young lady, who loved him indeed,

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but refused to marry him, as she had set her heart on marrying the Intendant, François Bigot. Bigot when in command in Acadia had won the affection of Caroline de St. Castin, and would have married her but for Mme. de Pompadour, who was then all-powerful with the King, and who had been assisted in her rise to that bad eminence by Bigot. Caroline's mother was the beautiful daughter of an Indian chief, and when Bigot left Acadia, a conquered province in the hands of the British, the girl, disillusioned, basely deceived and abandoned by the man whom she loved so fondly, left her home and sought refuge in the forest among her far-off kindred, the Abenakis. The Indians, treating her with every respect, sent her under a trusty escort to Quebec to seek Bigot. By him she was taken to his Chateau of Beaumanoir, the scene of bacchanalian revels with his boon companions; and there she lived with him in seclusion, attended by Dame Tremblay, who never forgot—or forgot to mention—that she had been “the Charming Josephine of Lake Beauport.” Caroline “was of medium stature, slender and lissome, looking taller than she really was. Her features were chiselled with exquisite delicacy; her

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hair was of raven blackness and her eyes of that dark lustre which reappears for generations in the descendants of Europeans who have mingled their blood with that of the aborigines of the forest. The Indian eye is preserved as an heirloom. . . . Her complexion was pale, naturally of a ripe olive, but now, through sorrow, of a wan and bloodless hue, still very beautiful and more appealing than the rosiest complexion. . . . She was naturally of a joyous temper, gay, frank and confiding"; but at Beaumanoir she spent hours in agonizing prayer—"Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world, have mercy on me."

Le Gardeur is dissipated; and, although when with Pierre Philibert, who had saved his life in boyhood, he yielded to his better nature, yet he fell into temptation by Bigot and others; and, rejected by Angélique with a declaration that she loved him, but would not marry him, he delivered himself over to the power of the tempter. Angélique knew of the existence of the mysterious lady of Beaumanoir and, recognizing that she had no hope of marrying Bigot so long as that lady was alive, she hired La Corriveau to make away with her.

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This she justified to herself: "Why did that mysterious woman go to Beaumanoir and place herself in the path of Angélique des Meuloises? Why did Bigot reject my earnest prayer (for it was earnest) for a *lettre de cachet* to send her unharmed away out of New France?"

La Corriveau⁵ was the daughter of Sieur Corriveau, a rich *habitant* of St. Valier, who had married her mother when she fled from Paris "in the guise of a *paysanne*, one of a cargo of unmarried women sent out to the colony on matrimonial venture, as the custom then was, to furnish wives for the colonists." The mother's name was Marie Exili, and she was the daughter of Antonio Exili, an Italian alchemist, and La Voisin. Exili had learned the secret of the Aqua Tofana from the poisoner, Beatrice Spara; he exercised the nefarious art in Paris, and taught it to "a reported witch and fortune-teller . . . La Voisin." Both Exili and La Voisin were condemned to be burnt to death, and with Marie they left their infamous secret.

This was the woman who was the mother of Marie Josephte whom Angélique hired to "kill the couchqean of the Chevalier Intendant,"

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and well the daughter performed her work for she had learned all her mother's nefarious art. Making her way to Caroline, she said that she had been sent by Bigot to conduct her to a sure place of concealment, as orders had come from the King that she was to be taken to France or Acadia. She gave to Caroline, as a gift from Bigot, a beautiful bouquet of roses, wrapped in silver tissue, but sprinkled with the fatal fluid. Once the silver covering was removed, "Caroline clasped it with both hands, exclaiming, in a voice of exultation, while every feature radiated with joy: 'It is the gift of God and the return of François' love! All will yet be well!'

She pressed the glowing flowers to her lips with passionate kisses, breathed once or twice their mortal poison, and suddenly, throwing back her head with her dark eyes fixed on vacancy, but holding the fatal bouquet fast in her hands, fell stone dead at the feet of La Corriveau."

To make assurance doubly sure, La Corriveau plunged a sharp Italian stiletto twice into the body of the lifeless girl. Bigot and Cadet, his bosom friend, "a large, sensual man with twinkling gray eyes, thick nose and full red

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lips," found the body on their return from Quebec to Beaumanoir, after midnight. They had come in order to send Caroline away in the disguise of an Indian girl, to the wild, remote valley of St. Maurice, in care of a band of Montagnais, and so prevent her being discovered. But they found "a white form . . . upon the floor . . . with her unclosed eyes looking as the dead only look at the living. One hand was pressed to her bosom, the other was stretched out holding the broken stem and a few green leaves of the fatal bouquet which La Corriveau had not wholly plucked from her grasp."

The two buried her in the very chamber, digging her grave with their own hands. Cadet found a sheet of linen and some blankets upon a couch in the chamber, and, wrapping her in them, they laid her away, unhouseled, disappointed, unaneled. "Buried in this unconsecrated earth, with no requiem sung for her last repose, no prayer, no sprinkling.

. . . No bell tolled for her; there was no chant of priest or lifting of the sacrament for the dead, but unknelled, uncoffined and unknown save to God only and to these two men, Caroline de St. Castin slept and still

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sleeps in the dust of the deep foundations of the Chateau of Beaumanoir."

Bigot suspected Angélique, and would not marry her; she continued to be a violent partizan of the Grand Company. Then, a plot was formed by Bigot and others to have Le Gardeur de Repentigny kill the Bourgeois Philibert. Le Gardeur was kept constantly drunk, and finally the plot succeeded. De Lantagnac and Le Gardeur galloping furiously in the market, the former rode down a crippled soldier who was speaking to the Bourgeois. The latter sprang forward to save the bleeding man being trampled on by Le Gardeur's horse. Le Gardeur, spurred the horse forward and it was about to trample on the prostrate cripple lying in the dust when the Bourgeois seized the bridle. The animal almost threw its rider headlong; and Le Gardeur, leaping off, struck the Bourgeois with his whip. The Bourgeois raised his cane to ward off another blow and struck Le Gardeur sharply upon the wrist. Angélique, who was near by, "laid her hand upon Le Gardeur's shoulder and exclaimed in a voice choked with passion: 'Comment, Le Gardeur! vous souffrez qu' un Malva comme

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ça vous abîme de coups, et vous portez l'épée!" It was enough; that look, that word, would have made Le Gardeur slaughter his father at that moment"; and he killed the Bourgeois on the spot. He gave himself up and was imprisoned in the Castle of St. Louis.

Amélie, his sister, who was to marry Pierre Philibert, entered the Nunnery of the Ursulines and soon died. "The vulture of quick consumption had fastened on her young life." Pierre went to France and rejoined the army, seeking danger with a desperate valour; and he found a soldier's death at Minden. Le Gardeur was sent to France and, after a long confinement in the Bastille, was released, and he joined the army again. He returned to New France a changed man; "an ascetic in his living and, although a soldier, a monk in the vigor of his penitential observances." He never spoke to Angélique again; and his joyless life was ended as Governor of Mahé, in India, many years after he left his native Canada.

Angélique had intrigued and sinned in vain. Bigot declined to marry her; so she accepted the hand of De Pean, one of Bigot's creatures; and became Bigot's mistress. Bigot returned

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to France, but Pompadour forbade Angélique to follow, and she finished her life in Quebec. La Corriveau murdered her last husband, Dordier, in 1760. She was tried by a special court of justice in the Great Hall of the Ursulines with all the fairness of the English law, and was convicted. "She was sentenced to be hung and gibbeted in an iron cage upon the hill of Levis, in sight of the whole City of Quebec."⁵

"And while the tablet of the Chien d'Or overlooks the Rue Buade; while the lamp of Repentigny burns in the ancient chapel of the Ursulines; while the ruins of Beaumanoir cover the dust of Caroline de Castin, and Amélie sleeps her long sleep by the side of Heloïse de Lotbinière, this writer has neither courage nor power to deviate from the received traditions in relating the story of the Golden Dog."

All that is really known is given by (Sir) James M. LeMoine in his article, "The Golden Dog—Le Chien d'Or," in "Maple Leaves," 1st Series, 1863. Bigot, angry at Philibert, billeted troops on him and amongst them was Lieutenant Legardeur, Sieur de Repentigny. Philibert attempted to prevent the Lieutenant entering the house, whereupon the Lieutenant

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stabbed him, inflicting a wound by which he died, January 21, 1748. De Repentigny fled to Acadia, and obtained pardon from Louis XV, and then returned to Quebec, where he served under de Levis. Pierre Nicholas Philibert, born in 1737, a severe and studious youth, grew up to be the support of his mother, the widow. In 1760, he left Quebec for France in order to obtain a commission in the French army; and finally he met De Repentigny in a duel at Pondicherry and slew him.⁶

Many historic personages are introduced by Kirby, and always with accurate characterization: de la Galissonnière; Bigot; Kalm, the Swedish scientist, whose "Travels in Canada" are still read and after whom the beautiful *Kalmia* is called; La Corne St. Luc; de Pontbriant, Bishop of Quebec; Père de Berey, Superior of the Recollets; Père Glapion, Superior of the Jesuits; Varin, Commissary of Montreal, etc., etc.

On the whole this romance is a work which no Canadian should leave unread.

There are also some shorter and less pretentious prose writings, which are still well worth perusal.

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1. This "Counter Manifesto" created a marked sensation: many prominent politicians were credited with its authorship, amongst them (Sir) Francis Hincks. It was not until many years afterwards that Kirby acknowledged himself the author.

2. In "Maple Leaves," 1st Series, 1863, pp. 29-32.

3. Benjamin F. Sulte, F.R.C.S., whose acquaintance Kirby had made in 1865, with whom he formed a warm friendship. Since the Text was written Dr. Sulte has passed away leaving a gap in the ranks of Canadian historians hard if not impossible to fill.

In a letter to Sulte, dated Niagara, Feb. 3, 1877 (in French) Kirby says:—(I translate) "It is a good many years since you and I were sitting in the window of the Hotel St. Louis in Quebec, talking about the Chien d'or and the Chateau Bigot—and I urged you to turn your facile pen to these subjects so full of an infinity of charm in Canadian romance. And I threatened you then teasingly (*en taminant*) that I myself would write the story of the Chien d'or, if you did not.

. I was more of a prophet than I thought. And to-day I am pushing myself amongst you Canadiens, with my book which I hope will prove that the history of our country and especially that of Lower Canada can furnish as good pastures for genius, as good harvest for the pen as can be found elsewhere." Kirby says that he "has written to the printers, Messrs. Lovel, Adams & Co. to send a copy of the Chien d'Or about to be published in a few days;" and asks Sulte's criticism for he adds "My dear Sulte, after all, I value your opinion more than that of a dozen others."

In the same letter he says that the MS had been accidentally lost and had not been found for three years.

I am indebted for a copy of this letter to M. Gérard Malchelosse of Montreal, who informs me that he has in his possession the French MS. of the Chien d'Or translated by Le May for a new edition. It covers 850 pages and has a preface, introduction and notes

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by Dr. Sulte who relates the origin and history of the Golden Dog and gives annotations as to dates and persons named in the story.

4. Miss Carnochan tells the story thus: "He had three copies made—one he sent to the Ottawa Parliamentary Library, one he kept for his family, and the third he sent to a publishing house in London, Eng., which had engaged to print it. Time went on and nothing was heard of its arrival there; letters were written and various attempts were made to find it. Miss Rye, of the Western Home, interested herself in it when visiting England; but nothing was heard of it. This went on for three years when, finally, it was found in the baggage room at Toronto, in the box in which it had been first placed. It was then given to Lovell in Montreal."

5. A woman called LaCorriveau, widow of Louis Dodier, to whom she had been married in 1760, after the death of her first husband, whom she had married in 1749, was found guilty, in 1763, by a court-martial, along with her father, Joseph Corriveau, for the murder of her husband, Dodier. They were both executed. See De Gaspé's "Canadians of Old," note 15, chapter 4. Kirby makes La Corriveau take that name from her first husband, not her father.

6. The story is told a little differently in Christie's "History of the late Province of Lower Canada," Montreal, 1866, Vol. IV, pp. 306-315.

Dr. Sulte went very carefully into the history of the building and the tablet and gave the results of his enquiry in an elaborate and excellent article in Vol. XXI (1915) of the *Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*, pp. 270, sqq.

Timothée Roussèl, a surgeon, in 1688, built the stone house later called the Chien d'Or; his heirs sold it to Nicolas Jacquin dit Philibert in 1734 and he enlarged it in 1736. His eldest son Nicolas Jacquin sold it in 1768 to François Dambourges; Charles Berthelot became owner in 1771; Miles Prentiss bought it in 1778 and made it into a hotel; his widow sold it to the

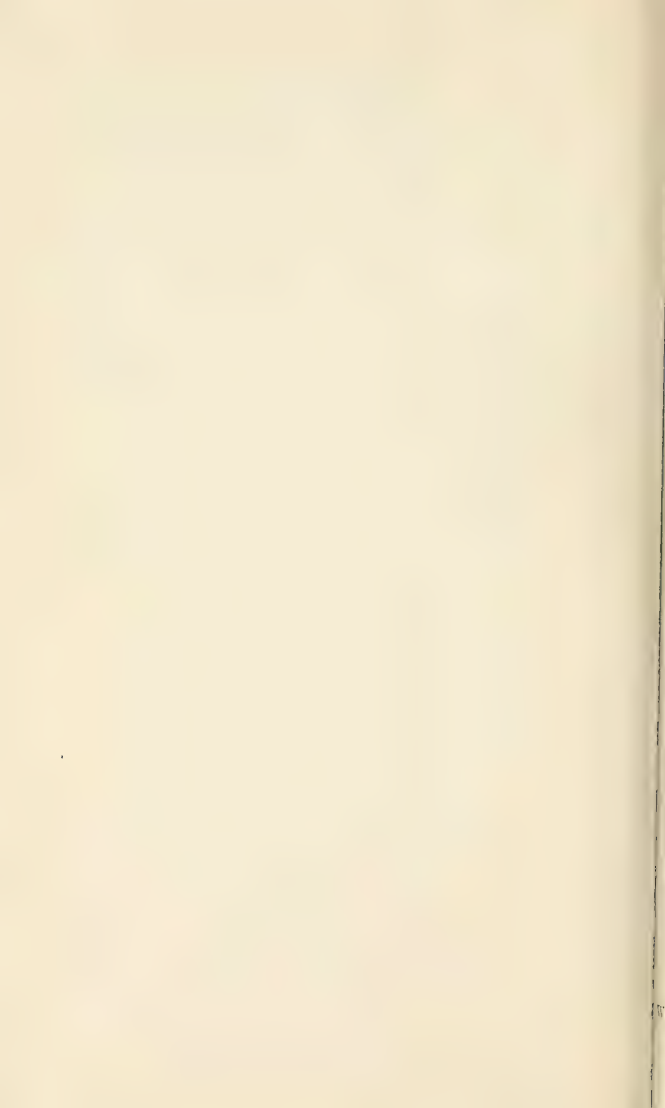
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Freemasons in 1787 and they to Andrew Cameron in 1790. It was in 1804 sold by auction under execution to George Pozer whose devisee, George Alford, sold it in 1853 to the Crown and it became the Post Office.

The Chien d'Or itself is found with the inscription substantially as of Quebec carved on a stone tablet with the date 1561 on a door near Pézenas in France. The motto was adopted by Latude (born 1725) who came from Montagnac near Pézenas.

It is not certainly known who placed the tablet on the house in Buade Street, Quebec, or when—Dr. Sulte thinks it unlikely that Philibert did and that is was probably Roussèl.

FAMILY RECORDS



FAMILY RECORDS

THE SERVOS FAMILY



HIS first appeared in *The Canadian Methodist Magazine* for April, 1884, and was reprinted the same year in pamphlet form.

The first edition of the pamphlet consisted of thirty copies and was only intended for family use. Then the Lundy's Lane Historical Society obtained the author's¹ permission and reprinted the paper; and it was also reprinted by the Niagara Historical Society (1901), as the first part of No. 8 of their publications.

Kirby begins with a discussion of the causes of the American Revolution, and gives due praise to the United Empire Loyalists. He then traces back the lineage of these particular United Empire Loyalists, the Servos Family, to their ancestral home in Hungary. He follows their progress down

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through the Principality of Wied, the town of Neu Wied, Alt Wied, to New York; and he describes the death of Thomas Servos, who was shot down upon his own hearthstone; the services of his sons and other kinsmen in the loyal army; the emigration to Niagara; and their services in the War of 1812 and the Rebellion of 1837. He closes this short paper thus:

“Truth will have its revenge in justice at last; and I venture to say that, a century hence, America will be more proud of her exiled loyalists than of the vaunted patriots who banished and despoiled them.”

“MEMOIRS OF THE WHITMORE FAMILY, OF NIAGARA”

This was first published in an abbreviated form in *The Canadian Methodist Magazine* for May, 1884; and afterwards, much extended, it was republished as the second part of the “United Empire Loyalists of Canada” in Publication No. 8 of the Niagara Historical Society’s valuable series.

The Whitmore family, of English origin, which had long settled in New Jersey, removed

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to Shamokin, Pennsylvania, a few years before the Revolution. The head of the family, Peter Whitmore, desired to remain neutral, but to be neutral was to be a traitor as the Revolutionaries thought; and in July, 1799, some Oneida and Delaware Indians in the American service killed Peter, his wife and eldest son, setting fire to the house. They carried away into captivity the four daughters, ranging from fourteen years to a few months of age, and two sons, George and John, the latter four years old. They murdered the infant daughter, but adopted into the tribe John and one sister who was never heard of again. The other girls were taken elsewhere. One was subsequently found, and married the American Indian Agent to the Senecas, Mr. Jones, of Genessee County, New York. The other daughter, Mary, was also rescued, and later married Mr. William Hoople, of the Long Sault on the St. Lawrence. Here she was visited by John in 1851 and they saw each other again for the first time seventy years after their separation. John was rescued by Captain Daniel Servos, who had known the family. The captain brought him to Canada, adopted him and gave him his

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daughter, Magdalene, in marriage. Magdalene, wife of William Kirby, was one of John's daughters. He served in the war of 1812, and survived until 1853.

Kirby adds that in 1890 a stranger came to his office and introduced himself as the son of George Whitmore, John's brother. The stranger informed him that remains of the burned homestead were still to be seen in Jerseytown, Columbus County, Pennsylvania.

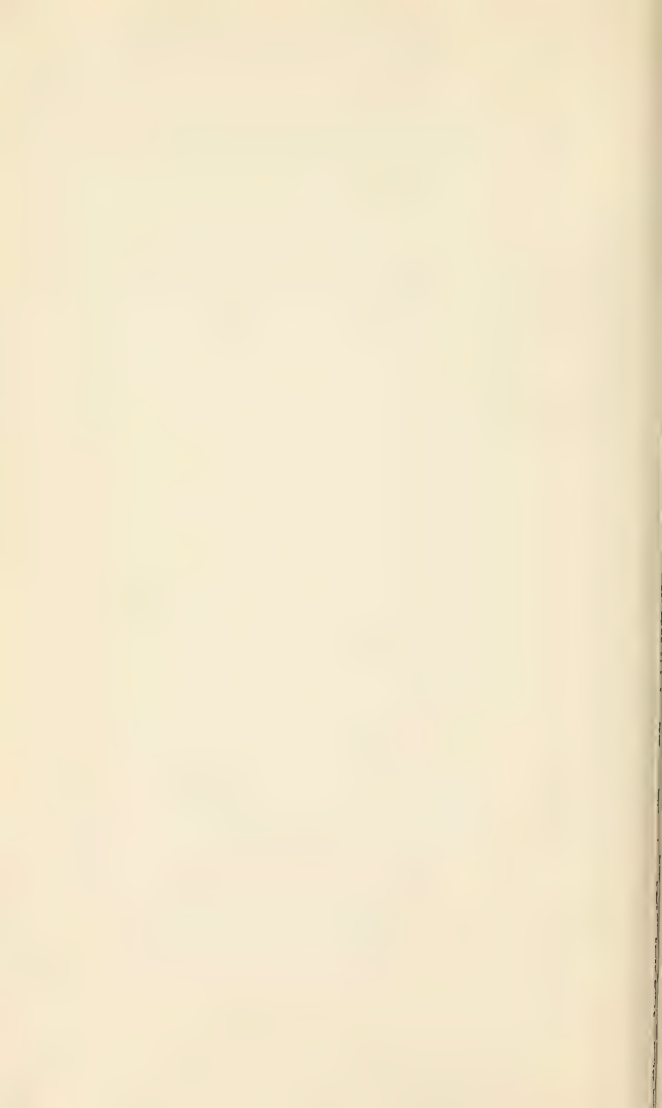
ANNALS OF NIAGARA

This work was printed in Welland and published by the Lundy's Lane Historical Society, 1896; it contains 269 pages, thirty-six chapters, and gives with great accuracy an account of men and things in Niagara, from 1640 to 1870. No résumé would do it justice; it must be read to be appreciated.

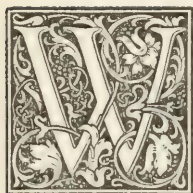
Interesting letters were written by Kirby, one in 1903 describing a two days' visit to Quebec in 1839; and one in 1905, urging the preservation of historic sites and fields at Niagara.

¹ Called William Kerby on the outside cover, but William Kirby within. Also he is "F.R.C.S." instead of "F.R.S.C."

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WILLIAM KIRBY'S fame will, to a great extent, rest upon his novel, "The Golden Dog." Of his various volumes of poetry and prose sketches, no new editions have been lately called for, and old copies are becoming scarce; on the other hand, the steady popularity of "The Golden Dog" has rendered the book a necessity in every Canadian public library, and made for it a place in many Canadian homes. Although, at a cursory glance, this popular preference might seem to be due to the melodramatic character of "The Golden Dog," there is displayed in it, in reality, more sound judgment than is often shown by the public in its partialities, sometimes unaccountable as they are. The English and Continental influences, which we must admit in Kirby, if he is not to be blindly overrated, mar the novel much less than the poems with their conventionalizing effect; and, in short, the fact

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that "The Golden Dog" is obviously indebted to Dumas does not detract from its freshness and charm. When all is said, it has the qualifications of successful fiction as laid down by Birrell thus:

"The one and only demand poor, wearied humanity has ever made, or will ever make, of the story-teller, be he as long-winded as Richardson or as breathless as Kipling, is to be made self-forgetful for a season. Interest me somehow, anyhow; make me mindless of the room I am sitting in, of the people about me; do what you like with me, only make it possible for me to keep reading on, and a joy to do so. This is our demand. There is nothing unreasonable in it. It is matter of experience. Authors have done all this for us, and are doing it to-day. It is their trade, and it is a glorious one."

The poetical works, however, are worthy of consideration. The language employed in them is decorous and choice, while no idiosyncrasies¹ distract the attention from the substance to the form. The diction possesses that placid and occasionally beautiful fluency which too often is accepted for genius. But they are not great poems; and they will sur-

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vive mainly as interesting specimens of the assimilative period in our literary evolution. The long poem, "The U. E., a Tale of Upper Canada," with the regularity of its heroic couplets and the sentimentally idyllic glamour that it casts over the lives of the country people, inevitably reminds one of Goldsmith's "Deserted Village." The poems in "Canadian Idylls" are little more than well-done exercises on the theme of English country simplicity, the style of writing begun by Wordsworth with "Michael" and continued by Tennyson in "Enoch Arden" and "Dora." Kirby's work, in short, exhibits most of the platitudes of content and *clichés* of diction that marks the minor poetry of the Victorian period.

Kirby was, in many ways, the epitome of the rhyming Victorian. He staunchly supported all the great tenets of the age. A zealous Anglican, he was profoundly and sincerely religious and no taint of scepticism or dissatisfaction with the divine governance of the world ever appears. Throughout his works he displays an intensely patriotic pride in the achievements of the English people in Canada. He can see no merit in any revolutionary; there are not two sides to that controversy. The rebels and

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“Sympathizers” in Mackenzie’s time are all scoundrels, destitute of honour, who conjure up alleged grievances as a pretext for murder and rapine. Naturally, the United Empire Loyalists, that body which has ever stood for the perpetuation of the English tradition, claimed him as one of their enthusiastic members. No better exponent exists—it is difficult to see how a better exponent could exist—of the mind and soul of the best United Empire Loyalists. His glowing words describing and praising them will be quoted as long as Canadians honour devotion to duty and principle. *Esto perpetua!*

"They who loved

The cause that had been lost
 and scorned an alien name
 Passed into exile, leaving all behind
 Except their honour.
 Not drooping like poor fugitives they came
 In exodus to our Canadian wilds,
 But full of heart and hope, with heads erect,
 And fearless eyes, victorious in defeat."

Kirby represented, in fact, a type that has steadily persisted through English history; in the times of Charles I, he would have been a "Church and King" man; in those of James II, a Jacobite.

There is an even greater reason for Kirby's

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inability to produce an original and peculiarly Canadian mode of poetical expression. He turned to England, not merely because he found no literary foundation in Canada on which to build, but also, and more particularly, because he was an Englishman before a Canadian, and because the authentic Canadian—or American—literary note, had it been sounded then as we are beginning to sound it now, would probably have irritated and alienated him. He showed no consciousness of Canada as anything but an English possession.² England, to him, was everything. It was the English camp which lay visible afar “on the verdant hills of Ancaster:” The Loyalists “kept their faith to England’s Crown;” and such of the heroes as are not United Empire Loyalists are pure English, either like Roger Gay, “in Lincoln born and bred,” or like John Ashby, from Kirby Wiske, or like Walwyn and Ethwald from “the grassy banks of winding Swale.” To the thought of Canada as a national entity, as a great nation in the magnificent British Commonwealth, he never attained, and probably would have spurned it, had it been suggested to him.

Inevitably, in the strong certitude of these

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conservative convictions, he stressed that part of Canadian life which most nearly corresponded to his English ideal. He was himself, and always thought and wrote of the great mass of Canadians as contented, conservative and intensely patriotic, with no love for drastic political measures, or even reform, and firmly believing in the doctrines of the Established Church of England. To this well-ordered, rural ideal the sentiments of the poems of Goldsmith, Tennyson and Wordsworth most closely approached; and out of his natural love for their subdued beauty he turned to them instinctively for lessons in poetic diction and technique.

Similarly derived influences affected "The Golden Dog." The author seems to have left Tennyson, Goldsmith and the pastoral, only to turn to France and Dumas père. The rapidity of the movement, the profusion of youth and beauty and the intricacy of high intrigue, all obviously suggest, on the surface, a close and careful relationship to the "*mousquetaire*" series. And yet while "Canadian Idylls" is little more than a passable, occasionally a dignified, imitation of the Tennysonian pastoral, "The Golden Dog" is in style a really vigorous

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and entertaining reproduction of the elder Dumas. Naturally so—for William Kirby, the Tory, Anglican and Loyalist, to invent and put into action the dashing and attractive French characters was, we may well believe, no easy task; and consequently the note becomes occasionally strained and the conversations and descriptions unreal. In the main, however, the achievement exhibits rare ability. Set beside the novels previously produced by Canadians or Americans, as represented by Richardson and Cooper, it is manifestly superior. The characters are vivid and well contrasted. The gentle character of Amélie, the steady course of Pierre Philibert and his father, the dignified performance of official duty by de la Galisonnière, are foils for the wickedness of La Corriveau, the frivolity and loquaciousness of the Charming Josephine and the villainy of Bigot and his *confrères*. The narrative possesses that colour and glamour which Dumas could so deftly produce; the dialogue is lively and natural; and there is an infinite and exciting variety. On the whole "The Golden Dog" is a credit to its author and a *ktēma es aei* for Canada.

Kirby was limited in his expression by

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heredity, environment and temperament. A simple, idealistic and religious Englishman, he was content to follow the main trails of English and French literature which had been blazed by so many whose works he revered. In him there were no troubling aspirations to create the beginnings of an original and native Canadian Literature; any attempt to differentiate the peoples of Canada and England, even by their literatures, would have incurred his disapprobation. The sylvan peace of England and her colonies, and the romance of France, about which so many have written, were his themes also. He was not an original creative artist. The manifold and vibrant life of this Continent did not give, as it has given to some Canadians and Americans, a vivid mode of thought and style. It is true, his themes were Canadian; but his expression, unconsciously copied from the masters whom he loved, tended to make his subjects less originally and authentically Canadian than they would otherwise have been. Kirby, in fact, was one of the earliest members of that intensely imitative movement which dominated Canadian literature for many years. His work, however, and all such work, was not

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wasted; it was necessary. Stevenson says that the only way for a man to learn to write is for him to play the "sedulous ape," and what is true of a man is likewise true of a nation. Before the people of a young country can hope to create a vivid and original native literature, they must absorb and master the literatures of other and older countries, gaining from them that sensitive consciousness with which they can face the manifold phases of the world and of experience and acquire that literary sophistication necessary for the recording of their impressions. Of him it must be said that he was a worthy Canadian poet, but not *the* Canadian poet.

William Kirby, however, deserves to be remembered for more than this. His intellect, although not splendidly creative, possessed an unusually wide range for that period in Canada's history; and in a country where inquiring and scholarly men were all too few he stood out prominently, not only as a man of wide catholicity of taste, but also as one of a broad and somewhat varied knowledge. Although he was never capable of writing great poetry or prose, he possessed a delicate touch; and many fine, quiet passages

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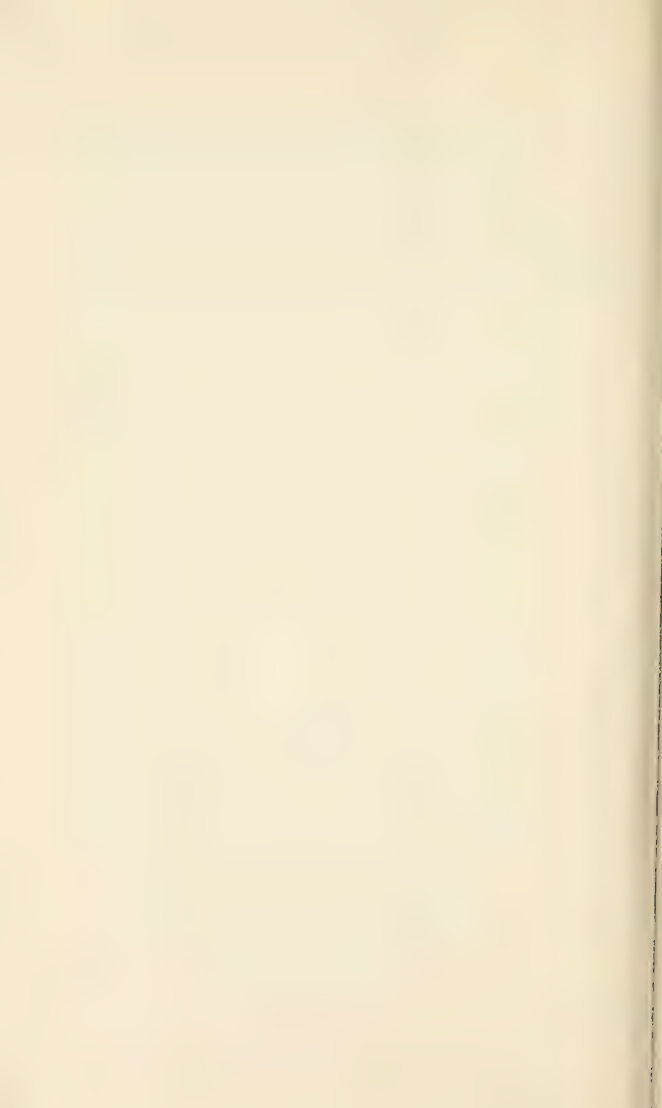
in the "Idylls" testify to a sensitive and discriminating taste. His knowledge of ancient and modern languages, gained in youth, formed a stabilizing force in his culture; he did some acceptable translations; and his writings are informed with an unobtrusive eclecticism.

The friend of famous men—Tennyson was one of his correspondents—Kirby was the epitome of the quiet scholar of the old type. He did excellent and painstaking work for the various Canadian historical societies, and several important historical pamphlets stand to his credit. Above all, deep beneath his conservatism and quiet piety, there lurked an inextinguishable and vivid yearning for romance, for action, as well as a keen delight in wholesome humour. One can observe this in his employment of all the melodramatic possibilities of "The Golden Dog" theme, and in his restrained use of humour and romance in the "Canadian Idylls." To the modern reader of his works these qualities give the added touch necessary to make his honest, homespun personality not only likeable at all times, but in rare and happy moments also charming and even intriguing.

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¹ The only idiom which has attracted my attention is his frequent omission of the relative "who" or "which" and the auxiliary verb, *e.g.*,: "they sought the nest cherished them."

² The sole exception which could be suggested is in "Canadians Forever, a National Song." In this, one of his least successful efforts, we do hear of "One great Dominion, just and strong," and "This Canada, our native land," but, even here, we are "of France and England's martial race."



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- 1849—*Letter to the Niagara Mail*, October 29, 1849, signed "Britannicus." This is an answer, "very abusive in parts," to the "Address to the People of Canada," issued in Montreal, 1849, advocating annexation to the United States; (Lord Elgin was actually burned in effigy at Niagara). The Annexation Address will be found *in extenso* in William Weir's "Sixty Years in Canada," Montreal, 1903, pp. 52-63. Kirby's reply—or philippic, as Weir calls it—is on pp. 80 to 89 in a slightly abridged form which leaves out much of the defamatory parts. This was reprinted by the Government of Canada.
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 And kind connubial tenderness are there,
 And piety, with wishes placed above,
 And steady loyalty and faithful love."
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"OUR ENGLISH FRIENDS"

"One of our corresponding and honorary members, William Kirby, Esquire, of Niagara, has recently greeted in mellifluous verse the early friends of his youth. It is with sincere pleasure we make room for this poetical contribution, equally creditable to the heart and the head of the writer."

The poem was afterwards made the "Winter Poem" in "Canadian Idylls," pp. 137-139.

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"To Miss Rye, in admiration of her intelligent and womanly perseverance in the good work to which she devotes her life—the rescue from poverty and vice of destitute children—this book is respectfully inscribed by

The Author.

Niagara, Ontario, January, 1877."

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verses were printed in *The Canadian Methodist Magazine* for June, 1884, pp. 538-9, under the heading: "The U. E. Loyalists, by William Kirby, F.R.S.C. (From "The Hungry Year: a tale of the U.E. Loyalists, by William Kirby.")"

- 1880—*Stony Creek* was published in Toronto, 1880, by William Briggs, of the Methodist Book and Job Printing Establishment. Republished in "Canadian Idylls" as the "Spring Poem," pp. 99-120.

"For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime—
Young Lycidas, who hath not left his peer;
Who would not sing for Lycidas?"—*Milton*.

- 1881—In Rose Belford's *Canadian Magazine and National Review* for April and May, 1881, appeared, pp. 414-421; 511-517, "Canadian Idylls," "The Queen's Birthday," by W. Kirby, Niagara. These contained the "Prelude" and "Spina Christi," with "L'Envoi," and there were prefixed Tennyson's lines:

"Victoria! May you rule as long,
And leave us rulers of your blood
As noble till the latest day!
May children of our children say
'She wrought her people lasting good.' "

A covered pamphlet of 16 pp. was issued the same year, containing the same matter: "Canadian Idylls—The Queen's Birthday. By W. Kirby, Niagara." Here follow the verses quoted above, but credited to Tennyson (sic).

Reprinted from the *Canadian Monthly* for May, 1881. Toronto: Hunter Rose & Company, Wellington Street, 1881.

These are reprinted in "Canadian Idylls," pp. 5-20.

- 1882—In Rose Belford's *Canadian Magazine and National Review* for April and May, 1882, pp. 281-291, 370-379, appeared "Canadian Idylls:

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The Queen's Birthday," which included "*Interlude First*," "*The Bells of Kirby Wiske*," "*The Lord's Supper in the Wilderness*," and "*L'Envoi*" (six). These were republished in covered pamphlet form: "*Canadian Idylls*," by William Kirby. "*The Queen's Birthday*"; "*Interlude First*"; "*The Bells of Kirby Wiske*" and "*The Lord's Supper in the Wilderness*." Reprinted from the *Canadian Monthly* for March and April, 1882. Toronto: Rose-Belford Publishing Company, 1882. Covered pamphlet, pp. 22.

These appear in "*Canadian Idylls*," pp. 20-39.

- 1883—The Rose-Belford Co. published, 1883, "*The Harvest Moon*." This included "*Interlude Second*," "*Interlude Third*," the two parts of "*The Harvest Moon*," and "*L'Envoi*." These appeared in "*Canadian Idylls*," pp. 40-63.

- 1884—*The United Empire Loyalists of Canada*. Illustrated by Memorials of the Servos Family. By William Kirby, F.R.S.C. Reprinted from *The Canadian Methodist Magazine*. Toronto: William Briggs, 78 & 80 King Street East, 1884. A covered pamphlet of 20 pp.

This pamphlet, reprinted from the *Canadian Methodist Magazine* for April, 1884, was of a very small edition of "30 copies intended for family use." By permission of the author, the Lundy's Lane Historical Society republished it, n.d., in a covered pamphlet of 12 pages, under the title: "The Servos Family. By William Kerby (sic), F.R.C.S. (sic). Republished by permission of the author, by the Lundy's Lane Historical Society."

The Niagara Historical Society republished it, 1901, in No. 8 of their series, under the title: "United Empire Loyalists of Canada: Memorials of the Servos Family. By William Kirby, F.R.S.C.," and in the same number printed: "Memoir of the Whitmore Family, of Niagara. By William Kirby, F.R.S.C." which had "appeared before

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in a shorter form, but never at its present length." This was in the *Canadian Methodist Magazine* for May, 1884.

- 1885—*Address*. By William Kirby. Delivered at Niagara on the 14th August, 1884, at the Centennial celebration of the Settlement of Upper Canada by the United Empire Loyalists in 1784. Published in 1885 in pamphlet form by the Rose Publishing Company, Toronto. Republished in the 2nd edition, 1894, of "*Canadian Idylls*," pp. 163-175.
- 1885—*Memoir of Hon. Josiah Burr Plumb*, in the Rose Publishing Company's *Cyclopædia of Canadian Biography*, 1886. (The title on the cover is "Representative Canadians.") Pp. 367-369. See also the second series, 1888, pp. 706-7.
- 1887—*Canadian Idylls: Pontiac, and Bushy Run*. By William Kirby. Niagara, 1887. A covered pamphlet containing pp. 1-22, "*Pontiac, A.D., 1763*"; and, pp. 24-44, "*Bushy Run, A.D., 1763*," The copy in the Toronto Reference Library is a presentation copy: "Dr. G. Stewart, with compliments, W. Kirby," in Kirby's handwriting.
- 1888—At Welland was published in 1888 a small edition of 200 copies of his collection of poems "*Canadian Idylls*" of which the second edition appeared, Welland, Ontario, 1894. This is the edition to which I have referred throughout.
- 1896—*Annals of Niagara*. By William Kirby, F.R.S.C. Published by Lundy's Lane Historical Society. Price 75c. 8vo: 269 pp. Paper covers.
- 1903—*Reminiscences of a Visit to Quebec*, July, 1839. This is dated Niagara, January 12, 1903. See note 2 to the Biography.
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