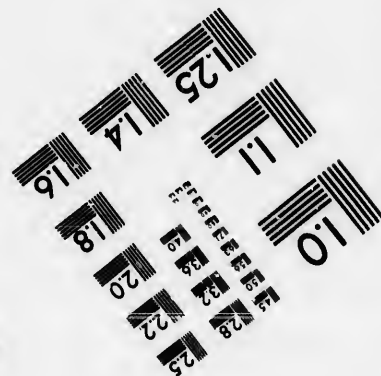
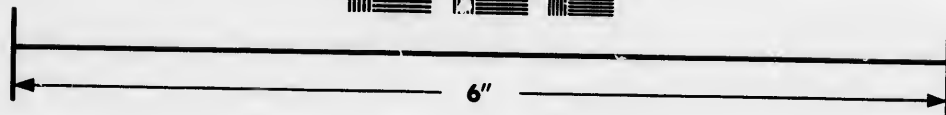
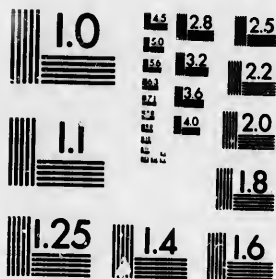


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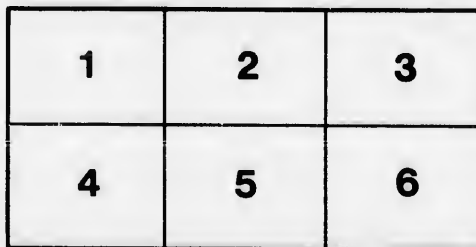
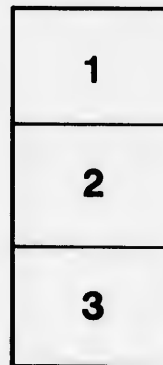
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CANADIAN IDYLLS.

BY WILLIAM KIRBY.

THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY.

Interlude First.

THE BELLS OF KIRBY WISKE,
AND
THE LORD'S SUPPER IN THE WILDERNESS.

Reprinted from the 'Canadian Monthly' for March and April, 1882.

Toronto:
ROSE-BELFORD PUBLISHING COMPANY.

1882.

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Queen's University at Kingston

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CANADIAN IDYLLS.*

BY W. KIRBY.

(From the 'Canadian Monthly' for March and April, 1882.)

THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY.

INTERLUDE FIRST.

'When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks sound,
To many a youth and many a maid,
Dancing in the chequered shade,
And young and old come forth to play
On the sunshine holyday.'

—L'ALLEGRO.

UNHASTING and unresting from his height
The sun slid down the slope of afternoon,
An avalanche of glory for an hour.
One fleecy cloud o'erhead that flecked the blue
Lay fringed with silver like an angel's robe
Afloat upon mid-air, too bright for shade ;
While in the south the gods of summer showers
Let down their golden ladders and in haste
Watered the mountain edge and plain above
The heights of Queenston, column crowned, where lies
Our country's darling on his bed of fame,
Speaking brave words for ever to our land
As spake his death on that October morn
Made glorious in our annals ever more. †
It thundered once beyond the echoing woods,
Like laughter of the gods who held the shower,
Nor let a raindrop touch the festive grove
Where sped the pastimes of the Queen's birthday.

The roaring of the distant Falls was heard—
Resonant—deep—abysmal—deeper still ;
Like throbbings of earth's very heart it came,
The old time monody, old as the world,
The lullaby of man when he was made,
And morning stars together sang for joy !
The shadows in the grove crept eastward now,
Weaving their woof and warp of light and shade
In new and quivering patterns, that defied
All art of schools to match their tapisserie.
Upon the grass a round of dancers wheeled
In graceful measure to the violins,
The flutes and tambourines, that filled the grove
With music such as stirs the blood, and sets
The feet unconsciously to beat the bars.

* [The reader is referred to page 414 of Vol. VI. for the Prelude and the first of these Canadian Idylls.—Ed. C. M.]

† General Sir Isaac Brock, Governor of Upper Canada, killed at the Battle of Queenston 13th October, 1812.

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May listened eagerly—while on her cheek
 The dimples went and came, quick as her smiles.
 True woman she! who gave the sighs where due
 The old French thorns—the love that went astray—
 Then put the grief aside. Her eyes shone out,
 Washed by a tear, the brighter for th' eclipse
 Of sorrow, and a love-grief not her own.
 She took the proffered hand of one she liked;
 With liking almost loving, sooth to say;
 A youth who worshipped her—as well she knew,
 And pleased to think so—for it seemed her due,
 The right divine of woman to be loved,
 And be herself heart free, if so she chose—
 Mistrusting little how her strength might fail
 Just at the moment of its least avail!
 As there was one who once did 'wilder him,
 Who wrote the tale—loved him perhaps—nay more,
 Kneft by his side at the Castalian spring,
 And, dipping with both hands the water pure,
 Gave him to drink of immortality—
 And kissed him into death, of all beside,
 To live with him in verse for ever more.

May joined the dancers, while a merry tune,
 In triple time of lilting airs they loved,
 Greeted her coming—for where all were fair
 May was the fairest, with her tossing hair,
 And thousand charms in motion everywhere.
 Her waving robe revealed two dainty feet
 Light as a plover's, tripping on the grass
 And scarcely touching it, as she danced through
 The joyous set and then renewed it, too!—
 Her dimpled smiles and merry glances caught
 Reflections of themselves in every face
 That followed her, as she flew gaily past.
 And so May danced without a single care,
 Until her thought reverted to a scene
 Like this, her favourite poet had described,
 A happy hour of others' joys, forbid
 To him who wrote the story—to relieve
 The weary night thoughts, and forget the pain,
 The want—the isolation, and the strain
 Upon the heartstrings, until one by one
 They snapped, and silent lay the broken harp,
 But not the music; which had been set free
 To float forever in the heart of May,
 And those who, like her, loved the poet's lay.
 The girl had in her heart of hearts, a fount
 Perennial, hid from eye of garish day;
 Ideals of love and duty—words of prize
 From poets gathered, many, rich and wise—
 And most from him whose book she loved the best;
 That old unprinted volume, whence she drew
 Day dreams of fancy, tender, lovely, pure,
 Illumed by hope, and warmed by youthful fire;
 And in them lived the life of her desire.

Amid the meadows and beside the brook
 The lake's lone shore—or by the winter fire,
 She filled the varied scene with forms she loved
 Flowers—trees—cascaçes, rocks, castles in the air;

A Beulah where true love was always sure
 Of its fulfilment ; for in that bright land
 Of her imaginings, all came to pass—
 Just as she wished it ; never died a flower—
 Nor failed a fountain of its overflow,
 Nor lost the grass its verdure, and where seed
 Life-germinal, first sown in heaven, appears
 On earth in new creations—of its kind,
 And not another's, to the evermore ;
 Whence comes the newness and in time, the old.
 In that fair land Love drank its fill secure—
 No heart of man or maid was ever sore—
 No cross between them ever marred their joy.
 But all things right and happily befell,
 As she would have it, and with start, half joy,
 Half fear, would sometimes flush to think one day,
 Perchance to her might happen in the way
 Of others to be wooed by thrilling clasp
 Of hands, that catch her haply unawares,
 And hold her, not unwilling it might be.
 What then ? Why all her glorious fancies raised
 To topmost height, were feeble to express
 The hopes—the joys—the tremulous distress
 Of that sweet change from fancy to the real
 Which finds in love the crown of its ideal.

The dancing ceased awhile—the dancers walked
 By twos and threes beneath the shade, and talked
 With zest and relish of the things they knew
 Things easy, common, not too high or low—
 Familiar as the stools whereon they sat.
 None stumble over them—nor fear to trip
 By too much wisdom—so gay talk and song
 Succeeded the dance amid the joyous crowd.
 May, flushed and happy, with disordered hair
 She shook into its place—with arm half-bare,
 She covered blushing, rejoined the few
 Beside her uncle, who sat book on knee
 And bade her choose a tale and read it too.
 She said : ' Good uncle ! There is one sweet tale
 I love, and fain would read—Not that ! nor that !'
 She turned the leaves in haste—' Nor that ! just now ;
 That melancholy tale which tells of one
 Poor maid forlorn and crazed, who died for loss
 Of her young bridegroom on their wedding morn—
 In the wild whirlpool where he ventured in
 To rescue drowning men—and was himself
 Caught by the swirling eddies fringed with foam,
 And borne away in sight of his young bride

' All day her cries to heaven rose up in vain.
 Heaven gave no sign—albeit the Father's ear
 Heard all in pity—ordering for the best
 Th' eternal providence of life and death—
 Of death, whose gloomy masque conceals the grace
 Of God beneath it—hides the beauteous face
 Of Life's archangel, sent to all in turn
 To summon each of us in name of him
 Whom we call Death, but who is Life Eterne.
 Three days her bridegroom with uplifted arms,
 Stark stiff in death, besought her as he whirled

In vast gyrations slowly round and round
 The watery circles, each one with a well
 That swallowed all things in it—bodies, trees,
 Tall masts on end—disgorging them again
 In sport of giants—so three days she gazed
 Upon her bridegroom in the whirling dance,
 Now sinking, now emerging—till she crazed.
 And still they say her ghost is seen of nights,
 When winds roar up the gorge, and moonlight falls
 With flickering beams amid the shaking pines
 That overhang the whirlpool. On the rocks
 There, with pale face and clasped hands, she sits
 Peering into the chasm, where he whirls
 With arms outstretched—two hapless ghosts forlorn,
 Each on the other calling—till the dawn.

'I like not that!' said May—and turned the leaves
 Impatiently—'nor that! No! Neither this
 Grim story of the rebel's bones! Although
 You always laugh to hear it, uncle dear!'

'Why, yes;' he answered, smiling as he spoke—
 'It makes one laugh—the story is so odd—
 So true, besides! for my own eyes have seen
 How an uneasy rebel—killed and laid
 In Navy Island could no quiet find
 Even in his grave. No rest had Beebe's bones;
 Oft as men buried them and beat them down,
 Earth cast them up again! Year after year
 His bleached disjointed frame next morning lay
 Upon the grass beside his open grave,
 Which seemed not dug, but scratched by demon claws,
 As if the great arch rebel Lucifer
 Had claimed his own—A weird, uncanny tale!
 Beyond the wit of any to explain!*

'The tale of Beebe's bones is all too grim
 For you, dear May! although you are, I know,
 Courageous as your mother—who, that night
 Of battle round the hill of Lundy's Lane,
 Passed through our ranks, amid the lines of fire,
 And carried water to our thirsty men,
 Who drank to victory—and won it then!
 Canadian women loyal, tender, true,
 In all the charities of life, possessed
 A man's heart for their country in those days,
 As you have in your bosom now, dear May!'

'Praise not my courage, uncle! lest it fail!
 She laughing said—'I feel it failing now!
 My man's heart is a woman's after all!
 A tale of peaceful life and happy love—
 Or love unhappy, so it end in bliss—
 Prefer I to the records of grim war:
 Such I will choose, and such will read, if you,
 My dear companions, round this witness-stone
 Will listen patiently—for it is true

* Beebe, a 'sympathiser,' killed in the bombardment of Navy Island, 1837.
 In 1846, nine years after the occurrence, the writer, with a friend still living, visited Navy Island, then densely wooded and uninhabited. Curiosity led us to the south-east corner of the island to see the grave of Beebe. We found it open, and his bones lying beside it on the ground, as described.

As poetry for ever is—more true
 Than hard, 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's in your heart I think, and you
 Who love him, and have caught his spirit well,
 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.'
 —COMUS.

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—

Beheld the sun shorn of his beams. His face
 Ruddy with festal joys, as of new wine ;
 For all things ripened now : The wild grapes hung
 In purple clusters. Acorns uncupped fell,
 With mast of beech upon the leafy ground—
 While far as eye could see, the maples blazed,
 Like distant camp-fires in the piny woods,
 Breaking the solemn gloom of evergreen
 With touch of light and warmth. The glassy lake
 Dotted with rocky islets overgrown
 With mimic forests—each a fairy land
 And empire of itself for Fancy's dreams
 Held in its bays—the vast migrating flocks
 Of wild geese, swans and mallards, with a clash
 Of wings and trumpeting. High up the stream
 In solitary pools, the beavers worked
 With quiet industry—and one for all
 And all for one—improving lessons gave
 To selfish man, to teach him how to live !

This afternoon two sisters—lovely both,
 Each lovelier than the other—people said,
 As rose or lily was preferred—so they—
 Unlike in aspect, as a ray of light
 Upon a diamond's facets in the sun,
 Reflected variously is still the same—
 Sat on a fallen tree—one with a book
 Upon her lap, one busy with the threads
 Of varicoloured wool, half work, half play
 Conversing, reading, musing, as it chanced.
 Their language soft as summer brooks that slide
 O'er mossy stones was interrupted oft
 With breaks and sweet elisions, that made
 Unspoken words more clear than utterance.

Their quiet lives amid the woods to-day,
 With some unusual news had been aroused—
 Next Sunday was to bring to Balsam Lake,
 A Sabbath such as never had been seen
 In these new settlements ; for word had come
 To good John Ashby, and, retold, had passed
 From house to house throughout the wilderness—
 Leagues inward, where the woodman rested on
 His polished axe, or ran the ploughman in
 To tell his good wife, overjoyed, the news :
 A godly missionary come from home,
 Yea—from their very country side—their own
 Old pastor, would before next Sunday be
 At Balsam Lake, with services that day !
 And for the first time in this wilderness,
 Set out the holy table of the Lord,
 For blest communion of the Sacrament,
 In memory of Him who died for all !

For good John Ashby, while he never missed
 In rain or shine, or heat or cold, to read
 God's word with prayers upon the Sabbath day,
 To all his neighbours, who to worship came—
 Nor hesitated, in the need there was,
 To christen babes, born in their forest homes,
 Into God's kingdom, there as everywhere ;

And as a magistrate, for good of peace
 And people's quiet rule and government,
 Commissioned by the broad seal of the king,
 Would marry all who came with good intent,
 And lawful hands to be in wedlock joined ;
 Yea—earth to earth and dust to dust—interred
 In graves of peace beneath the solemn pines,
 Such as fell by the way and died—no shrine
 Of holiest repute in Eastern lands,
 Glowing in sunshine by the lofty palms
 That cut the clear blue sky, was nearer heaven
 Than those green graves beside the Balsam Lake,
 Yet—moved by scruples—over-nice may be,
 As fearing to transcend what use forbade ;
 Not Christ expressly—and as if unsure
 Of all the depth and meaning of this gift
 Of love divine left in the Sacrament,
 John Ashby ventured not to break the bread,
 Or give the testamental cup, in those
 Pure elements, that represent the sum
 Of all God's grace—past, present, and to come.

'Great is the mystery of godliness !'
 Not less than chiefest of Apostles said,
 Unfathomable as the reach of space,
 Than man's most searching plummet deeper ; yet,
 However deep the eternal mystery,
 Upon its waters floats the ark of life—
 The Word divine. Amid the winds and wash
 Of angry waves, we hear the Saviour's voice,
 Say, 'Peace be Still ! O fear not, it is I !'
 'Do this in my remembrance !' Blessed words !
 Enough to save the world, if but believed.

Eve Ashby held her sister's hands, and sat
 With far off-look and parted lips, intent
 To catch a haunting sound from memory's depths
 That floated up, and in her startled ears
 Renewed the music of the by-gone years.
 'O, listen Hilda ! Hear you not,' cried she,
 With lifted hand that touched her startled ear ;
 That old familiar chime float in the air !
 The bells of Kirby Wiske are ringing—ringing—
 Have in my ears all day been ringing low
 Their triple cadence as on Sunday morns
 It came across the meadows, where the thrush
 Sang in the hazels and the sky-lark rose
 Above us in mid air, as we passed on,
 Or stood upon the bridge to watch the fishes
 With their own shadows playing in the brook—
 Across the corn-fields, where the beaten foot-path
 Cut by the stiles, led to the distant village
 Where stands our ancient church, gray with the ages,
 That in the nook of its old massive tower,
 As loving as a mother holds her children,
 Keeps safe the graves of all our kith and kin ;
 The solemn bells above them chiming sweetly—
 Ever repeating till the judgment day :
 "Blest are those servants whom the Lord finds watching
 When He shall come !" His servants ! blest are they !

Eve Ashby, after silence for a moment,
Embraced her sister fondly, and went on,
'Twas always said, you know, my darling Hilda
To hear those bells in dreams or fantasy,
Was certain sign that God was calling in
Some weary soul to rest from earthly labour,
As they to-day are haply calling me !'

A light of joy flashed up, and then she paled
To see her sister tremble, full of anguish,
For Hilda too believed the legend hoar
Told of the bells of Kirby Wiske,—Whoever
Heard them, in dreams or reverie, knew well
That God required the soul for whom they rang.

Eve Ashby, pure of mind as fair of face—
In each you saw the other—long had given
Her soul to God, and loved of all things else
Communion with His spirit by His Word,
Which in her quickened every power beside.
Her father's wisdom, culled in many lands,
In war and peace, converse with men and things
With ripe experience of a varied life,
Was the rich heritage she made her own ;
She read her father's books—the choicest lore
Of past and present—loved on them to pore,
Extracting gold whatever in them was.
From his wise conversation learned to sift
Truth's wheat from chaff, and garnered in her mind
A thousand things she loved to hear and know.
She learned how grand was England's heritage
Of minds immortal—from the nation's dawn—
When Caedmon, in his dreams, preluded first
In English tongue, up in the Angle-land—
Our earlier Milton—not unworthy him,
Who after came with thunderous harmonies,
And closed the song which Caedmon first began.
No vain romance sang he, but things divine
Of truth and righteousness, God's Word made plain
To our great, rude forefathers. Such the seed
First sown on English ground. Thank God for that !

Sang none before our Caedmon. After him
Came first a few—then more—then many, as
Unfolds the roll of centuries, until
A mighty host goes forth at last, renowned
As sages, poets, some with laurel crowned,
To all the earth's four corners, high a flood
With English speech and deeds of Englishmen,
And their true lineage here and everywhere,
That, when the world's great Babel crumbles down,
Their's may remain at last the only tongue !

The sun was setting slowly in a blaze
That filled the valley of the Balsam Lake,
Whose undulating shores were melted in
The bright effulgence of the western sky.
The sisters sat—Eve, eldest of the twain,
Bright chestnut-haired, with eyes cerulean blue,
Clear as the sky of Asgard—tall and lithe
With features sculptured by a master-hand,

Straight as Iduna's, who with apples fed
The Eddic gods of her ancestral race.

She spake to Hilda smilingly, whose eyes
Still wet with tears, tried vainly to respond
To Eve's unwonted ecstasy—to her
The culmination of the dread of years,
To Eve a hope more bright than any fears.
She drew her sister's face to hers, and said :
' My Hilda ! There is cause for joy to-day,
Our frequent prayers are answered in these wilds
Of woods, and waters little known to man,
But dear and near as Paradise to God.
On Sunday all our people, far and near,
Will come to meet our Pastor, and receive
From his good hands the supper of the Lord.
Here hungering for the precious bread of heaven,
We long have prayed to see Christ's messenger,
Ordained and sent and clothed for righteousness,
Like to the Saints, in linen fine and white,
Who follow Him, whose name is "Word of God."'
More had she said, but touched by Hilda's tears,
Was silent, and she heard the chime renewed
More near and clear of those forewarning bells,
That never lied to God or man, in all
The centuries they rang for quick and dead,
Up in the hoary tower, whose shadow falls
Of summer mornings on the graves she loved—
Her mother's, flush with fairest flowers of spring,
And many a hillock with its mossy stone,
Of kindred dead, laid with their kindred dust,
With one who might have been more near than all,
Whose grave her feet had left, but not her heart,
For there reposed her life's abiding trust.

That old gray church, built when Plantagenets ruled
Our England with a kingly hand, o'erlooked
The broad, flat meadows and the gentle stream
Not wider than a girl can throw a stone.
Where stood the village butts of olden time,
And sturdy yeomen learned to draw the bow
Of Cressy, Agincourt and Flodden field,
In those brave days when battles had no smoke,
And men their foes encountered eye to eye.
There, Roger Ascham, stout of arm and brain,*
Archer and scholar, learned in every lore,
Taught men to shoot, to think, and speak the truth
With wit and wisdom, as he nobly trained
The regal mind of great Elizabeth.

Or later, by a century and more,
One lived in this old Danelagh by the Wiske,
Who felt, he scarce knew why, the Viking blood
Stir in him, till his learned, laborious hand
Restored to English letters—almost lost,
The heirlooms of our race—the ancient tongue
Of Woden, and the Eddas once our own.
Brave, loyal, godly Hickee, without a See,†

* The learned and famous Roger Ascham was a native of Kirby Wiske. A fine memori window was, a few years ago, placed in the church to commemorate that distinguished schola

† George Hickee, D.D., Dean of Worcester, and suffragan Bishop of Thetford. A distinguished non-juror, deprived for refusing the oath of allegiance to William III. He was born in

A bishop rich in conscience as in lore ;
 In spirit poor to God, but not to man,
 Remains without a stone or carved line
 In those old walls he loved, which honouring him
 Would have an equal honour done themselves.

And he who these old faded leaves transcribes
 Will add what surely had been writ therein
 By our dead poet, had he lived to see
 That monumental marble raised to one
 Of England's dead who fell at Isandule
 Far from his happy home and native seat—
 *Pulleine, who when the hosts of savage foes
 Surrounded him, nor hope of life remained,
 Bade two take horse and save the colours, quick !
 Who saved the honoured flags, but not their lives !—
 While he turned calmly to his men, and spake :
 ' Men here we stand—and here we fight it out
 Unto the end ! '—and he and all of them,
 True English hearts ! together closed their ranks,
 And died upon the field they could not win !
 The Christian soldier, on the arid plains
 Of Africa, had heard the solemn bells
 Of Kirby Wiske ring on that fatal day !

Eve rose in haste, ' Come, Hilda ! ' cried she, ' come ! '
 Her voice was clear of flaw as is the note
 Of the glad oriole full tuned in spring.
 ' Come ! sister, come ! We must prepare the things
 Are needed for the Sabbath day, and deck
 With evergreens our upper room. It will
 Be more than filled with people come to see
 Their ancient pastor, wearing robe and stole,
 Repeat the sacred prayers, and after years
 Of spiritual fast, receive from him
 The sacrament ordained by our dear Lord.'

Rose Hilda quickly, for like Martha she,
 Housewifely to the core, and proud of it,
 Was cumbered with much serving, more than Eve,
 Who sat like Mary at her Saviour's feet,
 Pouring on them the ointment of her heart.
 Eve chose the one thing needful—that good part,
 Which none could take away—the love that lives
 For ever happy in the Master's eye,
 And does His bidding without asking : Why ?

But ever Eve was conscious of the bells
 That rang forewarningly—and she was glad

the parish of Kirby Wiske, 1642; died 1715. His great work on the old Northern languages, entitled '*Theaurus Grammaticus et Archeologicus linguarum veterum septentrionalium*,' restored to England the knowledge and study of the Danish and Anglo-Saxon foundations of our language.

* At the massacre of Isandula, 22nd of January, 1879, Colonel Pulleine, of the 24th Regiment, being completely enveloped by the main army of the Zulus—with his ammunition exhausted and no hope left of saving the lives of himself and his men—bade Lieutenants Melville and Coghill mount and save the colours. These two gallant officers fought their way through. They saved the colours, but both perished in the struggle. Colonel Pulleine then turned to his men with the following speech:—'Men of the 1st 24th! We are here! and here we stand to fight it out to the end!' They all fell fighting to the last man. Colonel Pulleine was the eldest son of the late, and brother of the present rector of Kirby Wiske, where a monument has been erected to his memory.

And whispered under breath, ' His will be done !
 My Lord is calling me to enter in
 His kingdom, where my heart has gone before !
 Where he awaits me, who that summer eve
 When Wiske ran rippling by our lingering feet,
 Heaven's countless stars for witness, pledged his love
 With this betrothal ring again to come,
 At Christmas tide, the gladdest yule to be
 For both of us ! which came—but never he !
 Alas ! the day ! when Swale in winter flood
 From fells and moorlands overflowed his banks,
 And buried all the fords in deluge wide,
 And he, for love of me, rode rashly in,
 To keep his word and set our wedding day.
 Ah ! me ! his lifeless body stark in death,
 His lips sealed with a smile as hard as stone,
 With open hands that seemed to say, farewell,
 Was all they brought me of my Lionel !

THE LORD'S SUPPER IN THE WILDERNESS.

Bone Pastor ! Panis vere !
 Jesu ! nostri miserere ;
 Tu nos pasce, nos tuere,
 Tu nos bona fac videre,
 In terra viventium.

Tu qui cuncta scis et vales,
 Qui nos pascis hic mortales,
 Tuos ibi commensales,
 Cohæredes et sodales,
 Fac sanctorum civium.

-- THOMAS AQUINAS.

THE Sabbath morning broke with noiseless calm
 Of light suffusing all the empyrean,
 Where unobstructed move the wheels of God
 Amid the smoothness of all harmonies—
 Foreshadow of the heaven of perfect rest,
 Where sun and moon shine not—nor need of them
 But God's own glory is the light thereof.

A silvery mist lay over Balsam Lake
 Thin and diaphanous, of soft outline,
 Like that which gathers in the vale of sleep,
 When after day of playful happiness,
 The children's drowsy heads the pillow press.
 Above the mist, the tree tops in the clear
 And rocky heads of promontories, bare,
 Or cedar-crowned, stand brightening in the sun,
 Like islands lifted from the vapoury sea.
 A breeze, fresh as Aurora's breathing, came
 Up with the morn, revealing azure spots
 Of water—like a coy maid's eyes of blue,
 That flash with sudden lifting of her veil,
 And strike you with their beauty, through and through.

The grass was overwebbed with tiny tents
 Of spidery armies, resting for the night,
 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, the Gentian blue,
 Bright golden rod, and late forget-me-nots,
 The tiniest and last—give service sweet
 When all the rest are gone—and close the year.
 Christ loves the very laggards of his flowers,
 And bids them sing in choir the requiem
 Of summer's glory in our Forest land.

To-day was sabbath—and no stroke of axe
 Resounded from the hollow woods ; no crash
 Of falling trees like thunder smote the earth,
 Waking the echoes far and near ; the smoke
 Rose noiselessly from smouldering fires, to-day
 Unfed amidst the clearings ; while afield
 The ploughman's cheery voice drove not his team
 Of patient oxen, midst the stubborn roots
 Of new burnt land, rich with the virgin soil
 Of centuries. Nor walked the sower down
 The steaming furrows, with next harvest's seed.

Deep, forest still—the silence lay on all—
 Nor heard was aught except the insects' hum,
 Or note of birds amid the yellow leaves.
 The mill wheel by the Falls, up in the glen,
 Stood idly in the brook's swift underflow.
 Nor heard was screech of saws—nor mill-stones hoarse
 Grinding the settlers' corn, for bread, well earned
 By sweat of brow, that turns the primal curse
 Of labour into blessing ; as our prayer
 For daily bread goes daily up to heaven,
 The Lord, who hears it, gives with gracious hand,
 And only bids beware of evil leaven.

John Ashby's house, broad-windowed, on the lawn,
 Stood like a tabernacle for the feast
 Of Christ's Communion. Willing hands had decked
 Its timbered walls with evergreen of fir,
 Balsam, and cedar. All without—within—
 Was purity and cleanliness—akin
 Or next to godliness—shown by the sign
 And miracle of water turned to wine.

Upon an eminence, a lofty staff,
 Tall as the highest tree, redoubled, stood
 Bearing a flag, red cross on field of white—
 Our nation's symbol—emblem of her great
 Wide Christian empire—first in war and peace.
 Not as in battle, streaming mid the smoke
 And roar of victory over sinking ships,
 Or in the van of charging armies borne,
 Flew it to-day ; but like a dove of peace
 With silver wings crossed with the blood of Christ ;
 Most like the symbol was in heaven seen
 By Constantine, that famous day, in which
 He conquered—*In Hoc Signo*—meaning that
 By righteousness alone do nations stand.
 No other sword but that of justice ever

At last prevails on earth—it is the law
 God gives the nations—breaking it they fall !
 Not to the proud and godless, and unjust,
 But to the meek, is earth's inheritance.
 So England's banner flew to-day, in sign
 Of Christian empire, over Balsam Lake.

Eve's hands, and Hilda's, all things had prepared
 Were needed for the Supper of the Lord—
 Wine, bread, and linen finest of their store,
 White as new fallen snow,—as conscience clear
 Which God has cleansed. The table of the Lord
 Was in an upper room, like that which he
 Who bore the water pitcher, showed the men
 Were sent to make all ready for the feast.
 That upper room in good John Ashby's house
 Was set apart for worship, and to teach
 The children of the settlement—by Eve,
 Who daily taught them—mingled with a few
 Red children of the forest drawn by love
 Of her sweet charity, all things required
 For use and ornament of simple lives.
 She taught and trained them to be just and true
 In word and thought and act—to let the law
 Of God's Commandments be their rule of life,
 Whose golden rule of love to God and man
 Is core of all religion worth the name.
 Man's education, lacking these, is naught.
 However rich in science, and in lore,
 His knowledge boast itself, his swollen vein
 Is heart destroying while it gluts the brain.

The people gathered in by families
 From their sparse settlements from far and near—
 Filled with a glad expectance—such as men
 Who hear of hidden treasure—eagerly
 Search after it, and with rejoicing find.
 By land and water came they—some on foot
 Through forests trackless, but for blazened trees
 Marked by the woodman's axe to show the way ;
 Some in their boats came coasting up the lake,
 With flash of oars, or sails that noiseless crept
 Upon the glassy water. Some had crossed
 The gloomy cedar swamps by narrow roads
 Walled in with densest thickets, bridged with logs
 Across the pools, and thickly overlaid
 With matted boughs, amid these unkempt woods,
 The first rude tracing of a King's highway—
 Fit for a royal progress by and by !
 The "*trimoda necessitas*" of yore,
 Roads, bridges, and the land's defence, restore
 In these wild woods, the primal duties laid
 By common law upon the Anglian race,
 When over sea from Scania's belts and fords,
 They came to settle in their English shires—
 As now now their far descended progeny
 Spread out in this Dominion of the West.

The people gathered in before the sun's
 Grand dial in the heaven pointed noon.
 Hilda and Eve with hospitable care,

Provided rest, refreshment for them all,
 Who met the aged servant of the Lord,
 With greetings fervent, as when children see
 A long-missed father, at the door, returned
 From years of absence in a distant land !

He stood amidst them—greeted on all sides
 And greeting them in turn—with grasp of hands,
 And endless questions—asked and answered, full
 Of Old World memories, and things all new
 To him and them, imparted mutually.
 His age and silvery locks reminded all
 How deep the love of their old pastor was,
 Which drew him over sea to minister
 To their dear souls again—that none be lost
 Of all whom he, as children, had baptized.
 Their joy was great, but not tumultuous,
 For they were men of native mood austere,
 Who wore not on their sleeves their hearts for show
 Or weakness ; such the temper of their race.
 Men and their wives had trudged for many a mile
 Unweariedly. Some of them in their arms
 Their little children carried—to behold
 The first time in their lives, oft spoken of,
 But never seen, God's minister attired
 In seemly gown and stole, reading the prayers
 From that old rhythmic book that's half divine --
 God's word its texture—in our mother tongue,
 As Tyndal wrote it ; Cranmer, Latimer,
 And Ridley, died for it—and in the flames
 Of martyrdom, that glorious candle lit
 Which, by God's grace, shall never be put out
 In England to the very end of time.*

The upper room with worshippers was filled,
 Range after range by families they sat
 In their best raiment, neat and kept with care
 For church and holiday. A ribbon, ring,
 The chief adornment of the comely wives,
 Whose native bloom craved no factitious help,
 For they were pure in race, of that old stock
 Of Angles, fair as angels—which the world
 Wins by its beauty—as its men by power.
 Their pretty children, rosy, flaxen-haired,
 Clustered about them, of all ornaments
 Most beauteous were and best ; the husbands grave
 In their demeanour, sat like men intent
 Upon the serious business of their lives.
 They spoke in whispers only, as their eyes
 Turned reverently towards the table spread
 With snowy linen—where the cup and dish
 Of silver, heirlooms of John Ashby's house,
 Stood with the elements of bread and wine,
 The sacred symbols of the mystery
 Of Christ's Communion of His flesh and blood,
 As they rose glorified and made divine :
 His all-redeeming love that fills the heart,

* 'Be of good courage, Master Ridley, and play the man ! We shall to-day light such a candle in England, as, by God's Grace, shall never be put out !' These words of brave old Latimer to his fellow-martyr at the stake, were the mightiest, in all their results, of any ever spoken in England.

His truth in faith to those who holily,
In His remembrance, eat and drink the same.

A sunbeam through the open window shed
A glorious radiance round the cup and dish
Of burnished silver, till they shone like stars—
A revelation of the Holy Grail.
The very dullest apprehended that
To-day was heaven come to them quite near.
The table made a chancel where it stood,
In that plain upper room, so unadorned
With carved or cunning work, and east or north—
No matter how it stood—for everywhere
The Lord is eastward to His worshippers
However they may face—hears and forgives !
Wide is the earth—but heaven is wider still
And God the Omnipresent is round all.

The aged minister stood up, and all
Rose with him—as he read the primal law
Of our salvation and God's mercy. ' When
The wicked man turns from his wickedness
That he hath done, and doeth what is right
And lawful, he shall save his soul alive.

The spiritual look—the loving voice, the tall
And saintly presence, grey and full of years
And holiness—the very dress grown strange,
Once so familiar—and the gracious words
Of unforgotten harmony—awoke
A thousand memories intensified
Of home and kindred in their native land.
The lips of strong men quivered—women wept
For very gladness, at the gracious words
Of their old pastor in these distant wilds,
Where they had come to rear their virtuous homes
Of peace and industry. The services
Went on in rhythmic words and prayers that meet
The primal needs of every human soul.
God's word was read, with liturgy and psalms,
Devoutly said or sung with harmony
Of men's and women's voices. Over all
Eve Ashby's, like an angel's, quiring rose
Above the organ's notes, and died away
In heaven's portals, where her heart to-day
Went with her song ; such joy her bosom filled
That even Hilda failed to comprehend.

Ended the prayers appointed. Each one sat
Still as a stone, expectant of the text
And sermon, which, in homiletic wise,
Not long but weighty—heated to a glow
Of ardent love, with gems of wisdom set,
That score the heart and memory, they knew
Would follow. For it was their pastor's way,
And always had been on Communion day.

' My children ! ' cried he—with appealing hands
Outstretched in fervour, after many things
Of godly exposition of his text—
' " Do this in my remembrance ! " children whom

My hands have held before the font, and signed
 With the baptismal cross—to make you His
 By covenant of water's cleansing sign—
 Do this in His remembrance—all of you !
 The rich and poor—the simple and the wise—
 We all are equally in sight of God
 Heirs of his promises—and poor alike,
 Save as He gives us gifts of His own grace—
 And pardon for our sins, if we repent,
 And make his golden rule of life our law !
 He whom no temple built with earthly hands,
 Whom not the heaven of heavens can contain,
 Is in the fulness of His Godhead, Power,
 And whole Redemption, in this holy Act,
 Through which we know Him ; as upon the day
 When He arose victorious over death—
 The two of Emmaus, and He the third,
 Together journeyed, and the two knew not
 The Lord of Life—until He entered in
 Their lowly home—constrained to sup with them,
 And, in the breaking of the bread, Himself
 Made known, and vanished from their raptured sight.

And so, my children ! when in low estate
 Your eyes are holden, and your hearts grow cold—
 False lights delude and faith begins to wane,
 Remember then, those brighter moments, that
 By certainty of faith, in hope and love,
 In breaking of the bread, you saw the Lord !
 Although He vanish for a little while—
 Yet in a little while again you see
 More near and clear—and your weak hearts will grow
 Strong in their sole dependence on the Lord.'

His words sank in their hearts, as April snow
 Melts softly in the earth's warm bosom, when
 The flambent sun ascends the vernal sky.
 Austerely then repeated he, aloud,
 The Ten Commandments, one by one, which God
 Once spake on Sinai, and with finger wrote
 On tables twain—as now on consciences.
 And all the people answered with a prayer
 For mercy—and the writing of these laws
 Upon their hearts- to keep them evermore.

The solemn rite went on in ancient wise—
 The bread was sanctified to holy use,
 And broken in remembrance of the Lord.
 The cup was blessed in thankfulness, that He,
 Who shed His blood of this New Testament,
 Has shed it for redemption of us all.
 Then reverently their pastor gave the food
 That feeds the soul, and in the act they knew
 That Christ dwelt in their hearts, and sanctified
 Their lives henceforth to live for Him alone.

A silence, only broken by the voice
 Of their old pastor, held their souls in awe,
 As if in presences unseen, of powers
 Communing with them in the sacred rite.
 But while all felt the influence, none beheld,

Save Eve, the vision of angelic forms
 In shining raiment—beauteous, yet diverse—
 Revealed commingling with the worshippers—
 God's ministers sent out to minister
 To heirs of His salvation. Only one,
 Eve Ashby, kneeling motionless, her face
 Uplifted, with clasped hands beneath her chin,
 Beheld with opened eyes, and vision cleared,
 The inner world of life, substantial, real,
 The substance of the shadow here below,
 That lasts, when this fades out, the spirit land
 Of man's true origin and last abode—
 Around us—in us—and God's Kingdom is,
 Where are the mansions of eternal rest
 For those who love the Lord and do His will.

Pale with expectance, Eve's amazed eyes
 Beheld a flood of light pour in a stream
 From topmost heaven—and amidst it, lo!
 A golden stair, broad, slanting, easy, straight
 Went up in triple flight—and rose, and rose
 Higher in long perspective to the sky—
 Till in the effulgences of glory lost,
 It vanished mid the heights inaccessible
 To vision and to thought. Its highest flights
 Seemed rarely trod. The inmost Paradise
 Of souls snow-pure and white, that never sinned
 With knowledge—but are perfect in God's love—
 As babes who live and die in grace—receives
 But few in these last days of sinful time.

But other heavens open—glorious—vast
 And comprehensive as the universe
 Of stars that fill immensity. In these
 Broad table lands and continents of light,
 For ever dwell the souls purged clean of sin,
 The Lord's redeemed from every nation, tongue
 And people under heaven, where each one
 According to his works done in the flesh,
 For sake of God and of His righteousness,
 Receives his just reward forever more.

The lower flight of that immortal stair
 Of golden steps that lead to heaven's abodes,
 Where each one finds the path leads to his own,
 Was thronged to-day with angels, in bright robes
 Of all celestial hues, with flowing hair
 Oft diademed, and sandalled feet, that seemed
 To glow with the good tidings that they bore.
 Red, blue or golden, was their rich attire,
 While some were dressed in white with crimson fringed,
 Saints these from bloody tribulations come,
 And martyrdoms—who died for sake of Christ.

A waft of air came with them, cool and pure
 As wind on mountain tops, that filled the room
 And every heart with breath of holiness,
 Till all perceived and felt, they knew not how,
 In touch with heaven, brought near to them to-day
 Eve still knelt motionless, and Hilda looked
 With wonder what might mean the sudden change.

Her face of marble purity had caught
 A glow as of the morning's dawning red
 When Eden's Cherubim with flaming swords
 That guard the tree of life from touch profane,
 Cleave through the east a pathway for the sun.

She still knelt motionless, with fingers clasped
 Across her heart, listening in silent joy
 To melodies of sweet celestial airs.
 The bells of Kirby Wiske ring out again
 A louder peal of silver chime and clang—
 None heard them else—for her alone they rang.
 She listened eagerly, but made no sign
 Save by the spirit. Then her vision cleared
 Still more and more, till she an angel saw
 In sapphire robe and golden sandals, dressed,
 With flowing hair that heavenly odours shed—
 A shining one, in youth's eternal bloom,
 Who swiftly came and knelt down by her side
 In the Communion. In his perfect hand,
 Snow-white with all good works, he held a wreath
 Of blooming roses fresh, and wet with dew
 Of Paradise upon them, which he placed
 With loving reverence on her head—nor knew
 She yet the radiant youth's immortal guise.
 Her eyes were dazzled, and she had forgot
 That spiritual life grows never old,
 But younger ever in th' eternal home ;
 Where time is not—nor age—where only love
 And wisdom fill the soul, and beautify
 With infinite diversity of charm ;
 And those grow loveliest who longest love.

He knelt beside her, glorious in form
 And beauty, bright with new-born happiness—
 For he was one, had found celestial joys
 Unsatisfying, lacking his betrothed—
 And counted time, by hours unused in heaven,
 Till she should come. Eve, lost in ecstasy,
 Knelt breathless at the vision, wondering
 What it might mean, and still she knew him not,
 Until the aged pastor bade her take
 And eat Christ's body in the Sacrament.
 The angel's hand touched her's upon the dish,
 And by the broken bread was instant known !

The veil of mist that held her eyes was rent
 As by a lightning flash, and Eve beheld
 The loving face of her own Lionel !
 Out of the depths of heaven he came, to fetch
 His bride long waiting, and she heard his voice,
 In words—no longer fancy—calling her :
 ' Rise up, my love ! My fair one. Come away !
 The flowers appear—the singing time of birds
 Is come—the turtle's voice is in the land—
 Heaven's gates of pearl to-day will open wide
 For thee to enter in—my love ! my bride !'

At that dear voice she stood in spirit up,
 And gave her hand with perfect faith and trust
 To go with him wherever he would lead.

Again the bells of Kirby Wiske rang clear
 Their aerial chime—and nearer than before—
 A joyous peal as on a marriage morn.

Transfigured, purified, set free from bonds
 Of earthly life, Eve, robed in blue and white,
 Stood saintliest among the shining throng,
 With one light foot upon the golden stair
 Prepared to go with him who held her hand ;
 Yet looking back, with pity for the grief
 Of her dear father, who her lifeless form
 Held in his arms—of Hilda's anguish, seen
 In tears, and cries and kisses of despair,
 As she clung to the prostrate knees, once Eve's,
 But her's no longer—in the evermore.
 Confusion reigned in all that upper room—
 With women's cries—until the pastor's voice,
 In loving sympathy and power divine,
 Invoked a blessing on the blessed one,
 Thrice blessed in dying with the Sacrament
 Of Christ upon her lips. A dove flew in
 The open window—and a moment sat
 Upon the table—as Eve waved adieu—
 And hand in hand with Lionel went up
 The golden stair, and vanished into light !

Above them shone a star, that led the way—
 Like that, the wise men led to Bethlehem,
 While troops of shining ones in waving robes—
 Before—behind—with harps and clarions
 Attended them, and sounded jubilees
 Of silver trumpets till the heavens rang—
 Chanting the angels' song—when Christ was born
 ' *Gloria in Excelsis Deo !* ' with
 Fresh songs of inspiration always new,
 In heavenly speech, which all the angels know ;
 Not learned by painful iterance, as men
 On earth acquire their mother tongue, but known
 Through breathings of the Spirit—as with fire
 Of Pentecost—all knew, and spake as one,
 The tongues which all in heaven understand,
 Which Paul once heard in vision, when caught up,
 In words unlawful for a man to utter.

L'ENVOY.

May closed the book. A mist was in her eyes,
 As when one, breathing on a mirror, dims
 Its brightness for a moment ; while her voice,
 Respondent to her mood, was full of ruth,
 That verged on wishing for a gracious death
 Like Eve's, who fell at her Redeemer's feet
 Crowned with the roses bloomed in Paradise.

' I knew,' she said, ' how that sweet story closed,
 And never thought it sad !—To be beloved,
 Betrothed and waited for—to leave the earth
 Claspng the hand of one we love supreme,
 Were life not death ! O ! to have waited long
 For one in heaven, to find him when we die !

As I have learned from this o'd book of truth,
Quite sure of this, one would not care to live !'

'Why May ! you are too wise by half to-day !'
Exclaimed old Clifford, smiling. 'So much love,
In one who never had a lover ! Nay !—
Blush not—nor be offended with me—What !—
"It is not so ? and many love you ?" Well !
I only jested. Sooth ! It is that book
Of our dead poet makes you wish that he
Were waiting for you—for no other swain
Like him, will ever touch your heart and brain !'

May pouted for a moment—blushing red
As salvia, to her temples—when she heard
Her secret fancies so turned inside out
By her rough uncle, whom she pardoned still
For truth of what he said. Yet woman-like
To show the contrary, and give him choice
To judge her either way, she answered not,
But pressed the book more closely to her breasts,
And then began to sing in wilful mood
A ballad gay, that drew the Chorus up
To join in the refrain—the music too
Refreshed by rest and mugs of ale, struck in,
And every thought of sadness brushed away
Like dust,—and so sped on the holiday.

