

INTRODUCTION

A year ago I happened to notice a reference to the poem included in this volume. In discussing its significance, a critic remarked that he could learn nothing of the author but her name. "Who is Eva Rose York," he inquired, "and what else has she written?" Since these questions will be asked by those who read these pages, I have promised to tell something of the life and work of the writer.

Eva Rose York, as she has been known for thirty-six years, was born at Norwich, Ontario, in 1858, the daughter of Heman Parker Fitch and his wife, Melissa Wolverton. This fact explains much that seems contradictory in her life. When liberty of conscience was established in the Netherlands, one of the English Fitches fled to Holland, where his descendants remained until they returned to England with William and Mary. Under the Georges, two brothers, sons of one of these refugees who wrote his name *Fitch*, emigrated to New England. At the Revolution their paths separated; one became a Loyalist, the other a Continental. Though the latter, unlike his brother, did not join the Northward Migration at the close of the war, his grandson Heman, deserting the Congregational Establishment of his fathers, became one of the founders of the Baptist Church in what was then Upper Canada. From him his granddaughter inherits her loyalty to the denomination with which she has been most intimately connected. On her mother's side, too, she comes from the New England element—Puritan and Loyalist—which has contributed so much to the moral and intellectual progress of the Dominion. Naturally,