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POETICAL REVIEW;

A BRIEF NOTICE OF

CANADIAN POETS

—AND—

POETRY.

BY A. C. STEWART.



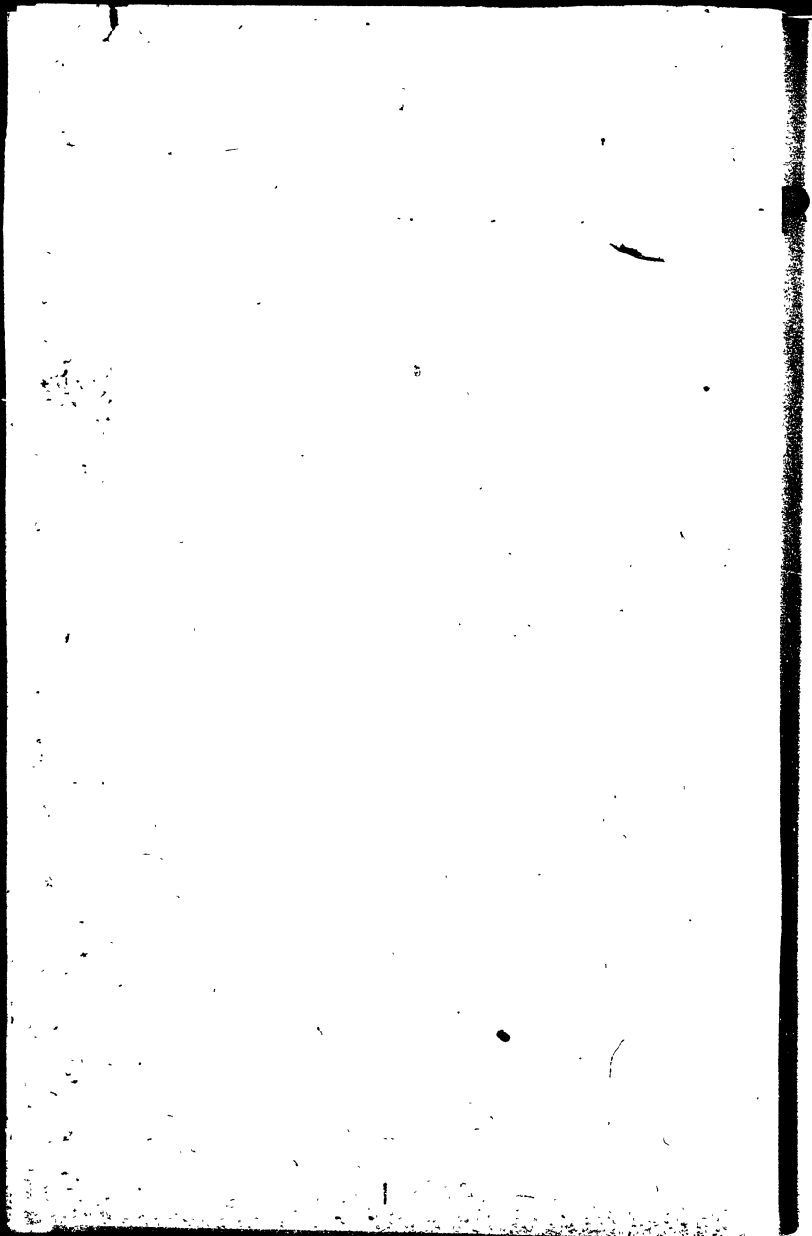
“The *Rhymers* and the *Critics* then
Leagued in one common cause,
Fell madly on the *bard* to prove,
How true his satire was.”

“The *Critic* drew his weapon keene,
And spurred right gallantlie,
And though I did not frighten him
He did not frighten me.”



Toronto:

J. ANDERSON, PRINTER, 75 ADELAIDE STREET WEST
1896.



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1896.

Entered, according to the Act of the Parliament of Canada, in the year one thousand eight hundred and ninety-six, by A. E. STEWART, in the Office of the Minister of Agriculture, at Ottawa.

F THE

THI

When bards unto their noblest rise,
And scorn the schemes which advertise ;
Trust us, ye poets, we are true ;
And in your noblest one with you.

TO

THAT LANGUISHING CAUSE,

The Regeneration of Canadian Poetry.

WHICH

CANADIAN BARDS,

IF THEY ARE TRUE TO THEMSELVES AND AS *LUCID* IN THE FUTURE

AS THEY HAVE BEEN *TUMID* IN THE PAST,

WILL TAKE TO BE

THE REASON OF EXISTENCE OF *THIS MOMENTO*;

AND

TO THE RECLAMATION OF THOSE *SCRIBBLERS* IN THE

SERVICE OF *FOLLY*;

THIS BOOK IS

Dedicated.

—*Lighthall's, Dedication improved.*

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.. PREFACE ..



THE objects in publishing this memorial are :—

FIRST—To show that the interest in Canadian Poetry is not (as some of our scribblers complain) dead, but on the contrary, very much alive.

SECOND—To prove to the self-elected synod of rhymers that their doctrine is a crude and fallacious superstition believed in by no one save themselves.

THIRD—To inform the said synod that the world fails to weep when its great head, Mr. Roberts, succumbs to poetical hysterics at the sight of a *Winkie*, which, if calmly considered, can in no wise be asserted even by a professor, to "*Rival the Unrisen Sun.*"

FOURTH—To notify all and sundry of that honorable body that this country utterly refuses to endorse nonsense, even should the writers thereof carry into effect, the harrassing threat, to leave their native land unless the people will read their rubbish.

FIFTH—That no amount of newspaper controversy can make their productions sell.

SIXTH AND LAST—That Poets and Poetry have not sunk as yet to that commercial basis above which rhymers have never risen.

A few explanations are now necessary—The authors immediately under review are those who willingly, or unwillingly, contributed to Lighthall's compilation, published under the title of "Canadian Poems and Songs in 1862," London, Walter Scott ; Toronto, W. J. Gage, & Co.

This volume contains so much ridiculous and absurd jingle that the few bright pages it contains are completely obscured. The general idea prevailing in the Editor's mind was evidently to draw his selections from those who occupied semi-eminent positions throughout the country, he doubtless thought that the ability of his authors in other walks of life

would excuse the wretchedness of their rhyming capacities, while their merits combined with the excellent binding of the volume would make a comparatively safe financial speculation. Of course he used many of the old advertising catches such as patriotism, national life, federation, and the materials combined are in effect a lilliputian tower of Babel. He arrogates to himself a kind of Divine right as to what is, and what is not poetry; but nothing further is needed to prove the fallacy of his judgment than the compilation that he made.

It may be claimed that some of the authors mentioned are unjustly treated, but if they had placed much value on their reputation they should have shunned such evil company.

Meantime if any author satisfactorily proves a forced presence in Lighthall's volume we will omit him in the next edition in which also we will make addition of those disciples of folly who may consider themselves unjustly omitted in this.

TORONTO, January 20th, 1896

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THE POETICAL REVIEW.

Oh Shades of Genius in that hoary pile !*
The proud possession of our parent Isle,
Whose dust shall sanctify that spot of earth
When time shall give new tongues and empires birth.
Oh Genius of the isle that nursed our sires !
Ye who awakened those immortal lyres
Your son who doth revere each hallow'd name,
Part of your fond impassion'd fire would claim.

Is it too much I ask, ye glorious dead ?
Is all that godlike inspiration fled ?
Must we your sons a lower mean persue
Nor hope to scale the heights our fathers knew ?
Proud of our country, lineage, and name,—
May we not hope to emulate your fame ?
And following your footsteps as we ought
Obey those precepts you yourselves have taught,
Yes we may write, although our prosy age,
Show not the fire of your immortal page
Our Muse, alas ! may not such strength display,
Yet is she worthy this degenerate day.

Hail, Vice and Folly ! you have flourish'd long
Twin monarchs of the realms of Law and Song
Before your throne behold what subjects kneel
All anxious to applaud and show their zeal ;
The honored Statesman, Counsels, learned-profound,
The worship'd Judge immaculately gowned,
The trimming Editor, politic Bard,
Whose inspiration needs must claim reward.
And lo ; Religion leaves her high resource
To try conclusions in the realms of Force
The cassock'd devo'ee with face severe
On this arena meets opposing peer ;

* We might have appealed to Parnassus but Westminster was preferred, which, although it contains not the dust of many of our mighty dead, is rightly associated with all that is great and glorious in our history.

In hate arrayed their battle flag unfurl'd,
 Themselves expose before the jeering world
 But not for me in stern relentless verse
 To saterize the high religious farce*
 Leave it to die with all the woe it made
 Guilt, crime and bloodshed, and men's soul's betrayed.

A more immediate theme my muse is thine
 The poetaster's poem and scribbler's line
 The jingling lawyer poetizing clerk
 And self-applauded bard shall furnish work;
 Here shall they find that fame most justly due
 Nor be the author of their own review.†
 These Heliconian drunks who vomit rhyme
 And then applaud it as a thing sublime.

Attorney Lighthall,‡ what a task was thine!
 To print thy samples far across the brine,
 Raked from each dusty, long forgotten nook,
 The precious verses swell and form a book;
 A book ye gods! well might old Europe stare,
 At this collection of poetic ware.
 Haply for babes and sucklings formed to use
 A glorious supplement to Mother Goose.

'Tis he, the author of the "Confused Dawn"
 Sunk to the neck in literary spawn.
 Compiler, rhymers, author, advocate,
 Writer of disquisitions on the State.
 Analyst, sketcher, and what not,—besides
 Accoucher-general to the labouring scribes.
 'Tis he inspired by drunken folly's "pluck",
 Who, like his pioneer "took the axe and struck",
 And hewed himself a literary sty
 Where he and his shall unlamented die.§

* Recent developments have proved that THE PEOPLE take but little interest in the religious panic which shakes the POLITICIANS,

† This line will possess no obscurity for some of our drivers of the quill.

‡ This gentleman compiled a volume—chiefly rubbish—as indicative of Canadian ability in the art of poetry for the edification of the world at large, as the dedication thereto signifies, which were it not redeemed by selections from Mair, Sangster, McLachlan, and a few others, would not be worth the bin ding.

§ William Douw Lighthall, alias Wilfred Cheateauclair, alias Alchemist—which last he had from Ben Johnson, that he might appear learned—is, of all the scribblers mentioned in this book, most to be reprehended, for if his compilation was made in good faith it proves him "an arrant ass." But there are some who shrewdly suspect that he basely holds up many of those good people that they may be laughed at. Has written much,—as he himself in the aforesaid compilation modestly setteth forth—published works numerous—but none of them were ever read except by the proofreader,

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A traveller he in Venice, Florence, Rome,*
 Yea raves of French fields mad with flowery foun.
 And Mighty Blanc he fears might homage pay,
 In special robes persuading him to stay,
 Fear not; that mountain did not even pale,
 When Coleridge sang in deep Chimouni's vale;
 And greater bards have gazed in silent awe.
 While Blanc proved faithful to creation's law;
 Then deem not—calm amid eternal snows—
 A paltry lawyer shakes that deep repose.
 Would he had travelled to Parnassus height,
 The Genii there had bid him cease to write,
 Or haply shipped him to the stygian shore,
 Pluto had silenced him for evermore;
 Poor legal limb, devoid of sentiment,
 Your law demands a *motive* and *intent*,
 These you possessed in naked innocence,
 All that your doggerel lacks is common sense.

Who first shall claim Attorney Lighthall's praise?
 Professor Roberts with his Grecian lays,
 Famed manufacturer both woof and warp
 Of Mic Mac Hercules, the wondrous Scarpe,†
 Whose power fantastic claimed no orphean lute
 To fascinate and feed each savage brute;
 Wolf, panther, bear and rabbit, eagle all,
 "In long row" marshalled at his magic call,
 While big with fate the prophet strides the shore,
 As the inspired oft have done before;
 Once dined, they list a pro-duction speech
 That evil utterly are all and each
 That he, the commissary, must depart
 With other marvels of genetic art,

*AT ROME.

"End of desire to stray I feel would come,
 Though Italy were all fair skies to me,
 Though France's fields went mad with flowery foam,
 And Blanc put on a special majesty;
 Not all could match the growing thought of home,
 Nor tempt to exile. Look I not on Rome,—
 This ancient modern mediæval queen,—

And three dozen additional lines of equal beauty and lucidity.

†"The departing of Clote Scarpe," is another "thing of beauty AND a joy forever," which will add to the reputation of our Professor of Folly, Mr. Roberts.

Then, lo ! as Clote Scarpe sprites himself away
 A second babel culminates the lay.*
 Yet this is not the mightiest of his strains
 Nor lone abortion of his *unclean*† brains
 Confederation Ode‡ and *do* Collect,
 Shall teach us how to pray and what respect
 While the dull humming of his tinsel song
 Shall cheat the fools of literature along,
 If he must roam on classic westermorland,
 If he must write of that immortal strand,
 And tantramarian nonsense turn his head,
 None will complain if he will not be read.

But his reserved the spoils of glory are,
 The harnessed bards, draw his triumphal car,
 A stranger pageant than Rome ever knew
 Here dazzling bursts on the astonished view,—
 Dost ask why he priority can claim ;
 Or exaltation of his unknown name,
 Why every rhymster poetaster bard ;

* " And when the beasts could see his form no more,
 They still could hear him singing as he sailed,
 And still they listened, hanging down their heads,
 In long row, where the thin wave washed and fled ;
 But when the sound of singing died, and when
 They lifted up their voices in their grief,
 Lo ; on the mouth of every beast, a strange
 New tongue ; then rose they all and fled apart
 Nor met again in council from that day."

—*The Departing of Clote Scarpe*

† ROBERTS TO CARMAN—

" With influences serene
 Our blood and brain washed clean."

But as Thersites saith, "Would it were clear that I might water an
 ass at it."

‡ We quote from this ode that the world may see how much it has
 lost by neglecting to read it.

" Under this gloom
 A deep voice stirs vibrating in men's ears,
 As if their own hearts throbbled that thunder forth
 A sound wherein who hearkens wisely hears
 The voice of the desire of this strong North—
 This north whose heart of fire,
 Yet knows not its desire.
 Clearly, but dreams, and murmurs in the dream
 The hours of dreams is done ; lo, on the hills the gleam."

Truly this is mere prose chopped like the honorable Ross's stump
 speeches into verse, or what these gentlemen please to call verse for
 want of a better name.

The foremost name in Canadian song at the present day is that
 of George Charles Douglas Roberts, poet, canoeist, and Professor of
 Literature—*Lighthall* in his introduction.

Deem themselves honored thus to drag their lord,
 It is because like old imperial Rome,
 Her second age of barbarism come
 Sunken to savage depths, the gothic rod,—
 Sways in the stead of the Olympian god ;
 He stands in Canada, without a peer,²
 That is if we must credit all we hear,³
 If Roberts' Jingle is the best and first,
 Shield us ye powers from the last and worst.

Famed, "intellectual race," his sister too,
 Has joined her efforts to the puling crew,
 And babbles trashy gush, at such a rate
 As is but equalled by her brother's prate.
 Her verse has "body" Lighthall says discreet,
 But mentions nothing of its head or feet.

Up from the marshes swells a loon-like cry,*
 And cousin Stratton answers "Here am I."
 He who untrammel'd with his flimsy line,
 Flings his defiance, to the outraged nine
 And strong maintains, despite of friends or foes,
 That rhyme improves when it is mixed with prose.
 Who read his "Dream Fulfilled" with broken heart.
 Acknowledge poetry a vanished art,
 His "silver frost" whose "gems of fire" glow,†
 Omits no colors that the dyers know,
 Yet not in vain, his compilation made,—
 It will serve as hand-book to the dying trade.

A line for Carman, whose high-tidal verse,
 Is slightly passionate to say no worse,
 An l'something foolish is his "long red swan,"‡
 That spectral bark which still keeps driving on,
 Way, Carman, let it serve its own best,
 It is not worthy of the wind you waste.

*"Through the darksome splendor break the lonesome cry of loon."
 —From Stratton's "*Evening on the Marshes*."

†"Violet, orange, indigo, red,
 Green, yellow and blue from each dimond are shed,
 More beautiful these than the jewels of a throne,
 For the forest is nature's glory and crown."
 —From Stratton's *Hysterics upon Frost*

There is no known law in poetry which can make metre of this
 poem ; if there is Stratton has the secret.

‡"THE 'RED SWAN' is Carman's favorite birch bark canoe, so
 named by him from the phenomenal rosinness of its bark material."
 —*Lighthall's Notes*

Carman has made it the subject of one hundred and fifty-four lines
 of ghostly verse, which something resembles an Irish ballad.

Ah ; mystic mourner all your barren dreams,
 Are but the dregs of passion's vanished gleams.
 How could you ever smile ; and know your light
 Was starlike shooting into murky night.
 All this abstract philosophy ne'er may
 Content the heart that burns itself away
 Cease thy wild dreams of this you may be sure,
 'Tis folly all, perhaps she was

Yet Candor must confess thy rising strain
 Shows power, thy cousins never shall attain,
 Thou hast the secret of the poet's art
 The first grand requisite, a human heart ;
 Nor needst to mock the " In Memoriam " phrase
 Though quite in line, these imitating days.

Yet sternly just the candid muse must speak
 Of those who sink to write their own critique,*
 This base resource, must stamp the poet's name
 That so decends with an undying shame,
 The mean attempt o'erwhelms them with scorn,
 And proves such bards were for the bathos born,
 Who values such critiques when authors may
 Tell the reviewer what his line shall say ?
 And with a shameless brow indite such gush—
 As from a stranger ought to make them blush ;
 Not all the applause of a crude scheme like this,
 Can ever save their name from the abyss.
 Poor paltry souls yours is an awful curse,
 The wild attempt to float a leaden verse.
 The monstrous toil proportions does essay,
 To which the task of Sisyphus was play.
 Idle your efforts, all your labor vain,
 Down it shall sink forever to remain.

Hear sacred Campbell† ranting as he takes
 The churchman's holiday upon the lakes,
 Devoid of heart, of soul, of common sense,
 He makes at poetry a wild pretense,
 Unconscious quite, he loudly halts along
 And deems his jingle constitutes a song.

* This is Campbell's accusation, and the bards concerned, Carman Scott, Lampman and Roberts were credited with correcting the Munsey reviewer's proof. Several ludicrous letters on the subject were published in the *Toronto Globe*,

† Wm. Wilfred Campbell, prolific scribbler—He was mightily offended at and bitterly attacked the bards who displayed so much genius in the conduct of their own review in *Munsey's Magazine*, but it turned out that the real cause of his resentment was his being denied a similar liberty.

For him undoubtedly his "kettle sings"
 Divinest music of divinest things,
 For his profession woe that such things be,
 Limits the reverend gentleman to tea.*
 "Smile with the simple," Garrick sang of yore,
 And they obey him who read Campbell o'er.
 The "Poet of the Lakes" some wag once croaked
 And Campbell wears nor deems the rascal joked;
 A "brutal" joke to use his favorite word,
 Nothing in titles could be more absurd,
 His "North and Westward"† ever shall remain
 A cracked memento of his doting strain,
 A halting mimiced Tennysonian rant,
 Without his vigor, but with all his cant;
 Behold his soldiers lie with folded arms,—
 False picture this of thundering wars alarms,
 The leaden death leaves no such scenes as these
 Where men die racked with mortal agonies,
 Or falling swift the vital flood escapes
 The quivering form, which writhes in hideous shapes;
 Here is no pause the glassy eye to close,
 The living think alone of living foes,
 And rushing heed no comrade's dying groan
 When, the next moment, death may be their own.

Next Scott,‡ shall lay his dainty "Isabelle"
 In sleep divine (perhaps hypnotic spell),
 Let him beware, the law is argus-eyed,
 And specious phrase will save no rhymers' shide
 The sleeping lady (if she ere awakes)—
 May much resent the liberty he takes,
 Observe decorum Scott, what e'er you do,
 And never stay beyond the hour of two;
 How e'er his *sleeping* "Isabelle" may pass,
 If he will turn his pegasus to grass,
 That spavin'd jade, may well acquittance plead
 And let him henceforth, mount the silent steed.

*"Ma jory, Marjory, make the tea,
 Singeth the kettie merrily."—*Campbell's folk song.*

†"Only the rifles crack
 And answer of rifle back.
 Heavy each haversack,
 Dreary the prairie's track,
 Far to the North and the Westward."

Although these haversacks are so heavy, Campbell has his soldiers starving; probably our reverend friend being a man of peace imagines that the soldiers carry their kit in them.

‡Duncan Campell Scott, Government official, Indian Department, Ottawa, selfsatisfied writer and aspirant to literary fame.

Oh Scott ! if thou would'st rise thy place resign,
 He knows no master, who would woo the nine,
 No bond official should hold Freedom's Bard,
 Enough for him posterity's reward.
 No poet ever lived, but sank to prose,
 Beneath the chains that governments impose ;
 Burns as exciseman, lost that gifted strain
 Which lit his soul when furrowing the plain,
 And Wordsworth though his heights he never knew,
 Sank to the baths of the laureate too ;
 Even Southey might have lived (at least in prose)
 If he had still preserved his youthful foes,
 While Tennyson had reaped, as much of fame
 Without Lord Laureate, added to his name.

Enough of him behold the *second* Scott*
 Another pearl of Lighthall's sample lot,
 Whose " Wahonomin " makes the reader stare
 To see the folly fondly garnered there,
 Where " buds of spring " there petals sweet disclose
 Above the drift of " fifty winters " snows,†
 Where empires wide cause, England's throne to fly,
 Above the clouded mountaintops so high,
 His necromancy makes the grasses wave,‡
 Despite of sense above the *new-made* grave,
 While presto change ! and lo his magic spell
 Transforms each heart into a " tolling bell."
 He cannot plead the specious plea of youth,
 So must prepare himself to hear the truth,
 By the Parnassian Nine it is decreed,
 If he must write that he alone shall read.
 And never hence vend mutilated verse
 Lest it return to him a sevenfold curse.

How sweet to read Llewellyn's§ holy verse,
 To divers magazines it finds its course,

* Frederick George Scott, Reverend, whose sermons must be more orthodox than his verse, else he had long since been convicted of heresy and false doctrine.

† " Great Mother they have told us that the snows
 Of fifty winters sleep around thy throne,
 And buds of spring now blossom with sweet breath,
 Beneath thy tread."—*Scott's Wahonomin*.

‡ " Wild the prairie grasses wave,
 O'er each hero's new-made grave."

Scott's " In Memoriam."

§ Llewellyn Morrison, scribbler of Toronto, who, though not incorporated in Lighthall's compilation, is as a deciple; of folly worthy of that honor.

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Like paraphrases do his poems run,
 Read backwards, forwards, and tis all as one,
 His Easter effort, something novel shows
 An ode quite innocent of rhyme or prose,
 Yet let him rave his soul may reach the sky,
 But with his body shall his verses die.
 Imrie* and he shall hands seraphic join
 And praise each other for a pious line;
 This later shall produce his pasted† praise,
 And boast himself his fifteen hundred lays.
 Long may he lay and hatch them if he choose
 They'll ne'er produce him such another goose.
 He who can sing Toronto's lovely bay
 Ne'er shipped from Yonge St. in the month of May.
 What devil tempted him this theme to choose
 Surely his ranting bardship has a nose,
 Yet for the man has nobly worked and striven
 Depart in peace thy poems shall be forgiven.

Lo ! from the vasty deep, what doth appear ?
 Davin‡ the author of the " Prairie Year,"
 Whose verse is proof for those who make the claim,
 Genius and madness, are almost the same,
 For none believe a man possessed of wit
 Could e'er produce such verse as Davin writ.
 Who print his trash declare themselves his foes,
 Abjure such folly sir, and stick to prose,
 And should you find this penance too severe,
 We'll pardon an oration once a year.

In Davin's columns Simpson, shows her " Ben,"§
 A pearl from unsophiscated men,
 A man, " no orator as Brutus " was,
 Yet no conspirator against the laws,
 Of folly. Heaven pardon Lighthall's crime,
 He knew not what he did this ass sublime.

* Imrie is not included in Lighthall's galaxy, and instead of giving thanks to the gods he was insulted.

† Imrie has a modest little hobby of collecting all the press notices of himself, and these he has printed in a neat pamphlet and presents without a blush to whoever will read them. He claims to be a patriot, too, but is an excellent trimmer.

‡ Nicholas Flood Davin—This gentleman's weak point seems to be his attempts at poetry; the fact of his being an M.P., can in nowise excuse the stupendous nonsense of "The Prairie Year," Lighthall calls it "Prairie Transcript," presumably from the fact that it is similarly monotonous.

§ It would be hard to decide which was the greater criminal, the author who wrote "Rough Ben," or the editor who permitted it to appear; perhaps the *Week* could tell us.

"Fidelis," Empress of the Thousand Isles!*
 Shall hold her court where nature ever smiles,
 And listening to the whip-poor-will complain,
 immortalize his fond and plaintive strain,
 Or pensive dreaming, through the autumn days,
 Repaint the hackneyed Indian summer haze,
 Yet when not otherwise employed her time
 She can translate chaste Ovid's moral rhyme,
Quo vadis, Sappho, gentle maid refrain;
 Not thine to gild the latin poet's strain,
 Grant though at times he may be pure enough
 The rascal's author of much "perilous stuff"
 Go study Carman, native, young and pure,
 Aught that's amiss that poet leaves obscure
 Beneath thy *fulvial fugus* by the stream
 Cull the sweet shadows of delusion's dream.

And now survey Sir Daniel's blundering "Scot,"
 Another raving, versifying sot,
 Who not content to drink "auld Scotia's" breeze
 Swallows the landscape, in triumphant ease†
 Immortal juggler, Science could not save,
 Thy titled head from the compiling slave.
 Position, place, example, nought availed
 Before the world thy ragged line was haled ;
 The vain compiler deems his power divine
 Can clothe with wisdom folly's bloated line.
 He speaks and darkness from the void is hurled
 From chaos called, behold the second world.

Where wild Niagara hurls his torrents down
 A poet dwells who wears a sanguine crown ;
 There Kirby‡ with his strong and graphic pen
 Shall rouse the warring legions up again:—
 English and French, and Redmen, marshalled are.
 And shake the plains, beneath the shock of war,
 Yet not the reeking charge and bloody fray,
 The lingering siege, or the victorious day,
 Alone are his, he can at list digress
 To plant the thorn that symbol of distress

* Fidelis poetically, or Agnes Maule Machar in the vulgar—Novelist, Disputant for the Canadian Poetess' Palm, inclined to Latin translations.

† Lighthall tells us that Sir Daniel Wilson is a reputed scientist, but mathematics alone would teach Sir Daniel that it is impossible to drink a landscape.

‡ Mr. Kirby is a bright star in William Douw's Heaven, he will live longer probably, than Lighthall himself, Government official, author of "Canadian Idylls," writer of some very good verse, and much rubbish.

An spin his little yarn of love betrayed
 The faithful wife and the seducing maid ;—
 Ah ! fated concubine thy wicked hand
 Is doomed to slay thy lover. " Bois-le-Grand"
 Vain thy carresses, in his mortal pain,
 He knows thee not but calls his chatelaine,
 Yet faithful still like Conrad's Kaled thou
 Watched to the last and sharest his glory now.
 Such is the story told in time and rhyme
 That makes ridiculous this antique crime ;
 Kirby no more thy leisure hours abuse
 Collect thy customs but tempt not the muse.

Oh ! Ascher trifling in thy " Youthful prime "
 And golden hours with a sickly rhyme ;
 Since Scott abandoned law, how many more
 Have deemed they might do what was done before,
 And imitators still, would mock the fame
 That gilds the memory of that noble name.
 Vain their attempt, thou Ascher shall go down
 To dark oblivion, nameless and unknown.

Oh hoary Smith, thou and thy dreadful verse
 Dragged into prominence sans all remorse ;
 Thy sixty years could not exemption plead
 Lighthall decreed that all the world should read ;
 Alas ! poor Smith, although thy crime was great,
 A fearful punishment has been thy fate.*
 Thy " reverence even the head-lugged bear " had
 spared

But this fell Harpy nothing could retard,
 A bloodless Nemesis to punish those
 Who dare to leave the sober realms of prose
 The follies all of youth or doting age,
 All are concentrated on his damning page
 And even the tomb is rifled of its dust
 To gorge his still insatiable lust :

Fair Crawford, † she who in her youthful bloom
 Unnoticed sank to the untimely tomb,
 In mortal slumber on her narrow bed,
 Recks not how much or little she is read ;
 The thrill for glory, the ambitious hope,
 Are now confined in very little scope ;

* William Wye Smith, Reverend, who is a man more sinned against than sinning.

† The story of this talented lady is but the repetition of that of many preceding lights and is therefore too old to attract attention. Her talents were original and certainly surpass in depth and finish any of our living imitators of Tennyson.

Denied in life what she deserved of fame
 What boots it idly to exhume her name?
 Extol her genius, her intrinsic worth;
 She sleeps and soundly with her mother Earth,
 Hers was a fate oft paralleled before;
 Genius neglected for some trifling boor.
 Sad-eyed and listless hidden in the crowd
 While some vain ass is lauded long and loud;
 Yet better far to never breathe of fame,
 Than rise to vanish into whence she came.

Happy our statesmen when as such they fall
 Thank heaven they still can twist the muse's tail,
 And fleeing far from the ignoble throng,
 In lisping strain produce the sparrow's song.*
 Thrice happy mortals roaming through the woods
 Or haply boating on the foaming floods,
 Or washing down the midday dish of "fish"
 With Adam's ale as much as heart could wish;
 Anon in slumber stretched upon the sod,
 Forget their plans for circumventing God†
 Soft dreams eleyasian on thy beatitude
 No cankering cares of empire can intrude
 For while the moon sheds her soft glories down
 The monarch might forget his useless crown,
 Thus Edgar may forget forensic fray
 And if he choose forget to draw his pay.

Turn from these triflers to the bright M'Gee,
 Sprung from that clime of genius o'er the sea,
 That little isle which sends its sons afar
 To shine in council or to lead in war,
 Faithful to that strange destiny which sways
 The Irish race through wild conflicting ways;
 Weird lights of genius flashing through the gloom
 To light her heroes to the martyr's tomb.
 He followed, subject to her fatal laws,
 A willing sacrifice to honor's cause.

Lo from his snug department Lampman‡ strays
 To rant of "Heat" and white and dusty ways,

* Mr. Edgar, M.P., has felt it his duty to translate the song of that imported nuisance, the English sparrow.

† *Hamlet*—"One who could circumvent God, might it not?"

‡ Archibald Lampman, Civil Service, Ottawa, would assuredly pass for a poet if the human interest was more strongly developed in his verse.

But "Maud" and "In Memoriam" seem to be the only criterions of poetry with our imitating bards. What will become of the imitations when the originals are already on the wane.

And rapt observant with sagacious art
 Tells how the *waggoner* walks by his *cart*
 Yet pause a moment and the *cart* (how sad)
 Becomes a wagon, Lampman you are mad.
 Yet claims he some blest power had brought him here
 Because his thoughts have grown so "keen and clear,"
 More blest his brooding soft midsummer seems
 For there he sinks forgetful into dreams—
 Official cares and the conflicting deeps
 Have no effect upon the bard who sleeps.

'Tis in his April that he rules a king
 And pours "Libation" to awakening spring,
 'Tis then he hears—for him—the flute like frog
 Trill "sweet voiced" tremulous up from the bog,
 Poor innocents sans heed of pain or ill
 They watch the hours pass and trill and trill,

Yet truth comes sometimes from the suckling's head
 He saw his "soul was for the most part dead,"
 Ingenious youth that truth has long been known
 Nor new that secret which thou thoughtst thine own.
 Yet Lampman shall outgrow his present rhyme,
 And soar to stellar heights, alone sublime,
 For even his frogs display a mind that brings
 Deep contemplation, even to meanest things,
 While the soft cadence of his verse can show
 A depth these poetasters ne'er can know.

Lone daughter of the tribes* to thee was given
 A ray divine, by the all pitying heaven ;
 Fond Nature could not see her children fade
 Unmourned, unsung, to drear oblivion's shade,
 And thou wert gifted with a task sublime
 To make the redman's last appeal to time ;
 Haply thy muse touched by thy people's doom
 Will pause beside Thayandanega's tomb,
 Or view the bronze memorial that wears
 A native touch of the departed years.
 Sad is thy lot thou spirit formed for tears
 To view the march of the advancing years ;
 Before whose tread like foam upon the brine
 Are swept the drifting wrecks of thee and thine ;
 Oh strange this scene, the pale-faced sons of toil
 Have swept away the monarchs of the soil,
 And to possession like stern masters come
 And make the redmen aliens at home ;

* Pauline Johnson, who occupies poetically the most unique position in history.

Not aliens long, fate points the certain way
 Unjust the doom but they must needs obey,
 Yea sad thy lot thou lone ill-fated Gracé
 To sing the wild dirge of thy dying race.

From the dark realms of deep hysteric prose
 Arises compassed with poetic woes,
 A lady novelist* whose polished pen
 Can justly claim to rival Simpson's "Ben,"
 Yes, let King Roberts heed his proud estate,
 High though he is, fair Rothwell is as great,
 Her verse transcendant, and her style intense,
 Her very fault like his the lack of sense,
 Perhaps compromise 'twixt them may atone
 And yield the king a consort to his throne.

Fond old McLachlin† with the heart of fire,
 Strong without fustian, caustic without ire,
 Simple yet piercing, honest without rant,
 And nature-loving void of barren cant ;
 Sick of this strained and artificial age
 The reader turns to thy refreshing page,
 And feels the shadow of the solemn woods
 And sees the sheen of the broad winding floods.
 Thank Heaven thou art no triton of the deep,
 A birch bark shallop cannot make thee weep,
 But thou canst smile at him who wildly shrieks
 A worship to the *Neptune* of the *creeks*,
 Yes, laugh out-right at those whose fancies rich,
 See Naiads lave in each Acadian ditch.
 Bow down, ye scribes before the mighty *Week*,
 Malicious vendor of the base critique,
 Lean Egotist, that claims the right divine
 To whip the slavish scribblers into line,‡
 High in its cob-webbed garret 'midst the dust
 It famished, gnaws its literary crust,
 And apes the journals of a bygone age
 To damn the poet, or exalt his page ;

* Annie Rothwell, whose poetry we hope to see properly appreciated, in point of "poetical Afflatus," as the professor saith, she is assuredly equal to the *Singer of Tantramar*, and no doubt Mr Roberts being a gentleman and a scholar, as well as a "caneist," will be ready to acknowledge the extraordinary capabilities of this lady as rivalling his own.

† Alexander McLachlin, Poet, requires no introduction to make him known ; his honest verses are like the man who writes them vigorous and plain ; he does not produce froth, but ideas unaffected and beautifully clothed. He is the first poet in Canada.

‡ The *Independent Week* desires a prohibitory tax imposed upon the dime novel. Surely that most pretentious journal has no ambition to shine in the realm of fiction.

Oh! thou dictator's heart without the brain,
 On neutral ground I meet thee once again,
 And in thy teeth my gage of battle throw,
 My one despised—and yes—my meanest foe.
 What! though you claim a high ideal to give.
 False the assertion, you but aim to live;
 You teach no class, you elevate no aim.
 Your freedom and a slave's are but the same;
 Crazed vehicle of the rats your ancient ways
 Are out of order these progressive days.
 Your Latin'd pedagogues and sages Greek,
 Thunder, but ah! a foreign* tongue they speak,
 Athens and Rome, their suns o'er ruins set
 This last bequeathed what we would fain forget,
 And for the first her lauded tongue and arts
 Are but a foil to show the scholar's parts;
 Their statesmen, true we have them here to-day,
 Can squander revenues as fast as they,

Oh! soaring journal, what a theme for rhyme
 When once per year, you swell to the sublime,
 And tales contestant fill the laden air
 With rhyme and prose sufficient and to spare,
 Oh Pope, no painter but a prophet thou—
 Those scenes ludicrous are exacted now,
 On Jordan Street the sons of Folly throng,
 Each with his story or competing song,
 Mad with ambition, nay a passion worse,
 Mad with the hope to clutch the promised purse,
 Who shall succeed among the motley crew?
 Avaunt ye classics; it is not for you.—
 The daring hero of a cattle boat,
 Who slushed the scuppers in his home-spun coat,

* The *Week* instead of dominating public sentiment has succumbed to that power, and was forced to repudiate its former oracle that egregrious Theorist,—Dr. Goldwin Smith, who, has joined—in the support of the Olney doctrine—that Triumvirate, of which Michael Davitt, John Redmond and himself are the members. But we take this opportunity to tell this Dr. of *The Depths* that there are instincts in the human breast with which even his philosophy is unable to cope.

“No children are we to be flattered or fear'd,
 But bold independence we love and adore,
 And we'll stand by the column that victory rear'd
 Till the last son of freedom succumbs in his gore.”

Meantime we can laugh at him and laugh also at Principal Grant who calls it an infringement of British liberty to tell the Dr. of Annexation to shut his mouth.

And piloted the bulls, across the wave,*—
 O'er glorious him the classic *Week* does rave—
 While lightly he describes the hoary pile
 Which holds the honored of our parent isle,
 The *Week* extends the purse, with weeping eyes,
 And the rude conquerer carries off the prize.

Ah, not forgotten, thou delightful *Grip*,
 The boast of Canada, her moral whip,
 Lo ; with what humor all thy pages teem
 The idle jargon of an idiot's dream.
 Thou dull old crow with soul and brain of straw,
 That knowest no music save thy croaking caw.†
 Doubtless your lash is oft severe enough,
 Were statesmen "made of penetrable stuff;"
 But dull McGreevy, Connelly, Caron,
 Pay no attention to your croaking song,
 Vice still progresses, drop thy blunted sword
 And yield the *Week*, thy task undone, abhorred.
 Yet Bengough's genius shall make good his claim
 To be remembered by recording fame,
 While far above his pencil's ready art
 He shall be valued for his generous heart ;
 Here is one public man that truth can claim
 Who bears a liberal untarnished name.

And thou my country, fallen on evil days,
 Corruption, bribery, every vice that sways,
 Till those who love thee most their blush may hide,
 Their shame too great to longer be denied.
 Alas ! must Virtue turn with weeping eyes
 Toward the tomb where just Mackenzie lies ;
 Nor find amid the ambitious living none,
 In truth to rival her departed son,
 Nay old Macdonald, criticise who may,
 Would scorn the peurile tactics of to-day,
 What though his methods strained at times the laws,
 Still in the van he placed his country's cause.
 Dishonored land, unhappy is thy fate
 When even the Turk‡ can sneer at thy estate,

* This was the class of literature that carried the laurel away from all competitors a few years ago, and the award of the *Week* was the subject of much mirth at the time. One gentleman, of our acquaintance, supposed that the victor's prize of \$50 probably cost him a hundred. He had been in the newspaper business himself and "spoke as one having authority and not as the Scribes and "envious "Pharisees."

† The lately deceased *Grip* may justly demand this record, that it died in defence of its principles.

‡ A writer, some time since in *Saturday Night*, who had travelled in the Balkans is authority for this statement.

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When common gossip passes thee and thine
 For vice a byword far beyond the brine,
 Oh sacred truth find champion for her cause
 To bring back prestige to her trampled laws,
 Restore the nation to a patriot's hand,
 And boodlers scourge from the polluted land.

Behold convicted Vice with brazen face
 Transferred from jail to fill a statesman's place
 And hear the filthy rabble's senseless voice,
 Shameless proclaim a criminal their choice,
 A seat he takes among the nation's best,
 And not a coward who would dare protest.
 Jocond, he enters 'midst his old colleagues
 Forgets his crime and prison life fatigues ;
 Degenerate age, stamped with the brand of shame
 When truth found none to vindicate her name,
 Nay *golden silence* gave consent to crime
 And vilest precedent to coming time,
 When such as this is borne without rebuke
 Dark may the patriot on the future look—
 If he must judge that future by the past
 To what vile depths will they descend at last?
 Manipulated by each party tool
 Till blood-red anarchy at last must rule.
 The country shall assert her latent right,
 And sweep these vampires to eternal night ;
 Vice oft hath flourished 'twas but for a time,
 Justice at length will surely punish crime,
 Time strips the gilding from emblazoned ill,
 Alone is sacred Truth immortal still.

It may be asked why I should thus presume
 To drag these shadows from their native gloom,
 I do not seek a Government reward,
 Nor to be branded Honored, Sir or Lord,
 Nor threat to leave this stupid country's clime,*
 Unless the people will peruse my rhyme ;
 Ye jostling bards, "lay unction to your soul,"
 Great minds have compassed no immediate goal.
 The barren heights of ultimate success
 Yield the dark guerdon of a long distress,
 For mountain summits in their gorgeous glow
 Know not the verdure of the plains below.
 Yield me your thanks ye parasites of fame,
 Earth but for me had never known your name ;

One of our bards threatened to voluntarily exile himself because
 adians refused to be charmed with his rhyme; he, however, recon-
 ered his intention although he is as deep in oblivion as ever.

The fame so long denied is yours at last
 Broad as the sky and liberal as the blast—
 Without exception, graphic, terse, and true,
 Nor first submitted to its subject's view.

'Tis said advice is folly, still ye bards
 Reform your verse if you would win rewards*
 Fame is not bought, nor is the critic's pen
 An open sesame to the hearts of men—
 Assumption is not genius, nor is rhyme
 From known necessities perform sublime,
 Simplicity and truth need not be great,
 'Tis simply true that four and four make eight,
 'Tis oft indeed the versifiers' curse,
 That they mistake impression for their verse,
 But oftener far they force th' unwilling muse
 Who yields no rapture when she would refuse;
 Reform ye scribblers, leave your mists and frogs,
 Lakes, Loons and *Injuns* and Acadian bogs—
 And hang the eternal paddle up to dry;
 Canoes good sooth; when Pegasus can fly,
 To read our bards the world might well mistake
 Our wide Dominion for an endless lake,
 Dotted with isles where birch expressly grows
 The raw material for bark canoes.

Ye trifling bards, leave these and kindred themes,
 Your crude philosophy and petty dreams:
 Leave Southern critics to their native songs
 And homage yield where loyalty belongs—
 Content to win your native land's applause,
 Toil for her glory† and support her laws.

* One of the most ancient prerogatives of poetry was to correct, or at least punish, the vices to which it is traditionally opposed; but our gentlemen prefer to paddle a canoe, address pumpkins, frogs, or some similar subject to striking those degraded, vicious, and mercenary boodlers who are a blot upon this age and country.

† Nearly all our bards occupy positions where Government salaries prevent them speaking; but the author of this poem congratulates himself upon the fact that he is free and will so remain; at the same time he considers it but just to himself to state that truth and integrity are to him of much greater importance than the frown or condemnation of the basest slave or the most illustrious criminal.

