

uncle of our subject, who was then in business in Chatham, and who, by the way, at Chatham in 1831, built and ran the first steamboat carrying the British flag on the upper lakes, being on a visit to his brother in Port Dover, and taking a fancy to our subject, prevailed upon his parents to let him go home with him to Chatham, to learn the mercantile business. Daniel Ross remained with him till 1838 when he commenced "paddling his own canoe." From this period till 1845 he was engaged as a clerk in various country stores. In 1845 he was managing a small store for a Chatham firm at the point where Dresden is now situated. Thinking this locality very eligible for the site of a town, he purchased that part of lot four, in the fourth concession of the then township of Dawn, County of Kent, owned by Jared Lindsley, and upon it founded what is now the flourishing town of Dresden. In 1846 he married Susan, daughter of the late John Williams, of Howard, who was born 12th August, 1824, and who died on October 5th, 1865, leaving four children living. These are Dr. J. R. Van Allen, of Kansas city; Mildred, now deceased, who became Mrs. William Ball, of Chatham; E. W. H. Van Allen, now of Winnipeg; and Hattie, married to Robert H. Agur, now of Winnipeg. To get Dresden established, our subject built there an hotel, a grain warehouse and a merchant's shop, and carried on business in the place till 1849, when, owing to a heavy loss sustained in the stave trade, he failed, and shortly afterwards returned to Chatham, engaging there in the mercantile business. He was again overtaken by disaster in the unparalleled crisis and revolution in trade that occurred in 1857-8, and he bid good-bye to the mercantile business forever, and embarked in the manufacture of hardwood lumber, in which he has continued ever since with marked success. In 1866 he married Mary A., daughter of the late C. C. Waller, of New York city, a lineal descendant of the poet Waller. All his education was such as the public schools in Ontario afforded, between his eighth and his fourteenth years. He is not a military man in any sense of the word, though he holds the commission of captain in the Sedentary militia. He served the people of Chatham very many years as a school trustee, as councillor, as deputy reeve and reeve; and finally for one year as mayor of the town, when he had the honor of receiving Lord Dufferin, then governor-general. In 1882, after the adoption of the national policy, he conceived the idea of getting up a joint stock com-

pany for the purpose of making farm waggon, &c., by machinery, something after the model of the great waggon concerns in the United States, in which enterprise he was successful; and to-day, the Chatham Manufacturing Company, of which he is president and manager, after passing through a severe struggle for existence, can say "it has come to stay." During his life he has been connected with three different secret societies, but has ceased his connection with all of them. He has been a life-long consistent Conservative, and is now the president of the L. C. A., of West Kent. He has never been much of a traveller. He was brought up in the Church of England, and adheres to it. During his thirty years residence in Chatham, since his last return to it in 1852, he has been a large employer of labor, and from enquiries on the spot we are led to believe there are but few men in the town of Chatham who have contributed more largely to the growth and material prosperity of that place than D. R. Van Allen has done; and judging from his present appearance, and the fact that he says he has not taken a shadow of any kind of drug medicines in forty years, we think, and may be permitted to express the wish, that there are still many years of his useful life in store for himself and the place he inhabits.

**Kirby, William, F.R.S.C.**—This well-known Canadian author, like many other literary men, had a long preliminary training on the public press. He was for twenty years the editor and publisher of the *Niagara Mail*, the leading, and for a long time the only newspaper, except the *Niagara Chronicle*, which was published in the Niagara district, which comprised the three counties of Lincoln, Welland and Haldimand. Mr. Kirby, on ceasing to write for the press, continued his literary work, and wrote several valuable books, which stand high among the best specimens of Canadian literature, in recognition of which he was selected by the Marquis of Lorne as one of the original twenty members of the English literature section of the Royal Society. Mr. Kirby is most known, perhaps, as the author of the splendid Canadian historical romance of the "Chien D'Or"—a book which has obtained a wide circulation, both in English and French. It has been complimented by several American piracies, which have extended the reputation of the author, but of course profited him nothing. But it is in the region of poetry that many find their greatest pleasure in Mr. Kirby's works. His "Ca-