

CANADIAN IDYLS,

NUMBER IV.

Spring.

STONY CREEK.

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

PART FIRST.

A SHAMEFUL and ungenerous war at best,
Waged ruthlessly despite the wise and good,
Too few to hinder it, had been declared
Against our King and country, in the name
Of that false Liberty, whose Phrygian cap
Set up on naked poles, proclaimed a birth,
Servile and alien to our kindred blood ;
To all the great traditions of our race
In Freedom nurtured, as her true born sons.
Spring came, and wolfish winter fled amain.
Not unregretted ; for thick rumours ran
Of armies gathering to invade us, when
The snow-drifts melted and the ice gave way
That long had barred our coasts. The savage war
Had been suspended by a truce, while lay
Our foes in frozen camps, sore stricken down
’Neath Brock’s victorious sword that won Detroit,
And, flashing out again on Queenston Heights,
Passed them beneath the yoke, a captive host,
Making the red earth redder, where he fell,
And gave his own pure life that we might live.

Our Country’s tears had fallen copiously
From hearts surcharged with sorrow, o’er his grave
Ungrassed as yet, ’mid guns and piled up balls,
Within a rugged bastion of Fort George.
There lay our soldier statesman, whose brave words
Had rung in trumpet tones throughout the land,