

As poetry for ever is—more true
 Than old dry knowledge without music's beat,
 That never tastes the sweetness of th' ideal
 Nor shakes the dust of earth from off its feet !
 Old Clifford smiled. ' We are alert to hear
 Your tale so wisely prefaced, dearest May !
 That poet in your heart I think, and you
 Who love him, and have caught his spirit too,
 Will fail not in the reading—for I know
 That when the heart is in it, nothing fails !'
 May smiled approvingly, but answered not ;
 She turned the faded leaves, and quickly found
 The story treasured, and so often read—
 Indeed by heart she knew it, and the book,
 With his firm writing on it, only gave
 Her looks more animation, and her tongue
 More emphasis of keenest sympathy
 That wound round every fibre of the tale—
 She smoothed her ruffled hair, drew in her robe,
 And pulled her kerchief tighter round her heart
 Unconsciously—to stay its beating—while
 She sat upon the stone of witness, and—
 With voice clear, soft and flexible—began

THE BELLS OF KIRBY WISKE.

TEMP. GEO. IV., 1820.

' The airy tongues that syllable men's names,
 On sands and shores and desert wildernesses.'
 —CORUS.

It was their autumn—fifth amid the woods,
 Yet in their primal solitude, remote,
 Vast and unbroken, save where came a few
 Brave pioneers—the first, to Balsam Lake,
 From English villages and breezy wolds,
 Led by John Ashby, who in many wars
 In every clime, and last in Canada,
 Had served the King with honour, and received
 These lands in gift, which he as freely gave
 To his poor hardy people—their's in fee—
 To build, to plant, and make themselves a home—
 A home of plenty, peace and sweet content ;
 A home of loyal, brave and godly men,
 The heirs of English freedom—their's by birth ;
 Not free by license of a lawless will,
 Or breach of kinship or allegiance due ;
 But free by right of commonweal in all
 The franchises of her Imperial State ;
 Whose public conscience is the law of God,
 Source of her power and greatness—that alone
 Builds up a State—without it none can stand,
 All else is but the house upon the sand,
 Foundationless, that in the tempest falls.
 The equinoctial gales had ceased among
 The balsams, pines and hemlocks, bough to bough,
 Locked in a phalanx with a forest grip ;
 That linked the hills together in a chain—
 The calm of Indian summer had set in—
 Mornings of hoar frost—smoky, sleepy noons—