

kenzie Bowell who is going to stand in the way of an amicable arrangement? One would think so from his speech in the Senate! Are there not enough independent men in the Conservative ranks to call the Premier back from so untenable a position? I am loath to believe that there are not. The vast majority of Canada's thoughtful, honest, and patriotic citizens are ardently hoping that just as Parliament united to leave Quebec alone to spend her money as she saw fit, so it will now unite to leave Manitoba alone to manage her own educational affairs as she has an undoubted constitutional right to do. Parliament would not heed Mr. McCarthy though he had much reason on his side; will it now heed Senator Scott?

Meanwhile let me remind your readers of some utterances on the Clergy Reserves question that may aptly be applied to Manitoba at the present moment. In his famous appeal to the British Parliament in 1851, Dr. Ryerson said: "What the Canadians ask they ask on grounds originally guaranteed to them by their Constitution, and if they are compelled to make a choice between British connection and British constitutional rights, it is natural that they should prefer the latter to the former." And the same sturdy yalist quoted with approval these words from the organ of the Church of Scotland in Upper Canada in 1840: "Year after year, at least during the last decade, the general sentiment in this Colony has been uttered in no equivocal form, that no Church invested with exclusive privileges derived from the State, is adapted to the conditions of society among us." Note also the wise words addressed by Lord Stanley to England in a speech delivered in 1828: "It is important that His Majesty's Canadian subjects should not have occasion to look across the narrow boundary that separates them from the United States to see anything there to envy."

C. GUILLET,

Toronto, April 29th.

* * *

Poetry, Art, and War.

SCARCELY a month passes by but some new volume of Canadian poems comes from the press. William Kirby, the author of that intensely powerful tale, "The Golden Dog," has just published a volume of poetry under the attractive title "Canadian Idylls." Mr. Kirby is no "idle singer of an idle song." There is an intense seriousness about every one of his poems. He loves Canada, he loves the country, her institutions, and her people. This love voices itself from the opening lines of the book—

"A calm of days had rested on the broad
Unruffled waters of Ontario"—

to the rousing national song at the close, "Canadians Forever."

The prelude to the opening poem shows the poet at his best. He is a lover of Nature, and has the power of expressing his love. His sunrise scene on the Queen's Birthday is charming:

"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.
A smooth horizon cut with clear divide
The sky above it from the sea below,
Each touching other, save one spot of white
Where stood a glistening sail, caught by the sun
And held becalmed upon the distant verge.
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."

The opening poem, "Spina Christi" is a tale of old and new France; of woman's love and man's faithlessness. It is told with poetic vigor and ease, and has a few strikingly beautiful passages. The opening lines of the second part are particularly strong:

"Atlantic gales come winged with clouds and voices of the sea
The misty capes uncapt to hear the ocean melody."

But while we have beauties, there are many blemishes, and a little judicious pruning would greatly improve all the poems. Mr. Kirby is a scholar, and his scholarship is constantly obtruding itself. It would take a good deal of poetic excellence to make the reader forget such a blemish as:

*"Canadian Idylls." By Wm. Kirby. A. P. Watts & Co., Toronto. Price \$1.50.

"In old Niagara fort a cross stood loftily in view
And Regnat Vincit. Imperat. Christus, the words did show
Carved on it."

Again we find such lines as:

"He conquered." In Hoc Signo—meaning that," etc.

and:

"The 'trinoda necessitas' of yore."

But these are knots on the oak, and when he is in his epic mood, viewing nature with sympathetic eye, he has something of Wordsworth's insight. His lyrical poems and his romances are weak, and his dramatic power in his poetry is immeasurably inferior to that in "The Golden Dog." His fishermen talk like university professors, his Indians like philosophers, and his peasant girls like high-born ladies. But when he is in the presence of nature there is a power that strongly reminds one of "Tintern Abbey," and "The Prelude." "The Lord's Supper in the Wilderness" is one of his most characteristic poems. A passage from the beginning of it will suffice to show his appreciation of the autumn mood of nature:

"The bushes stood adrip with glistening dew,
And flowers that blossom last and are not spurned
Because they labour at the eleventh hour,
And deck God's footstool, asking no reward—
Immortelles for the dead, and gentian blue,
Bright golden rod, and late forget-me-nots,
The timeliest and last—give service sweet
When all the rest are gone—and clothe the year."

"Pontiac" deals with the famous siege of Detroit. The material is well worked up, but, as in the case of the two following poems, "Bushy Run," and "Stony Creek," we cannot help feeling that the proper vehicle of expression for such subjects is prose. Mr. Kirby has tried his hand at the sonnet too, but he lacks the lyrical intensity necessary for making such formal verse attractive. The one "On General Gordon's Death," has, however, several strong lines:

"All England weeps hot tears of angry grief,
Bowed neath the shame of it, words sharp and brief
Find fierly utterance in the nation's gloom."

The book is a valuable contribution to our literature, and will tend to foster a national spirit, and create a worthy patriotism. There is but one altogether unworthy poem in it, a fulsome piece of praise of Lord Metcalfe. The poem was written in 1845, and, in the light of our records, if Mr. Kirby has not changed his views about the despotic governor "who jeered at responsible government," he should, at least, for his reputation's sake, not ask us to believe such lines about him as:

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

As we hinted in the beginning of this review, Mr. Kirby is a scholar, and this scholarship displays itself not only in the thought and phrasing of his poems, but in several translations from the French and German. He has evidently been a careful student of the masters of English verse, and his style, both in manner and matter, is often clearly modelled on Wordsworth and Tennyson.

It was a happy thought of Mr. William Briggs to ask Mrs. Rand's consent to have her letters † on art, contributed to the *McMaster University Monthly*, published in book form. They seemed to him "admirably adapted to awaken interest in a subject of which Canadians are indifferently informed," and now, with the little book before us, we feel that all readers, whether acquainted or unacquainted with art, will peruse it with pleasure. As the writer says, "the letters were not written to present original views, but simply to give an orderly and brief account of Italian art from its dawn till its noonday splendor." While this is true Mrs. Rand is, at times, strongly original in thought, and although no technical terms that could puzzle the reader are used, a clear, comprehension of painting is shown, an accurate knowledge of the pictures studied is displayed, and where some knowledge of the life of the artist will aid in adequately understanding his art a sympathetic sketch of his life is given.

The book begins with Margaritone (1216 to 1293) and closes with Titian and Tintoretto. The writer keeps in mind

† "Letters on Italian Art." By Emiline A. Rand. Wm. Briggs, Toronto.