

**TECUMSEH; A  
DRAMA AND  
CANADIAN POEMS**

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Tecumseh; a drama and Canadian poems by Charles Mair

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**CHARLES MAIR**

**TECUMSEH; A  
DRAMA AND  
CANADIAN POEMS**





Amos Fairbanks  
C. Tracy



# Tecumseh

A Drama

(SECOND EDITION)



AND

## Canadian Poems



BY

### CHARLES MAIR



TORONTO:

WILLIAM BRIGGS

1901



4752  
2455  
72  
21

~~752~~  
~~112 48~~  
~~1152~~

TO THE SURVIVORS  
OF THE  
**"Canada First" Association**  
THIS VOLUME IS  
AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

## PREFACE.

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THE first edition of "Tecumseh," published in Toronto in 1886, had a quick sale, but, not being stereotyped, ran out of print, and a re-issue is now called for. The author has often been asked to republish his youthful venture, entitled "Dreamland, and other Poems," only a limited number of copies of which saw the light. Whilst the edition was passing through the binder's hands in Ottawa, and the author himself in the then wilderness of Prince Rupert's Land, the greater part of it was burnt in the Desbarats fire in 1869. In the following pages (Part II.) the major portion of that unfortunate volume is included, with such revision as seemed desirable.

For the shortcomings of his work, of which the author is but too conscious, his only excuse is that he has done his best. Our romantic Canadian story is a mine of character and incident for the poet and novelist, framed, too, in a matchless environment; and the Canadian author who seeks inspiration there is helping to create for a young people that decisive test of its intellectual faculties, an original and distinctive literature—a literature liberal in its range, but, in its highest forms, springing in a large measure from the soil, and "tasting of the wood." Any work of this kind, therefore, is on the right path, and, though of slender pretensions otherwise, may possess the merits of suggestiveness and sincerity. For his own part, the writer may say, with regard to the book now in hand, that its colouring, at any rate, is due to a lifetime's observation of those primitive inter-racial and formative influences which,



together with a time-honoured polity, are the source of the Canadian tradition.

In "Tecumseh" the author attempts to depict dramatically the time and scenes in which the great Indian so nobly played his part—at first independently, and in his own country, and afterwards in alliance and leadership with General Brock in the War of 1812. That war was the turning point of Canada's destiny. It was maintained mainly within her borders—a community of some 70,000 souls in Upper Canada, with about thrice that number in the Lower Province, being pitted against a nation of 8,000,000. Upper Canada was then a wilderness almost unbroken, save by the clearings of the United Empire Loyalists and their sons. There were only 1,500 Imperial troops in the Province, scattered along an immense frontier; and England, when the United States declared war, was in the throes of her deadly struggle with Napoleon. In the face of such emergencies, the courage and vigor of the Canadian people of both races can be truly appreciated. Enrolling during the war over 500,000 men, and repeatedly entering Canada at many points, the invaders were at last everywhere discomfited, and at its close had been driven to a man from Canadian soil. The bitter feelings engendered by the long struggle have died down, and racial sympathies, wantonly alienated on the one hand by despotic statecraft in the previous century, and, on the other, by a criminal and unprovoked attack upon Canada, have revived, and are rightly taking their place. The tradition lives, but the feelings begot of it, like the ancient memories of Flodden and Bannockburn in the mother-land, are now academic. In this altered spirit Americans, in their fiction and histories, restore the body and pressure, even the rancours of the time, without offence; whilst Canadians, in

like manner, call to mind the decisive victories which preserved their liberties.

Both preface and notes to the drama are, no doubt, superfluous to many home readers; but, as the book is to be published in the Old Country, and as the persons of the drama move in an atmosphere—a domain of Nature's things—unfamiliar to people there, the notes may be read with advantage perhaps before turning to the text, especially as the study in England of Canadian history subsequent to the Conquest is said to be confined to experts—the general reader being familiar only with the captivating pages of Parkman. Certainly knowledge of such a momentous event to Canada as the War of 1812 must be far from common, since its greatest names seem to be unknown. Lieut.-Colonel G. T. Denison, in his recent book, "Soldiering in Canada," states that "few even of the well-educated people of England have ever heard of Brock, and, if his name is mentioned, the question is generally asked, Who was General Brock?" If such be the case, no doubt Tecumseh is also unknown, yet these are names familiar as household words in the mouths of Canadians. Both were men of transcendent ability, to whose genius and self-sacrifice at the most critical period in her history is due the preservation of Canada to the Empire. At the outbreak of the war numbers of aliens domiciled in the Upper Province had contrived to spread dismay amongst a timid and wavering section of the community. It was at this juncture that the bold stroke of Brock and Tecumseh at Detroit electrified the people. Both heroes subsequently fell, but not until all Canada, inspired by their example, had resolved to fight it out to the end. It seems strange that well-read Englishmen should be ignorant of this vital record, whose stirring chapters exhibit in the clearest light the spirit and

the springs of action which have made Canada what she is. If the prophetic soul of a wide empire, "dreaming on things to come," is already prefiguring an imperial adjustment in which the larger, if not the greater, Britain shall be the outworks, and the mother-country the citadel, it is surely important that she should know something of the history and idiosyncrasies of her offspring. The habitudes of each colony are largely the products of distinct environments which can never be transfused, and must be reckoned with hereafter as constant factors in the interaction of imperial politics. Certain it is that, even if the characteristic features and incidents of Canadian history were unrecorded, they would still survive in tradition, and influence for generations, perhaps for ages to come, the feelings and sympathies of both sections of her people. Not that thereby they are less true to their institutions; on the contrary, loyalty has crystallized in Canada. Nowhere has judgment been less warped or a people's insight been more clear and penetrating regarding the great question of a United Empire. Nowhere has public opinion been more instinctively opposed to disintegration. With all her faults, Canada has ever been true to the high ideal. Even when the mother-country seemed ignobly to falter and fall away, she saw in it the indispensable safe-guard of our common interests, and with enlarged confidence in her own future, looks forward to its fulfilment still with abiding faith. For then Canada shall cease to be a dependency, and become a nation. Then shall a whole family of young giants stand

"Erect, unbound, at Britain's side—"

her imperial offspring oversea, the upholders in the far future of her glorious tradition, or, should exhaustion ever come, the props and support of her declining years.