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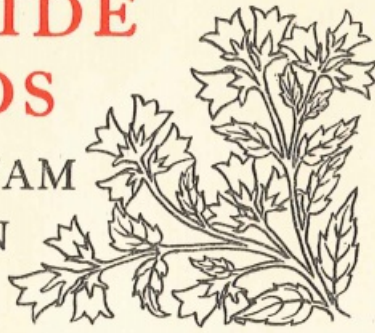
WAYSIDE WEEDS



W. H. Ellis
Emery Walker Ph.sc.

**WAYSIDE
WEEDS**

BY WILLIAM
HODGSON
ELLIS



TORONTO : PUBLISHED BY
J. M. DENT & SONS LTD.

MCMXIV

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NOTE

The verses in this volume have been collected by a few of Dr. Ellis's friends, and in this form are presented to him by them as a New Year's gift

1 January, 1914

INTRODUCTION

BY
MAURICE HUTTON, LL.D.,
Principal of University College, Toronto

W. H. E.

[There is a Heav'n](#): at least on earth below:
[It is where scholars read and thinkers brood](#):
For [crowns and halos](#) volumes in a row
For angels' wings it has its [gown and hood](#).

In that seraphic choir see Ellis sit!
With that Elys-ian light his numbers glow:
The scholar's seriousness, the scholar's wit,
[Twin spirits](#) in alternate ebb and flow.^[1]

Studious and silent he has read life's page,
Scholar and chemist [he sees part and whole](#);
Teaching and thought let loose his [noble rage](#)
And [stir the genial current](#) of his soul.

His [golden rod](#) absorbs our meaner staves
As Aaron's rod the rods of Phara-oh,^[2]
Or as New Brunswick's river-name outbraves
The [pious Jordan](#) of Ontario.

His May-blossoms relieve our [strenuous May](#),
Our evening smoke curls bluer as we read,
The earliest pipe of half-awakened day
Draws a new fragrance from his choicer weed.

His artless puff-balls have a tale to tell,
His Flora opens treasures new and old,
His [way-side weeds](#) have been our asphodel^[3]
His "dandy lines" become our "harmless gold."^[4]

^[1] Plato (sixth letter—323 c.) speaks of Elysian or Ellis-i-an scholars "Swearing with scholarly seriousness and with that playfulness which is seriousness' twin sister." Thompson's *Gorgias*, 41.

^[2] See "[Weed](#)," p. 37.

^[3] See "[Weed](#)," p. 43.

^[4] See Lowell on "Dandelions":—

"Fringing the dusty road with harmless gold."

SOME ELUCIDATIONS OF THE INTRODUCTION BY THE EDITORS

Lines

1. So also,

“ . . . amidst the fairest flowers
Of the blest isles, Elysium’s blooming bowers.”

Greek inscription on a marble at Rome. Neaves, *Greek Anthology, Edin.*, 1874, p. 62 (“blooming,” vulgarism, meaning weedy.)

2. Cf. *Ezekiel*, xxxvii. 1, 2.

3. Academic “crowns and halos” (cf. Seneca, *Naturales Questiones*, 1, 2, 1 and 3) must needs, for obvious reasons, be made of paper. Notice also the subtle suggestion that Dr. Ellis is *laurea donandus Apollinari*, worthy of the laurel (crown) of Apollo. (Horace, *Carminum*, iv. 2, 9.)

4. Why should “the gown and hood” be required “for angels’ wings”? To clothe them withal, of course. The draping of angels with wings and the attachment of wings to the structure of the back of the human figure have presented problems to artists in all ages. The best solution is undoubtedly to cover up the wings, and the gown with its hood is the only appropriate garment. (Cf. Carpenter, Edward, “Angels’ Wings,” . . . London, 1898, pp. 25-40, in which the anatomical and sartorial difficulties are fully discussed.)

8. Principal Hutton and Dr. Ellis present the phenomenon of ὁμοβλαστής sprouting (or swearing) together. Cf. Theophrastus, “On the Causes of Plants,” v, 5, 4.

10. In other words, Dr. Ellis is at once πολῦπαίπαλος, exceeding crafty (*i.e.* master of many crafts, including angling). Cf. Homer, *Odyssey*, 15, 419, 11. and πολῦπάθης, subject to many passions. Cf. Plutarch, *Moralia*, 171.

11-12. A subtle hint of ἐλάσι-βροντα, thunder hurling (cf. Pindar, *Fragments*, 108), or ἐλλίσσω βωμόν, to dance round about it (whatever it may be). Cf. Callimachus, *Del.* 321.

13. Clearly referring to “*praedam calamo tremente ducit*,” he draws in his prey with a rod. Martial, 4, 30, 9. Cf. *infra*, “Weed” p. 31.

16. “The pious Jordan” is evidently a bull, referring to the cult of the river-god. It reflects *tauriformis Aufidus*, the bull-formed Aufidus, the river upon which Horace was born (Horace, *Carminum*, iv. 14, 25). We also have our Afidus or Jordan, upon whose banks our own Horace lives.

17-20. An ingenious reference to the University final examinations in May, when candidates write all day and the examiner reads and smokes till dawn. Having subjected his victims to freshly devised tortures (*novo quaestiones genere distorsit* Suetonius, *Dom.* 10), he broods over their miseries and their papers—ἐλεᾶς ἀνέλεος—an owl without pity.

23-24. Or, in the language of the angler, his ἐπανθράκιδες have been our ἐπανθισμός; his weeds have given us the motive for the design on the back of this book.

J. M.
J. J. M.



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Christmas 1913

ix
Toronto

*To those good friends in whose indulgent eyes
they seemed worth collecting and preserving;
And to the beloved memory of some
who once trod with me the Highways and Byways
where they were gathered;
I offer this handful of
Wayside Weeds.*

Little White Crow (A LEGEND OF ST. ANNE)

PART I.

Little White Crow was an Algonkin,
And he lived on the Isle of Chips;
His legs were long, and his flanks were thin,
He had high cheek-bones, and a strong square chin,
Jet black was his hair, dark red was his skin,
And white were his teeth, when a joyful grin
At the sound of the war-whoop's hideous din
Parted his silent lips.

Three eagles' feathers adorned his head,

Well greased was his snaky hair;
His face was daubed with black and with red,
No trousers he wore, but fringed leggings instead,
And moccasins 'broidered with quills for thread.
Very proud was his look, very stately his tread,
And of this he was fully aware.

Little White Crow had a sharp *couteau*,
A carbine, and powder and shot:
And the scalps of the braves whom he'd sent below
Hung at his girdle, a goodly row.
He'd a med'cine bag where he was wont to stow
Charms against famine and fever and foe:
And over his shoulders he used to throw
A beaver-skin robe on occasions of show:
Oh, a very fine fellow was Little White Crow!
If you're curious to learn why they christened him so
The Indian Department might possibly know
Ask Deputy Minister Scott.

Father Le Cocq was a priest from Quebec,
Rather spindle of shank, rather scraggy of neck;
He'd a stoop in the shoulder, was yellow of skin,
With closely cut hair, and a smooth shaven chin,
He had very black eyes, and a rather red nose;
Wore shoes with steel buckles and very square toes,
A big shovel hat, a black cassock and bands,
And a rosary seldom was out of his hands.

But Loyola never, and nowhere than he
Had a loyaller or a more staunch devotee;
And none carried further the Jesuit virtue,
Viz.:—"Do as you're bid, and don't cry if it hurt you!"
Though gentle by nature and fond of his ease,
He would work like a slave his Superior to please;
He would shrink from no danger, pain, toil or disgrace,
Or would swear wrong was right until black in the face!
As wise as a serpent, as firm as a rock,
Yet as meek as a dove was good Father Le Cocq.

With bell, book and candle the priest had been sent
To Ottawa's banks, with the pious intent
To find, if he could, after diligent search,
A few stray, red sheep for the fold of the church;
And there in a cabin of poles and of bark,
He sang hymns and said masses from daylight to dark.
It happened one day that good Father Le Cocq
Had been visiting some of the lambs of his flock,
And homeward returning, his pious task done,
Was paddling along at the set of the sun.
Now a man may be virtuous, learned, austere,
In religion devout, and in morals severe,
Yet,—true as it's strange, and sad as it's true,—
Not able to manage a birch bark canoe!
So now,—at the paddle by no means a dab,—

He caught what is vulgarly known as a “crab”:
His balance he lost, the canoe was upset,
And Father Le Cocq tumbled into the wet!
Poor Father Le Cocq! any chance looker-on
Would have fancied for certain, his usefulness gone.
And, indeed, the priest’s chance was uncommonly slim,
The current ran fast, not a stroke could he swim,
And he thought all was over in this world for him.
But, thanks to St. Francis, St. Anne, St. Ignatius,
Or some saintly personage equally gracious,
It happened that not fifty paces below,
Behind a big boulder sat Little White Crow.
He was fishing for trout, and I wish I could catch,
In these days of saw-mills another such batch!
The rock, as I’ve said, hid the priest from his view,
But he heard a great splash, and he saw a canoe
Float down bottom upwards, while close behind that
Swam jauntily after,—a big shovel hat.
No moment to ponder paused Little White Crow:
He sprang from the bank like a shaft from a bow;
He could swim like a mallard and dive like a loon,
But he reached the poor priest not a moment too soon;
Caught hold of his cassock and collared him fast,
Just while he was sinking the third time and last;
Then reaching the shore, dragged the poor Father out,
As you’d land a remarkably overgrown trout!

It’s needless to mention that Little White Crow
Did not know, and could not be expected to know,
Doctor Marshall Hall’s method, so justly renowned,
For restoring to life the apparently drowned;
But he worked in his own way with such a good will,
He rubbed and he chafed with such zeal and such skill
That the priest after heaving some very deep sighs,
First yawned, and then groaned, and then opened his eyes.
Little Crow’s simple means as completely succeeded,
As ever the treatment of any M.D. did.
(Where credit is due I’m determined to give it)
And the priest before long was as right as a trivet.

“My friend and preserver, you very well know,”
Thus the Father the red-skin addressed,
“That of gold and of silver I’ve none to bestow,
In return for the life that to you I must owe”;
(Here he drew a silk bag from his breast)—
“But one precious treasure I beg you’ll accept.”
(And here, overcome by emotion, he wept.)
Then he took a small object from out of the bag,
Which he carefully wiped with a small piece of rag.
A moment he tenderly gazed on it,—then
He kissed it with fervour again and again,
One last lingering look of affection,—and so
He handed it over to Little White Crow.

With stately politeness the Indian received
The treasure so prized, and at once he perceived,
(With some disappointment, to tell you the truth,)
A badly decayed, rather large, double tooth!

“In your estimation, I very much fear,”
Thus gravely the Father began,
“Devoid of all value my gift will appear;
But when you have heard me its worth will be clear:
’Tis a relic of Holy Saint Anne!
To tell half its virtues all night would require:
’Tis an excellent cure for the vapours;
’Twill heal any dropsy, no matter how dire,
Put out the last spark of Saint Anthony’s fire,
And stop all Saint Vitus’s capers!
The twinges of toothache, so hard to endure,
The quinsy, the gout and the spleen,
The scurvy, the jaundice, all these it will cure;
While to break up an ague you’ll find it more sure—
And a great deal more cheap,—than quinine.

“In short, there is nothing need cause you alarm
So long as this relic you wear;
You’ll find it indeed an infallible charm
Against every conceivable species of harm
To which poor humanity’s heir.”

He ceased, the red-skin gravely smiled,
And gravely shook his head,
And then the simple forest child
Addressed the priest in accents mild,
And this is what he said:

“My uncle thinks it’s easy to gull
Little White Crow, I ween;
Hollow and empty he deems his skull,
He fancies his wits are all gone dull,—
He’s wrong,—they’re *Al-gon-keen!*”

He grinned, and without any further delay
Put the tooth in his med’cine bag safely away,
And then with a gesture more free than polite,
Clapped the priest on the shoulder and wished him, “good night.”

PART II.

A year and a day! A year and a day!
How the days and the weeks and the months roll away!
How little we know what of joy or of sorrow lies
Before us next year—but I’ve no time to moralize.
Well, a year and a day had elapsed as I’ve stated,
Since the incidents happened I lately related.
Little White Crow and a score of his friends
To further their own individual ends

(And those of their neighbours as well, I've no doubt),
Deep loaded with furs for Quebec had set out.

They'd been rather more lucky than usual, I think,
In hunting the beaver, the bear and the mink;
And their spoils at Quebec they intended to trade
For the goods of the French, which long habit had made
If not indispensable still very handy,—
Knives, gunpowder, kettles, beads, bullets and brandy.
To keep to my story: our friends on this day
Down the river were calmly pursuing their way,
When Little White Crow in the foremost canoe
Was startled to hear a wild hullabaloo.
He sprang to his feet, and he shaded his eyes,
Then cried in a voice of alarm and surprise—
(We all use strong words when things happen to plague us),
“Oh bother it! here are those bless'd Onondagas!”
He said; and with yells of defiance the crews
Paddled quickly ashore and pulled up their canoes.

Oh! pleasant it is through the forest to stray
 In the gladsome month of June;
To list to the scream of the merry blue jay,
And the chirp of the squirrel so blithe and gay,
And the sigh of the soft south winds that play
In the top of the pine trees tall and grey
 A sweet regretful tune.

And pleasant it is o'er a forest lake
 Through the cool white mists to glide,
Ere the bright warm day is half awake,
When the trout the glassy surface break,
And the doe comes down her thirst to slake,
 With her dappled fawn by her side.

Where the loon's loud laugh rings wild and clear,
Where the black duck rears her brood;
Where the tall blue heron with mien austere,
Poised on one leg at the marge of the mere,
Muses in solitude.

Yes, sweet and fair are the forest glades,
 Where the world's rude clamours cease;
Where no harsh, workaday sound invades
The Sabbath rest of the solemn shades;
 A Paradise of peace!

But oh! it's a different thing when one knows,
That each bush is an ambush concealing one's foes;
When the sweet flowers are choked by the sulphurous breath
Of the musket whose mouth is the portal of death;
When instead of the song of the frolicsome bird,
Shots, shrieks, yells and curses alone can be heard;
Then the streamlet's sweet tinkle seems changed to a knell,
And the forest's deep gloom to the blackness of hell!

Little White Crow, at the close of the day,
With a handful of comrades was standing at bay;
Things had gone with them badly, they were but a score
And the enemy numbered a hundred or more.
Now flushed with success and of victory sure,
The Iroquois, thinking their triumph secure,
Were preparing to deal one last finishing blow
To annihilate utterly Little White Crow!
Poor Little White Crow! though a "fisher of men,"
He hardly looked like an apostle just then;
He'd been dodging all day behind rock, bush and tree,
A cunning old fox in a scrimmage was he.
But numbers will tell in the long run, and now,
With hate in his heart and revenge on his brow,
With his knife in his teeth and his gun in his hand,
As he urged on his comrades to make one last stand,
Though his bullets were spent and their arrows all gone—
He looked more like Old Nick, I'm afraid, than Saint John!

[1]

Little White Crow had poured into his gun
His last charge of powder, but bullets he'd none;
He searched in his shot pouch again and again,
He begged of his comrades, but begged all in vain;
Among the whole party in fact there was not
So much as one pellet of No. 6 shot.
He was just giving up the whole job in disgust
When his hand in his med'cine bag chancing to thrust,
As Fortune would have it his fingers he ran
Against the back tooth of the blessed Saint Anne!
Little White Crow gave a terrible shout,
The tooth in a trice from the bag he whipped out,
Dropped it into his musket, and yelling still louder,
He rammed it well home on the top of the powder.
But here come the foe! From rocks, bushes and trees
They start like a swarm of exasperate bees;
A capital simile that is in any case,
To describe an assault of Oneidas or Senecas:
And one, as it happens, remarkably apt in
This particular case, for the Iroquois Captain
Was a chief called Big Hornet,—a beggar to fight,
Who measured six feet and some inches in height.
'Twas he gave the signal to make the attack,
'Twas he led the rush of the bloodthirsty pack,
And 'twas he, as he charged in the front of the foe,
Attracted the notice of Little White Crow.
Little White Crow brought his gun to his shoulder,
And rested the barrel on top of a boulder,
Singled out the Big Hornet's conspicuous figure,
Drew a bead on his forehead,—and then pulled the trigger.

[1]

"Click" went the flint lock, and the musket went "bang,"
The forest around with the loud echo rang,
The gun burst to atoms, so great was the shock,
And vanished entirely, lock, barrel and stock:

While wholly uninjured, incredible though,
It seems, I acknowledge, was Little White Crow.

But the Iroquois Chief gave a horrible yell,
He threw up his arms and then backward he fell;
He sprang to his feet and fell backward again,
He rolled, and he writhed, and he wriggled with pain.
His friends gathered round him and started aghast,
At seeing a *tooth* to his nose sticking fast.

“Away,” they cried, smitten with panic, “away!
Let us fly to the distant hills!
The Devil is fighting against us to-day,
Our foemen are shedding their teeth as they say
That the porcupine sheds its quills!”

And shaking with terror away they all ran,
Big Hornet, as usual, leading the van,
While astride on his nose sat the tooth of Saint Anne!

PART III.

In the Iroquois towns very deep was the grief,
When they heard of the pitiful plight of their chief;
There wasn't a woman in all the Five Nations,
Who didn't indulge in prolonged lamentations.
They tried to relieve him, but tried all in vain,
The tenderest touch produced exquisite pain:
The med'cine men tried incantations and sorceries,
And yet, though their magic as strong as a hawser is,
The tooth wouldn't budge for the best of the lot;
The more they incanted the tighter it got.

A Dutchman from Albany came to their aid,
Who had once been a student of medicine at Leyden;
He practised in vain each resource of his trade,
And swore that the tooth by the foul fiend was made,
While its carious cavity was, so he said,
A hole for the Devil to hide in.

Big Hornet meanwhile grew haggard and grey,
With grief and chagrin he was wasting away;
His friends found their efforts all powerless to save
Their chief in his rapid descent to the grave;
There was nobody able to set the tooth free,
It clung like a little Old Man of the Sea!

It happened one day there was brought to the town
A captive French priest in a shabby black gown;
He had very black eyes and a rather red nose,
Wore shoes with steel buckles, and very square toes;
He'd a stoop in the shoulder, was yellow of skin,
And a week's growth of bristles disfigured his chin.
Alas and alack! it was Father Le Cocq;
The Iroquois wolves had both harried the flock

[1

[1

[1

And kidnapped the shepherd—now doomed to be fried as
Soon as it suited the heathen Oneidas!

Now, just as a drowning man grabs at a straw,
His aid was besought by the favourite squaw
Of the sick man—no doubt at some saint's kind suggestion
To specify which is quite out of the question.

“O Frenchman, remove the excrescence that grows
So horribly tight on the bridge of his nose,
And home to your friends you shall safely return
Instead of remaining among us to burn!”

Thus urged, the good Jesuit followed the squaw;
But oh! his bewilderment, wonder and awe,
No tongue can describe, and no pencil can paint,
When lifting his hands in amazement he saw
On the nose of the red-skin the tooth of the saint.

But Father Le Cocq wasn't long at a loss;
He made on the relic the sign of the cross,
When, wondrous to hear and amazing to tell,
The tooth from the nose incontinent fell.
And the chief, from that moment, began to get well!

My story is told. There's no more to relate.
The Iroquois sent back the Father in state;
They feasted him daily as long as he'd tarry,
Then gave him more furs than he knew how to carry,
And safe in his bosom, thrice fortunate man,
He bore the back tooth of the blessed Saint Anne!

As for Little White Crow from that day to the end
Of his life he was known as the “Frenchman's best friend”;
A friend of French missions he called himself, and he
Without any doubt was a friend of French brandy.
At the close of a well spent career the old man had a
Collection of scalps quite unequalled in Canada:
But never again did he venture to sneer
At the bones of the saints, looked they never so queer.
He often would say that his good luck began,
On the day he received the back tooth of Saint Anne;
And for all his successes he piously thanked it. He
Died full of years in the odour of sanctity.

1878.

Consider the Lilies of the Field^[5]

O weary child of toil and care,
Trembling at every cloud that lowers,
Come and behold how passing fair
Thy God hath made the flowers.

From every hillside's sunny slope,

From every forest's leafy shade
The flowers, sweet messengers of hope,
Bid thee "Be not afraid."

The windflower blooms in yonder bower
All heedless of to-morrow's storm,
Nor trembles for the coming shower
The lily's stately form.

No busy shuttle plied to deck
With sunset tints the blushing rose,
And little does the harebell reck
Of toil and all its woes.

The water-lily, pure and white,
Floats idle on the summer stream,
Seeming almost too fair and bright
For aught but Poet's dream.

The gorgeous tulip, though arrayed
In gold and gems, knows naught of care,
The violet in the mossy glade
Of labour has no share.

They toil not—yet the lily's dyes
Phœnicean fabrics far surpass,
Nor India's rarest gem out-vies
The little blue-eyed grass.

For God's own hand hath clothed the flowers
With fairy form and rainbow hue,
Hath nurtured them with summer showers
And watered them with dew.

To-day, a thousand blossoms fair,
From sunny slope and sheltered glade,
With grateful incense fill the air—
To-morrow they shall fade.

But thou shalt live when sinks in night
Yon glorious sun, and shall not He
Who hath the flowers so richly dight,
Much rather care for thee?

O, faithless murmurer, thou may'st read
A lesson in the lowly sod,
Heaven will supply thine utmost need,
Fear not, but trust in God.

1865.

[5] Awarded the prize for English verse in the University of Toronto in 1865.

“Along the oozing margins of swampy streams, where Spring seems to detach the sluggish ice from the softening mud, the Skunk Cabbage is boldly announcing nature’s revival. Handsome, vigorous and strong, richly coloured in purple, with delicate . . . markings of yellow, it rises . . . a pointed bulb-like flower, as large as a lemon. . . . Even its devoted admirers, who seek it as the earliest of all the awakening flowers, feel constrained to apologise for the odour it exhales.”—S. T. WOOD, in *The Globe*.

The soft south wind hath kissed the earth
That long a widowed bride hath been;
And she begins in tearful mirth,
To weave herself a robe of green.
The budding spray
On maples grey
Proclaims the quick approaching spring;
And brooks their new-found freedom sing.

Green is the moss in yonder glade
On cedars old that loves to grow;
And, underneath the pine tree’s shade,
The wintergreen peeps through the snow.
The fields no more
With frost are hoar;
But not a flower doth yet appear
In glade or wood or meadow sere.

The earth within her sheltering breast
The pale hepatica doth hide;
The bloodroot and wake-robin rest
In quiet slumber side by side;
The violet
Is sleeping yet;
And still the sweet spring-beauty lies
Beyond the reach of longing eyes.

But look! beside the silent stream,
Beneath the alders brown and bare,
What is it shines with purple gleam
’Mid withered leaves that moulder there?
I know thee well,
But may not tell
Thy name. Yet I rejoice to meet thee,
And from my heart, old friend, I greet thee!

The lily hangs her dainty head
To hear her charms so loudly sung;
The rose doth blush a deeper red
To know her praise on every tongue.
But no kind word
Is ever heard
Of thee: The poets all reject thee,
The vulgar scorn thee or neglect thee.

And yet I love thee. Thou dost bring
To me a thousand visions bright
Of joyous birds that soon will sing
Among the hawthorn blossoms white;
Of happy hours
’Mid dewy flowers;

The hum of bees; the silvery gleams
Of leaping trout in amber streams.

Soon as the snows of winter yield
To April sun and April floods,
Retiring from the open field
To strongholds in the thickest woods,
Then like a scout,
Dost thou peep out,
And cheerily lift up thy head
To tell the flowers the foe has fled.

[2]

O thou that comest our hearts to cheer,
The first of all the flowers of spring,
Brave herald of the opening year,
Accept the tribute that I bring,
When now once more,
The winter o'er,
Thy honest face has greeted us,
O *Symplocarpus fœtidus*!

[6]

1904.

[6] The fickle botanists have changed the generic name of the Skunk Cabbage to *Spathyema*. For reasons which will be obvious to the intelligent reader, the author prefers to retain the older designation.

[2]

The Wanderer's Song

We have left far behind us the dwellings of men,
We have traversed the forest, the lake and the fen,
From island to island like sea birds we roam,
The waves are our path, and the world is our home.
Juvallera, Juvallera, Juvallera, lera, lera!
Juvallera, Juvallera, Juvallera, lera, lera!

On the lone rugged rocks a rich table we spread,
The balsam and hemlock afford us a bed;
While the gleam of our camp fire illumines the sky,
And the murmuring pines sing a soft lullaby.
Juvallera, etc.

When the orient hues of the dawning of day
Emblazon the clouds and smile back from the bay,
We spring from our couch like the stag from his lair,
And drink in new life with the free morning air.
Juvallera, etc.

Then we launch our light bark on the silvery lake,
That dimples and breaks into smiles in our wake;
While we sweeten our toil with a tale or a song,
Or rest while the winds waft us bravely along.
Juvallera, etc.

[2]

At night when the deer to the thicket has fled,
And the scream of the night hawk is heard overhead,
We startle with laughter the wilderness dim,
Or the forests resound with our evening hymn.

Juvallera, etc.

Then Hurrah for the north, with its woods and its hills;
Hurrah for its rocks, and its lakes and its rills!
And long may its forests be lovely as now,
Untouched by the axe, and unscathed by the plow!

Juvallera, etc.

1870.

[2

The Cowdung Fly

Of all the flies that ever I see
The Cowdung Fly is the fly for me
In cloud or shine, in wet or dry
You can't find the beat of the Cowdung Fly!
So early in the morning or when the sun is sinking,
So early in the morning or any time of day.

The salmon fly shines in purple and gold
Brighter than Solomon shone of old
But give me the finest that money can buy
And I'll give it you back for the Cowdung Fly!
So early, &c.

A cute little chap is the silver trout
When the wind is still and the sun shines out!
No maiden so coy and no widow so sly
But he'll jump like a shot at the Cowdung Fly!
So early, &c.

A tough old cuss is the big black bass
It's a mighty hard job to bring him to grass
But it makes no odds how hard he may try
He can't resist the Cowdung Fly!
So early, &c.

[2

There's many a fly of old renown
Green Drake, Red Spinner and little March Brown,
Coachman, Professor, but Oh my eye!
They ain't a patch on the Cowdung Fly!
So early, &c.

There are Hackles black and Hackles white
Good by day and good by night
Hackles brown and Hackles red
But the Cowdung Fly is away ahead!
So early, &c.

There's the little black gnat when the sun shines bright

And the big white moth for the cool twilight
But of all the bugs in earth and sky
I'll bet my boots on the Cowdung Fly!
So early, &c.

Then anglers all you can't go wrong
If you've plenty of Cowdung Flies along
You never will want for fish to fry
If your book's well stocked with the Cowdung Fly!

[2

[3

Song of the Bass

Over the waters, merrily dancing,
Softly glides our light canoe,
While the phantom mirror glancing,
Shines alternate white and blue.

Chorus.

Never can tell when the bass is a-coming,
Never can tell when he's going to bite;
First thing you know your reel will be humming,
Strike him quickly and hold him tight.

Past the maples, red and yellow,
Crimson oak and purple ash—
Gosh! you've hooked a monstrous fellow!
Golly! don't you hear him splash?

Hold him lightly, reel him slowly
If you wish your fish to save;
Nothing's gained by hurry—Holy
Moses! what a jump he gave.

Lower your rod; now take the slack up—
Thank your stars you've got him yet!
Now he sticks his thorny back up—
Now you've got him in the net!

[3

In the basket, wrapped in fern, he'll
Lie in state in scaly grace;
In the pan, when we return, he'll
Find a warmer resting place.

Let him fry in crumbs and butter—
Hear the appetizing fizz!
No weak words that I could utter
Can describe how good he is.

Serve him with a slice of bacon,
Quickly to the banquet come,
And unless I'm much mistaken
Your remark will be "yum, yum!"

Never can tell when the Bass is a-comin'

Words: Drs. ELLIS & SPENCER.

Music: Adapted.

Allegro piscatore: con brio.

The musical score is written for piano in 4/4 time, featuring a treble and bass clef. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The tempo and mood are indicated as 'Allegro piscatore: con brio.' The lyrics are: 'O-ver the wa - ter mer - ri - ly danc - ing, Soft - ly glides our light ca - noe, While the phan - tom min - now glanc - ing, Shines al - ter - nate white and blue.'

[play]

Maskinongewagaming ^[7]

Would you slay the Maskinongé
In the fastness where he lurks?
Leave a card *pour prendre congé*
On the town and all its works.

Leave the tram-car's jarring jangle
For the silent bark canoe;
For the forest's leafy tangle,
Bid the dusty streets adieu.

As befits her slender tonnage,
In our tiny craft we stow
Cunningly our modest dunnage—
Shove her off, away we go!

Joy once more to grasp the paddle!

Farewell worry, doubt and gloom.
Care, who clings behind the saddle,
Finds in our canoe no room.

Off we go! The lake before us
Stretches far and stretches fair;
Forest scents are wafted o'er us;
Forest voices fill the air.

Paddling past the pebbly beaches
Where the ancient cedar grows;
Toiling in the open reaches
When the stiff nor'wester blows.

Winding down the silent river
Where the scarlet maples blaze,
And the pallid aspens quiver
Through the warm September days;

Past the oily eddies sweeping
Where the hidden boulder lies;
Down the rapid gaily leaping
Where the spray about us flies.

Poling through the gravelly shallows,
Floating 'neath the alder's shade,
Where the moose at noon-tide wallows,
And the beaver plies his trade;

Shoving through the rustling sedges,
Battling with the autumn gale;
Lifting over rocky ledges,
Sweating on the portage trail—

On we go, with steadfast faces,
Till at last with gladdened eyes,
We behold the secret places
Where the Maskinongé lies.

Shall we find him in the rushes?
Where the waterlilies grow?
Where the roaring torrent gushes?
In the foam-flecked pool below?

Fierce and cunning, bold and cruel,
Is the Maskinongé grim,
Who shall dare him to a duel?
Who shall fight and conquer him?
* * * *

Proudly with his spoil returning,
We with shouts the victor greet;
By the camp-fire brightly burning,
He shall have the warmest seat.

Is he hungry? Pile the platter;

Thirsty? Join the gay carouse;
Weary with his toil? What matter?
Heap his bed with balsam boughs.

Fill his pipe with rare Virginian,
Cheer him till the echoes ring,
Monarch of his new dominion,
Maskinongewagaming.

1904.

^[7]The place where the Maskinongé dwells. In the vulgar tongue “Lunge Lake.”

[3

Magaguadavic^[8] and *Digdeguash*

“Are not Abana and Pharpar rivers of Damascus better than all the waters of Israel?”

Let each man praise the river
That’s dearest to his heart,
The Rhine, the Guadalquivir,
The Danube or the Dart.
Let others sing the Tavy,
The Tweed, the Wye, the Lea,
Give me the Magaguadavic,
The Digdeguash for me.

Some men choose lakes for fishing—
Ceceebe or Couchiching,
Namabinagashishing,
Kenongewagaming.
I’ll take my affidavit
That what they say is bosh;
Give me the Magaguadavic,
Give me the Digdeguash!

[3

Beneath the shady willow
Cast cunningly your flies,
His wake a widening billow;
Behold the monster rise!
No dreadnought in the navy
Could make so big a splosh;
You’d hear at Magaguadavic
The trout of Digdeguash!

Behind the purple spruces
The golden sunset dies,
As each his pipe produces
And puts away his flies.
The basket’s full, the slavey
To-morrow morn shall wash
The spoils of Magaguadavic,
The loot of Digdeguash!

And when upon the table

They come to lie in state,
Hardly shall we be able
A decent grace to wait.
They need no sauce nor gravy,
For none can beat, by gosh!
The trout of Magaguadavic,
But those of Digdeguash!

[3

O restless Bay of Fundy,
O mist and fog and rain,
Hope whispers I may one day
Behold you yet again.
How gladly would I brave ye,
Nor ask a mackintosh,
To see the Magaguadavic,
To fish the Digdeguash.

Callirrhoe's fair daughters
Have fled their ancient grots;
The voice of many waters
Turns shrieking into watts.
But spare, oh! spare, I crave ye,
Amid the general squash,
The falls of Magaguadavic,
The rips of Digdeguash!

1910.

^[8] Pronounced Mackadavy.

[4

Rhona Adair

How dull these links to me!
Rhona's not there,
She whom I long to see,
Rhona Adair!
Who has a swing so true?
Who such a follow through?
Who, who can putt like you,
Rhona Adair?

Who drives her ball so far,
Far through the air
Swift as a shooting star?
Rhona Adair.
Who hits her ball so clean,
Landing, whate'er's between
Dead on the putting green?
Rhona Adair!

Whose strokes, of all who strike
With hers compare?
Who has a waggle like
Rhona Adair?

[4

Of all the girls I've seen
Playing across the green
You, Rhona, are the Queen!
Rhona Adair!

[4

The Duffer's Elegy

"Oh! put me on your waiting list
I'll be a golfer if I may
And learn the joys too long I've missed
Before I get too old to play!"

They gave him on the list a place
And year by year they let him wait,
For golfers are a long-lived race
And very seldom emigrate.

When, after many weary years,
He reached the top his sponsor said,
"The friend (excuse these natural tears)
Whom I proposed has long been dead."

And when at last in Charon's wherry,
It was the sponsor's turn to stand
His friend came down to meet the ferry
A phantom niblick in his hand.

"Welcome to Hades," thus the shade
In hollow-sounding accents spoke
Then spied a puff-ball and essayed
To loft it, but he muffed his stroke.

[4

"Permit me, pray, to be your guide
Until you've learnt your way about
Our golf course is our greatest pride
Old Colonel Bogey laid it out.

"Some people say Avernus stinks
And Acheron smells like a sewer
But Fernhill golfers like our links
They find the air so fresh and pure.

"Cocytus, Styx and Phlegethon
As hazards serve extremely well,
In this particular alone,
The Lambton links are just like Hell.

"The asphodel wants cutting sadly,
The lies are wretched, more's the pity
But everything is managed badly
By that infernal Green Committee.

"Come, lay aside your shroud and pall
And play a friendly round with me."

[4

(A Dead Sea apple was the ball,
A pinch of church-yard dust, the tee.)

He took the club of cypress wood
And smote what seemed a mighty blow,
But, though the aim was true and good
The ball remained in *statu quo*.

“Alack and well-a-day,” he cried,
“A duffer must I ever be,
A duffer I have lived and died
A duffer through Eternity.”

1905.

[4

When Potter Played

When Potter played in front of me
The other day upon the links,
The mist rolled landward from the sea
(The sleepy Caddie yawns and blinks),
We watched him waggle at the tee
And curl his body into kinks,
When Potter played in front of me
The other day upon the links.

We watched him make the divots flee
And dribble o'er the bunker's brinks,
The dewdrops sparkled on the lea,
The sun shone through the fog bank's chinks.
My partner, hopeful, said to me
“He'll lose, and let us through methinks!”
When Potter played in front of me
The other day upon the links.

The noonday sun looks down in glee
While Potter in the bunker swinks,
He plies the niblick merrily
While Caddie unto Caddie winks.
The crow on yonder tall fir tree
Looks down and caws at such high jinks,
When Potter played in front of me
The other day upon the links.

[4

The shadows fall on land and sea,
The sun to rest in splendour sinks,
And Potter crouched on hand and knee
Thinks out each putt, and thinks and thinks.
We all got home too late for tea!
My mind with grief and horror shrinks
From memory of the day when we
Played after Potter on the links.

1910.

Colonial Preference

Macgregor, always spick and span,
 Was quite the military man.
 He never walked about the town
 Arrayed in sober cap and gown,
 But blazed in scarlet, gold and steel,
 And clanked a sabre at his heel.
 He took no pride in his degree,
 In F.C.S. and F.I.C.,
 But wrote with joy akin to tears
 C.D., Canadian Engineers!
 Macgregor had been often sent
 His country's arms to represent,
 To Chatham, Woolwich, Aldershot,
 Or anywhere, it mattered not.
 He always followed, never weary,
 "Quo fas et gloria duxere."
 At length, because they thought him yearning
 To represent his Country's learning,
 Toronto Universitee,
 Knowing how ready he would be
 Alike in "bello" and in "pace,"
 Despatched him to the I.C.A.C.
 He packed his trappings Academical,
 And sailed to join the Congress Chemical,
 Which met that year in London reeky,
 To study "la chimie appliquée."
 Watching the vessel's fall and rise,
 'Twas thus he did soliloquise—
 "I may not wear my sword and spurs,
 But one glad thought my bosom stirs,
 'Tis this that I shall surely be
 Presented to His Majesty!
 It may be when he sees my face
 He will reward me with a place
 With my deserts commensurate
 The Secretary, say, of State
 For War, or give me Chief Command
 Of all his troops on sea and land!"
 Arrived in town, his journey done,
 He took a cab to Kensington,
 Sir William Ramsay, honest man,
 With kindly words to greet him ran.
 "Put on," he cried, "your cleanest shirt
 And free your hands and face from dirt,
 To-morrow you shall go with me
 To meet His Gracious Majesty!"
 When they alighted from the train
 They met the Lord High Chamberlain
 Who scanned each name with anxious care
 Lest some who ought not should be there.

[4]

[4]

“Here’s Stinkemout from Buda Pesth,
And Sneezetoff, and all the rest,
Ezra P. Binks from Idaho,
But here’s a name I do not know
‘Dr. Macgregor from Toronto,’
That’s something that I’ve not got onto!”
Sir William cried “The College where
My friend Macgregor holds a chair
Is in Toronto, Canada.”
“Ah!” said the Chamberlain, “Ahah!
I’ve heard of Canada, of course,
But that’s another coloured horse.
Your friend, to say it gives me pain,
Will have to toddle back again!
The King, the invitation states,
Receives the Foreign Delegates.
Remove this person from the list
He’s nothing but a Colonist.”
A prophet, says the Holy Book,
Must not at home for honour look,
The greater here includes the lesser,
For “Prophet” therefore read “Professor.”

1912.

[5

[5

The Lyric League ^[9]

We be seventy Lyric Poets,
All in the Fatherland,
Our verse is delightful, although its
Not easy to understand.

We’re the flower and crown of the nation,
The crown and flower of the earth,
But we find our remuneration
Inadequate to our worth.

We sing of “Sehnsucht” and “Trauer,”
“Die Liebe,” “Das Herz” and “Die Welt,”
But leider, we haven’t the power,
To sing from the public “Das Geld.”

The plumbers have their Union,
Fast joined the joiners keep,
And sweep hold dark communion,
With sooty brother sweep.

The motormen and switchmen,
The very firemen band,
Alone against the richmen,
The Poets helpless stand.

A fig for the Philistine slander,

[5

Let's cut from all precedent loose,
What's sauce for the bus-driving gander,
Is sauce for the quill-driving goose.

We'll found (because empty our purse is)
A Lyrische Dichterverein;
And we won't write any more verses,
Under 50 pfennig a line.^[10]

^[9]“Seventy lyric poets in Germany have formed a trade's union, and agreed not to sell their verses for less than half a mark a line.”—*Daily paper*.

^[10]The author encloses his name and address, not for publication, but in order that the editor may know where to send the three dollars and thirty-six cents—twenty-eight lines at twelve cents.

[5

Psychology

Dr. Jaeger has propounded the theory that the Soul is an emanation emitted by animals, and is the cause of the odour characteristic of each species. Cf. in *Lives of the Saints*, “the odour of sanctity”; also *supra*, page 17.

What's the Soul? throughout the ages
Mystery never yet unveiled
Prophets, poets, saints and sages
All have tried and all have failed.

But at last we've got an answer
No vague dream or fancy vaguer
From a scientific man—Sir
Herr Professor Dr. Jaeger.

Printed in his lucid pages
This is what he has to tell
Listen poets; listen sages;
That's the Soul that makes the smell.

Whoso takes his meat to season
Onions chopped or garlic whole
Shall enjoy a feast of reason
Followed by a flow of soul.

[5

[5

The Bal Poudre^[11]

The Reverend Canon Dumoulin
Although he don't object
To dancing in a room along
With company select
Can't tolerate the *Bal Poudre*
I am not surprised at all
For when there's powder, cannons play
The mischief with a ball.

^[11]While rector of St. James's, Toronto, the late Canon Dumoulin protested against the holding of a *bal poudre* in aid of a local charity.

Wisdom and Fancy
From the German of A. G. MARIUS.

With weary steps as Wisdom trod
 In Reason's dusty way
 Came Fancy with alluring nod
 And beckoned him astray.
 Laughing she snatched away his books,
 And charmed him with her witching looks,
 He could not say her nay.

She shook her curls with childlike grace
 And all his anger fled,
 He looked into her sunny face
 And followed where she led.

And lo! his weariness was gone
 Fresh vigour filled his soul
 She led him up, she led him on
 Till he had reached his goal.

Persicos odi
TO MY TOBACCONIST

I hate your imported Havannahs,
 Your perfumed cheroots I decline;
 His own special weakness each man has,
 A pipe, I confess it, is mine.

Why take from their elegant wrappers
 Your gilded cork-tipped cigarettes,
 Fit only for militant flappers
 Or reckless R.M.C. cadets?

What need for cigars to be pining
 When smoking a briar or a clay;
 In front of the fire I'm reclining,
 And peacefully puffing away.

The Iceberg

We stood upon the deck and saw
 Mid fog and mist the iceberg loom;
 And while we gazed in wondering awe,
 It vanished into mist and gloom.

With various skill each tried to draw
 What printed on his brain had been
 The vision that he thought he saw
 Or that he thought he should have seen.

Some drew it flat, some drew it round
And some with many a tower and steeple
And when we shewed our work we found
As many bergs as there were people!

Across each other's paths we drift
Pale shadows on a misty sea.
The clouds but for a moment lift
Then naught is left but memory.

If then at any distant day
Your thoughts should chance to turn to me
Draw me not as I am, I pray,
But as you think I ought to be.

[5

[6

Horace, Odes I. i. ^[12]

Colonel, Most worthy President,
Our Club's chief stay and ornament,
One man who drives with dust and jar
A 40 h.p. motor car,
All other mortals counts but clods,
Himself a rival of the Gods.
The fickle crowd another woos
Him for a threefold term to choose.
A third will lie awake all night
If Manitoba wheat be light.
Not Rockefeller's treasure chest
Could tempt the Farmer to invest
The savings of his life of toil
In shares of rubber or of oil.
The liner's skipper when he steers,
The foghorn booming in his ears,
Through thousand dangers all unseen,
Sighs for the peaceful village green;
Yet fog nor ice nor foundered ships
Can stop him making record trips.
Some spurn not, when their throats are dry,
Long drinks of Irish or Old Rye,
Nor scorn to blow through moistened lips
Great clouds of smoke between the sips;
Others in such things find no charms,
And when the bugle calls to arms
Would banish from the tented green
(Bugbear of matrons) the Canteen.
The hunter leaves his tender spouse
For a rude bed of hemlock boughs,
Content to bag a head or two
Of bearded moose or caribou.
But give me rather, if you please,
A score-card full of 4's and 3's.
The bunker cleared, the putt gone done,

[6

And, of all joys the flower and crown,
The well-hit tee-shot's graceful flight
When everything has gone just right!
Alas! Fate holds for me in store
No chances of a bogey score.
I must send in till I am sick
Cards that defy arithmetic;
Nay, Haply, the Etobicoke
May add to every hole a stroke,
Yet, Colonel, if your grace awards
Some place among the minor bards,
Who sing the Game to me—Ah, then,
I am the happiest of men!
If me from this no fate debars
Then my swelled head shall strike the stars.

[6

[12] Read at the Farewell Dinner at the Old Toronto Golf Club House, October 19th, 1912, Col. G. A. Sweny, the President of the Club, in the Chair.

[6

When You and I were Young [13]

When you and I were babes, Adam,
In good Prince Albert's time,
The word went forth that war should cease,
Commerce should link all lands, and Peace
Should dwell in every clime.

When you and I were boys, Adam,
In Queen Victoria's days,
Those guns that now so silent stand,
Where meet the rulers of our land,
With olive decked and bays.

Roared from the Russian ramparts grim,
Their muzzles all ablaze,
While old Todleben, with his back
Against the wall, foiled each attack
In Queen Victoria's days.

When you and I were young, Adam,
In good Victoria's time,
We stood together side by side,
When Mewburn and Mackenzie died,
And Tempest, "ere their prime."

[6

But say not "they have left no peer—"
That were unwelcome praise
To those three friends of ours long dead,
Whose blood for Fatherland was shed
In good Victoria's days.

In royal Edward's time, Adam,
Fresh prophecies were rife.
They told us nickel-pointed shot

And flat trajectories and what not
Would rid the world of strife.

But now that we are old, Adam,
We see with startled eyes
Quick-firing guns won't stop the Jap,
Nor Serb nor Bulgar cares a rap
Who wins the Nobel prize.

When you and I were young, Adam,
There were no telephones;
There was no ultramicroscope;
And no X-rays for those who grope
And pry among the bones.

But, though with diagnostic aids
They were but ill supplied,
There were a few who shrewdly guessed
(Old What's-his-name among the rest)
At what went on inside.

When you and I were young, Adam,
It was damnation stark
To doubt that all that breathe the air,
Came, male and female, pair by pair,
Straight out of Noah's ark.

"Mutantur," Adam, "tempora
Mutamur atque nos,"
And now we're not a bit afraid
To tell just how the world was made
In detail and in gross.

In pre-Archæan periods
Of elemental stress
The C and H and O and N
Collide, rebound, combine, and then
React with H₂S.

Colloidal specks from this ensued
Which grew, and grew, and grew,
With lively motion all endued,
Till they attained a magnitude
Of 0·01μ.

Then somewhere over ·01
And under ·05
Amoeboid feelers out they sent
And took some liquid nourishment
And, lo, they were alive!

In pre-Archæan periods
Let fancy have her fling,
But, Adam, will your faith allow
Such goings on can happen now

When George the Fifth is King?

Well, times may change, and we may change,
But find him when I can,
I'll drink a health to one who's stood
For all that's honest, kind and good;
So here's to you, Old Man!

1912.

^[13] Read at the Dinner given at the York Club, Toronto, November 29th, 1912, in honour of Dr. Adam H. Wright.

As a Watch in the Night^[14]

The soldier called from rest or play
To take his post as sentinel,
To guard until the break of day
Some sore-beleaguered citadel,

Springs to his arms with beating heart
To take some war-worn veteran's place,
Proud to perform a soldier's part,
Dreading what yet he dares to face.

His comrades' footsteps on his ears
Ring fainter and fainter. Silence falls
About him. Moments seem like years,
And loneliness his soul appals.

But when the signal rockets flare
He strains his eyes the void to scan;
When sounds of battle fill the air
In face of death he plays the man.

He stays where duty bids him stay,
The boldest when he fears the most;
And Rounds, come whensoever they may,
Find him alert and at his post.

Unnumbered now the moments fly
By him whose thoughts are set upon
Each moment's task. The eastern sky
Brightens with dawn. The night is gone.

And hark, at last he grows aware
Of footsteps his release that tell.
Clear rings his challenge, "Who goes there?"
"Relief!" "Advance, Relief, all's well!"

1913.

^[14] Read at the Dinner given in May, 1913, in honour of Professor van der Smissen, Professor of German in University College, Toronto, on his retirement after forty-eight years' service in the University and University College.

[6

[6

[6

To R. R. W. ^[15]

From Scotland's mists across the sea you bore
 The sacred fire, (kindled by him whose name
 Has made the century famous with his fame,
 And bid our lamp burn brighter than before.
 Upon our Tree, a branch from Scotland's shore
 You grafted, and behold our Tree became
 Wanton in leafage; with blossoms all aflame;
 Deep rooted; and with boughs to heaven that soar.

We see the better issue from the strife,
 And hope the best. In loathsome crawling things
 We feel the fluttering of jewelled wings.
 In Nature's score, with seeming discords rife,
 We seek to read, with you, the note that brings
 To harmony the jarring chords of life.

^[15] Read at the Dinner given in honour of Professor R. Ramsay Wright, Professor of Biology and Dean of the Faculty of Arts in the University of Toronto, on his retirement, May, 1912.

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 BRUNSWICK STREET, STAMFORD STREET, S.E.,
 AND BUNGAY, SUFFOLK.

[The end of *Wayside Weeds* by William Hodgson Ellis]