

"POET OF THE MIST"
A CRITICAL ESTIMATION OF THE POSITION OF
WILLIAM WILFRED CAMPBELL IN CANADIAN LITERATURE.

by

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PREFACE

I wish to acknowledge the very great assistance given to me in this work by Mrs. Faith Malloch, of Rockliffe, daughter of the late William Wilfred Campbell, who lent me her unpublished manuscript, eighty-nine pages in length, containing biographical material on the poet's life, letters back and forth between England and Canada and Scotland from Campbell, his friends and daughters, and it also contained much information about his friends and their influence upon him. I profited also by talking with Colonel Basil Campbell of Ottawa, Campbell's only son. The Right Honorable William Lyon Mackenzie King gave me other details about the poet's personality and their unique personal friendship which lasted for more than twenty years in spite of opposed political views.

Several members of the Canadian Authors' Association, of which I am a member, remembered Wilfred Campbell and knew him slightly. I especially owe a debt to William Arthur Deacon, Literary Editor of the Toronto "Globe and Mail" and Past President of the Canadian Authors' Association who encouraged me in this and previous writing, and supplied me with details of the friendship of the three Ottawa poets, Archibald Lampman, Duncan Campbell Scott and Wilfred Campbell. He also furnished information on the "Mermaid Inn" series of weekly essays written by these three poets in the 1890s for the old Toronto "Globe" and he supplied me with access to the incomplete (due to a fire in 1895) files of that paper, when I visited Toronto in January, 1950. Dr. Lorne Pierce, editor of the Ryerson Press of Toronto offered his help and Mr. T.G. Lowery, Managing Editor of the Ottawa Journal put at my disposal the microfilm records of the "Ottawa Evening Journal" covering the period

during which Campbell published his "Life and Letters" series of essays in that paper.

Finally, I wish to thank a strange assortment of friends, acquaintances and strangers, who offered me their critical advice, some of which was extremely helpful and the remainder served to strengthen my resolve to carry on in the manner which I had commenced. These people include fellow graduate students, university professors, doctors, engineers, writers, artists, accountants, clerks, librarians, reporters, radio artists, a nurse, stenographers, casual train passengers, fellow plane travellers and long-suffering but tolerant relatives, all of whom encouraged me, discouraged me, helped me and disparaged me, and generally assisted in some way in bringing this work to an arbitrary completion within the rough limitations of approximately one hundred pages. I also owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. George Buxton, my Major Professor, who answered many questions and helped me develop my attitude of treatment of my subject by his kind direction of my work.

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INTRODUCTION

The investigations and research which led to this thesis were the direct result of my wish to prove that William Wilfred Campbell was not, and never will be, merely "a minor Canadian poet" as was suggested by Dr. George Buxton, my major professor, during the course of a lecture on Canadian literature in the spring of 1949. I have tried to form an opinion of Wilfred Campbell's writing which would be entirely just and permit me, with trepidation, to set down my own critical analysis of his position in Canadian letters.

Paradoxically, I have tried to be as unprejudiced as possible in forming my prejudices with respect to Campbell's importance and my estimation of his position. A few people, whose opinion I value, have asked me frankly if I felt qualified to criticize and judge another writer. Others, like Dr. Lorne Pierce, editor of the Ryerson Press in Toronto, William Arthur Deacon, literary editor of the "Globe and Mail" in Toronto and William Lyon Mackenzie King, our former Prime Minister, and undoubtedly Campbell's closest friend during the last twenty years of the poet's life, have encouraged, advised and helped me to go ahead with my work. They have given me, as well as their good advice, their own impressions of Campbell and his work, as formed by themselves and by men they have known, as, for instance, Archibald Lampman, Duncan Campbell Scott, William Henry Drummond, Bliss Carman, Charles G.D. Roberts and many other American and British men of letters and political importance. To them I am both grateful and "beholden".

In justification of my work (which I feel could and should be expanded into a full length book) I have to offer my own conviction of the merit of Campbell's writing and of his secure place in Canadian literature.

The opinion which I present is that of a student of English and Canadian literatures but it is more than that for it is the opinion of any reader, the opinion of the man in his wing-chair by the fire, the opinion of the college student or dilettante arguing in the late hours of the night over cigarettes and coffee, the opinion of another poet and writer (for such I am and will be) and the opinion of a fellow-Canadian who has been raised to love and admire both the land and our nationhood. I do not believe that it is weakened by being the opinion, also, of a woman.

I could perhaps have marshalled more factual quotations; I could have collected letters of praise of Campbell's work; I could have emphasized his friendships with the great men of his day whose respect he always held. I could have eulogized over his lyric poetry to the exclusion or at least subordination of all his other writing. Instead, I have deliberately chosen to lay equal stress upon all the facets of his written work; his plays, novels, essays, place-writing and his poetry. I wished to form, and to influence others to form, an opinion of this man which would be considered and impartial or, if not impartial, then as definitive as possible. I wanted his work to speak for itself, all of it, the good, the bad and the indifferent. By laying out, like the pieces of a quilt, all the portions of his literary output and by setting them neatly side by side, with all their colors brilliantly revealed, I have hoped that there would emerge a complete picture of a man's work, a broad, over-all picture which would be an entity. It seemed to me that a topical division of his work might be preferred, in my thesis, to chronological exposition which would mix up poetry and prose. For this reason, these natural divisions of his work, physical in nature, have become the

physical limitations of my paper. My only regret is that it has been necessary for me to write within the limitations of a prescribed amount of space and time. The work which I have done on Wilfred Campbell is manifestedly and admittedly incomplete. I have not been conveniently able to go through his manuscripts which lie in the library of Queen's University in Kingston, along with his great amount of uncatalogued correspondence from Oliver Wendell Holmes, James Whitcombe Riley, Rudyard Kipling, Dale Carnegie, the Duke of Argyll, William Lyon Mackenzie King, Dr. William Henry Drummond and many other men whom the years have destined to be called "great". These letters should at some time be studied and their information made available through literary effort to those people in the world who would be, like myself, fascinated and interested. It seems to me that the day is not yet ripe, nor has the scholar appeared, who could justly interpret the position of Wilfred Campbell, not only in Canadian but in all English literature and in Canadian public life. He may have been a man who will yet be called "great" in a future day.

I have included, immediately following this introduction, a bibliography of Wilfred Campbell's writing which is as complete as it has been possible for me to compile, though it does omit mention of a series of articles (very brief) published about 1890 in "The Week" edited by Sir Charles G.D. Roberts either in Montreal or Toronto. I hope that this bibliography may be an asset to those who read this thesis and that they may wish to refer at times to it.

It is my hope that I have succeeded in revealing Wilfred Campbell as a man of sound literary ability and ambition and with the right to be called a "father of Canadian literature" standing equally beside his friends Lampman, Scott and Drummond. He helped to create in Canadian literature, the fields of place-writing and lyrical nature poetry.

WILLIAM WILFRED CAMPBELL (1861-1918)

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF CAMPBELL'S LITERARY OUTPUT

1. PLAYS:

- (i) Mordred, 1893, published 1908 in Poetical Tragedies
- (ii) Daulac, 1895, published 1908 in Poetical Tragedies
- (iii) Morning, 1897, published 1908 in Poetical Tragedies
- (iv) Hildebrand, 1893, published 1908 in Poetical Tragedies
- (v) The Brockenfiend, published 1896 in the Ottawa Lounger
- (vi) Prince of Mantelli or The Fatal Throw, manuscript at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario
- (vii) Sanio, the Avenger, 1895, manuscript at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario
- (viii) The Admiral's Daughter, 1895, manuscript at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario
- (ix) The Heir of Linne, 1895, manuscript at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario

2. ESSAYS:

- (i) At The Mermaid Inn, a series of essays, letters and controversial causeries published weekly on Saturdays in the Toronto Globe in 1894 by Wilfred Campbell, Archibald Lampman and Duncan Campbell Scott.
- (ii) Life and Letters, published in the Ottawa Evening Journal on Saturdays from August 22, 1903, to June 24, 1905.

3. NOVELS:

- (i) Ian of the Orcades or The Armourer of Girnigoe, published in the Gentlewoman, London, England, serially in 1897 and republished by Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, London, England, in 1906.
- (ii) Wizard of the Tongue, 1898, manuscript at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario
- (iii) The Hand of Lorat, 1899, manuscript at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario
- (iv) Richard Frizell, 1899, published in Manchester Guardian, Manchester, England

WILLIAM WILFRED CAMPBELL (1861-1918)

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF CAMPBELL'S LITERARY OUTPUT (CONT'D.)

- (v) The Beautiful Rebel, 1908, published in The Westminster, Toronto, Ontario

4. PLACE-WRITING:

- (i) Canada, published in 1908 by A. & C. Black, London, England. The prose was written to collaborate with the paintings of a noted Canadian artist, T. Mower Martin.
- (ii) The Scotsman in Canada, published in 1911 by the Musson Book Company of Canada, Toronto, Ontario.
- (iii) The Beauty, History, Romance and Mystery of the Canadian Lake Region, published in 1910 by the Musson Book Company of Canada, Toronto, Ontario.

5. POETRY:

- (i) Snowflakes and Sunbeams, 1888, published by the St. Croix Courier Press in St. Stephen's, New Brunswick.
- (ii) Lake Lyrics, 1889, published in Toronto, Ontario.
- (iii) The Dread Voyage and Other Poems, 1893
- (iv) Beyond the Hills of Dream, 1899
- (v) Collected Poems, 1895, edited by Wilfred Campbell
- (vi) Sagas of Vaster Britain, 1912, published in London, England, edited by his friend Mr. Watts-Dunton
- (vii) Langemarck and Other War Poems, 1917, published in Ottawa, Ontario
- (viii) The Poetical Works of Wilfred Campbell, 1922, edited by W.J. Sykes, Ottawa librarian
- (ix) Collected Poems of Wilfred Campbell, 1950, being published by the Ryerson Press, Toronto, Ontario, with a foreword by Carl F. Klinck & Lorne Pierce.

CHAPTER I

THE GROUP OF THE SIXTIES

Who knows where the wind blows, or where the future of Canadian Literature lies? What man on the streets, what toddler in the sunny fields, what urchin crying in the dust shall rise up tomorrow and proclaim himself the voice of a people? Where does poetry begin?

Any consideration of the wisps of Canada's accumulated literature, slight as it is, must of necessity be fraught with questions, with weighings and with doubt. From this thought only one positive conviction may perhaps be deduced: the idea that out of a nation, as vast, alive and young as Canada, will come song and the philosophy of a way of life that is respected and in which our people find the path to glory. It is difficult not to become, if not emotional, at least sentimental about the great potentialities lying inherent in our culture through the mingling of three racial veins: Indian, French and British.

The greatest productive period of poetry in Canada's history, with the exception of that since World War II, occurred during the last half of the 19th century. About 1888 a new flowering of Canadian literature began to be noticed. It centred around the activities of that group of writers called "The Group of the Sixties", all of whom were born about the year 1860. They were young men who created, by the sheer force of their abilities and personalities, a school of Canadian writers who won recognition throughout the world, and also earned due criticism. They left to succeeding generations the example of beauty to follow, its fragrance clasped between the printed pages, and the example of some errors by which to profit. Roughly, the group divided into two small circles of writers, those living in Ottawa and thriving within the limi-

tations of the Civil Service, and the Maritime group. The Ottawa group included Duncan Campbell Scott, his brother George Frederick Scott (the beloved Canon Scott of World War I), Archibald Lampman and William Wilfred Campbell. It also included briefly Nicholas Flood Gavin. There was a strong affinity between these men and the Quebec poet, William Henry Drummond who was a close friend of Campbell until Drummond's sudden and unexpected death. Between the two men was a bond of sympathy and understanding, appreciation and enthusiasm, and as late as two days before he died in the mining country of Northern Ontario, Drummond penned a happy, laughing letter to his friend. The other circle, existing in the Maritimes, included Charles G.D. Roberts (the "father of Canadian literature"?), Charles Mair, Bliss Carman and several of Roberts' brothers. These Maritime writers formed the nucleus of the group who made writing their profession and who were molded by the wider influence of the United States in which they spent much of their lives. However, they still belonged to Canada as they wrote about their native land and not only for the American publishers but also for Canadian editors and all added as much lustre to the reputation of Canadian literature as did the Ontario group. There is also the fact that Wilfred Campbell was, with William Henry Drummond, far more appreciated in England and Scotland by the wide reading public of Great Britain, than the pseudo-Americans. I would like to quote several reviews from English papers in support of this opinion:

The foremost living Canadian poet. He writes because of a great impulse to sing about many things, full-hearted, high-spirited poetry, often trite and imitative but always marked by indomitable vigor. As delightful in form as it is fresh in inspiration. Mr. Campbell is too genuine a Canadian not to be a true citizen and some of his patriotic verses are as good as anything we have seen of the kind. (1)

(1) London "Spectator" critic, 1906.

The verse is strong and vigorous, characterized by much insight into Nature - especially Nature in the great elemental moods she reveals in North America. High national spirit, conspicuously devoid of spread-eagleism which animates Mr. Campbell's patriotic verse, is a good omen for Canada. (2)

I wish to call my readers' attention to "The Collected Poems of Wilfred Campbell". This Canadian poet has sung the larger songs of Britain, whose echoes vibrate over the whole Empire; but it is perhaps in his "Lake Lyrics" that one catches in all its purity the interpretation of what the Dominion means to her children. (3)

These songs come from the banks of the Ottawa River; they bring a gift to London; they merit a glad hearing in England..... Every page among the three hundred of this volume tempts one strongly to quotation. This volume of Collected Poems is a work which should become as well known in England as across the Atlantic. England should cherish so true a poet of Empire. (4)

The group in Ottawa, however, remained more purely Canadian in the subjects and environment and influence of their writing. They were caught in the familiar monotony and routine of the pattern of life in the employ of the Civil Service and found scant time to broaden their experience and to sharpen their pens. Lampman, for instance, was scarcely out of Canada and obtained his sole relaxation in canoe trips up the rivers and through the lakes of Algonquin Park and the Laurentian Mountains. Not despite this, but because of this, their inspiration was of necessity limited to the rugged and noteworthy beauty of Ontario, in particular, and was inverted to seek nourishment on the fantasies of their imagination. Within these limitations they thrived and their ideas are those of Canadians, born, raised and living in the land of which they sung.

Someone said to me that William Wilfred Campbell might be lightly dismissed as a "minor Canadian poet". In my mind, and the minds

(2) Violet R. Markham in "The Outlook", London, 1906.

(3) "T.P.'s Weekly" critic, London, 1906.

(4) "The Standard" critic, London, 1906.

of many other Canadian writers at this moment, it seems that no poet in Canada is minor. Merely by being a poet, or wishing to become a poet an individual assumes a certain stature. He is aware of the responsibilities and capabilities, the expansive breadth that Canadian literature may grow to have. The moment that his writing is offered to the public he has begun to exert an influence on Canadians and to add to or diminish the reputation of Canadian literature which though commendable is small. He has become one step further in the progress of Canada towards a literature of its own, that may stand independently. His contribution is the traceable step of his thought. Wilfred Campbell is therefore the example, not of a minor Canadian poet, but of a Canadian writer whose contribution was definite, intent, often lyrically beautiful and a landmark along the rough but beautiful path of Canadian literature.

CHAPTER II

EARLY INFLUENCES

William Wilfred Campbell was born on June 1, 1861, of English and Scotch ancestry, into an Anglican clergyman's family at Kitchener, Ontario. He was the second son of Reverend Thomas S. Campbell. Wilfred Campbell always considered himself a Scot. In his nature was inherent the Celtic strain of his forebearers and he possessed all the moody dreaminess, the superstition, sensitivity and lyricism of this side of his family. On the other hand, to his English ancestors did he owe his great faith in "The Mother Country", England and the dominant strain of Imperialism which came to rule him in the late years of his maturity. It made him the fighter of a lost cause in the dawn of the new century intent upon the freedom of democracy and enhancing the idea of a youthful country growing to manhood and strength with power of its own. Imperialism was doomed and therefore, inevitably and irrevocably, so was nearly all of Campbell's late writing. It earned for him criticism and condemnation and misunderstanding rather than the popularity and fame a writer, acclaimed in his youth, expects.

Most of his youth was spent in Wiarton, Ontario, in the heart of the Lake Country on a peninsula separating Georgian Bay from Lake Huron, and close to Lake Michigan. He has described this country with a sensitive fineness in all the vastness of its patterned texture and his understanding was born of love acquired in early youth. The family also moved and lived in Farmersville on the St. Lawrence River, in Stafford near Pembroke, and in Meaford on the arm of Georgian Bay. His father preached in all these parishes. In 1874 the Campbell's had moved to Wiarton, then a tiny village of about two hundred people, a lumbering centre near Owen Sound. The beauty of the country nearby stirred and

charmed the young lad, so that he could never free himself from the reality of his memory and its influence prompted all the most lovely and perfect of his early verse.

As a youth Campbell was a sensitive lad, a boy with a keen mind. He was serious and impressionable, alive to the beauty of his surroundings, tremendously impressed by the reality of Canadian history which was close and alive to him; a boy who already felt the great sweep and inherent dignity of Canada, the potentialities of his country's future. He steeped himself in the legends of this Huron country and around them he wrote his earliest stories. He was a lithe and tawny haired lad with expressive, pale blue eyes which betrayed the haunting, brooding, determined nature he possessed. He seemed older than his age. Wilfred Campbell, like all poets, was a dreamer, an idealist who could lose himself in his imaginations so that the physical realities and necessities of the world were lost to him. He would wander off on walks along the cliffs near Colpoy Bay or seven miles away to the shores of mighty Lake Huron with its rugged headlands, and he whiled away the time, lying on some grassy knoll, reading or dreaming as he listened to the water crashing angrily up against the rocks, or rolling smoothly in during its few pacific moods. He might be happy and alert, or quiet and moody, but he was secretive as he was sensitive, hoarding the treasure of his thoughts and probably eager for maturity. Yet he was a lad of temper, wilful, determined, solitary, sure of his ability and the future reality of his dreams and all that they would achieve for him. All poets bear a certain similarity in their minds' shape; they are impressed by the uniqueness of their own individuality, knowing that their thoughts must govern their duty, without regard to consequence. This conviction molds and

contains all the varying inflections of their personalities. As a man, Campbell's personality contained all the same elements which united for its formation as a youth. The print of his individuality was felt by all his close friends and the enormous tug of his ideas and determination earned him enemies as well.

In order to prove that Wilfred Campbell was not "a minor Canadian Poet" it seems to me necessary to establish the great strength of his individuality and the deep tenor of his thought. Without the marked individuality of temperament, without the Celtic strain which gifted him with imagination, without the English heritage that marked him as a strong Imperialist there would be nothing to lift him beyond the level of all the many writers who, disappointingly, often with heartbreak, achieve no real success and have no lasting place in a nation's literature. This combination of determination, personal conviction, imagination and the essential ingredient, genius, combined to make Campbell, equally with Duncan Campbell Scott and Sir Charles G.D. Roberts, one of the "Fathers of Canadian Literature". However, this very individualism was Campbell's greatest weakness. He was a man who could not understand or tolerate criticism. His later years were made unhappy because he felt he was not appreciated, that his work had not won the recognition and understanding that it deserved. He could never like a person who failed to appreciate his writing as he wished and he literally dissipated his time in trying to justify his position and to answer the questions of his critics who perhaps found him hypocritical in leaving the ministry and yet expressing a strong religious belief in writing poems glorying in the peace of his country and

nature and then condemning that peace to disruption by his outdated Imperialism. These are the conflicts of an idealist who can often not succeed in applying practical considerations to his ideals.

Wilfred Campbell made only a few close friends but these he held until his death. In his later life, he was a man surrounded both by his children and his grandchildren and he was entirely happy with them. One of his charming poems is written about his small son, entitled "Little Blue Eyes and Golden Hair". His daughter has told me that in his later years when he was writing in his study, the only person allowed to enter was one small grand-daughter whom he allowed to chew on first editions of James Whitcombe Riley's work as well as on school-boy editions much dog-eared of Shakespeare. Where his writing was concerned he must have been at last a solitary and lonely man for he disagreed and parted company with even his two poet-friends, Duncan Campbell Scott and Archibald Lampman. Eventually his friendship with the Scott family was shattered, as much due to his dislike of Scott's American wife as to the difference in opinion on literary themes. At one time the two families were close friends and Sunday dinner at one house or the other was a happy custom.

As a child, Campbell was first tutored at home by his mother who was a brilliant musician, and then later he attended school in Owen Sound. As he was a second son and the family's efforts were concentrated on educating the elder son, he found it necessary to put himself through university. First he passed an examination and became a public school teacher for several years in the small country school at Zion, a few miles from Wiarton. During this time he met and fell in love with a young school teacher, Mary Dibble, daughter of a Woodstock doctor. She had

begun to teach near Belleville, Ontario, at the age of seventeen. Campbell's maternal grandparents had settled in this district where the Wright's owned a large house and farm on the city's outskirts. Colonel Wright had been a British army officer with a large estate in Surrey in England. Indeed, Campbell's great aunt who lived in strict retirement in Toronto remembered walking in the gardens of Kensington Palace hand-in-hand with Queen Caroline of England and it was rumored that there had been some connection with the royal family of Hanover. There is no doubt in my mind that on such a basis was the root of Campbell's later Imperialism founded. He was early convinced and enormously impressed by the dignity of royalty and he came to be possessed of an intense loyalty to England and the crown. His paternal grandparents had also lived in Belleville and his grandfather, Thomas Campbell, had preached in the Anglican Cathedral in Quebec City and then came to Belleville as the first rector of St. Thomas Church, a beautiful, Georgian, greystone building which still stands on its grassy hill in the centre of the city. The street running down from the church towards the Moira River was named Campbell Street in honor of his grandfather so that even today the city bears the imprint of the Campbell clan.

In 1884 while still attending Toronto University, Wilfred Campbell secretly married Mary Dibble, who went on teaching for several years, until she joined him after his graduation at his first parish in West Claremont, New Hampshire. She was a very handsome woman and she helped Campbell an untold amount by her love, her faith in his writing, by the sureness of her criticism and by her devotion. Without her it is possible that Campbell would not have found as much time or opportunity or freedom to spend upon his writing. She was a marvellous manager, a

home maker, and a very sensitive and intelligent woman, the perfect help-mate for this poet. She never failed to understand and sympathize with his problems.

In 1881 Campbell had saved enough money from his teaching to enter University College at the University of Toronto where he enrolled in the Arts course. He was already writing and a great deal of his juvenalia was published in the Varsity and other undergraduate papers. Some of his stories centred around the Indian legends that he had learned in his youth. Some of his verse was of a humorous nature and some exhibited the influence of Tennyson, Longfellow, Pope and Byron. His romanticism was of a Dickens' flavor, not of the "noble savage" type characteristic of earlier Canadian literature. Campbell drew characters. This is seen in stories such as Maguire's Nan and the Mystery of Dog's Nest and the humorous poem Dan'l and Mat which had a genuine feeling like the habitant verses of his friend, William Henry Drummond. This last poem achieved local fame and was later published in Lake Lyrics. Some of his early work published during his university days in University of Toronto journals included The Love of Kewaydin, Evenin' Paper, Mister?, The Story of the Sea, Old Voices and Nama-Way-Qua-Donk. His pen-name in the college papers was "Huron". Some of his poems such as Trust, A Dedication, Philmona and Ode to Thomas Moss were imitative of Tennyson. Sennacherib and The Suliote show the influence of Byron. The young poet was in the earliest formative stage of his development where every new poet, discovered in the course of reading, is a wind blowing the individual in a different direction; it is a time of experiment when he tries to mark the boundaries of his ability before his writing has crystallized into the definitive style of maturity.

This early work is valuable because it shows the trends by which Campbell was influenced. It is a far cry from the smooth and polished lyrics of Indian Summer one of the most perfect Canadian poems ever written. (This poem is the best known of all Campbell's work because it has, for years, appeared in public school readers and anthologies. It is brief, lyrical, beautiful, representative of his best work as a Canadian and as a poet.) It is complete in twelve lines of balanced rhyme. It must hastily be admitted that not all Campbell's verse was smooth and polished. He has been accused of a sometimes rough and unfinished style and the accusation is applicable to much of his later verse which, if not marred, is at least altered in its form by the Imperialistic fervor of his idealism which made him hasten to pour out all the hopeless thoughts he entertained without time to stop and polish.

Few today have felt the full power of Campbell's voice with its vitality, the voice of a heart and mind united in understanding the beauty of nature. He knew, as many poets do, that in loving nature one comes close to loving God. That he loved nature ardently is clearly seen in his poems about the Laurentian Hills, the Gatineau countryside and even the country roads about Ottawa. There is a beautiful image in one of his late war poems:

When the woods at Kilmorie are scarlet and gold
And the vines are like blood on the wall..... (1)

There is a sureness of touch in this mature appreciation, the echo of perfection interpreted in fullness. This is the truth in Campbell's writing which is his great step farther than mere sincerity. For this reason alone he must not be forgotten and his work may not be dismissed as unimportant.

(1) The Woods at Kilmorie in "The Poetical Works of Wilfred Campbell" edited by W.J. Sykes, 1922, p. 307 - published by Hodder & Stoughton, Toronto.

CHAPTER III

MATURE INFLUENCES

In December of 1882, Campbell left University College and entered Wycliffe College, a newly formed Low Anglican divinity school, founded several years previously by the Reverend S. Clarke, a friend of his father. This school in Toronto enclosed the low church ideals of those who differed from the more ritualistic view of Trinity College. However, I believe that Wilfred Campbell was already experiencing the disquiet of those with the writer's temperament, the desire to pursue an ideal, never possibly attained, always constantly sought, until at last comes the bitterness of reconciliation and the necessity for compromise or else return to views long since held and previously discarded with the impatience of youth.

He did not graduate from Wycliffe for he left Canada for the moment to pursue his quest for the unobtainable in New England. His daughter writes that he deliberately sought to acquire "the culture and sound literary tradition of New England", and to subject himself to the influence of American thought. He may also have remembered that it was from New England some two hundred years before that Canada's earliest writers had come as United Empire Loyalists. In the fall of 1883 he entered Cambridge University in Boston where he studied at the Episcopal Theological School for almost two years, although he did not receive his Bachelor of Divinity degree upon graduation when he was ordained. The reasons for this are complex and have not been explored thoroughly. I believe that it was obvious to those who knew his questing mind best that he was a poet and not a minister. As Dr. Klinck, his only biographer, has written, "The emphasis was first and last upon conduct rather than on

apostolic succession, liturgical worship and dogma. He was thus susceptible to influences which would lead him through liberalism to New England transcendentalism. At Toronto he had gone no farther than Low Church views." There was an evangelical note to Campbell's religion and he possibly had known that it would find more sympathy in the liberalism of Cambridge. However, he was too full of poetic sentiment to apply himself to more rationalistic studies. In him there was a combination of determination, moodiness, an overkeen and questioning mind, a sensitive and brilliant genius.

A friend of mine, William Arthur Deacon, literary editor of the Toronto Globe and Mail, refers to Campbell's "near-genius, marred by a quarrelsome and argumentative nature". I feel that the poet was undoubtedly possessed of genius, but of a most impractical nature which still did not detract from his brilliance. His mature work which should have been his best was marred by what his biographer calls "the best example of late Victorian provincialism". (1) He believed in Truth, not the dogma and ritual of the church but in the virtues of deed and action and sincerity of heart, the importance of the search for truth. He was then, as he was always, intolerant and misunderstanding of what he, himself, did not believe. Surely it was inevitable even as early as this, that he would not achieve success in the ministry but perhaps instead fame as a poet. He must have chafed at discipline, though he strove to be submissive to the ideals of his church. Soon he would fall into the dilemma of doubt and be saved, perhaps by his deep love of nature, from the chasm of disbelief. He would not for long be a minister in the Anglican Church.

(1) Wilfred Campbell by Carl F. Klinck, 1942, Ryerson Press, Toronto -- Preface (viii).

At Cambridge he met Oliver Wendell Holmes through Reverend Daniel Dulany Addison, who sent him to Holmes with a bundle of poems. Holmes sent them to the editor of the "Atlantic Monthly" with a covering letter commending them, and they were published at once. After this he was accepted by other American magazines, such as "Harper's", and his literary reputation began to be founded. His first poem was published in January, 1885. Here too, he became a friend of James Whitcombe Riley and Richard Harding Davis and he formed deep admiration for the work of Mark Twain and Joel Chandler Harris.

In 1885 he was ordained to the priesthood by the Bishop of New Hampshire and on July 1st of that year he preached his first sermon in Union Church in West Claremont, New Hampshire. This church was of historic importance for it had been built before the American Revolution. After a few months his wife came to join him, to the surprise of his parishioners who had imagined him to be single. He had spent the first months happily writing nature poetry and also idyllic love poems to his wife such as the set of poems entitled the Two Marys referring to his wife and the Mary of the Bible. Here he and his wife lived for three years on the bank of the Connecticut River and he completed the manuscript of his first small booklet, Snowflakes and Sunbeams, which was published in 1888. Simultaneously he continued to publish more poetry in the American journals. The small community in which he lived was delighted to learn that they had a poet in their midst in the person of the young clergyman. His parishioners also probably realized that not for long would they retain their brilliant rector. He would go on to wider fields of literary endeavor.

His children say that their father was always nervous as long as he was in the ministry, before stepping into a pulpit. This uncertainty may well have been the restlessness of an uneasy mind and heart, reflected through the depths of his meditative experience. It is the uneasiness of a man racked by indecision and the realization that neither feeling nor belief are in what he says. If he breaks through and does speak what he truly believes, or thinks he believes, then he must await the inevitable full stop, the time when either he will not be allowed by authority to speak, or else his conscience will not permit him to voice what he does not believe. Not yet had Wilfred Campbell made his decision to leave the ministry. It is impossible not to believe that he had begun to doubt. This is seen not only in his failure to graduate from Wycliffe nor to receive his degree from Cambridge. There is ample evidence of his restless search for the unfound truth in life, the refusal to submit to dogma and to ritual. I have wondered if he felt when he preached at West Claremont and later in the Anglican Church in St. Stephen, New Brunswick, that he was yet the man of God; or was he upheld by sheer determination to persevere in the road which he had elected to follow? His attitude certainly was already unorthodox and had been since his early college days in Cambridge when he belonged to the breakfast club of Oliver Wendell Holmes and used to partake not only of food but also of friendly controversy and argument with his fellow, college students.

I would like to strengthen my opinion by quoting at some length from another letter from William Arthur Deacon, a fellow-alumnus of Toronto University, Literary Editor of the Globe and Mail, past president of the Canadian Authors' Association (to which I have the eccentric honor

of belonging!) and a Canadian author of note who had done much critical writing and speaking on Canadian Literature. He is a man of stature in whose footsteps I would like to follow and by whose advice and help I have profited on much more than this occasion:

Campbell died when I was twenty-eight and hardly knew any Canadian writers personally. Later I became well acquainted with Scott whom I regard as the greatest artist in verse, although E.E. Brown (author of "On Canadian Poetry" and writer of several lives in the Ryerson Press series of "Lives of Canadian Poets") prefers Archibald Lampman; yet Scott, I am sure, was the more significant figure. Scott told me that the "Mermaid Inn" weekly series, did not last long. It was to be written by Lampman, Scott and Campbell as a causerie but died because of the quarrelsome and argumentative side of Campbell's nature. Campbell was an Anglican clergyman and like others of his generation developed doubts about the literal truth of the Bible as history and became heterodox. My vague memory is that he harped on these controversial matters so much in the pulpit that he had to give up preaching. He was a rather conceited fellow, opinionated, and kept harping on matters that annoyed a fair number of other people. No tact or sense of discretion! Campbell at times hit the thing on the nose. His book on the Great Lakes was about the finest place writing in this country and he did a good imaginative job of interpretation. His lyric "Indian Summer" is a small simple gem -

"Along the line of snowy hills
the crimson forest stands"

is still one of the most Canadian utterances. I quote it in extenso publicly as an example of what a writer could do to evoke atmosphere with sixty-nine short, common words, mostly monosyllables.

I never want to know as much about Campbell as you are going to know before you are finished. To me he was essentially the man of near-genius born twenty-five years too soon. I think you ought not to forget that the group - Roberts, Campbell, Carman et al, essentially created Canadian Literature and dominated it from 1860 till 1920. The prose writers are a product of the aftermath of the First World War. I knew Roberts extremely well and Carman slightly. Roberts was a great man and Scott a great artist with words. Campbell was one member of a mighty team - all gone now unless you treat Tom MacInnes as sole survivor and he was never a member of the group, too individual. (2)

In June, 1888, Campbell returned to Canada when he accepted a call to take up parochial duties at the Episcopal Church in St. Stephen,

(2) Letter from Wm. Arthur Deacon, Toronto, July 19, 1949, to me.

New Brunswick, where he was widely welcomed. One might have expected that here amongst the descendants of New England Puritans, who believed in plain worship, he might have been happily situated but undoubtedly he was wrestling with the conflict in his heart. While preaching in the Maritimes his first worthwhile book, Lake Lyrics, was published. It contained all the poems which had been included in the booklet of verse, Snowflakes and Sunbeams, as well as some new and very beautiful lyrics written out of his memory of the Lake Country he had known and loved so well in his youth. It reveals a magnificent grasp of the beauty of the land around Georgian Bay and it established securely his poetic reputation.

Again in 1890 he moved, this time to his last charge in Southampton, Ontario. In 1891 he made his decision and left the ministry to enter the Civil Service in the lowly job of a government clerk in the office of the Secretary of State, a position attained through the influence of Alexander McNeil, a Member of Parliament for North Bruce, and a close friend of the Campbell's. In 1891 he publicly repudiated the title of "Reverend" in the columns of the Toronto Globe and Mail. The assignment of his position in the Civil Service on the basis of literary merit was hotly contested in the House of Commons, but among the men who supported him were Sir Wilfred Laurier, then leader of the Opposition, and Sir John A. MacDonald, as well as Mr. McNeil and other Parliamentary friends such as Dr. Seldon and Mr. Dicky, members from the Maritimes.

Wilfred Campbell had a close personal friendship with the Right Honorable William Lyon Mackenzie King, whom he met about 1900 when Mr. King was editor of the Canada Gazette and a brilliant, rising young man in the Department of State. The friendship of the future Liberal leader with the outspoken Tory who said exactly what he thought with fine, high

disregard for practical considerations (to be found in poets) seems unexpected. However, despite their difference of opinion their friendship endured unvarying until the day of Campbell's death and it is certain that Mr. King felt the loss of his friend, deeply. At the time that Campbell and Mr. King became friends, Campbell was a man of forty though only a clerk in the Department of Labor while Mr. King was twenty-six. Mr. King would come to Campbell's house, late in the evenings, perhaps after dinner with Sir Wilfred Laurier or after an evening session of the House of Commons and the two idealists would sit up late talking and arguing and strengthening the bond of their great and enduring friendship. Campbell was a poet; Mr. King was a politician who knew that he could do most to realize his ideas on social welfare through power and wise political administration while Campbell was the dreamer who never learned to rationalize his Imperialistic theories to practical considerations and the needs of the modern, democratic Canadian people. The fact that both were sincere, intellectuals and idealists probably made them friends despite the fifteen years difference in their ages. Mr. King and Wilfred Campbell naturally must have differed widely in their opinions at the beginning of the Great War in 1914 for Campbell was so ardent an Imperialist and eager for Canada to render due aid to the "Mother Country" while Mr. King was influenced by the knowledge of his great responsibility in committing his country and his people to the privations of a war. Such questions, while vital to each, never, I think, disturbed the tenor of their friendship.

Campbell's impracticability was revealed in little things as well as in vital issues. One frosty winter day in Ottawa he decided that he needed a new winter coat and entered a shop on Sparks Street. A wealthy young man came in and casually bought the best coat in the

store, a heavy black broadcloth, muskrat lined, elegantly trimmed with a persian lamb collar and at that time it sold for one hundred and twenty-five dollars. Said the young man casually, "You should buy a coat like this. It's exactly what you need for a cold Ottawa winter." So the poet bought an identical coat and it took him four years to pay for this unthinking extravagance of the moment. A man like this is entirely loveable and irresistible in his inability to concentrate on such things as food and rent and shoes and shingles for the roof. His family was a happy one nonetheless and much credit goes to his wife who was the even keel of the family. She helped and encouraged him and tried to balance the unfeasible nature of many of his dreams with the hard facts of existence.

Frances Brownell, the prominent Canadian artist, lived next door to Campbell for some years and was a very close friend. At this time he painted a three-quarter length portrait in oils of Campbell which once hung in the home of his son, Colonel Basil Campbell, here in Ottawa. It is the portrait of a slim man with reddish-brown hair, determined blue eyes behind lightly-rimmed glasses, a bushy moustache and a determined set to the jaw. Nonetheless it is the picture of a kindly man, an intelligent and thoughtful individual. Much later, during the Great War, shortly before Campbell's death, Forrester painted a half-length portrait of Wilfred Campbell, done in profile. What changes had the quarter century made in his appearance? Campbell had mellowed with the years. Now the kindness and understanding have replaced the determination and wilfulness (though they still linger too). He is more human and very likeable, without glasses, presenting a rugged profile that is still thoughtful and now, mature.

Those who knew him best did not call him brusque or ruthless. They admitted that he was opinionated and misunderstanding about his own work. But it is because he was foremost of all a poet and his efforts were concentrated on literary success. It would have made many a greater man more bitter and cynical to be accepted in England and away from home and to go unrecognized and certainly much-criticized in one's native land.

He had so great an imagination that he could become completely oblivious to everything and everyone surrounding him, wrapped up in some dream of his own, or thought for a poem or play or novel perhaps. His only son laughingly tells how his father has passed him on the street and never seen him until Basil ran back and touched him on the arm and spoke. His father's fingers would flutter to his moustache and he would say startled, "Oh yes! hmm, ugh, Basil isn't it? I didn't see you, my boy." Wilfred Campbell was an extremely honest man. Unable to back-pat as a clergyman, insisting on preaching at his parishioners from the pulpit, he made many uncomfortable in their thoughts and some disliked him. He was too forthright in the expression of his opinions. It is not a sin but only the birthright of an honest and innocent man who could tolerate no compromise or conventional cliché. It is necessary to admire a man who has the courage not only of his convictions but of his ideas and would carry them so far in the attempt to put them into action.

During these years in Ottawa before the Great War, the Campbell's lived in a small stone house with a pleasant, walled garden near the Rideau River, next to the artist, Frances Brownell. I think these days were probably the happiest of his life. He had many friends including

William Lyon Mackenzie King, Sir Wilfred Laurier, Lord Grey, Dr. Gibson, Alexander McNeil, Archibald Lampman, Duncan Campbell Scott, the Brownell's, William Henry Drummond in Quebec and he knew Sir Henry Irving and some of the members of his dramatic company including Miss Kenny, an Irish actress. Nearly every night some of these friends would drop in, anytime during the evening, until very late and would gather around the fire which roared in the fireplace both winter and summer for Wilfred Campbell felt that, regardless of the weather, there should always be a fire upon his hearth. It would have been a wonderful treat to sit in on the argument and laughter, the serious discussions and the lighter moments of these leaders of Canadian artistic, literary, political and intellectual development during this most creative time while Canada was growing daily into greater nationhood beneath the hood of the world's countries. As Miss Kenny would declaim dramatically her latest role in an Irving-produced play or read with her husky, sensuous voice the poetry of Wilfred Campbell, her audience would listen enthralled, as close to peace and contentment as individuals may generally come.

CHAPTER IV

IMPERIALISM

In those days, early in the century, the Civil Service still existed under certain prerequisites of preference and it was comparatively easy for an employee to obtain rather long leave of absence. This permitted Campbell to take six months at a time and go off to England and Scotland with his wife and one or two children approximately every five years. On a salary of four hundred dollars a year this must have been a difficult accomplishment for Campbell but with a remarkable faith and optimism he would save until he had enough for one way passage, arm himself with introductions from influential friends and sail away on the "Virginian" or a sister vessel on the old Allen line.

He loved England and Scotland and always, all his life, dreamed of moving there and obtaining a better position and lasting literary fame and success. His first trip with his wife was made in the 'Nineties. The second trip made in 1901, he took his wife and young, red-headed son, Basil. On this trip Campbell visited his highland chief, the Duke of Argyll in Scotland at his castle near Dalchenna, Inveraray, on Loch Fyne. Campbell liked Scotland a very great deal and felt that there he belonged. It was like going home to visit the "old country". In order to find money to return home when his leave expired he sold his first novel, Ian of the Orcades or The Armourer of Girnigoe with a highland setting, to "The Gentlewoman" in London, for five hundred dollars. Actually, it was his only successful novel and it was later republished in London.

Again in 1906 Wilfred Campbell visited England and Scotland for six months. On this trip he took with him his daughter Faith, who was seventeen (now Mrs. E.S. Malloch of Rockliffe whose help I have deeply

appreciated in this work). Campbell's daughter, Margery, had eloped with the nephew of Lord Grey, Governor-General of Canada, and Lord Grey had recommended Campbell to many of his friends among the nobility in Britain. He also bore letters from Sir Wilfred Laurier and the Chief of Military Staff in Canada. They stayed in London for a few days in a middle-class rooming house and Campbell decided that he should learn about life in Petticoat Lane, that street of wonder and evil in London. One night, he and his daughter, walked up and down talking to pedlars and street-artists and to the owners of fruit stalls. He was charmed by the story of a Russian girl's escape from the Ukraine and the tales of a peanut vendor. So much so that the next night he went out alone to learn more about this colorful life of the nomads of the city streets. Several hours later, the police wakened his daughter and asked her to identify her father at the nearest police station. Horrified, she learned that he had been arrested for starting a fracas in Petticoat Lane and the police would not believe his story of being a minister from Canada! He had apparently antagonized some strays by his too-intimate questions and taking offence they had assaulted him. It was the end of his journeying into London night-life of this order.

Later they went to Scotland and stayed some weeks with the Duke of Argyll who was a very close and dear friend of Campbell as well as a relative. They visited Lord Dundonald, Lady Frances Balfour, Sir George Noble, Boyce Mackenzie who was the Canadian ambassador in London, Bishop Boyd Carpenter, foremost Anglican clergyman of the day, at the Palace of Ripon, the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland, Miss Grey, the sister of Lord Grey, Lord Percy and his mother, the Duchess of Northumberland, and so on. It is seen at once that Campbell was readily admitted to the highest

society in Britain.

He spent an afternoon with Rudyard Kipling at his home, "Burwash" in Kent and they seemed to share a mutual admiration for each other's poetry. Campbell also became a friend of Andrew Carnegie. He went to the House of Lords and he visited the London editors and placed several of his stories and poems. In England, Campbell had already, and always has had a far wider renown and a greater reputation than that he held in Canada. In 1905, his collected poems had been published in Canada and this book contained his most famous poems such as The Mother and The Dread Voyage as well as his beautiful lyrics about the Lake Country of Ontario. He included in it all the poetry he had written up to 1905 which he wished to preserve, all his best work. These poems had added to his renown abroad.

In 1911 Campbell again visited England and Scotland, this time with his two daughters, Faith and Margery. The faithful Mrs. Campbell remained at home to look after her house and two children. This time the poet was highly honored. He was lionized and accepted with a wide popularity and loud acclaim as well as the open hand of respect, admiration and cordiality. Edward VII, King of England and also chancellor of Aberdeen University in Scotland, bestowed a doctorate upon Wilfred Campbell in one of these fateful pre-war years. In Aberdeen it was the time of a great world-wide conference that brought all the intellectuals of the world together to meet and to be honored. Slowly he paraded through the streets of Aberdeen in the colorful procession, marching next to Andrew Carnegie while the crowds cheered, his daughters waved, the ladies bowed and the foremost intellectuals of the day, capped and robed in glowing colors, strode forth in honor and humility.

Soon after, at the coronation of the new king, George V, William Wilfred Campbell sat, midst the Royal Household, in the pews of Westminster Abbey, next to his relative, the clan "ancestor", the Duke of Argyll, while the music swelled through the nave of the great Cathedral as he bowed his head. Yet, back in Canada he stood almost unrecognized and much criticized. It is little wonder that Campbell seemed crusty and resentful and felt he had never attained due recognition of his talent and work. Still, he wrote with determination to the end in view and he would not go to the United States as Roberts and Carman had done; Canada he felt had need of all her voices, needed their power and their prophecy. It seems undoubted that Campbell could have lived in England, in prosperity and happiness, understood, accepted and financially assured in the midst of friends, writers, editors and peers. When he alone, without apparent rank, sat in Westminster Abbey and attended the Coronation, there were those who rankled at the thought. Jealous men penned the squibs that appeared in the London Times from Canadian correspondents who wrote indignantly to ask why a man unknown in Canada, a poor government clerk, with no claim to rank or glory, should be so lionized in England? They had never read the glorious Lake Lyrics or heard Sir John A. MacDonald read upon the floor of the House of Commons in 1891, Campbell's poem, The Mother, which MacDonald pronounced the greatest poem in Canadian literature. Campbell could win and keep the friendship and admiration and respect of the great men of his day but he was scorned by those who should have loved him best.

This lack of recognition or at least lack of understanding during his later years does not, I feel, detract in the slightest amount from his value as a Canadian writer. He was accepted in England without

reservations. That fact I hope I have established. He never had any trouble publishing any of his work in England and he was in demand both by members of society and the nobility and by intellectuals like Andrew Carnegie, Rudyard Kipling and London editors who recognized his worth. His Sagas of Vaster Britian, his last major volume of work, which contained many Imperialistic poems was published both in Canada and England, in England by an admirer of his, Mr. Watts-Dunton, and received many, very favorable reviews and much appreciation. His novel, Ian of the Orcades, was published twice in England and another of his novels was also published there. His poems and stories were readily placed with leading English journals. In the United States, also, he had achieved much success with his early writing and his poems, while he was still at college, had appeared in "Harper's", "Atlantic Monthly" and many other leading American journals and periodicals. He was a close personal friend of Oliver Wendell Holmes and James Whitcombe Riley who helped, admired and encouraged him and were proud to count him as their equal both in intellect and literary achievement. Later, his strong Imperialism found him little favor with the American point of view as may be readily understood and his liking for an argument made him further misunderstood when he engaged in public controversy in series of running letters in the public press with his critics in the States and Canada. He was simply an outspoken Tory and an outspoken and outdated Imperialist because of his idealism which prevented him from ever rationalizing and setting foot upon the solid ground. William Arthur Deacon, the literary editor of the Globe and Mail says that he thinks that Campbell was "the man of near-genius born twenty-five years too soon". To me he is a man

of genius born twenty-five years too late! His ideas were Victorian, still Victorian two monarchs after the rein of that worthy Queen. Poetically and prosaically, Campbell resembled the group of 19th century British writers. He was akin to Sir Walter Scott, Wordsworth, Tennyson and Dickens. In his writing there was nothing whatever humorous or light-hearted with the sole exception of a few juvenile poems. Even his daughter admits that while her father did have a sense of humor, it was limited. His was not the hearty laugh nor the light and airy approach to life. He was a dreamer, but a serious one. To him, every idea was a serious and vital issue about which he must take some action. This attitude does not lead to grace in literary form nor to lightness of rhyme and metre. As time went on and he grew more serious, his poetry and prose became heavier and more serious not only in content but in style. I hope to trace this pattern of his development in his writing a little later when I discuss his poetry and prose rather fully.

During the last few years of his life, Campbell bought a large, grey stone house with several acres of land on the Merivale Road on the outskirts of Ottawa. This home he called "Kilmorie" and here he spent the last days of his life. He dwelt quietly in comparative isolation from the literary men of Canada and the rest of the world, with the exceptions of Scott, Lampman and a few others. However Lampman died prematurely and he eventually became alienated from Scott. It is very interesting to note that around the end of the century he maintained a sporadic friendship with the very brilliant but erratic and tragic Canadian writer, Nicholas Flood Davin who worked in the Dominion Archives and died while still very young. (Note: it would be most interesting to

learn more about this man, an alcoholic, if not worse, who made a strong and lasting impression upon all who met him. He wrote brilliantly but published nothing and he seems to have been a genuine genius, intent upon his own destruction.) By now, Campbell had been transferred to the Archives where he did more worthwhile work and this change in jobs afforded him much satisfaction.

His Imperialism was heart-felt. England to him was always the "Mother Country" and he had great faith in the racial traditions of good breeding. A man today, he thought, was what he was in consequence of centuries of racial experience. In the past was the example by which to profit, age old experience there for the taking. He also felt that Canada owed a great deal to Great Britain. England defended the colony which otherwise would have been a prize plum for any conqueror; surely we owed her loyalty and any help within our power to render. This was in Campbell's mind when he sought and found the ear and confidence of an army Chief of Staff (which did not help that officer's career as he was shortly recalled to England) and suggested that a force should be trained in Canada in case of future war. This seemingly out-dated and anti-pacific idea to which he clung to the end of his life earned him more misunderstanding and criticism and shed upon his strong, Scottish brow, upon this tawny, blue-eyed lion, the halo of fanaticism, perhaps a kindly light akin to a gentle martyrdom. He would sacrifice anything, his life included for the good of the Mother Country and the ties of Empire. This he had come to believe was his purpose in life after he had parted from the ministry with all its doubts and proclivities. When Canada entered the war in 1914 on behalf of England, and the Empire, his prophecies were justified.

Campbell was primed by confidence in the war years as he marched the straggling group of farmers, would-be defenders of Canada, whom he was training, across the fields along the Merivale Road near his home, "Kilmorie". These men he trained with heart-felt fervor rather than the science of military tactics and they grew to love him. Two of these grand old men are alive today, now in their nineties. They are Mr. J.E. Caldwell of City View and Mr. F. Acland of Bronson Avenue, in Ottawa. They remember him both as a poet and as a man with faith in the unity of Empire. His daughter has written of the last year of his life and I would like to quote her:

He was continually writing during these months, poetry that expressed his hopes for his country and his thoughts, under the stress of the war, that the culminating peace might be everlasting so that we should not again have to pay the price of those who died. He did not like war and dreaded it as he expressed in Peace Chorus. But once it was inevitable, he wished the whole Empire to rise as one heart and voice and do her part. These ideas run through The Sea Queen, War, The Summons, We are coming Mother Britain, Langemarck, The Woods at Kilmorie and The Ridge of Flame. In the Peace of God he expresses his hope in a great world peace.

In 1917 my father was commissioned to write the history of the Imperial Munitions Board. He entered into it with great interest and hoped with naive importance that he could, after all, do something towards the war's general fulfilment. All the pent up energetic Imperialistic enthusiasm of years was at last to find outlet and he was to die in action of the spirit, at least, before his work was finished.

During his lifetime he may have been disillusioned in some minor details but he had a great, irrepressible hope in things, a childish faith that was a bright and shining star leading him ever on. (1)

The winter of 1918 was very severe and just after Christmas the poet developed pneumonia. With characteristic determination he refused to stay in bed and insisted in going out and walking up and down the

(1) Unpublished manuscript by Mrs. Faith Malloch written 1921, p. 78.

porch because he felt very warm. That night he became worse and he died most unexpectedly on New Year's morning, 1919.

His friend, Mr. J.E. Caldwell of City View wrote a rather lovely poem of elegy in his memory. I would like to quote part of it because I feel that the author caught a great deal of Campbell's complex but innately loveable personality in his first few verses. The poem is entitled "The Song is Hushed":

The song is hushed, the singer strangely still
Shrinks not to blame, nor heeds the voice of praise.
Winter and care and time have had their will
And haunting horror of these dreadful days.

Lover of beauty, lover of righteousness,
Lover of childhood and the childish heart,
Lover of Britain in her sore distress,
Eager to do and more than do his part.

Singer of gladness in the far gone days
The quest eternal towards the hills of dream
The magic cloud, the iridescent haze,
The mirrored lake, the sunset's dying gleam.

A vast enchanted palace seemed this earth
And he a child to seek its wonder out
With more of dread and awe than joyous mirth
Smitten at times with chill and tragic doubt.

But through it all the true and trusting friend
Scorning no task to help the common weal (2)

This was the life of a poet, a man who lived and died in Canada, whose life was hemmed in by limitations and the things he could not do, whose dreams went partly unfulfilled. It is the story of a very human man and of a soul-searching, truth-seeking individual who was always faithful to himself. His poetry sometimes rose to heights that were truly magnificent and with a rare beauty, truly Canadian in inspiration.

(2) Unpublished manuscript, written by Mrs. Faith Malloch in 1921, page 88.

His novels and plays were imitative and some of his later, more Imperialistic poetry was much less important and much less lyrical than his earlier work. Yet he sang, sang of Canada and he wrote for Canada. He is a Canadian poet whom it is impossible not to recognize as being far above the ordinary or insignificant. What he had to say, the essential issues he expressed, the picture of beauty, all this is important. His life and his work belong, uniquely, to Canadian literary history.

CHAPTER V

PLAYS

William Wilfred Campbell wrote nine plays, all within the five year period between 1893 and 1898 when he was in his late thirties while living in Ottawa. He had left the ministry and was more or less peacefully situated as a clerk in the Civil Service at the time. All of these dramas are based on historical themes though only five of them ever saw the light of the public eye. One, The Brockenfiend, was published in the Ottawa "Lounger" in 1896 serially and is based on the famous Faust by Christopher Marlowe. It is the story of Martin Waldeck, a charcoal burner who sells his soul to a devil who is "the fiend of Brocken". The play was never republished and its only claim to success was in the author's name as by now Wilfred Campbell's name was well-known in consequence of his beautiful lyric nature poetry and also the notorious and morbid poem The Mother (which Sir John A. MacDonald had rendered famous by reading in the House of Commons) and by the book of poems The Dread Voyage which was published in 1893. The play is, we are told, melodramatic, imitative...and out of print.

For the purposes of my thesis I would like to discuss the only four plays by Campbell which were published. William Briggs Publishing House of Toronto published these Poetical Tragedies in 1908 and they enjoyed a mediocre sale. They were Mordred, Hildebrand, Daulac and Morning. None of his dramas ever went farther than the printed page and four others remain only in manuscript in the library of Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. These four are The Prince of Mantelli or The Fatal Throw, the story of a spendthrift Italian prince; The Heir of Linne with an historical Scotch setting; Sanio, the Avenger, a melodramatic, fire and thunder romance; and finally, The Admiral's Daughter, a drama

of the massacre of St. Bartholomew in the reigns of Charles IX, Henry of Anjou and Catherine de Medici. The centre of the plot is a French admiral, Coligny, who is a Huguenot and patriot. If it were possible to go deeper into the roots of Campbell's writing it would be interesting to visit the Queen's University library and unearth these manuscripts which are part of the Lorne Pierce collection of Canadiana, a valuable possession of Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. A Canadian press report in the "Ottawa Journal" of July 20, 1949, has this to say:

The internationally-known Lorne Pierce collection of Canadiana is housed at the Library (Queen's) in a room literally piled to the roof. Manuscripts by Bliss Carman, Charles G.D. Roberts, William Wilfred Campbell and Marjorie Pickthall are piled on the floor in brown paper parcels - piled there because there is no other place to put them. The purpose of the collection of Canadian mementos is to aid historians of the future.

Here is our literary history, the manuscripts of our writers, dust-gathering, unknown, waiting, perhaps, to grow in fame, to be rediscovered one hundred or five hundred years from now. Who can say they have no importance? Here lie the pages that hold the secrets of the minds of the fathers of our national literature. Can they be unworthy, can they be second-rate when they are our first child-like steps, the experiments and the learning by which we, their successors, may profit and build higher and stronger this literature of our own. That is why I have said, and I do say, "Is any Canadian writer unimportant? By aspiring does his not become an existence that must be noted and remembered?". I am not particularly proud that this may be the case, but I am glad and confident that in time, with the years, we will build up out of our first awkward footsteps, some of them quite beautiful and finely delicate, a great national Canadian literature. This faith is what will keep young Canadian writers in Canada. It held Wilfred Campbell fifty years ago, just as

today it holds a mature Robertson Davies in Peterborough, a brilliant Lister Sinclair in Toronto and an experienced Morley Callaghan in Toronto. For we are Canada, and Canada is us.

William Wilfred Campbell had no dramatic ability worth mentioning. None of his nine plays ever sold well or ever caught the eye of an incipient producer with the single exception of his Arthurian drama Mordred which Sir Harry Irving almost decided to publish about the turn of the century. Details of the affair are confused and rather lacking but it is said that Irving read and liked the play, was quite enthusiastic and prepared to produce it with his company and that a day or two before the contract was to be signed a cable came from England saying that a similar play, also entitled Mordred, had appeared upon the London stage in the repertoire of a rival theatrical company. Irving was consequently forced to decline Campbell's play and Campbell was very naturally both embittered and sadly disappointed since he was most eager to see his play produced. He, himself, was convinced (as most authors usually are about their "ugly ducklings") that his dramas were perhaps his best writing and when in 1908 the Poetical Tragedies was finally published he was still optimistic enough to add a touching foreword to the volume stating that:

If these plays, in spite of their imperfections, receive a kindly welcome, the author will later publish another group of his historical dramas and comedies in a separate volume.

This preface is dated "Ottawa, November, 1908" thirteen years after the plays had been written. He also wrote in this preface that:

The four tragedies included in this volume are widely separated in their subject-matter. It is a far call from Arthur of the Round Table, of ancient Celtic Britain, to Daulac of the French Canadas, and they each are seemingly separated from the fortunes of the great Pope Gregory; yet these plays are included in the

one volume because they deal with those eternal problems of the human soul which all of the world's thinkers have had at heart. Two of the plays, Mordred and Hildebrand, were written in 1893 and published in a small edition in 1895, while the others now appear for the first time in book form. The author makes no apology for the form of these plays. Like other writers, he has his own literary ideals, and with the great mass of the sane British peoples, (!) believes that Shakespeare is still the great dramatic poet of the modern world.

Now I have no complaint whatever to make with his acknowledgment of Shakespeare as the great master dramatist, but I do feel that it was unwise of Campbell to so grossly imitate the playwright in this pre-Great-War period, at the end of the Victorian age, in a time far removed from the Elizabethans, when the Victorian era was at an end, Edward VII was on the throne, and the British Empire was beginning to relax its stays as Imperialism began a slow decline. Campbell's judgment may have been well but his moment was inopportune to say the least.

Campbell's five published plays were all tragedies. His four unpublished would-be masterpieces, The Heir of Linne, The Prince of Mantelli, Sanio, the Avenger and The Admiral's Daughter, are all tragi-comedies which have been termed, in malapropos fashion "tragi-comic plays". They are all heavy-handed in romantic treatment, stilted, unreal, melodramatic to a marked degree and unbelievable as, I think, are the published tragedies. Simple words and obvious reasons outline his failure as a dramatist. He never mastered the considerable art of dialogue (a factor which was no asset to his career as a novelist as well!) nor the techniques of dramatization. His plays are bulky, awkward, lavish, exaggerated, out-of-fashion. The dialogue is mechanical, incredible, imitative, and he committed every sin possible to a would-be dramatist. He used and reworked every device that Shakespeare, Marlowe and the other

Elizabethans had used so originally and successfully and he lifted ghosts and witches from Macbeth, portents from Henry IV, partings from Romeo and Juliet, dying kings, betrayed maidens, renegade monks, fools, jesters, wits, nobles, and a host of others including a devil from Faust with a blissful and innocent nonchalance that makes one gasp and wonder if he had ever heard of plagiarism. There are touches of Scott, Dickens, Tennyson, Malory, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Ben Johnson and perhaps even a little Robert Burns to bring joy to the individual who enjoys a little literary guessing-game and I might gently say, perhaps even with understatement, that his tragedies became, in the end, upon analysis, inversely and unintentionally humorous. They were consequently, to the eye of any but he who loved Wilfred Campbell and did not wish to hurt him, unproduceable. They were unwieldy and impractical for they contained many changes of scene, great tribes of people prancing in and out across the stage, a consequent great amount of costuming, and so many stage properties that the host of actors would inevitably have tripped not only over themselves but over the "props" of the house. The very violence of the action would have overwhelmed both cast and scenery and the production could only have appeared as slap-stick comedy, which is a very far and remote result from Campbell's original intentions for Wilfred Campbell was never a humorist but only an intensely sincere and serious man with a very great strength of conviction. For instance, in the only four act play which he wrote (the others all contain five acts and many scenes) Hildebrand, a tragedy about Gregory VII (the great Pope who cried out in banishment "I am Rome!" to those who begged him to capitulate to Henry of Germany and return to Rome to die), the action changes within a scene from Milan to Rome and requires a battlefield, the papal palace, and a chapel in a castle. In another play, Daulac, about the hero of the Long

Sault, the actions shift from one part of France to another and then in Canada from an inn to a convent to the Long Sault. This constitutes an unusual and not customary variety of changes of scene and place and makes a play more difficult to stage or handle on a stage. His plays are therefore artificial and unreal, meant to be read and not performed, and this fact makes a dramatist no dramatist at all. However, despite my derogatory comments, which I hope have been justified and would meet with approval in the eyes of more senior critics, Wilfred Campbell's plays are a literary experience worth having. Their historical basis is comparatively sound though one must remember that Wilfred Campbell is apt to treat legend as historic fact for he remarks several times through his writing that he considers legend to be only "decadent history" and therefore to be acceptable on a historic consideration. His plays are set in such varied countries as France, Italy, Scotland, Canada, Greece, Germany, England and Wales, and they abound with pomp and circumstance, tradition and adventure, disguises and trickery, "alarum and betrayale" as some old, anonymous chronicle has mentioned, about those days. How far they are authentic I am not prepared to say for I am neither historian nor Roman Catholic and am placed at a disadvantage by both these factors for all of Campbell's plays have an historic (or supposed historic) setting and all but one, laid at a time before Christ, deal with peoples who are, for the most part, Roman Catholics or have fallen from grace. In any case the issues at stake are those of morals or principles and must be viewed in the light of the characters' faith. I am sadly separated from a complete understanding of both the characters and the times by my own lack of knowledge. I hope that any lack of delicacy, any personal opinion or prejudice (though

I will try with deep sincerity to eliminate any pre-formed attitude) will not be taken seriously as an offence outside of lack of knowledge. In justification of my desire to discuss the subject matter of Campbell's four Poetical Tragedies I would point out that Wilfred Campbell was at one time an Anglican minister who left his ministry because he felt or knew himself inadequate. First and foremost he was a poet. His personal religious views were bound up in his great love of nature and his faith in man's divine origin. He saw God in nature and from his student days at college had a formal dislike of pomp and ceremony. He was a free-thinker and many of his ideas were unconventional. Yet he was not a radical nor yet a reformer. He was, politically, a Conservative, an Imperialist and a reactionary...behind his times. Religiously he was perhaps just as confused as I am and his only sin was his uncertainty for morally he was a good man and his whole life was dedicated to trying to help people, his family, his friends, his country. He was a pacifist, but first a patriot. He believed in God and he saw God a little in nature, a little in his fellow-man, as well as in the Bible or in a church. To my untutored eyes, his treatment of his characters, who were nearly all Roman Catholics, was entirely sympathetic and rather deeply understanding.

His one drama based entirely upon the Roman Catholic church as its vital issue is Hildebrand, a short four-act play dealing with the struggle between Pope Gregory VII and Henry IV of Germany and the main actions take place in the year 1066 about the time that William of Normandy was waging his war with England and the Battle of Hastings which made him "William the Conqueror". Indeed, Gregory, the Pope, is

seen sending off a grudging blessing to William, the Norman, at the time of his invasion of England.

The play opens in an inn-yard in Milan where two burghers sit drinking and discussing the new Pope in Rome whose name is Hildebrand but reputation has named "Hellbrand" for his determination to "unwife all the priests in Europe" (1). He has sent out two decretal preachers, Ariald and Arnulph, to preach this new edict throughout the land and they are in Milan to preach, that night. The scene shifts to the market place (in the manner with which Campbell constantly changes the scene completely within a single scene of the play, nonchalantly and lightly and without any considerations whatever for the medium within which he is writing) where the priests harangue the crowd and Gerbhert, the parish priest, learns of the ruling and gives up his wife Margaret and their child in deference to the Pope's will, despite her pleas. Margaret is really the daughter of Hildebrand, who once was married to Catherine before he entered the priesthood, though neither she nor Hildebrand knows it. At home, Margaret tells her mother of the tragedy that has occurred and Catherine leaves to seek out Hildebrand and beg him to restore their daughter's husband. Ariald, the priest, tries to seduce Margaret but she drives him out.

In the second act Hildebrand talks with Peter Damiani, his friend and a fanatical priest in the Papal palace. They talk of the good Princess of Canossa who loves the Church though her husband is subservient to Henry of Germany and does not favor the Church; they mention their determination to see their edict enforced as a means of strengthening

(1) Poetical Tragedies by William Wilfred Campbell
1908, Toronto, page 256.

the priesthood and the Church; they interview a supposed wizard to whom Gregory (Hildebrand) listens tolerantly with kindness as he says the world is round and claims that he is able to cure diseases; they interview Catherine and Hildebrand is moved but can do nothing for Margaret and sends her away. In subsequent scenes one learns that Henry of Germany has forsaken his Queen and the Bishop of Hamburg arranges an interview to facilitate a reconciliation but the meeting is a failure; that Henry has been brought word that he must bow to the Pope or dread excommunication and that Rodulph, a Saxon king, has marched against him. There is also a scene where Margaret goes to the monastery where Gerbherth is dwelling and tries to speak to him but fails. Their child and she are dying of hunger for they have no means of livelihood.

The third act presents the drama advanced considerably. Henry is in a deserted camp, excommunicated, stripped of his royalty, forsaken. He and his wife become reunited and go to Rome where they are penitents before the Pope who finally pardons them. The humbled Henry finds his arrogance returning a little after the ban is lifted and he leaves saying aside that he is "a man once more" (2). In this act Ariald once more approaches Margaret but her child dies and he retires saying "I almost believe there is a God" (3). Henry's loyal noble, Wolf finally kills the invading Saxon, Rodulph and Henry's power is secure once more.

In the final, fourth act, the tables have completely turned. Much action has been left out. Gregory VII and his faithful priest,

(2) Ibid, page 304.

(3) Ibid, page 306.

Peter Damiani are in exile in a fortress near Milan. The Cardinals in Rome beg the Pope to return and make peace with the now-powerful Henry IV but he refuses and cries out, "Wherever I am, Rome is! I am Rome!" (4). His daughter Margaret, crazed with grief, comes to the fortress. Hildebrand comforts her but she dies of grief and hunger. Hildebrand wishes that he too were dead. The brief and unclimatic finish comes when the Cardinals come to visit Hildebrand to try and persuade him to return and he dies. The climax of the play comes in Act III, the last scene, Scene IV, when Wolf, the German noble enters Henry's presence bearing the head of Rodulph, the Saxon invader. In my opinion all of Act IV, Scene I, is unnecessary and slows up the play which is actually very brief in any case, as do scenes between burghers, monks, the Princess of Canossa, and so on.

As a powerful one act drama this theme might have been successfully developed though its theme is not a pleasing one to me, nor to those who read the play apparently for this one of the Poetical Tragedies never achieved any fame whatsoever though it was published with Mordred as early as 1895 privately in a small blue bound volume by Wilfred Campbell, here in Ottawa, and registered by him as required by law with the Dominion Government department governing publications which then was lodged in the Department of Agriculture offices. The page of Poetical Tragedies entitled "Some Opinions of Mordred" quotes Miss Louis Imogen Guinney "the exquisite American lyric poet and a scholarly critic" as saying:

It is literary and it is human. I do not think it a common occurrence that a poet should be on the face of it, thoroughly

(4) Ibid, page 309.

poetic and plainly of the only lineage, the Elizabethan, and at the same time not artificial in feeling, not set upon exploiting himself, not removed from the great fountains of simplicity and life at hand.

This eulogy I discount strongly and I shall try to point out explicitly where Mordred seems to me to fall short of this glowing account and supposed "simplicity". Another critic, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, a New England literary man wrote more frankly if less enthusiastically:

Your treatment of the Arthurian legend at first repelled me a little, to tell the truth, as Shelley's "Cenci" does, but with every reading this has diminished and I feel its power more and more. Compared to it, the treatment of your Lancelot (discussed in section on poetry...footnote) in A Dread Voyage and Other Poems is smooth and Tennysonian, a thought that too is most pathetic. This Mordred is grim and unflinching but very strong. I think that he is a wholly new creation and his final yielding a most daring and touching outcome; it was impossible to foresee what you would do with him. The other characters are also touched with much vigor of characterization. You certainly have the dramatic quality in a high degree.

Frankly, it sounds to me as though the worthy Thomas Wentworth Higginson had tongue-in-cheek when he penned his comments. Wilfred Campbell had a "dramatic quality" alright...insofar as his conclusions were unexpected and, to be sure, "impossible to foresee". It is the drama of surprise, the drama of the "unfollowable", the drama of inconsistency and inconstancy in the depiction of character, in logical outcome. He had an unfortunate dramatic genius, a genius for choosing a subject that is in itself distasteful to the average, or even intellectual reader, and the genius for not only clothing his indelicate themes in no subtle beauty or refinement but of highlighting the very repulsive details of these themes. Mordred for instance is based on the tragedy of Arthur's sin, his incestuous and casual conception of his illegitimate son, Mordred, a hunchback of wry and twisted shape. Once told it would certainly have

been an effort of refinement and delicacy to concentrate on strong characterization and personality, on historical events leading up to Arthur's death at Mordred's hand, to idealistically and with some gentleness recount the love and friendship of Arthur for Sir Launcelot and to depict the downfall of this friendship with a sure and inevitable touch. Instead Wilfred Campbell has deliberately made of Arthur a twisted, bitter weakling; of Mordred a nearly heroic character who succumbs to weakness and temptation and then at the end, with an impossible twist of the writer's pen becomes half-hero and half-weakling as he dies. Campbell turns Vivien the evil temptress into a good and sweet Queen after unbelievable cruelty and duplicity on her part. He has her love the twisted Mordred after she has used and twisted him to her will. He has Mordred who has always been inverted into blackness of mind fall in love with Guinevere the Queen whom he has hated formerly for her purity, when Mordred is cruel and ruthless and entirely domineering and dominant himself. It is a queer twisting of all the characters. Mordred becomes bad then becomes good again, Vivien who is bad becomes good, Guinevere who is weak and immoral is considered white and pure, Arthur who has sinned is the hero-king, with slightly tarnished coat of silver armour, who becomes a weakling and "no king" and yet dies with seeming kingly virtue. Launcelot who should have been the "shining knight" is not good at all; he has seduced other women; he seduces Guinevere, yet he pretends friendship with Arthur; he leaves court and becomes a swineherd to "preserve" his lost virtue; he weakly leaves Guinevere whom he pretends to love when she most needs him; he dies in battle fighting Arthur in France and yet he loves Arthur. It is all very baffling and full of a dread inconsistency. The only real and stalwart character throughout is a minor one, the knight, Sir Gwaine, who is an ignorant lout, kneeling

to no one, respecting none, knowing nothing and yet, somehow, he emerges the hero for he is the only man who retains the same character with which he is introduced, to the bitter end of this melancholy drama. Social taboos which cannot readily be overlooked, make it inevitable that a drama which depends for its strength upon an incestuous relationship cannot help but repel an audience, in this case, of readers. Here too Campbell has made use of all of Shakespeare's successfully introduced devices. Arthur consults a hermit in a forest, and hears a prophecy. At his crowning there are heavenly portents that all will not be well. On the field of battle in France, Arthur goes through the motions of seeing the ghost of Merlin, his friend, the magician. The fool is a double-dealing, double-talking jester after the manner of Falstaff and throughout speaks to us in Shakespearian terms of wit and play on words. There are sub-plots and over-plots.

Campbell as a dramatist seemed to love an intricacy of scenery, an intricacy of plot, an intricacy of words. He did not learn the virtue of simplicity, the true drama of building a single incident to a tense and strong, growing climax and his meandering made his plays weak and not easy to follow, like a ball of string that has been threaded through the grass, helter-skelter and is meant to baffle and mislead. His is the drama of surprise, the drama of the unguessable and eventually the drama of "why guess anyway?". Interest becomes lost and purpose vague. There is no real or concentrated attempt at all to depict the customs of the time, the conditions of a court. There is not the beauty of mere fancy painting a legendary court. It is a legend improvised upon carelessly into something similar to "decadent history" which Campbell fancies legend to be. But as such it is without value, without reality or

intention, incredible but unlikeable, and without the refinement of taste that one would expect from so gifted a lyrical poet as Wilfred Campbell was. All his plays are possessed of this withering morbidity. They were meant to shock but they were not adequately dynamic to make the shock tenable when once revealed. He justified his use of the Arthurian legend by the following foreword:

The Arthurian story is one of the most remarkable in human history or literature. There is strong reason to believe that modern scholars have been wrong in their attitude toward what is commonly called mythology.

I believe that it will yet be acknowledged that what is now regarded as pure myth is in reality degenerate history, and that what has been considered mere fable and the outgrowth of the child-like imagination of primitive people is rather the time-dimmed account of great civilizations of the early world.

This is a question which I am dealing with in a work treating of the origin of mankind. But whether Arthur is regarded as a great historic figure, as the traditions of my own race claim him to be, or as a mythological personage, there is something of the story akin to those themes of the great Greek Tragedies, and of the greater Shakespearian dramas, which associates it with what is subtly mysterious and ethically significant in the history and destiny of mankind. Like the divine literature of the Hebrews, all of these great world dramas and epics - for in a sense they are both - lift the thought and imagination to a loftier plane, and are concerned only with man's personality in his relationship to those more sublime and terrible laws of being which mysteriously link him to deity.

Those who may superficially judge this play as gloomy, must, for the same reason, condemn Hamlet, Macbeth, Faust and the Greek Tragedies. The story of Arthur and Mordred, as I give it, is found in Malory's relation. (5)

Now in my undergraduate work at Queen's University, I undertook a term paper on the Arthurian legend some time ago. I read Sir Thomas Malory's version, the account of Geoffery of Monmouth, the smooth and lyrical tale of Tennyson with its jewel-like setting and its great

and subtle refinement of words and lyrics. Of the three versions I found Sir Thomas Malory's by far the strongest, the most realistic and credible, the most worthwhile. It was an opinion in which my professor, Dr. G. Bageshaw Harrison, now professor of English at the university at Ann Arbor, Michigan (an authority on the Elizabethan stage, Elizabethan writing, the author of some six books on the Elizabethan period and on drama, the editor of several collections of plays and poetry) entirely concurred and agreed. (I respected his judgment then, I accepted his advice later, and I was immensely grateful when he corrected and criticized for me, my first efforts at writing poetry, when he was in England a few summers ago. Some of these poems were subsequently published in a small booklet in 1948, several others in various magazines, and I am, tonight, mentioning again, the Arthurian legend, because once, seven years ago, I mentioned the Arthurian legend before.) Time has not altered my opinion of the superiority of Malory's version of the Arthurian legend, nor has the play Mordred by William Wilfred Campbell. Despite my admiration and my intense conviction that Campbell is an important Canadian writer and poet, I still find his drama falls far short of the man to whom he is contemporary. Campbell has altered and added, changed and twisted to suit his own whim and desire for sensationalism...which, I think, was established beyond any reasonable doubt as early as 1890 when he published the poem The Mother which woke such a storm both in Canada and the United States and of which the reverberations re-echoed, stirring even the dignity of the House of Commons; and again in 1891 when he published the book The Dread Voyage and Other Poems which never escaped the appellation "morbid". Campbell was argumentative and quarrelsome; he loved to shock and he succeeded in creating a sensation often throughout his life from the time he left the ministry to

become a clerk, past the publication of the above-mentioned poems, past his Imperialism and Conservatism when Imperialism was passé and liberalism the party of the day, even as it is today; past the storm his presence among royalty at the coronation of George V and Mary of England aroused (His seat was secured by his distant but constantly-clung-to cousin, the Duke of Argyll, once Governor-General of Canada and himself a poet and the author of the poems Quebec and Niagara); up to his rift with Duncan Campbell Scott and his stubborn and often fantastic literary arguments in At the Mermaid Inn where he loosed his bombastic style and utterings upon the heads of any hapless men who dared to criticize and not appreciate him. This is the negative and weakening side of Campbell's nature. At his best he is seen as a lover of nature, a creator of beautiful and original lyrics about Ontario's lakes and rivers, forests and paths in many moods and many seasons, as an accurate, authentic and appreciative interpreter of Canada in three prose works of non-fiction, Canada, The Scotsman in Canada and The Beauty, Mystery, Romance and History of the Canadian Lake Region which I will discuss a little later.

I do not think it is a superficial judgment, and I believe that time and lack of producers and publishers and readers and audience have all born this out, to say that Wilfred Campbell showed a decided lack of taste in his choice of themes for his tragedies, in the mode of his technique, in his imitative style, and in his lack of knowledge and control of his medium.

A third play in Poetical Tragedies is the shortest of all his dramas, Morning. It is very simply the contrast of the cynic, Vulpinus

to the humanist, Leonatus, the old problem of good versus evil, of justice versus deceit...and neither triumphs so far as a decisive conclusion is concerned. Protinus, the prince of the Greek city of Avos at some indefinite date before the advent of Christ has a son, Varra who loves a girl, Morning who is the daughter of Leonatus, a merchant and a just and good man. Leonatus is about to be elected senator of Avos at which time the betrothal of Morning and Varra will be announced. Vulpinus, who pretends to be the friend of Leonatus, is plotting to forestall Leonatus' election by turning the crowd of electors against him, which he successfully does. Leonatus is cast out and ostracized by the priests of the city and goes into exile, a madman. His daughter Morning, forced to choose between her father, Leonatus and Varra, her beloved, goes with her father to his miserable hut. A year later, Varra realizes that Leonatus is the only just man and able politician the city had and goes to seek Leonatus out. In the meantime the city has realized how Vulpinus, senator, has corrupted them and exiles him. He joins Leonatus in exile just as Varra and his friends come to restore Leonatus to power. Leonatus dies, mad, not realizing that good and justice have triumphed and Morning presumably marries Varra and goes back to live in the leaderless city. It is an indecisive plot, over-simple (just as Mordred was over-complex) and trite, without power and with no climax. All is expected and foreseen. Indeed it suffers from the very opposite of the failings of Mordred.

Of all the published plays, Daulac is the only one which can even make a pretence of originality. Part of its action takes place in New France and for this Campbell must at least draw on our own history.

Still it offers no real historical detail or accuracy of setting. There are the same massive settings, the many changes of scene and the action is again foreseen and without the necessary element of climatic force. As a dramatist Campbell lacked vitality and the ability to achieve a strong, emotional climax. This same deficiency rendered his novels stilted, unreal and unimportant. The *Sieur de Daulac* is an adventurous young noble whose uncle, dying disinherits him in favor of his cousin *Helène* whom he loves and wishes to marry anyway. *Helène* burdened with wealth and *Daulac* a pauper make the marriage impossible. *Daulac* goes to New France, following his love of adventure and liking for his sword and there *Helène* follows him with her maid *Fanchon* who cannot decide whether to marry *Daulac's* lusty servant, *Pornac* or the lean, homely and shy servant of the villain *Desjardins*, her uncle's lawyer who murdered the uncle and wishes to marry *Helène*. The only humor in the play is rather well done and centres around the difficulty of *Fanchon's* choice for her husband. Finally, at the marriage market in Montreal, she chooses *Pornac* whom she has constantly favored slightly more than the ugly but sincere *Piotr*. *Helène* who is considering giving her fortune to the church (which she does) and becoming a nun, is reunited with *Daulac* just before he has been asked by *Maisonneuve*, the hard-pressed Governor of Montreal (urged on by the sly *Desjardins*) to leave at once with seventeen men to defend Montreal by staving off six hundred Iroquois at the Long Sault. *Daulac* and *Helène* are married and parted at once. She follows him to the Long Sault as does *Desjardins* (no reason is given for his unnecessary arrival) perhaps to gloat over *Daulac's* certain death. He tries to tell *Daulac* that *Helène* is returning to France to marry him but *Helène* emerges and calls him a liar so he cowers and perhaps intends

to slink off to France. Helène falls shot by an off-stage bullet, Daulac catches her, then kills Desjardins just before he is rushed upon by the massacre-intending Indians who kill him and he dies for New France. Actually, I believe this is the best of the tragedies by Campbell as it carries the definite impression of being the most authentic and vivid. It is almost alive. Yet the difficulties in staging it would have been many for the scene changes from a castle in France to an inn, to Montreal to an inn, a convent, the Governor's house and finally to the Long Sault. It called for a large cast and many stage effects would have been necessary. I believe that Campbell simply had no idea of the capacity of a stage, the capability and adaptability of a play for production, and, of course, he possessed no knowledge from the actor's point of view whatever. His intentions were good but his execution very inadequate indeed. With no excuse for the use of his great ability to depict the beauty of nature and to lavish his poetic ability upon descriptive verse and lyrics, his drama is undistinguished and unoriginal. The long soliloquys, the meetings and prophecies are not worth quoting and no lines stand out in my memory as being exceptionally beautiful just as none of his characters apart from the minor sketches of the humorous maid, Fanchon in Daulac and the loutish but honest Sir Gwaine in Mordred, impress me in any way by the validity of their characterization. At best the characters are weak puppets, responding by a pull of a string to whatever mood or personality, the puppeteer, Campbell, wishes to endow or lay upon their wooden heads.

Out of Campbell's dramas emerges only the awareness of his respect for the Elizabethans, and even Victorians and his contribution to Canadian drama is only that of an effort only slightly advanced from

the strictly amateur. The plays do all possess a certain air of bookishness, of knowledge of the history upon which the action is based. This is their authenticity. None of his drama is alive throughout and only very briefly do any of them come alive. Campbell was impractical in the course of his own life and his interpretation of the characters he attempts to create is impractical and without reality. Still there is a certain mastery, a literary ability and polish in the very ease with which he pens the soliloquys, introduces a host of characters without trepidation or temerity, and in the skill with which he adapts the devices of a Shakespeare or a Marlowe. Even so do we all begin for how does one learn and become a writer if not through reading and imitating or adapting the works of masters and then much later branching out into the daring of being completely original? His attempts at writing plays were entirely justified. Even a moment of vitality is worth creating, and when he sensibly realized that his plays had not popular appeal nor could they be enacted practicably upon the stage he desisted in his efforts and went on to write prose travel books which are models for all Canadian place writing and which are both beautiful and alive to read.

CHAPTER VI

ESSAYS

During the course of his life, William Wilfred Campbell wrote several series of articles which were printed in the daily papers of the day. The first appeared in the old Toronto "Globe" which was founded by George Brown in 1842 during 1894. I was amused to find that all the references to this feature which appeared on Saturdays and was entitled At the Mermaid Inn indicate that it appeared over a period of anything from two to four years from 1893 to 1896.

I made a trip to Toronto early in January with the particular wish to locate and read this series of essays, after a correspondence with William Arthur Deacon, literary editor of the Toronto "Globe and Mail" who had promised me the facilities of the microfilms in the "Globe and Mail" library and there met with frustration and defeat everywhere I turned. The microfilms possessed by both the Toronto Reference Library and the "Globe and Mail" library go back only as far as the latter half of 1895 and it was expected that I could view the latter essays of this series which was written originally as a causerie for literary discussions by Campbell, Duncan Campbell Scott and Archibald Lampman. However, Lampman died about that time, and a rift arose between Scott and the argumentative and often disagreeable Campbell and the articles were discontinued. To my surprise I discovered that there is absolutely no trace of any of this series during 1895 or 1896 in the paper and I covered thoroughly the period from middle 1895 to middle 1896 on microfilm and visited the stacks where I rifled through brown and crumbling newspapers covering the entire first half of the year, some of which still show the effect of survival of the disastrous fire of 1895 in the "Globe" building.

It was not possible to go back farther as the earlier papers were incomplete and badly damaged and are not all in the files of the "Globe and Mail" itself. For references to these articles I had seen the manuscript of the "diary" of Mrs. Malloch, Wilfred Campbell's daughter, had received a letter from William Arthur Deacon, the literary editor of the "Globe and Mail" (also past president of the Canadian Author's Association and Chairman of the Governor-General's Awards Board) who wrote as follows about the At the Mermaid Inn series:

After I was twenty-eight I became well acquainted with Scott (Duncan Campbell), whom I regard as the greatest artist in verse though E.K. Brown (whom I believe is a friend of my English professor, Dr. G. Buxton who mentions knowing him when they both lived in Maison Canadienne in Paris while they attended the Sorbonne) in "On Canadian Poetry" prefers Archibald Lampman, yet devotes far more space to Scott, who, I am sure, was the more significant figure. Scott told me that The Mermaid Series, weekly, did not last long. It was to be written by Lampman, himself and Campbell as a causerie, but died because of the quarrelsome and argumentative side of Campbell's nature. Campbell was an Anglican clergyman and, like others of his generation, developed doubts about the literal truth of the Bible as history and became heterodox. My vague memory is that he harped on these matters so much in the pulpit he had to give up preaching. He was a rather conceited fellow, opinionated; and kept harping on matters that annoyed a fair number of other people. No tact nor sense of discretion. Campbell at times hit the thing on the nose. His book on the Great Lakes was about the first place writing in this country and he did a good imaginative job of interpretation.

The Globe book page began 1894 - Saturdays. You should also look into "The Week" edited by Roberts (Sir Charles G.D. Roberts) in 1884. (1)

This journal I have not yet been able to locate but, if my present plan of undertaking a comprehensive survey of all Campbell's work for the purpose of obtaining a Ph.D. degree materializes, it will be necessary for me to read the few articles which did appear in "The Week" as well as those manuscripts and letters in the library at Queen's

(1) Letter from Wm. A. Deacon, Toronto, to me on July 19, 1949.

University in Kingston. I believe that it is valid to conclude that this series of letters, responses to criticism, essays expounding the ideas of the writers, appeared for only a very short time in 1894 on the book page of the "Globe", and was not a terribly important piece of prose writing. It has been possible to more thoroughly exhaust the qualities and limitations of Campbell's better known series of articles which appeared in the Ottawa "Evening Journal" on Saturdays from August 22, 1903 to June 24, 1905. This series he wrote alone as essays or scholarly lectures and they probably appeared through the efforts of his friend, P.D. Ross, editor and owner of that paper. In them he reveals mature and advanced views on education, history and civic affairs. His treatment is serious and earnest and his judgements seem to me to be considered, foresighted and reasonable. His opinions possess the same vitality, vigor and interest that is displayed in his three books of "travel" or place-writing about Canada. The series is entitled Life and Letters and the subject matter indicated in the title leaves him free to digress or criticize, to expound bits of homely philosophy or in turn attack the then current educational system with bombastic and convincing rhetoric. In some of the articles he blasts the American press (which never happened to give Campbell an enthusiastic reception) and literary critics in general; he lauds the scenery of the beautiful Laurentian country near Ottawa; he writes book reviews; he criticizes the writings of the great Victorian writers with an authoritative if not necessarily justified voice; he expounds his Imperialistic ideas; he speaks for the preservation of stable family life; he even attempts to analyze the qualities of a writer whose works will endure.

His pen is quick-witted and nimble, frank and fascinating and

he shows a wide range of expression and interests. For instance, in his article of September 5, 1903 he is discussing the way in which the literature of the United States dominates that of Canada. He says that there is not enough ambition in Canadian writers and readers to form their own "public ideal". He goes on:

Let us not forget our rights. This moral self-disfranchisement is not justified. We should preserve our family records and remember our ancestry.

On September 12, 1903, he writes:

There is a natural tendency among present-day novelists and literary men to write too fast and too much with the result that they soon deteriorate. When a man writes something genuinely fresh and original it is a sign that he has discovered a view of life and nature from a window of his own. Let him stick to his original outlook and not be wooed from it down into the crowd.

In the same article he bombasts the insincerity of literary critics and he varies as far as to criticize Robert Louis Stevenson (whom he was not above imitating) as being imitative, artificial and unoriginal. He lauds Byron as being a transcendentalist with a knowledge of "sublime truth" and mentions the beauty of nature revealed in Shelley's work. He tells writers that Keats and Tennyson can't approach Byron and Shelley for they are "only writers and have not genius". The next week on September 19, 1903 he praises the work of two Canadians, Richard Haliburton, the great humorist who wrote the Sam Slick series and the originality of Dr. William Henry Drummond seen in his Habitant poetry. This real Canadian genius is of a rare type which goes, like Burns, to nature and life for its inspiration and therefore should be appreciated. He puts forth one of his favorite ideas, the need in Canada for good Canadian historical writers and teachers. In this column he carried on for some time a sort of "citizens' forum" regarding the method of teaching

history in Canadian schools, and the inadequateness in which it was laid down in the history text books in use. It was biased, prejudiced, un-alive and generally unworthy. He stirred up quite a storm and "letters to the editor" revealed that many Canadians were entirely in agreement with his complaint. Since then the method of teaching history has been greatly revised, in the manner in which he suggested. History became more human and as "civics" a study of interest to our young Canadians.

On the whole these articles are well-written. True they reveal eventually many of his small personal idiosyncrasies and ideas but they served to stimulate public interest and their intentions were good. He must have been given a free-hand and I do not believe the articles were edited at all so they truly express his own opinions. They offer a valuable commentary on many problems of local, public and civic, as well as literary, interest.

CHAPTER VII

NOVELS

Of the five novels which William Wilfred Campbell wrote between 1897 and 1899, two remain only in manuscript at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario along with the other Campbell manuscripts stacked away in the library attic as part of the Lorne Pierce collection of Canadiana. These two are the Wizard of the Tongue written in 1898 and The Hand of Lorat written in 1899. It has not been possible for me to read and form an opinion of them. A third novel Richard Frizell appeared in 1899 as a serial in the very reputable "Manchester Guardian" in England but was never reprinted in book form. His last novel The Beautiful Rebel was also published serially in 1908 in the Toronto paper, "The Westminster" and was also reprinted in a very small edition which it is now impossible to obtain from either family, friends or libraries.

Obviously, as a novelist, Wilfred Campbell's efforts were not successful. Just as he was no dramatist, so was he no novelist. His novel technique was exaggerated, melodramatic; he had no gift of characterization and his dialogue was stilted, awkward, incredible and unreal. He attempted to paint with a lavish sweep of pen and he produced portraits of heavy-handed lack of realism. The faults from which his drama suffered were repeated in his novels. For the purposes of my personal estimation and criticism I have drawn upon his first, and most successful, novel Ian of the Orcades or The Armourer of Girnigoe which he, at least partly, wrote in 1897 while holidaying in the north of Scotland at the castle of the Duke of Argyll, his cousin and great clan chief, at Dalchenna, Inverary. His daughter told me an amusing and rather enchanting story that her father silently posted the novel off to

the publisher in London and that eventually the return letter from the publishers reached them, having travelled from place to place just as Campbell and his daughter, Faith were travelling, visiting titled friends across England and Scotland. The all-important letter from the publisher lay upon a silver tray in their host's house for two days while Wilfred Campbell calmly ignored it. Upon opening it, out tumbled a cheque for one hundred pounds (five hundred dollars at that time) which was the money which paid their return fare home to Canada. With an unbelievable faith in destiny Campbell had purchased one way passage for his daughter and himself to sail to England, all he could afford, had taken leave of absence from his clerical duties in the Civil Service in Ottawa, and had naively trusted to either God or himself to furnish the means by which to return home within six months. He took it quite for granted that he would finish his novel, sell it for a sufficient price and have it publically accepted.

Be that as it may, the novel first appeared in the "Gentlewoman" a well-known English monthly and then nine years later in 1906 was again published in book form by Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier of Edinburgh and London. The novel enjoyed a fair sale and especially in England lent substance to Wilfred Campbell's literary reputation which was already high in that country. He never had any trouble of disposing of his literary output in Great Britain and was considered a great "lion" when he visited the "old country" as he so frequently did. His popularity in Britain always seemed to disconcert his narrower or less-appreciative Canadian and American audience who failed to see in him a literary success. He always had to strive against a wall of misunderstanding at home where people seemed not inclined to forget that he was a mere government clerk

and not a financial success. It may have been a justified opinion on the part of the American reading public that they did not appreciate him for they may well have expected (indeed should have done so) a new and original literary style, a subject matter and background Canadian in manner and a "new country" rather than an "old country" point of view. Campbell's attitude was definitely and inescapably Imperialistic, Tory, reactionary and slanted towards the historical traditions of England and Scotland which he admired so immensely. His point of view probably contributed greatly to his popular British appeal for he was a little bit like Dickens, Sir Walter Scott, Tennyson, and other Victorians. His only biographer, Carl Klinck has undoubtedly well named him "an excellent example of late Victorian provincialism." (1)

The dialect of the novel is Quakerish and apparently that which Campbell believed existed during the reign of Robert III of Scotland. He consistently uses a Latinish inversion of noun and verb, and the pronouns "thy", "thou" and so on. To his verbs he has added the laggish "eth" and his sentences are cluttered with "therein" and "herewith" and other archaic adverbs which were better left forgotten as they deserve. Perhaps he hoped to recreate his period by this use of ancient language but a more direct simplicity would have carried vigor and conviction. The manner in which he told his story weakened the interest of his plot. For example, he begins his book as follows:

That mine is a sad tale is not of mine own making but it is even the work of a greater One who showeth His might in the vast seas and the hushed tempest; and if there be anything of ill on my part in the events and scenes therein described may my children and my children's children forgive, as Heaven forgiveth, the one who hath stumbled in darkness, not only of the flesh, but even of the spirit and heart. (2)

(1) Wilfred Campbell by Carl F. Klinck, Ryerson Press, Toronto, 1942, Preface (viii).

(2) Ian of the Orcades by Wilfred Campbell, 1906, page 1.

One can see at once that this poor imitation of Carlyle's style, twisting tortuously inward upon itself makes the sense of his work difficult to follow. He may not even be forgiven for cause, as there is not the power nor the philosophical idea and ideal hidden like a gem in every setting, as there is in the worst and best of Carlyle's writing. Campbell's is a needless and derogatory lack of directness. His novels could not for long survive.

The plot of the story is as complicated and meaningless as the dialogue. Presumably his story is a romance...a romance winding through the midst of family pride, of madness, of mistaken identity, of two half-brothers who look alike, of the misunderstood hero bearing up in the face of insurmountable difficulties so that, eventually, some three hundred and more pages later, justice and goodness may prevail (as well as unintended stupidity and a complete lack of conviction).

Ian, the hero, is brought up by his heart-broken and gentle mother and two trusty retainers in a lonely glen on a wild island of the Orcades off Northern Scotland. He has no idea who his father is, nor what his own identity may be. His mother dies, he is discovered by a young and noble lord who looks like himself and is his half-brother Hugh, son of the cruel but great Lord of the Orcades. The brother takes Ian to Castle Girnigoe where he is allowed to study under their evil plotting uncle, Father Angus, brother of the Lord. Angus plots with the Duke of Albany, the evil brother of Robert III of Scotland and with the Bishop of the Cattynes, appointed by the Pope to watch the powerful Lord of the Orcades and try to bring him back into the fold of the Church from which he has strayed some time before. The Bishop of the Cattynes has a beautiful ward, Lady Margaret Seton, of royal birth. Hugh falls in love

with her and persuades his father to lead an expedition against the Bishop to rescue the girl whom he wishes to marry. Ian, now an apprentice armourer and smith, takes part in the engagement, kills a man who tries to seize Lady Margaret and himself falls in love with her and carries her back to the castle to be taken care of by Hugh's mother (Ian's stepmother, for Ian is the son of the noble Lord and his aristocratic mother whom the Lord had later betrayed and divorced as too close in kin) who hates him.

The Bishop is killed and the Duke of Albany sends an expedition to force Hugh to his knees for not reporting to the Court at Stirling to justify the death of the Bishop of the Cattynes. In the meantime, the Lord has died mad and Hugh has succeeded to the title though Ian, the armourer, is the rightful heir. Ian bears up patiently with great and sacrificing fortitude and even allows Lady Margaret to plan to go ahead and marry Hugh though secretly she is attracted to Ian who saved her from disaster at the engagement where the Bishop, her guardian, was killed. Hugh is taken prisoner to the Court at Stirling by Albany's men and expects to be condemned to death. Ian takes his place in prison and the sentence is commuted to a command to have Ian's eyes put out by the master-smith formerly of Castle Girnigoe and his friend. The friend, throws wine into Ian's face, apparently in anger, and then appears to put out his eyes. Though scarred, Ian regains his sight, and Hugh restores the title to him and goes off to be a soldier. The Lady Margaret becomes his wife, the evil stepmother dies of grief, and all ends well and happily.

There are many, detailed, small sub-plots and tricks, too numerous to mention and also very confusing. There is a trap-door, a

chained skeleton, a secret passageway, a cave, all sorts of traps and cross-betrayals with surprising slants of character imputed into the personality of the individuals who woodenly move across the main platform of the story. They lend to it a general air of being entirely incredible and over-complicated. The novel did possess a sort of "gaie galante", "Sir Walter Scottish" touch which would have appeal in England and Scotland at the end of the Victorian period but it definitely does not seem important, crucial or in any way apt to be a classic. It is not particularly light or entertaining literature but it does have excellent descriptions of the country of Northern Scotland. When Wilfred Campbell turned his pen to a survey of the beauties of nature, wherever he might be, there he became alive and convincing and his words live. Like his dramas, the novel contains much that is almost humorous by the exaggeration of the tragic element. Ian goes to Stirling to replace his brother in prison and die for him (after Dickens' Tale of Two Cities perhaps) and stays overnight "at a quiet inn which mine uncle did wot of". It is really impossible to take such dialogue seriously and feel due regret at the hero's desperate deed.

It seems impossible for me to escape the conclusion that I would not be able to justify my thesis that Wilfred Campbell was far more than a mediocre Canadian writer, if my opinion must rest solely upon the evidence of his novels and his plays. Fortunately I am delighted to be able to offer concrete and conclusive evidence that both plays and novels were but experiments. All five novels and all nine plays were written and past within a six year period between 1893 and 1899. During this six year period when Wilfred Campbell was in his early thirties he was tentatively extending himself in his literary efforts. He was trying to find what he

could successfully write, what techniques he could master, in what ways he could stretch out his literary personality. When he found that his efforts did not meet with financial success or public approval, he desisted in them. Six years in a writer's life is an incredibly short time.

When I first entered college and commenced a course in Biochemistry, a perspicacious English professor dug me out of a huge class attending lectures solely to put in the required number of hours for an optional subject and told me,

Out of all my classes in the period of one or two years, perhaps one student will have the ability to become a writer.. IF he or she is willing to devote themselves entirely and whole-heartedly to that achievement. You could become a writer, if you worked hard; but, it would take you at least seven years apprenticeship and hard work and study before you would be ready to publish anything. Then there is an even chance that you would become successful in your profession. After three years I would say perhaps you might achieve your goal, after five years I would say probably and at the end of seven years I would know for certain.

That was almost six years ago and those words seem fairly true if somewhat over-optimistic. I still may make a writer and behind me I have a small taste of success, a small evidence of creative ability, a small amount of published work.

Well, Campbell's first work appeared in 1888 and when he wrote all his plays and novels with a tremendous output of literary effort, he was still in the first ten years of his literary career. He was entirely experimental in his outlook and attempts. His early lyrical nature poetry had been very beautiful and well-written as is often the case. He went on further to see what else he might write and after he had explored all the latent possibilities he persisted in the two fields in which he was both competent and successful, he went on to write three very, very good books of prose about Canada and he continued to write a great deal

of poetry, some of which was more patriotic, less inspired and less vigorous, and some of which rose to heights equivalent to his early and youthful successes. His novels and his dramas should be fairly criticized. (I have attempted to express my own honest opinion. I hope that I have not unfairly biased any prospective reader or student of the work of William Wilfred Campbell.) Neither he, nor I, would wish to apologize for them. They were sincere, well-intended and they were influenced, as all early writing is, by the works of other masters. It is undoubtable that he recognized his limitations, accepted them intelligently and went on to produce work in fields in which his talent would not be dissipated. He continued to write prose and poetry that was ranked with the best and some of it could not be equalled, for it was better than any previous trail-blazing attempts.

In final justification, I would defy anyone to show me that Canada has a respectable novel tradition of its own, either fifty years ago or today? It has no professional theatre worth mentioning. It has no great playwrights, no great novelists and authors. Canada is still in its infancy in the foundation of its literary tradition. It has an excellent and original school of poets, both past and present but I could still quote Dr. Norie Frye, author of Fearful Symmetry (the book on the life of the English poet, Blake published in 1947), professor of English in the University of Toronto, literary editor of "Here and Now" (Toronto) and "The Forum" (Toronto) who wrote an ovation upon the death of his friend, Dr. Sissons of Toronto, last year. Dr. Frye wrote:

Canadian literature is greatly indebted to him. When he was born it was in a terrible state; when he died it was not bad.

Canadian literature is, I think, fairly admitted to have been born some time ago. It has not, by a long step, attained any hint of maturity.

That is still in our future. Wilfred Campbell, along with the other Ottawa poets of the Group of the Sixties, Duncan Campbell Scott and Archibald Lampman, along with William Henry Drummond, Bliss Carman, Charles G.D. Roberts and many others, helped us take our first step towards an enduring and valuable literary tradition. Let him not be despised.

CHAPTER VIII

PLACE-WRITING

Canadian literature has been enriched immeasurably by the efforts of William Wilfred Campbell in describing Canada in three books of place-writing. It is conceded by every critic and writer whom I have approached or read that several of these books are models and ideals of the craft of descriptive writing.

His first book of this nature, Canada was written in 1907 and published in 1908 by A. & C. Black, London. It was dedicated to Lord Grey, the Governor-general of Canada and a relative, through marriage, to Campbell. It was done in collaboration with a noted Canadian artist, T. Mower Martin, who painted the pictures of the various scenes of the great Dominion. Wilfred Campbell produced the prose accompaniment to this portrait of an exciting, young country which was rugged, beautiful and yet strangely peaceful, almost lyrical in mood. There was no attempt to present an entire history of Canada but throughout there are vigorous and exhilarating glimpses of the men who moulded the young nation. Campbell describes the great natural features of the land, its coast and rivers, mountains and lakes, prairies and forests. All the beauties of nature are skilfully turned into the smooth-faced production of the printed page with surprising artistry. He has accurately depicted the changing seasons and their effect upon the land; he has included brief sketches of the settlements across the continent and the development of various communities. He has made unifying references to the origins of people and he has outlined our composite ideals. The Canadian way of life, the national personality (if such a stereotyped phrase may be permitted here) and the importance of our leading historical figures to the growth of Canada to nationhood are carefully revealed.

The style of this book is clear-cut, balanced, sincere and convincing. Its subject matter is vigorous, explicit and possessed of great dignity of tone and a smoothness which captivates and holds the sometimes fickle interest of a reader. The book is good! It is mature and well thought out. It contains poise and all the unity of a national ideal. The introduction opens with a poem by Campbell Canada written in rhymed couplets. From there he starkly sets down with great conviction the core of his "argument" so far as his topic is concerned. He says,

The destiny of a young and vigorous people must be either lofty or sordid. Between these two extremes lies national tragedy. Canada will either be the greatest commonwealth or will have mere crude sophistication. Patriotism is apt to be destroyed by party politics and idealism may be crushed by materialism. (1)

His own opinions, which made his plays and novels weak, here appear the foibles of a wise and intelligent man whom one respects and whose whims one gratifies for one knows the hand and the work of a master. Here in this particular and highly-specialized field of prose-writing, Campbell was a master craftsman. He may say "Canada is the Scotland of America" and one smiles, for one knows that Campbell was himself Scotch. He adds that the descendants of Normans and Scots are partners and rivals in the future destinies of this newer Britain. He promises us a strong, ethical, and intellectual man as typical of Canadians. He says truly as his pen strides forth to set down the manifest beauties of nature that in the environs of the Capitol of Canada will be found as grand natural scenery as is to be seen anywhere in the world and that the glamor still hangs of virgin land with boundless possibilities. It appeals to dreamers and the discontented. Canada is a land for the strenuous man of the present and the future. Under our materialism is a striving toward ethical government

(1) Canada by W.W. Campbell, 1908, published by A. & C. Black, London, page 2.

and thought. It is seen in our municipal government, our literature and pulpit utterances. Our material and moral welfare depends partly for its future existence upon the rural population.

The book contains twelve chapters and a strong internal and external unity. There is unity of style, and the even tenor that is given only by a harmony and internal consonance of subject matter closely related to the literary style. I believe that it will be admitted readily that a book depends for its lasting success and merit upon the happy marriage of good style with good taste...a good literary style and good taste in selecting a subject. This is the enduring appeal that makes this one literary effort the best of Campbell's prose work. It is better than his five novels, his nine plays, his two other books of non-fiction which lack essentially an equal amount of finesse, although one of them comes close to achieving the harmony of Canada, the book entitled The Beauty, History, Romance and Mystery of the Canadian Lake Region. After the introduction he continues to describe Canada by regions, the Maritimes, Quebec and the Lower St. Lawrence Valley, the Upper St. Lawrence Valley and Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto and other Ontario towns, the Canadian Lake Region (this chapter he later expands into the book mentioned above), Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, and finally, British Columbia. I have omitted mentioning one very beautiful chapter which is unrelated topically to the rest of the book. It is called "Canadian Seasons" and is most skilfully done.

In this chapter he says that the beauty of winter and summer is the beauty of body and soul, of death and life. The Canadian summer next to the Canadian autumn is the finest season in the whole world. (He himself was an "autumn poet", as I have named him "a poet of the mist" who

penned the lyrical lines "when the fire is on the sumach and the mist is on the hill...". He believes that the beauty of the woods is close to the Greek ideal of culture, beauty and simplicity (2) and he interprets various trees and moods in terms of a sensitively expressed architecture. A beechwood is pagan; the elm and maple woods are vast, sublime and Gothic.

There is a beauty here but it is of another, more indefinite nature, as if the body was lost, soul and earth had faded into heaven and the merely sensuous seems merged in the vaguely mystical. Out of the mystical soul-struggle has man achieved the realization of the human personality; as apart from human responsibility and as an advance in evolution from the grim fatalism which rounded the Greek environment. All this one learns if he listens and dreams in the great forest. (3)

I can find it in my mind to forgive William Wilfred Campbell a dozen, poorly written, imitative books in order that I may know and enjoy and learn from the dozen others which are of expert workmanship and possessed of a true and inward beauty which remains long after in the depths of an intellectual's mind and evoke a positive admiration. Surely no one could deny the superb handling of his subject matter, the sincerity which goes very deep, the lyrical and poetical treatment which is part of a literary style perfectly adapted to his topic. Where his soul went out to meet his subject, Wilfred Campbell became a great artist. His poetry and his prose place-writing are very beautiful.

The book is entirely genuine and fascinating. It is as alive today as at the moment it was written. He writes of history and geography and the beauties of nature as though he loves and is eternally intrigued by them. Through their contemplation he grows in stature as a writer and

(2) Canada by W.W. Campbell, 1908, published by A. & C. Black, London, page 126.

(3) Ibid, p. 129.

as an individual. His interest spreads to the reader and his audience is firmly held by the enchantment of a moving and interesting panoramic presentation. The book is innately dignified, meritorious, frank and completely objective as it is possible for an author to become, which is a triumph for a man of Campbell's usually strong opinions. Here, any personal prejudices have highlighted the whole treatment of the book; whereas in his plays and novels where he had characters to forge, his opinions twisted and warped the personalities he tried to create. For the first time in prose he was writing from the heart of his country as well as from his own heart. He is entirely original and there has never been any hint of imitation. His book is a classic today in its field and it is turned to by other would-be descriptive writers for guidance and assurance. There is a steady smooth flow of words and events are presented naturally, almost casually, with great ease while history is uncovered in delightful little sketches which fail to bore and stimulate the reader to further research and increased interest.

The paintings by T. Mower Martin, around which Campbell wrote his prose description, are beautiful, restrained, naturalistic, a trifle nostalgic and the artist has taken advantage of all the beautiful colors of Canadian nature to serve his purpose. Wilfred Campbell's picture of Canada is fair, well-rounded, knowledgeable and completely unexaggerated. It is free of those weakening influences of English imperialism and English writers which allowed him to produce much that was unworthy of his imagination and sensitive nature. In his own land, and by himself, he was an excellent and imaginative writer with a well-controlled technique and an original literary style and method of treatment. I myself found this book the best of all his prose writing.

THE CANADIAN LAKE REGION:

His next book followed up the chapters of Canada which had appeared two years before. In this fairly short book, also beautifully illustrated, he expands Chapter IX of Canada which had been entitled "The Canadian Lake Region" and had given a tiny sketch of the great lakes and the small lakes between Lake Huron and Georgian Bay. There were brief descriptions of the moods of the lakes and a little indication of the historical figures who had pioneered their exploration. Now he enlarges his previous work into a book of some one hundred and thirty pages which describes the Great Lakes one by one in their geographic and historical features and he devotes several chapters to the chains of small lakes in Northern Ontario. He has deliberately given the book a poetic title The Beauty, History, Romance and Mystery of the Canadian Lake Region though it is generally referred to by the last three or four words.

The book opens with Campbell's beautiful poem Ode to Thunder Cape which gives an immediate impression of strength, faith and lyrical beauty,

And thou wilt stay when we and all our dreaming
Lie low in dust...
Thou still wilt linger, mighty Cape of Storms. (4)

It was published in 1910 by the Musson Book Company of Toronto. The first quarter of the whole book is contained in the introduction which contains several of his beautiful poems once printed in Lake Lyrics. Throughout the book, the lyrical note is preserved and artfully twined about the poems from Lake Lyrics. The introduction opens with a poem which sets the note for his entirely justified rhapsody on the beauty of Canada's lakes:

Domed with the azure of heaven
Floored with a pavement of pearl
Clothed all about with a brightness
Soft as the eyes of a girl.

- (4) The Beauty, History, Romance and Mystery of the Canadian Lake Region by W.W. Campbell, 1910, page 1, published by the Musson Book Co., Toronto.

Girt with a magical girdle
 Rimmed with a vapor of rest
 These are the inland waters
 These are the lakes of the west. (5)

He says that the most beautiful portion of the American continent is the lake region of Canada from the Thousand Islands to the western shores of Lake Superior. The Lower Lakes, Erie and Ontario, are more picturesque and beautiful while the Upper Lake Region of Huron, Georgian Bay, Superior and Michigan have grandeur and majesty. He has long wanted to describe them for the world and feels that in order to do so a writer should be combined poet, romancer, historian. He introduces the spirits of the early discoverers, adventurers, martyrs and the lonely spirits of unrest who first trod these wilds in an heroic age. Of Lake Huron he says

Here man can, if he sanely chooses, renew his life for a
 season and forget he is a hireling, for

Miles and miles of lake and forest
 Miles and miles of sky and mist
 Marsh and shoreland where the rushes
 Rustle, wind and water kissed
 Where the lake's great face is driving
 Driving, drifting into mist. (6)

Campbell did possess the art and the talent to describe the nature of Canada as it should be done for he had the gift of personification of nature. He attributed, built up and gave to Canada a personality of it's own, a strength and dignity and historical background which were worthy of the magnificent natural topical features of the dominion. By doing so he laid down an example and a model and he earned his own right to greatness. For whether you or I believe or can prove that Wilfred Campbell is one of the stars in Canada's brief literary history, still his words will go on being remembered just as they are today by every public

(5) Ibid, introduction.

(6) Ibid, page 23.

school boy, and buried deep in the memory of adult Canadians. He spoke with the voice of every individual who grew up in Canada and knows her nature, her countryside, her seasons, her history, her present status. Wilfred Campbell was essentially, Canadian, in his living and in his writing. He was the friend of statesmen and writers, sculptors and artist men and women of every walk of life both in Canada and abroad in Scotland and England. He has not been forgotten and I do not think he will be for his contribution was unmistakeable and definite. He walked with beauty and he interpreted Canadian nature just as Wordsworth did. It was truly said of Wordsworth that much of what he wrote was unimportant. The same thing may be truthfully told of Wilfred Campbell. But neither will be forgotten and both will be forgiven for being human and therefore fallible. Like all men they sought and strove for perfection, never completely achieved it but sometimes came very close and did find a very deep beauty.

He writes also in his introduction that the Canadian Lake region is not only benign in its vast brooding spirit. In late autumn and winter it can be cruel and sinister with terrible moods. He points up his moral with details of shipwrecks and descriptions of storms growing up on individual lakes and spending themselves in fury. Again, he returns to Canada as a nation and remarks that Canada should realize her ideals and responsibilities as a community, but we have, sad to say, divorced our intellect from ethics. We have forgotten that Canada is an ideal place fit to be the cradle of a great people.

Simcoe picked Ontario to perpetuate British good government and ideals as it was shut off effectually by beautiful freshwater seas. Canada consequently owes much to British heredity and conservatism - and to her superb waterways which also help to moderate the climate. These waters have witnessed

the ever recurring dream of humanity and the story and legend of the lakes is the comedy and tragedy of romance and realism. (7)

He devotes a chapter to Lake Ontario and the Thousand Islands, another to Niagara and Lake Erie, one to Lake St. Clair, the Detroit and St. Clair Rivers, an excellent one to Lake Huron, another to Lake Michigan; several chapters describe Lake Superior with its mighty waters and a final tenth chapter is briefly devoted to the beauties and hunting and fishing potentialities of the Muskoka and Kawartha Lakes of Ontario. Each lake assumes its own definite personality. The reader learns its history and its appearance in all the varying possibilities of mood; the coast and shoreline is described, the geographical features enumerated but there is no intrusion or feeling of figures set down, names listed in a deliberate muteness. All the chapters, all the features are unified and well integrated, orientated against setting and mood, tied together with fine and beautiful threads of poetry. The book is a successful achievement and it attains the same power and dignity that characterize the previous work, Canada. It is more truly lyrical and poetic, but it is one of the best pieces of Campbell's work and I was pleased to learn that it enjoys the greatest circulation in Ottawa, for instance, of all Campbell's other books, almost together. It has much popular appeal, is simply and appealingly written and it is a source of enjoyment not only to adults but to the reading audience among Canada's youthful population. The copy I obtained was dog-eared and much-read and had the look of a book well-loved. Yes, I think that Campbell's books still live today. The book, Canada enjoys an aristocratic binding and is large in size in order to render the paintings more appreciable. It is considered an example of

the best Canadian place-writing and is treated with great care and ample respect. It undoubtedly deserves the added dignity but it is good to see that many people do appreciate his little book into which he put so much of his own love of the Canadian lakes.

THE SCOTSMAN IN CANADA:

His last prose work was published by the Musson Book Company of Canada in Toronto in 1911. It is part of a two volume series undertaken by that company and volume one containing a survey of the Scotsman in Western Canada was done by Professor George Bryce of Winnipeg. Wilfred Campbell was commissioned to complete the volume on Eastern Canada and his work includes a discussion of Scotch settlements and the history of the Scots in the Provinces of Quebec, Ontario and the three Maritime Provinces. He dedicates his volume to his cousin the Duke of Argyll, former governor-general of Canada.

The book is well written and interesting with a good deal of detail which serves to make his subject matter fascinating, human, alive and a moving panorama. The book is balanced and there is a skilful use of quotations from unearthed charters, diaries, letters and many miscellaneous, private and official documents which indicate that a great amount of research was done for this particular work. Just as he cleverly interwove poetry with descriptive narrative in two previous books of place-writing, here he has interwoven the narrative, which is historical in nature, with the realistic and referential material garnered from the documents which must have come from many sources. In some places the narrative takes on a sort of rolling rhythm which is the property engendered by the overuse of lists of names of people and places, societies and

army personnel, ships and candle-stick makers, members of clans, lists of forebearers and officers. This apparently deliberate technique has made the narrative in some places heavy and burdensome, difficult to follow and unnecessary in length. It has slowed up the confluency of the book. On the whole however, the vocabulary is good; he displays his customary fluent ease of description; there are brief and sensible accounts of the foundation of settlements and excellent references to journals and writers of the time. The roll of names and titles for which I have just expressed some regret does show a respect for tradition, a little awe of his topic, great admiration for the Scotch race and perhaps it reveals an iota of self-praise. Some of the small details of marriages and relationships in the various colonies are both homely and fascinating and create a definite air of reality and an atmosphere that is homespun and genuine.

His object, as revealed in the preface to his book, serves to justify his method of writing. He wishes to give the reader a knowledge of the origin of the early Scotch settlements in Eastern Canada. He also lists the founders and pioneers who may be of interest to future students in individual research. He reveals the Scotch influence on religion, education and politics in our national life. Stress is laid upon the Ulster Scots from Northern Ireland who made the first great immigrations to Canada and he feels that his book has been an imperfect result of the ideal which prompted its making. His motive is stated simply when he says that a great part has been played by that illustrious stock in the last three hundred years, in upbuilding the British Western Empire.

The chief Scotsmen whom he discusses in some detail in his book

are Sir William Alexander, Sir John A. MacDonald, William Lyon Mackenzie and his grandson, William Lyon Mackenzie King, Bishop John Strachan, Reverend Alexander Macdonell, Principal Grant of Queen's University, Colonel Allan MacNab, Chief Justice Haliburton and his Sam Slick books, Sir Sandford Fleming, Canada's greatest engineer, Colonel Thomas Talbot and his Middlesex settlements and John Galt, the Scottish writer who founded Guelph and Goderich and after whom Galt is named. He relates the history of the various Eastern Canadian settlements founded by Scots: the Pictou and other Nova Scotian settlements, settlements in Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Quebec and in Ontario the Glengarry, Perth, Lanark, MacNab, Galt, Talbot, Zorra, Huron and Bruce settlements. His first several chapters are devoted to an account of Scottish ideals in Scotland, Canada and throughout the world wherever Scotsmen may have roamed. He outlines thoroughly the history of "New Scotland", how the first charter was granted in 1621 by James VI of Scotland to the Earl of Stirling, Sir William Alexander, to found New Scotland in Canada in that district of Acadia which had been taken for the king by Captain Argall in 1613. The charter was completed and the Baronets of New Scotland created by Charles I in 1625 on July 21. After that the reader is given a complete account of all the difficulties which occurred in Scotland to delay settling and all the ships which eventually sailed to Canada bearing the "flower of the race" who colonized our land.

As must be expected the book is highly prejudiced in the favor of the Scot and as a result must be taken seriously by the student of Scotch history and by all Scotsmen, and a little humorously by us other English, French and Irish "inhabitants". Regardless of bias the book is an entertaining and fascinating presentation of history and it is well

written and well-authenticated by references and documents. The facts have all been neatly marshalled and thrillingly offered and do contain a great deal of interest and concrete data. A vast amount of detail concerning the growth and development of Canada from its earliest roots is contained in this book and it would be invaluable to student, teacher or reader interested in "individual research" which was the author's avowed intention. From that point of view he has entirely succeeded in achieving his objective. I learned many facts of which I had not previously been aware, my interest was sustained, and I was bemused and amused by the small details of family life in the early settlements.

I was amazed at the mass of information which Wilfred Campbell had accumulated here in his final work of prose non-fiction. The book contains some four hundred and twenty-three pages, over half of which are devoted to eighteen chapters picturing the early settlements. He has, in other chapters, discussed the Scotch governors of Canada....governors-general, lieutenant governors and early administrators of Upper and Lower Canada. A particularly interesting section discusses the role which Scotsmen have played in education in Canada. The founding of the major schools, colleges and universities in Eastern Canada is thoroughly revealed and the ideas and ideals of men like Bishop Strachan, the Reverend Alexander Macdonnel, James McGill, Dr. Egerton Ryerson, the Reverend George O'Kill Stuart and the Reverend Robert Fyfe are compared. He lists the Scotsmen of importance in the Churches of Eastern Canada and in one chapter compares two great Canadians, Bishop Strachan, the conservative and William Lyon Mackenzie, the radical, both of whom had the same end in mind, the good of the individual, the good of the commonwealth, though both thought along entirely different lines. The role of Scots at the time of Confederation

is outlined and in medicine, justice, literature, journalism (which is held apart from literature by Dr. Campbell) and art. In a brief closing chapter the various Scottish Societies of Canada are listed.

The book is a veritable goldmine containing a treasure of information about the Scotch race to which Campbell belonged and it too must be regarded as a classic in its field. With this last prose work I have completed my survey of Wilfred Campbell's prose writing.

CHAPTER IX

POETRY

Although Wilfred Campbell's poetry has filled at least nine volumes, and he edited several anthologies as well, his main output of poetry can be found in four books, Lake Lyrics published in 1889 which contained the poems from his previous, first booklet Snowflakes and Sunbeams which appeared in 1888; The Dread Voyage and Other Poems which was printed in 1893; Beyond the Hills of Dream published in 1899, and a volume of war poetry and patriotic verse entitled Sagas of Vaster Britain which was edited in England in 1912.

His other books of verse, which I will also discuss, were Snowflakes and Sunbeams (1888), Collected Poems (1895), (edited carefully by Campbell, himself), The Poetical Works of Wilfred Campbell (1922), edited by W.J. Sykes an Ottawa librarian, Langemarck and other War Poems (1918) and a volume which is so newly on or off the press that it perhaps should not be mentioned, Collected Poems of William Wilfred Campbell (1950) edited by Dr. Lorne Pierce, editor of the Ryerson Press in Toronto and Dr. Carl F. Klinck, professor of English at Western University in London and Campbell's official biographer.

A tentative analysis has briefly summarized his verse as enjoying an evolution through four stages. His early poetry is termed "lyrical"; his book The Dread Voyage and Other Poems and other miscellaneous published verse of this period is called "emotional"; Beyond the Hills of Dreams is considered mature and "reflective"; and finally, Sagas of Vaster Britain, Langemarck and Other Warm Poems are often patently "narrative" in style. This neatly phrased evolution of descriptive-emotional-refeective-narrative seems absolutely correct and valid though I am at a loss to assign

authorship exactly for the opinion. I believe it came from E.K. Brown, our noted Canadian literary critic who published the volume On Canadian Poetry in 1948 via the Ryerson Press in Toronto. The book was a much needed volume of criticism and is widely appreciated. The phrase was my first and only "key" to the poetry of William Wilfred Campbell. I hope I may be forgiven, if just this once I take the great liberty of quoting my English professor at the University of Ottawa, Dr. George Buxton who described Wilfred Campbell's poetry as "grey or white, of all one color, a monotone" and thereby provoked a literary argument which eventually grew into this thesis. At that time my recollection of Campbell's poetry was small but definite. He had written

Then a fire is on the sumach
And a mist is on the hills
And a gentle pensive glamour
The whole world fills.

and a brief poem about Indian summer, which I could partly remember,

Along the line of smoky hills
The crimson forest stands
And all the day the blue-jay calls
Throughout the autumn lands.

Now by the brook the maple leans
With all his glory spread
And all the sumachs on the hill
Have turned their green to red. (1)

None of these lines had led me to form an opinion that Wilfred Campbell was Canada's own "grey poet". His poetry was brilliant, full of color, of jewelled reds and greens and blues with which he painted the autumn woods, the lakes and sky and hills. Certainly I must find out. After becoming much more thoroughly acquainted with all of Campbell's published writing my final decision rested between my first vivid impression which rested in the roots of memory and the casual description given by Dr. Buxton of "grey

(1) The Poetical Works of Wilfred Campbell, edited by W.J. Sykes, 1922, page 20.

and white". I was tempted to compromise and term Wilfred Campbell "Poet of the Mist" in the title of this thesis. However it would still be fairer I believe to call him "The Autumn Poet", if by so doing we may still conjure up the thought of a man who deals not in terms of grey and white exclusively but in the brilliant autumn colors and the gentle, pensive, persuasive picture of mist floating above the hills and making them smoky in appearance. Campbell did sometimes paint a picture that was subdued and grey in tone, but more often, I have found, he painted the bright shades of autumn.

Campbell's first verse was published in 1888 in St. Stephen's, New Brunswick by the St. Croix Courier Press. It appeared in a very slim booklet entitled variously Sunshine and Snowflakes (according to W.J. Syke: in his preface to The Poetical Works of Wilfred Campbell published in 1922; or Snowflakes and Sunbeams (according to Carl F. Klinck in his biography Wilfred Campbell published in 1942). It contained eighteen pages of verse written in the early days of Campbell's ministry and marriage while living in West Claremont, Massachusetts. The book was favorably received in Toronto, Montreal and St. John and Charles G.D. Roberts welcomed Campbell to the rank of Canadian poets. In tone the verses are full of the peace and domesticity which pervade his early married life in his first parish. These poems were all included in his next volume Lake Lyrics published in 1889 and considered his formal offering as a Canadian poet.

This second volume attracted considerable attention in the United States, England, Scotland, as well as in Canada. Most of the poems sing of his love of nature though a few such as Lazarus reveal Campbell's questioning nature, contemplating the purpose of human life and destiny. All the poems are characterized by a musical quality and his early work has a

finer lighter grace and beauty of form than his later poetry when the finely chiselled line seemed to appeal less to him than the vigor of his words and the importance of the message which expressed the rugged independence and strong delineations of his personality.

One of his earliest poems, Snow appeared first in Snowflakes and Sunbeams and later was included in the Lake Lyrics as was the poem which is considered his most perfect, the twelve-lined lyric Indian Summer which is considered a beautifully complete and lyrical expression of Canadian nature and is often quoted. It is still to be found, as it has been for the past fifty years, in the Canadian public school readers, and I would like to quote it entirely here for it is brief and it is perhaps the best of all Campbell's writing. It has a rare simplicity and charm.

INDIAN SUMMER

Along the line of smoky hills
The crimson forest stands
And all the day the blue-jay calls
Throughout the autumn lands.

Now by the brook the maple leans
With all his glory spread
And all the sumachs on the hill
Have turned their green to red.

Now by great marshes wrapt in mist
Or past some river's mouth
Throughout the long, still, autumn day
Wild birds are flying south. (2)

In order to highlight a little Campbell's first booklet of verse I thought in all justice I should compare the two brief poems which gave the volume its title Snowflakes and Sunbeams. They were Snow and Sunbeams and I do not feel that upon them one could ever base an opinion of Wilfred Campbell as a poet. It would be more fair to turn to the strength and

wonderful poetry in the Ode to Thunder Cape which introduced a chapter about Lake Superior in his book on the Canadian Lake Region...or to read Lake Huron (October) or How one winter came in the Lake Region or some of his other lovely lyrics which appeared in all his other books. Both Snow and Sunbeams are simple little poems; there is a charming imagery and personification with a delicate and lyrical touch. The poem consists of five four-lined stanzas which rhyme in the second and last lines. In his early verse Wilfred Campbell was always noted for his successful use of short mainly one-syllabled words. His expression was entirely Canadian and his verse was perhaps so readily accepted and appreciated in those early days because of its simplicity and ability to be readily understood. He refers to the sunbeams as

...in the caverns of night they spin
The white locks of the moon

and again, And whether by night or whether by day
 They loosen their shining skein
 It falls down out of the heaven's deep
 In a silver or golden rain. (3)

His theme in Snow is equally simple:

Down out of heaven
Frost-kissed
And wind-driven
Flake upon flake
Over forest and lake
Cometh the snow. (4)

In order to make a point I hope that I may be forgiven the liberty of quoting here part of one of my own poems entitled The Mirror:

The water is curling
Over my toes
Lapping up
Swirling over
Gently,
Oh so gently.

(3) Ibid, page 19

(4) Ibid, page 14

I see a face
 Mirrored in the cold, blue pool
 Flesh-tinted and alive.
 There is no ghost
 Nor is the brow
 Sad.
 Curl gently over.

A pebble splashes
 And sinks softly
 With empty weight
 To the bottom of the dish.
 It smashed my face
 Into a thousand splinters.
 I understood. (5)

This poem was published while I was attending the University of Toronto during my last undergraduate year and, as it deserved, it received some criticism. I was told by James Reaney (familiar to readers of his grotesque short stories in "New Liberty" and his modernistic verse in "Canadian Poetry Magazine", "The Forum" and "Here and Now") through the columns of the "The Varsity" and over the air on a CBC arranged radio broadcast in February 1947 that I wrote "very facile verse" and was taking advantage of my ability to do so by limiting a poem like this to a single image. His criticism was justified if not received with any particular grace. And this same accusation I would level at these poems of Wilfred Campbell. He had found that he had the gift of writing "very facile verse" just as I had done and he was taking a single idea and evolving it into a very simple poem. I have since come to realize that it is a sign of immaturity or at least of youth. A beginning poet, experimenting with his medium, sets down sometimes, each idea as it comes to him, on the spur of the moment. The product may be charming verse, but it definitely is slight in importance and slender in meaning. One (and by "one" I think that I mean "any writer") would prefer to be judged by more serious and worthwhile work which may have been evolved only with much effort and perhaps over a long period.

Campbell's Lake Lyrics have a true and lasting beauty and express not his own personality alone but are an unequalled expression of the enchantment of nature in Ontario. Campbell has expressed every mood and season and all the natural beauties of this country. There is also in his early verse the only personal note of human love and passion for these were the first several years of his youthful love and marriage. Some of the verses like A Lake Memory are for that reason particularly haunting and deep in expression.

The lake comes throbbing in with voice of pain
 Across these flats, athwart the sunset's glow
 I see her face, I know her voice again
 Her lips, her breath, O God, as long ago.

To live the sweet past over I would fain
 As lives the day in the red sunset's fire,
 That all these wild, wan marshlands now would stain
 With the dawn's memories, loves and flushed desire.

I call her back across the vanished years
 Nor vain - a white-armed phantom fills her place;
 Its eyes the wind-blown sunset fires, its tears
 This rain of spray that blows about my face. (6)

Again in August Evening on the Beach, Lake Huron he mentions his love:

I will remember till I die
 The sound of pines that sob and sigh,
 Of waves upon the beach that break.

'Twas years ago, and yet it seems,
 O love, but only yesterday
 We stood in holy sunset dreams
 While all the day's diaphanous gleams
 Sobbed into silence bleak and grey.

We scarcely knew, but our two souls
 Like night and day rushed into one;
 The stars came out in gleaming shoals...

...What was it, sweet, our spirits spoke?
 No outward sound of voice was heard
 But was it bird or angel broke
 The silence, till a dream voice woke
 And all the night was music-stirred? (7)

(6) Ibid, page 4

(7) Ibid, page 9

This early volume contained many beautiful lyrics like To the Lakes in June, On the Ledge, August Night, on Georgian Bay and Campbell also attempted, quite successfully true Canadian ballads like the half-humorous Dan'l and Mat and Canadian Folksong with its refrain,

Margery, Margery, make the tea,
Singeth the kettle merrily.....

and such lines as

The doors are shut, the windows fast;
Outside the gust is driving past,
Outside the shivering ivy clings,
While on the hob the kettle sings. (8)

Another poem Little Blue Eyes and Golden Hair is a child's lullaby written about and to his baby daughter and is charmingly written. Upon these poems his reputation as a poet was securely and truly founded. He was a poet whose work will be remembered.

These first two books of domestic and nature verse which had been so well-received had led his readers to expect from his pen a definite type of poetry. They were rudely shocked or awakened by the publication of his third book of poetry The Dread Voyage and Other Poems which appeared in 1893. W.J. Sykes says of this book:

When The Dread Voyage appeared in 1893 it was clear that in the intervening years, the poet had been less absorbed in the moods and external face of Nature, and that his imagination had dwelt more on human life with special attraction to those aspects of it that are gloomy, weird and mystical. (9)

This book included the controversial poem The Mother which was read upon the floor of the House of Commons by Sir John A. MacDonald in defence of Campbell's appointment to the Civil Service on grounds of literary merit. At that time MacDonald proclaimed that Campbell had become the best known poet in Canada and he felt that he was "Canada's foremost poet". All the

(8) Ibid, page 15

(9) Ibid, page XVII

poems in this volume were melancholy in nature. Some dwelt like Sir Lancelot upon the Arthurian legend and I felt that in this category belonged others such as The Dread Voyage and perhaps The Last Ride. Others dwell on themes like disastrous journeys of exploration or rescue, the fall of Pompei and similar historical but tragic episodes. Some are based on legend, which in any case Campbell considered "degenerate history" such as The Werewolves and a few turn to nature again such as An October Evening, To the Rideau River, How one Winter Came to the Lake Region, which is a well-known and much-loved poem, In the Spring Fields and Harvest Slumber Song. I fear that these lovely nature poems were submerged beneath the storm of protest and accusations of lack of taste, and morbidity which were levelled at The Mother and some of the other poems in this book.

The Mother was based on an unusual and rather morbid theme, "the pathetic German superstition that the dead mother's coming back in the night to suckle the baby she has left on earth may be known by the hollow pressed down in the bed where she lay". The topic could hardly be considered desirable and its motive might be questioned from the poetic point of view on "the duty of poetry?" which as early as Sir Philip Sidney's book Prose and Poesie written in the 16th century outlining what he considered the function of poetry, suggested that poetry should amuse, entertain, interest and lend a note of prophecy. If this is the case, and I believe it to be entirely true, then Wilfred Campbell was not justified in setting down such a lengthy and unpleasant series of rhyming couplets. I am certainly not prim and I admit that my opinion is not perhaps solidly considered with great maturity but I found the poem unpleasant, not heroic in stature, not attractive to read and not musical or rhythmic in tone. I disliked the poem intensely, and would wish, myself, to discount it on the

grounds of taste and on Sidney's theory of "duty" which I believe Dryden later re-echoed about 1666, as did Pope and Ben Johnson. In this book there also appeared the first poem by Wilfred Campbell which was both elegaic and patriotic in inspiration. Entitled The Dead Leader it was written on the day of Sir John A. MacDonald's funeral on June 10, 1891. The rhyme scheme is a favored and well-used system of aabccb. The third and sixth lines contain twelve syllables each while the first two and third and fourth contain eight syllables each. The long lines lend a dirge-like note of pomp and slowness to the elegy and the poem seems to me imitative and unoriginal though undoubtedly sincere in inspiration. His sentiments are heart-felt:

With banners draped and furled
 'Mid the sorrow of a world
 We lay him down with fitting pomp and state;
 With slumber in his breast,
 To his long, eternal rest
 We lay him down, this man who made us great. (10)

In 1899 Campbell published in Boston what W.J. Sykes calls "decidedly his best volume of verse up to this time", (xvii SYKES) Beyond the Hills of Dream. Sykes goes on to add "This volume substantially increased his reputation both in America and England". It is nature poetry written out of his recent life in Ottawa about the Laurentian Hills, the Rideau and Ottawa Rivers; and it contains patriotic verse such as Victoria, England and Sebastion Cabot and The World-Mother, Scotland. It does contain the haunting melody of Bereavement of the Fields written in memory of Archibald Lampman who died suddenly on February 10, 1899. It is written in seven-lined stanzas of iambic pentameter which rhyme abababb. In the poem Campbell links him truly with the English nature poets:

(10) Ibid, page 77.

He moves with those whose music filled his ears,
 And claimed his gentle spirit from the throng, -
 Wordsworth, Arnold, Keats, high masters of his song. (11)

Campbell has been accused occasionally of a grave sin, lack of concern with form. I would say more leniently, "He was not preoccupied with form". He did show certain definite trends of style and rhyme and rhythm. Sometimes he wrote in rhyming couplets, sometimes in iambic pentameter, occasionally in blank verse, sometimes in a measure that approached the Alexandrine and at times, particularly in his early verse, in simple four-lined verses such as are seen in Snow. Some of his verse was in the form of the ballad with a refrain at the end of each verse and infrequently he wrote a sonnet. It seems only fair to conclude that Campbell essayed all the various forms of verse, some of them with more success than others, as might be expected. Exceptionally good poems like Ode to Thunder Cape, The Woods at Kilmore, Lake Huron (October) and Vapor and Blue possess not only irrefutable, deep, understanding, and sympathetic beauty but also a well-sustained rhythm and a rhyme scheme perfectly adapted to the subject being described. Some of his lines are unforgettable such as those I have quoted in my sections on "Place-Writing" and "Poetry". He has made frequent use of onomatopoeia, the attunement of his words to the sound they are describing and he has intelligently and brilliantly often used rhymes and lines that accelerate or slow the speed of the poem to fit his intention whether it be elegaic, narrative or lyrical. His deep concern, it is true, was with what he wished to say and although his narrative was his supreme motivation he did not neglect the pre-requisites of his verse. If he had done so, he were no poet! (and I use "were" in the strictly conditional sense.)

The title poem Beyond the Hills of Dream of this, his fourth volume of verse is written as a ballad of eight-lined verses with a refrain which alters slightly from verse to verse:

and, Over the mountains of dream, my Love
 Over the hills of sleep
 Over the mountains of dream, my Love
 Over the hills of care.

It is an idealistic and whimsical poem whose theme is this:

Over the mountains of sleep, my Love
Over the hills of dream,
Beyond the walls of care and fate
Where the loves and memories teem,
We come to a world of fancy free,
Where hearts forget to weep; -
Over the mountains of dream, my Love,
Over the hills of sleep. (12)

It is mature and rhythmic though not, I find, as beautiful nor lyrical as his early Lake Lyrics. Perhaps that is a matter of purely personal opinion. His later poems are more dreadfully mature and stern; his early ones sing and are joyous and lyrical; they appeal therefore to youth and I enjoy and appreciate them greatly. One charming short poem in this book is his ode,

To the Ottawa

Out of the northern wastes, lands of winter and death,
Regions of ruin and age, spaces of solitude lost,
You wash and thunder and sweep,
And dream and sparkle and creep,
Turbulent, luminous, large,
Scion of thunder and frost. (13)

It is vigorous and unexpectedly powerful with a sincerity and sureness of execution which is quite admirable.

In 1905 he collected all the verse previously published which he wished to preserve as well as many new poems and they received a very favorable reception both in America and England and, as W.J. Sykes says

(12) Ibid, page 84.

(13) Ibid, page 119.

in his preface to The Poetical Works of Wilfred Campbell (published in 1922 after Campbell's death and the text which I have most used for this survey of his poetry):

The favorable reception given to this work was an evidence of the secure place Campbell had won among contemporary poets. (14)

Some of the new poems included in this volume were extremely imperialistic in nature and were dedicated to the heroic efforts of the Empire's troops in fighting the Boer War. Many of the titles alone indicate the heroic tenor of his verse and patriotic inclination. They included To the Canadian Patriot, The Patriot, Show the Way England, Britain, Canada, Crowning of Empire, Return of the Troops, The Race. Others were reflective and contemplative, The Soul, My Religion, Death, The Consolation of the Stars, The Higher Kinship. Some also were still turning to nature for inspiration: Nature, Glen Eila, Dawn in the June Woods, A Northern River, Autumn Leaves. This volume also contained an elegy to his brilliant and poetic friend who died so prematurely, Nicholas Flood Davin, whose name is always associated, where it is known, in Canadian Literature, with an air of mystery that intrigues interest and defies understanding. (It seems to me very necessary that his work should be uncovered and, if not published, at least related in some manner to the other writers of his day who valued his friendship so highly and regarded his talent as to the point of genius though marred by his self-destructive instincts.) He also published here his ode to Henry A. Harper, the friend of William Lyon Mackenzie King as well as Campbell, who drowned in the Ottawa River undertaking to rescue a young lady. It seems to me that the personalities of not only the writers of the Ottawa "Group of the Sixties" but also the personalities of their friends is inextricably woven into

the content of their literature and may not readily be divorced from it.

I have not taken pause here to select any of these poems specifically for criticism because none contained any specific factor adding to his poetic valor. They did show the definite trend towards Imperialism but in verse form and rhyme were similar to his other poems which I have discussed. The nature ballad Glen Eila is quite beautiful while some others such as Orpheus are written in simple couplets and undistinguished in sentiment and imagery. The poem Show the Way, England makes evident strong feelings of patriotism and the idea that Canada was a child-like dominion beneath the wing of the "mother country". His workmanship is not as careful as it was in his earlier verse and the poems do not possess as much rhythm nor the freshness of imagery and turn of phrase which made his nature lyrics sing. There is a rather charming sonnet entitled Shelley in which Campbell calls that poet:

Spirit of fire and snow, and heart all dew,
Child of the midnight's glory and the stars. (15)

It is written in the sonnet form and rhymes abbaabba, cdcd ee. Other sonnets are The Poet, The Politician, Night, The Patriot, Britain, On a Picture of Columbus, Love, Earth's Innocence, and there are many others. Campbell did not have the light and sure touch and rhyming ability that makes a sonneteer and so his sonnets are sincere and passable, pleasant to read but have not the lyrical quality and compactness of a single idea by which they might be compared with those of masters like the Elizabethans, Spenser, Shakespeare, Wyatt, Surrey, Sidney, Marlowe. This is unexpected for Campbell's early verse was very lyrical and beautiful and he also professed great admiration for the Elizabethan writers. His later verse lacked humor and wit, the carefree spirit, rhythm and musical qualities. It was deeply sincere, questioning and therefore indecisive and where it

which appeared in 1917. The introduction to the tiny book was written by the Reverend W.T. Herridge of St. Andrew's Church in Ottawa to which the proceeds were dedicated:

In this little book are brought together a few war poems of Dr. Wilfred Campbell, our foremost Canadian singer. They have received enthusiastic praise from the highest literary critics on both sides of the sea; and quite apart from their poetic merit, a noble patriotism breathes through them. Wilfred Campbell dedicated the book to his son, Major Basil Campbell then overseas and also "to the stern spirit of Godlike justice which demands that this fight be fought to a finish". (17)

The poem Langemarck has been much published in such collections as Poems of the Great War edited by Cunliffe, Selected Poems of the War by Clarke, 1916, in this volume Langemarck and Other War Poems, in The Library of the World's Best Literature, 1916 and in the Poetical Works of Wilfred Campbell by W.J. Sykes, 1923. It is usually termed a ballad though strictly speaking it does not adhere to that form since it lacks the accepted refrain. Topical in interest, it does possess some of the necessary qualities of the ballad. The poem describes the first gas attack by the Germans during the last three days of April, 1915 on the field of Langemarck in Belgium and is unorthodox, for rhymed verse as it contains a combination of four, five and six lined stanzas. Generally speaking the four lined verses rhyme only in the second and fourth line while the heterodox verse rhyme in the second and fifth lines. It is definitely not free verse and is a peculiar conglomeration of lines from the point of view of rhyme. The six lined verses rhyme in second, fourth and sixth lines so that the deduceable common denominator of rhyme scheme for this awkward poem is that second and last lines always rhyme throughout the twenty-five verses. The rhymes are again trite; there is no attempt at consonance, that strange essential factor, equivalent to the resonance of sound, but there is in all the war poems the fierce and almost beautiful unity of

(17) Langemarck and Other War Poems by Wilfred Campbell, 1917, page i, Introduction.

purpose. All the poems are fired with a burning patriotism which they retain today and are still sincere and convincing.

Another of the several important poems in this volume is the Avenging Angel with its simple rhyme scheme of abccb with no carry-over of rhyme from stanza to stanza. In metre the lines of each verse are ten, eight, five, five and eight syllables in length respectively. It is not as intricate and complicated in metre as it does at first appear and the poem contains thirteen stanzas. This poem is dedicated to the heroes of the Royal Air Corps and describes a night attack by the RFC on a German Zeppelin (airship) hovering high in the air near London. The poem realistically interprets, for a moment, the air-warfare of the First Great War before a day of Spitfires, buzz bombs, and atomic warfare or mass-plane, long-range bombing raids. There is a lone-wolf flavor about the single plane scanning the air above London and then dropping upon the slow, silvery airship. There is however little beauty in these two poems. The rhymes tend to be rather careless and unoriginal, "tune" and "moon", "I" and "sky", "star" and "far", "night" and "fight", all the unoriginal stand-bys of a second rate poet though this Wilfred Campbell certainly was not when he penned the haunting melodies of such lyrics as Autumn, Indian Summer and When the Snow Came.

I have grown to feel, with deep conviction that Wilfred Campbell's dramas, novels and essays, although they may not meet the high standards of some of his poetry, exist and merit existence for the constant and undoubted sincerity which pervades them all. In an age when Canada needed sincere men, he was sincere. For instance, I conclude that these two war poems attained a fairly marked degree of popularity for their topical

interest, patriotism and stark realism which would create their popular appeal at that time and give them value today for their importance as examples of mature and latter-day work of an outstanding Canadian poet and writer whose reputation was secure and high in England and Canada. Their value today remains the same to the scholar and reader; they are sincere and they are samples.

Of all Wilfred Campbell's war poetry, the poem which I feel is the very best is the four stanza poem Blood Drops of Heroes which has more adequately been called in other collections The Woods at Kilmorie. In its beauty it harks back to his early, exquisite, nature poetry. The poem rhymes ababccbaa and is accurately laid out with a finesse and artistry which some of his late poetry lacked. It shows mastery of technique, his old sureness of touch and interpretation when his writing turned to nature for its inspiration. It also contains the "bitter, insistent call" of his patriotic and imperialistic sentiments, which here ring lastingly through the woods of Kilmorie near his last and loved home on the outskirts of Ottawa. The duality of his feelings, his horror of war and his love of nature are uniquely and impressively combined in the four stanzas which are written in his personal variation of the Alexandrine verse form. Throughout rings the refrain:

When the woods at Kilmorie are scarlet and gold
And the vines are like blood on the wall...

and the second verse, for instance, begins:

When the woods at Kilmorie are scarlet and gold
I see but the beauty of God
Not the small ways of men, and the mean faiths
 they hold..... (18)

The best collection of Wilfred Campbell's poetry available to this

(18) Ibid, page 307.

date has been The Poetical Works of Wilfred Campbell published in 1923 by W.J. Sykes, Ottawa librarian who died in 1942. This volume also contains a penetrating and fairly detailed critique of Campbell's personality and writing which shows great insight and the mark of a deep personal friendship. It is probably valid within certain limitations in the eyes of a man of literary stature and William Wilfred Deacon, literary editor of the Globe and Mail, as well as Campbell's son and daughter have told me that they would have preferred that Duncan Campbell Scott (who also offered) had been able to assume the duties of "literary executor" to Campbell. Scott, himself a great artist and writer of importance in Canadian literature, wished to publish Campbell's posthumous poems and edit his work but was over-ruled by Sykes, a fairly worthy man and loyal friend who said that Campbell had always wished him to edit his work when the occasion should arise.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

William Wilfred Campbell was a fairly prolific writer and like the poet, Wordsworth, he wrote some prose and poetry that was original and beautiful showing a highly developed creative talent and some that was imitative, trite and weak where technique became subordinate to the ideas he expressed and, unfortunately, the validity of some of these ideas has been questioned. He was an Imperialist and a Victorian at a time when those ideas had become declass  . He was influenced both in his youth and in his maturity by many of the Victorians, including Tennyson, Browning, Stevenson, Poe, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth, Scott and Dickens and yet he admired also the Elizabethans and retained a little of their flavor, rather inexpertly distilled from the contents of the age.

His dominating characteristic was his sincerity. What he lacked in humor he made up for in idealism and a childlike faith in human nature which remained with him in spite of disillusionment and is one of his most charming traits. His youthful poetry, comprising his beautiful lake lyrics and nature poetry and his two books of place-writing Canada and The Beauty, History, Romance and Mystery of the Canadian Lake Region are, I believe, his most beautiful and technically flawless writing while many of his essays published in various Ontario papers are stimulating, thought-provoking and often ahead of their time. His ideals with regard to education and national maturity were foresighted although his views on politics and Canada's status were insular, reactionary and unimpressive.

His position in Canadian literature, located centrally in the "Group of the 1860's" makes him a definitely delineated figure in the development of Canadian poetry and prose. He was the friend of some of Canada's greatest men including William Lyon Mackenzie King, Sir John A.

MacDonald, Sir Wilfred Laurier, Dr. Tait Mackenzie, Dr. Wm. Henry Drummond, Duncan Campbell Scott, Archibald Lampman, Bliss Carman, Charles G.D. Roberts, Lord Grey (Governor-General of Canada), the ninth Duke of Argyll (Governor-General of Canada) and many others: doctors, lawyers, writers, actors, politicians, sculptors, soldiers. His reputation in England and Scotland was secure and he was lionized abroad in the British Isles to a far greater extent than he was in Canada where his minor position in the Civil Service of Canada led some people to refuse him due recognition. He was a staunch supporter of lost causes which made that great and progressive body, the United States of America, consider him a petty writer and left him the prey of avid American critics. His personal integrity was so firm that he gained a name for being outspoken and, perhaps, a little rash in action, yet his kindnesses were many and his intentions good. His total personality was human. Like many Canadians his love for Canada was deep, fervent and highly personal. It is revealed in every poem and non-fictional prose-work he wrote. He was a highly educated and intelligent Canadian with a large and detailed knowledge of Canada and his fellow-Canadians so that his books about Canada are extremely valuable and meritorious pieces of place-writing.

In my thesis I have tried to portray, by example, a broad and fairly complete portion of his writing and to emphasize the inseparable features of his personality intertwined so closely with his work. I hope that I may be forgiven if the biographical detail of my work has seemed over-long. It has been a deliberate failing on my part for, as I talked to the friends and family of Wilfred Campbell, I was told many anecdotes, hitherto unwritten and unpublished, which seemed important as they revealed his personality. It is absolutely impossible, in my mind, to divorce a

writer's personality from his work for the circumstances of his life exert inevitably a profound influence upon his writing. He writes out of his experience and out of his environment. I have therefore felt entirely justified in including an unplanned and somewhat unexpected amount of biographical material without which I came to feel that my discussion of the poet would be manifestedly incomplete, and by being incomplete might be inaccurate. I have discussed his excursion into the ministry, his civil service career, his trips to England, his comparative literary reputation in Canada, the United States, England and Scotland, the friends he made, the people and events he knew, which all together made up his background. I have outlined, almost after the fashion of black-and-white sketches, his literary works and I have, with temerity, expressed an opinion which is entirely my own and compounded of both criticism and admiration for his writing. It is valid insofar as it is the opinion of one more individual who was interested and somewhat-trained in appreciation of our Canadian literature.

That interest does exist at the present in the work of Wilfred Campbell is revealed by the fact that his formal biography was completed by Carl F. Klinck (Professor of English at the University of Western Ontario) and published by the Ryerson Press in 1942. This interest is also admissible because I have completed this thesis on Canada's "poet of the mist" and it is in evidence in the new book, The Complete Poems of Wilfred Campbell edited and compiled by Dr. Lorne Pierce, editor of the Ryerson Press, Toronto, with a foreword by Campbell's biographer, Dr. Carl F. Klinck, which is to be published in 1950 (the galley proofs are at present just off the press) by the Ryerson Press. Letters of encouragement from Mackenzie King, Dr. Lorne Pierce, William Arthur Deacon and several other

editors and writers, conversations with many members of the Canadian Authors' Association, with the members of Campbell's family who live in Ottawa, and with many other interested individuals, have shown me that there is a definite need for further exploration and deeper investigation into the roots of our Canadian literature and, in particular, a clearer picture is needed of the activity of the fascinating "Group of the Sixties" who played so important a role in the development of our Canadian poetry and prose.

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