



DELPHI
CLASSICS

Thomas Campbell
Complete Poetical Works

DELPHI POETS SERIES

D E L P H I P O E T S S E R I E S

Thomas Campbell

(1777-1844)



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The Delphi Classics Catalogue



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Version 1

DELPHI POETS SERIES

Thomas Campbell



By Delphi Classics, 2025

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NOTE



When reading poetry on an eReader, it is advisable to use a small font size and landscape mode, which will allow the lines of poetry to display correctly.

The Life and Poetry of Thomas Campbell



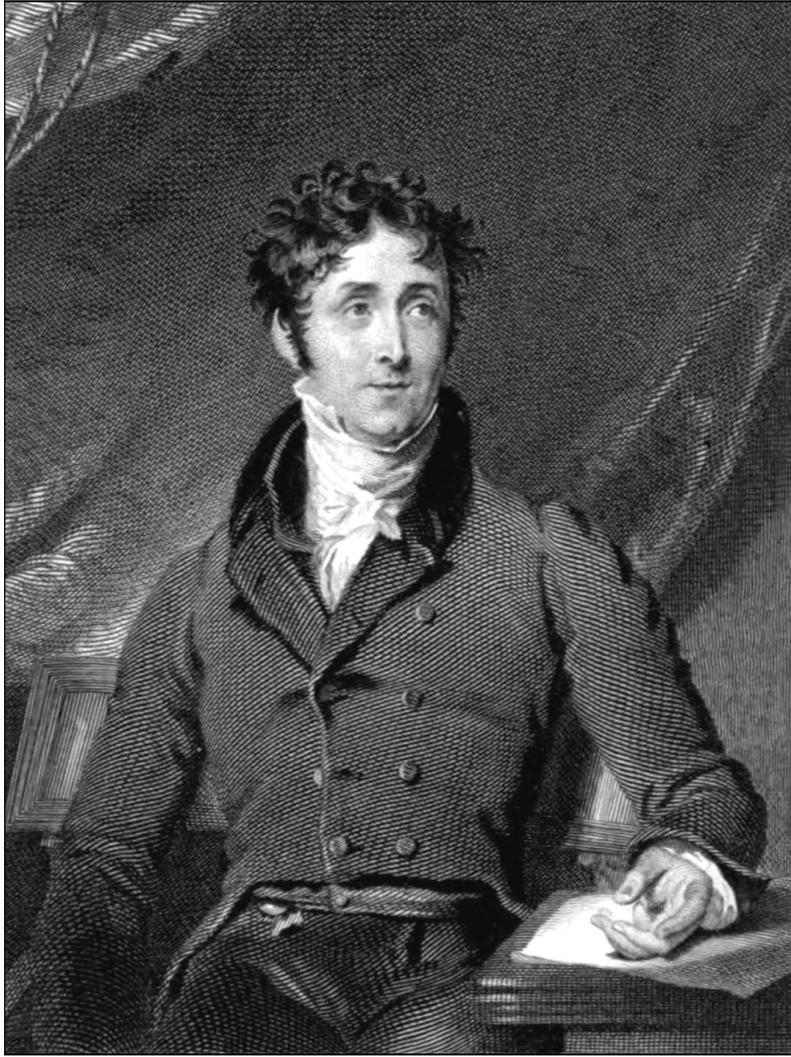
Old Glasgow — Thomas Campbell's birthplace



High Street, Glasgow, 1868 — Campbell was born in the High Street on 27 July 1777.



The High Street today



Campbell as a young man, by Sir Thomas Lawrence, c. 1800

Brief Introduction: Thomas Campbell

From '1911 Encyclopædia Britannica', Volume 5

THOMAS CAMPBELL (1777-1844), Scottish poet, eighth son of Alexander Campbell, was born at Glasgow on the 27th of July 1777. His father, who was a cadet of the family of Campbell of Kirnan, Argyllshire, belonged to a Glasgow firm trading in Virginia, and lost his money in consequence of the American war. Campbell was educated at the grammar school and university of his native town. He won prizes for classics and for verse-writing, and the vacations he spent as a tutor in the western Highlands. His poem "Glenara" and the ballad of "Lord Ullin's Daughter" owe their origin to a visit to Mull. In May 1797 he went to Edinburgh to attend lectures on law. He supported himself by private teaching and by writing, towards which he was helped by Dr Robert Anderson, the editor of the *British Poets*. Among his contemporaries in Edinburgh were Sir Walter Scott, Henry Brougham, Francis Jeffrey, Dr Thomas Brown, John Leyden and James Grahame. To these early days in Edinburgh may be referred "The Wounded Hussar," "The Dirge of Wallace" and the "Epistle to Three Ladies." In 1799, six months after the publication of the *Lyrical Ballads* of Wordsworth and Coleridge, *The Pleasures of Hope* was published. It is a rhetorical and didactic poem in the taste of his time, and owed much to the fact that it dealt with topics near to men's hearts, with the French Revolution, the partition of Poland and with negro slavery. Its success was instantaneous, but Campbell was deficient in energy and perseverance and did not follow it up. He went abroad in June 1800 without any very definite aim, visited Klopstock at Hamburg, and made his way to Regensburg, which was taken by the French three days after his arrival. He found refuge in a Scottish monastery. Some of his best lyrics, "Hohenlinden," "Ye Mariners of England" and "The Soldier's Dream," belong to his German tour. He spent the winter in Altona, where he met an Irish exile, Anthony McCann, whose history suggested "The Exile of Erin." He had at that time the intention of writing an epic on Edinburgh to be entitled "The Queen of the North." On the outbreak of war between Denmark and England he hurried home, the "Battle of the Baltic" being drafted soon after. At Edinburgh he was introduced to the first Lord Minto, who took him in the next year to London as occasional secretary. In June 1803 appeared a new edition of the *Pleasures of Hope*, which some lyrics were added.

In 1803 Campbell married his second cousin, Matilda Sinclair, and settled in London. He was well received in Whig society, especially at Holland House. His prospects, however, were slight when in 1805 he received a government pension of £200. In that year the Campbells removed to Sydenham. Campbell was at this time regularly employed on the *Star* newspaper, for which he translated the foreign news. In 1809 he published a narrative poem in the Spenserian stanza, "Gertrude of Wyoming," with which were printed some of his best lyrics. He was slow and fastidious in composition, and the poem suffered from over-elaboration. Francis Jeffrey wrote to the author: "Your timidity or fastidiousness, or some other knavish quality, will not let you give your conceptions glowing, and bold, and powerful, as they present themselves; but you must chasten, and refine, and soften them, forsooth, till half their nature and grandeur is chiselled away from them. Believe me, the world will never know how truly you are a great and original poet till you venture to cast

before it some of the rough pearls of your fancy.” In 1812 he delivered a series of lectures on poetry in London at the Royal Institution; and he was urged by Sir Walter Scott to become a candidate for the chair of literature at Edinburgh University. In 1814 he went to Paris, making there the acquaintance of the elder Schlegel, of Baron Cuvier and others. His pecuniary anxieties were relieved in 1815 by a legacy of £4000. He continued to occupy himself with his *Specimens of the British Poets*, the design of which had been projected years before. The work was published in 1819. It contains on the whole an admirable selection with short lives of the poets, and prefixed to it an essay on poetry containing much valuable criticism. In 1820 he accepted the editorship of the *New Monthly Magazine*, and in the same year made another tour in Germany. Four years later appeared his “Theodric”, a not very successful poem of domestic life. He took an active share in the foundation of the university of London, visiting Berlin to inquire into the German system of education, and making recommendations which were adopted by Lord Brougham. He was elected lord rector of Glasgow University three times (1826–1829). In the last election he had Sir Walter Scott for a rival. Campbell retired from the editorship of the *New Monthly Magazine* in 1830, and a year later made an unsuccessful venture with the *Metropolitan Magazine*. He had championed the cause of the Poles in *The Pleasures of Hope*, and the news of the capture of Warsaw by the Russians in 1831 affected him as if it had been the deepest of personal calamities. “Poland preys on my heart night and day,” he wrote in one of his letters, and his sympathy found a practical expression in the foundation in London of the Association of the Friends of Poland. In 1834 he travelled to Paris and Algiers, where he wrote his *Letters from the South* (printed 1837).

The small production of Campbell may be partly explained by his domestic calamities. His wife died in 1828. Of his two sons, one died in infancy and the other became insane. His own health suffered, and he gradually withdrew from public life. He died at Boulogne on the 15th of June 1844, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.



Thomas Campbell by John Henning, 1813



Thomas Reid by Henry Raeburn, 1796 – Campbell's father was a close friend of Reid, after whom the poet was named. Thomas Reid (1710-1796) was a religiously trained Scottish philosopher best known for his philosophical method, his theory of perception, and its wide implications on epistemology.



In 1797 Campbell travelled to the University of Edinburgh to attend lectures on law. He continued to support himself as a tutor and through his writing, aided by Robert Anderson, the editor of the British Poets.

THE
PLEASURES OF HOPE;

IN TWO PARTS.

WITH OTHER

P O E M S.

BY THOMAS CAMPBELL.



EDINBURGH:

PRINTED FOR MUNDELL & SON;
AND FOR LONGMAN & REES, AND J. WRIGHT, LONDON.

1799.

The first edition title page of Campbell's first book, published in 1799, six months after the publication of Wordsworth and Coleridge's 'Lyrical Ballads'. 'The Pleasures of Hope' is a rhetorical and didactic poem in the taste of his time, owing much to the fact that it dealt with topics such as the French Revolution, the partition of Poland and slavery. Its success was instantaneous, but Campbell was slow to follow it up.



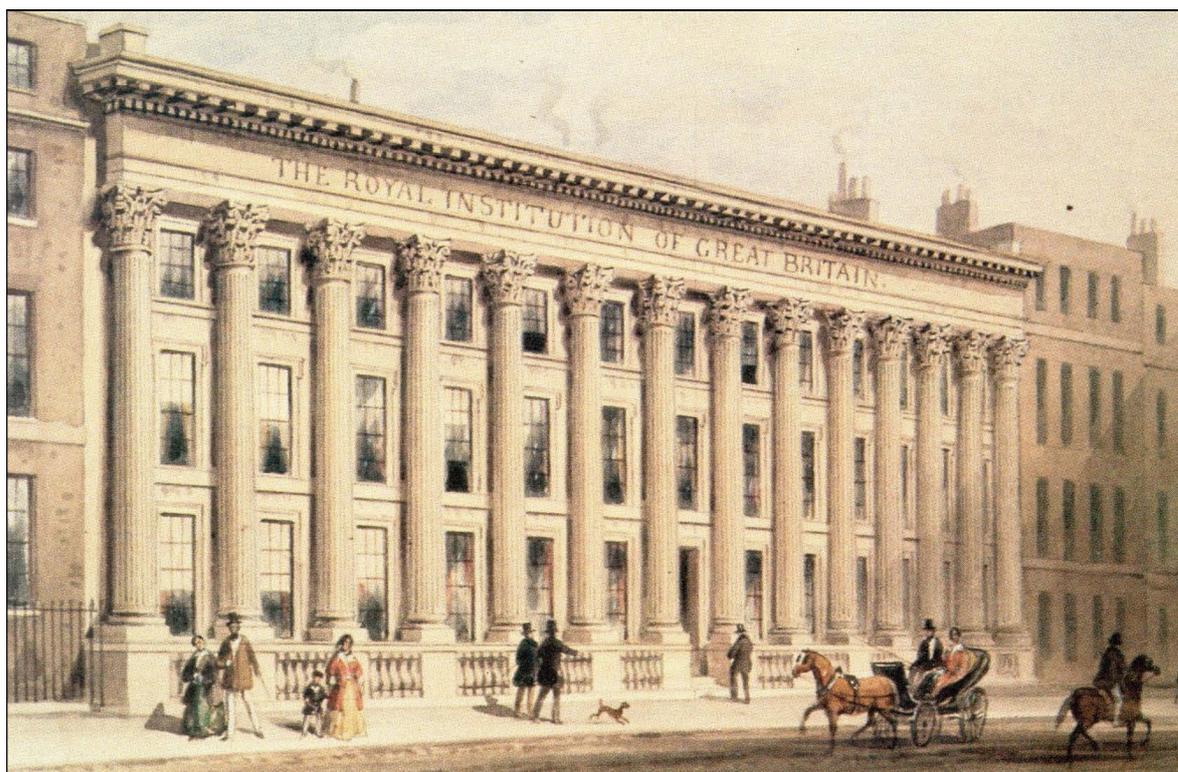
'Massacre of Wyoming, July 3-4, 1778' by Alonzo Chappel, 1858 — Campbell's poem 'Gertrude of Wyoming: A Pennsylvanian Tale' (1809) is a romantic epic composed in Spenserian stanzas, written in the context of the Battle of Wyoming. Also known as the Wyoming Massacre, this was a military engagement during the American Revolutionary War between Patriot militia and a force of Loyalist soldiers and Iroquois warriors. The battle took place in the Wyoming Valley of Pennsylvania on 3 July 1778, in what is now Luzerne County. The result was an overwhelming defeat for the Americans.



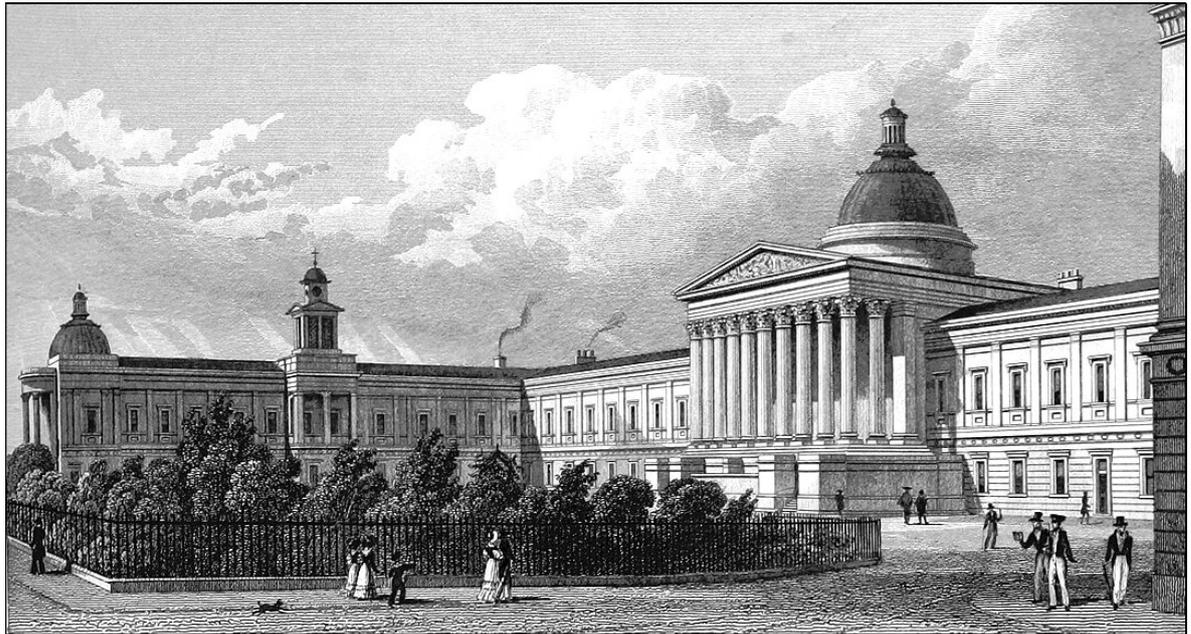
'The Battle of Hohenlinden' by Henri Frédéric Schopin, 1836. The subject of another famous poem by Campbell, the Battle of Hohenlinden (situated 20 miles east of Munich) was fought on 3 December 1800 during the French Revolutionary Wars. A French army under Jean Victor Marie Moreau won a decisive victory over an Austrian and Bavarian force led by 18-year-old Archduke John of Austria. The allies were forced into a disastrous retreat that compelled them to request an armistice, effectively ending the War of the Second Coalition.



'The Battle of Copenhagen, 2 April 1801' by Nicholas Pocock, 1806 — the subject of Campbell's famous 1801 poem 'Battle of the Baltic'



The Royal Institution building on Albemarle Street, London, c. 1838 — in 1812 Campbell delivered a series of lectures on poetry in London at the Royal Institution; he was urged by Sir Walter Scott to become a candidate for the chair of literature at Edinburgh University.



Campbell took an active role in the foundation of University College London (originally known as London University), visiting Berlin to inquire into the German system of education, while making recommendations that were adopted by Lord Brougham.



Portrait of Sir Walter Scott by Thomas Lawrence, c. 1826 – Campbell's close friend and supporter. In 1826 Campbell was elected Lord Rector of Glasgow University in competition against Scott.



Thomas Campbell by Thomas Clement Thompson, 1847

Complete Poetical Works of Thomas Campbell

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PREFATORY MEMOIR.



THOMAS CAMPBELL WAS born in Glasgow, July 27, 1777. He was of good family, his father being the youngest son of a Highland laird, Campbell of Kirnan, who could trace his descent from Gilespie le Camile, first Norman lord of Lochawe. As was (and is) usual with the younger sons of Scottish families of rank, Campbell's father was destined for a commercial career. He commenced it in Virginia, where he entered into partnership with a kinsman, and returning with him to Scotland, carried on the business in Glasgow, till the wars between Great Britain and her American Colonies for a time seriously injured British commerce. After incurring severe losses he at length gave up business altogether, and retired into private life with diminished means and a large family.

Thomas, the poet, was the youngest of eleven children, and was born after his father had retired. At eight years of age he was sent to the Grammar School of Glasgow, and became the pupil of David Alison, who soon detected the infant genius of his pupil. The boy worked hard for his years, but his health was delicate, and, like Walter Scott, he had to be sent away for the benefit of country air. Amidst the fields and green lanes he regained health and strength, and returning to his studies made rapid progress, especially in Greek. At twelve years old, he gained prizes for his translations from the Greek poets.

In 1793 Campbell commenced the study of the law in the office of his relative Mr. Alexander Campbell, a Writer to the Signet, of Glasgow; but he soon abandoned it, and again devoted himself to more congenial pursuits. About this time his *Lines on Marie Antoinette* appeared in the poet's corner of a Glasgow paper; he had already won a prize for his poem *On Description* from the University.

In 1795 the failure of a Chancery suit still further reduced his father's income, and Campbell, eager to reduce the family expenses, sought and obtained a tutorship in the family of a Mrs. Campbell of Sunipol, in the Hebrides, for the summer months. The romantic beauty of his new home strongly impressed the youthful poet, and it was whilst wandering on the wild lonely shores of Mull, that the subject of his celebrated poem the *Pleasures of Hope* was suggested to him by his friend Mr. Hamilton Paul. A rock on the isle, on which he often sat and mused, obtained and still keeps the name of the "Poet's Seat."

In the autumn Campbell returned to his studies at the University, and finally closed his academic career by winning two prizes — one for the *Choephorcæ* of Aristophanes, and the other for the *Chorus in the Medea* of Euripides.

After quitting the University, he again became a tutor — this time in the family of General Napier, who was greatly interested in the gifted young man beneath his roof. It was during this residence in Argyleshire that he wrote *Love and Madness*, and some other poems.

In 1798 the poet proceeded to Edinburgh, determined to try his fortune in the Scottish metropolis. He had an introduction to Dr. Robert Anderson, who, struck with his ability, recommended him to Mr. Mundell, the publisher. Mr. Mundell at once gave him literary work, his first task being to compile an abridgment of Bryan Edward's *West Indies*. He also obtained pupils, and thus managed to secure a comfortable livelihood. But by degrees the love of poetry grew too strong for this

routine of industry, and he gradually devoted himself to the composition of the *Pleasures of Hope*. Campbell's life at this time must have been a very happy one. He was enraptured with his task, and he had many and kind friends in Edinburgh — amongst them was Francis (afterwards Lord) Jeffrey. To his aunt Mrs. Campbell, and to his beautiful cousin Margaret, who resided in Edinburgh, he used to read his verses, and was cheered and encouraged by their applause.

When the poem was finished, Dr. Anderson took it to Mr. Mundell, who, after some consideration, offered the poet £60 for it, an offer which was accepted.

The poem appeared, and Campbell at once became famous. Everywhere it was read and admired, and it secured to the Author a permanent reputation at the age of twenty-one. The *Pleasures of Hope* went through four editions in a year. In the second edition several new and remarkably fine passages were introduced.

In 1800 Campbell left Scotland in order to visit Germany. He landed at Hamburg; and proceeded, after a short residence there, to Ratisbon, which he reached only three days before the French took it, and was, consequently, obliged to seek a refuge with the monks of the Benedictine College; from the walls of which he beheld a cavalry charge made by the German horse on the French under Grenier. The scenes of war through which it was now his fate to pass, no doubt suggested his fine lyric of *Hohenlinden*, though he was not a spectator of the fight (Dr. Beattie tells us) — it occurred after he had left the scene of war.

The times were now so troubled that Campbell hastened homeward, the moment he could obtain his passports. At Hamburg, where he remained for a while, he wrote the *Exile of Erin*. From Hamburg he proceeded to Altona, and thence to England. During his absence he had sent several small poems to the *Morning Chronicle*, and on his return he was received and welcomed cordially by its editor, Mr. Perry, who introduced him to the best literary society in London. But from the natural enjoyment of his popularity he was called by the tidings of his father's death, and he hurried at once to Edinburgh. Here he found that an absurd charge of treason had been made against him, which, however, his own prompt and manly demand of an investigation of his conduct at once quashed. Moreover, his trunk, which had been seized on its way homewards, was examined, and amongst his papers was found the glorious national lyric, *Ye Mariners of England*, which he had written at Altona. The patriotic feeling displayed in it at once assured the Sheriff of Edinburgh of the poet's innocence of the crime with which he was charged, and the affair ended in the young poet's character being entirely cleared.

From the period of his father's death it became Campbell's duty to provide in a great measure for his widowed mother and his sister, and he worked bravely and patiently for them at literary task-work.

In 1801 he visited London at Lord Minto's invitation, and passed a season of great gaiety in the midst of the literary celebrities of England. On his return to Edinburgh he published *Lochiel*, and *Hohenlinden*, and brought out the seventh edition of the *Pleasures of Hope*.

In 1802 Campbell married his cousin, Miss Matilda Sinclair, and went shortly afterwards to reside at Sydenham, then a lovely and rather aristocratic place, — where his memory was long cherished, and his dwelling is even now pointed out to strangers.

Here he supported by his literary labour his mother, his wife, and children; and was occupied and happy. He contributed to the *Philosophical Magazine*, the *Star* paper, and planned his *Specimens of the British Poets*.

In 1805 Campbell received a pension of £200 from the Crown, which must have greatly relieved the anxieties of a husband and father dependent on so precarious a profession as literature. But he retained only half for himself; the remainder he divided between his mother and sister; an act of generosity which afterwards, we are told, led to his receiving a handsome legacy of nearly £5,000 from a Highland cousin.

In 1809 *Gertrude of Wyoming*, *Lord Ullin's Daughter*, and *The Battle of the Baltic* were published. Several prose works also appeared from Campbell's pen; in 1807, the *Annals of Great Britain from the Accession of George III. to the Peace of Amiens*, was published anonymously in Edinburgh. He wrote also a *Life of Petrarch* in 1841, and edited numerous works. In 1818, the long-planned *Specimens of the British Poets* was produced in London. After this publication, Campbell delivered lectures at the Surrey Institution on English Poetry, and the public pronounced him to be as elegant a critic as he was a fine poet. In a pecuniary sense, everything he did prospered.

In 1824 *Theodric* was published, which, however, obtained small favour with the public. In fact a new style of poetry had superseded that of the day when the *Pleasures of Hope* won golden opinions; Scott had since charmed the ear with his *Lay* and his *Lady of the Lake*, and had been in turn supplanted by the fiery muse of Byron, and — though not then fully appreciated — the matchless melody and classic charm of Shelley. After the productions of these great poets, the calm and unimpassioned *Theodric* fell flat on the public ear; in fact there is no comparison between it and the *Pleasures of Hope*.

As a lyric poet, Campbell, however, continued unrivalled, and would have held his own place in our literature if he had never written more than the *Mariners of England* and *Hohenlinden*. Nor did the *Pleasures of Hope* lose its hold on public favour; it has retained it to this day, except in a certain clique of critics. There are passages in it which will ever have a strong hold on our sympathies; and which will be remembered when the half intelligible utterances of our more modern times shall only excite wonder and amusement.

In 1827 one of Campbell's early day-dreams, that of being Lord Rector of his own University, was gratified. He was chosen, though no less a rival than Sir Walter Scott was in the field, and he filled the position so well, and so much to the benefit of the University, that he was re-elected the two following years.

In 1820 Colbourne offered him the editorship of the *New Monthly Magazine*, which he accepted and retained till 1830, at a salary of £500 per annum. His sub-editor — a very efficient one — was Mr. Cyrus Redding.

In 1831 Campbell brought out the *Metropolitan Magazine*, editing it himself.

Meantime much domestic affliction had fallen on him. He had lost a child, and his dear wife died in 1828, a loss which greatly affected him. But he made himself other strong interests besides domestic and literary ones. The Poles and the Greeks had enlisted his most ardent sympathies, and had the best aid of his pen. Moreover, he travelled in France and Germany, and in 1834 as far as Algiers, from whence he wrote the *Letters from the South*, published in the *Metropolitan Magazine*.

In 1838 he was presented to the Queen by the chief of his clan, the Duke of Argyle, at the first levee held by the fair young Sovereign after her accession to the throne. He had loyally offered her a present of his works; the Queen accepted them, and graciously sent him in return her picture. Campbell had been always a Liberal, but, like Leigh Hunt, he was won by the gentle lady who held the sceptre to sincere loyalty to the Crown.

Campbell moved to No. 8, Victoria Square, Pimlico, in 1840, and adopted, as the sharer of his solitary home, his niece, Mary Campbell, whose gentle ministrations soothed his declining years, and brightened the last hours of his life.

In 1842 *The Pilgrim of Glencoe* was published, but it was not well received, and the aged poet began to perceive that it was time to lay by his pen; that he spoke to a generation he could not charm. Nevertheless his age was honoured and prosperous. His works produced nearly £700 a year, and his means exceeded altogether £1000 per annum. But he fancied he should prefer a cheaper residence than London, and in compliance with the aged poet's fancy, his niece accompanied him to Boulogne, where they settled, at 5, Rue Petit St. Jean.

Here he remained in a varying state of health till 1844, when he became seriously ill, and the physician, Dr. Allatt, gave no hopes of his recovery. His faithful and beloved friend, Dr. Beattie — by whom a charming memoir of the poet has been since published — came to him, and did his best to soothe the last moments of the dying poet.

His death-bed was truly Christian. Some of his last words were “Come, let us sing praises to Christ,” “Let us pray for one another.”

On the 15th of June 1844, his spirit passed calmly, without a struggle, to a better world.

The body of the poet was brought to England, and on the 3rd of July buried in Westminster Abbey, near the centre of the Poet's Corner. His funeral was attended by numerous friends and admirers, amongst whom were his chief, the Duke of Argyle, and Sir Robert Peel, then premier.

Thus closed the life of one of the most popular poets of the beginning of our century. Prosperous in its public phase — very sad and sorely tried in its domestic one. He had refined taste and pleasing manners; and no reproach rests upon his private or public character. In his youth he was singularly beautiful in person. Leigh Hunt tells us (in his autobiography) that Campbell's face and person were rather on a small scale, “his features regular, his eye lively and penetrating, and when he spoke, dimples played about his mouth, which, nevertheless, had something restrained and close in it. Some gentle Puritan seemed to have crossed the breed, and to have left a stamp on his face, such as we often see in the female Scotch face rather than the male.”

No poet, except Shakespeare, has been so frequently quoted as Campbell. Many of his lines have become proverbs:— “Coming events cast their shadows before,” “'Tis distance lends enchantment to the view,” &c. &c. are as familiar to us as household words. “His verses” says a writer in *Chambers's Papers for the People*, “cannot be mistaken for those of any other English poet — his odes do not resemble those of Dryden, Collins, or Gray — they stand alone.... Scott said, ‘he could imitate all the modern poets but Tom Campbell,’ he could not imitate him because his peculiarity was more in the matter than the manner.” High praise this! Byron said that he believed Campbell wrote so little poetry because he was afraid of comparison with his early and famous poem: we have not the volume to quote the exact words. We are rather inclined to think that the true reason why he gave us no more poems than we possess at present was, not only that his taste was exceedingly refined and fastidious — he would not admit many charming minor poems into his collected works — but that, like Goldsmith, his time was much occupied by task-work for the publishers; and as he would not suffer hastily written lines to appear, or any which he had not carefully polished, the quantity he produced was necessarily small. We are told in *Notes and Queries* that he took some pains (returning to the house where he had

written it for the purpose) to substitute a single word which he believed would be an improvement on another in his *Stanzas to Florine!* Consequently, his poems must have occupied time and thought beyond what we may imagine from their length, and his leisure could not have been great. It would have been better, perhaps, if more voluminous poets had imitated his reticence, and given us quality rather than quantity.

Campbell was a pleasant companion, and when he pleased could (we have Byron's authority for it) talk delightfully; but he was occasionally absent and silent. His poetry is much admired by foreigners. Madame de Staël was enraptured with the *Pleasures of Hope*, and Goethe was a warm admirer of the Poet.

His domestic character was excellent, and his family sorrows — of which this is no place to speak — were borne by him with patient courage.

His *Life*, admirably given us by his friend Dr. Beattie, is well worth reading as a record of Genius, aided by patient perseverance, struggling with difficulties, and vanquishing them; and to it, for fuller and far more interesting details, we refer the readers of this brief Prefatory Memoir.

To this collection of his poems we have added his *Lines on Marie Antoinette*, the *Dirge of Wallace*, and one or two other poems, published in the *New Monthly Magazine*.

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End of Sample