

“Himmelhoch jauchzend / Zum Tode betrübt”: The Poetry of Eugen Funcken*

by Peter C. ERB

*Wilfrid Laurier University
Waterloo, Ontario*

Eugen Funcken was a nineteenth-century German Resurrectionist pastor, educator, social reformer, builder of institutions, administrator, poet, playwright, art collector, and general cultural gadfly, whose centre of activity was the small village of St. Agatha in Waterloo County, some six kilometers west of the present city of Kitchener-Waterloo.¹

My path to the study of Funcken was somewhat peculiar. It began in the year 1972, which marked the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the Amish in Ontario from Alsace and Lorraine. Like many anniversary celebrations, this one stimulated research into the history of the people it commemorated. One of the stories which surfaced a number of times was of an Amish bishop, a Peter Litwiller who lived near St. Agatha and who, according to the story, held biweekly theological discussions with the local Catholic priest, a Father Eugen Funcken. Moreover, it was said that on Litwiller's death, Funcken had the bells rung in the Catholic Church as the cortege passed on its way to the Amish cemetery, that Funcken wrote a glowing commemoration of Litwiller in the local paper, and that he told his parishioners in a sermon shortly after that this "heretic" was certainly in a higher level of purgatory than most of them would manage on their deaths. As the only local Amish man who had anything to do with Catholics (I was, after all, a graduate of a Pontifical Institute), several historians of my tradition asked me to trace out the story. I went immediately to the Catholic Church in St. Agatha and there met the

* This paper was presented as a key-note address at the Canadian Catholic Historical Association banquet, June 4, 1987.

¹ Surprisingly little scholarly attention has been directed to this prolific individual. That lack is now being remedied by the work of Father James Wahl of St. Jerome's College (University of Waterloo) who is editing and translating the Funcken correspondence and Journals from the time of the Resurrectionist's arrival in Canada in 1857 to his death in 1888. See James A. Wahl, C.R. (ed. and trans.), *The Letters of Eugen Funcken* (Waterloo, 1981-). In 1985 the third volume of letters from 1871-1873 was published. It was preceded by volume 1 (1857-1862) and volume 2, numbers 1-3 (1862-1871).

local priest, the late Fr. W. G. Borho, who had himself devoted a good deal of his life to the care and memory of Funcken's work. On that first meeting Fr. Borho introduced me to Funcken's poetry and I have never gone much beyond it. How much of the story of the Funcken-Litwiler relationship is true and how much apocryphal, I have never found out, and can await the full edition of the letters and the journals to know for certain. For the present I choose to believe it for an obvious reason: it links my love for two religious traditions which continue to attract me.²

The Funcken biography can be quickly outlined. He was born at Wanckum in Rhenish Prussia on November 28, 1831. In 1851 he went to Rome, joined the Resurrectionists and was ordained to the priesthood on June 6, 1857. Immediately thereafter he left for Canada, arriving in St. Agatha in the same year. German Catholics had settled in that predominantly Amish and Mennonite area for some thirty years prior to Funcken's arrival and pastoral care had been provided for them some five years after their initial arrival. From St. Agatha Funcken reorganized Catholic life in the area, worked to found an educational institution (St. Jerome's College), a convent, an orphanage (1858 or 1859), and a Catholic colonization society. A dedicated local priest, he travelled to and from Europe, as well as throughout present-day southern Ontario, and into the United States, helping communities of German- and Slavic-speaking Catholics. He was joined in his work by his brother, Father Louis Funcken, in 1860 when he took up residence in nearby Berlin (now Kitchener). Eugen died on July 18, 1888 at the age of fifty-six.³

Funcken's poetry is extant in two large collections, the first published under the title *Gedichte* ten years after his arrival in Canada and the second which exists only in manuscript, entitled *Immanuel*. In addition to the lengthy piece *Dein Engel*, there exist a few miscellaneous pieces scattered in his letters, journals, and the periodical literature of his day. The present report focusses on the two major collections and concludes with comments on Funcken's 'Canadianism'.

I

In 1868 he gathered a number of poems he had written over a fifteen--year period under the title *Gedichte* and had them printed "to support the

² On the Amish in Canada see Orland Gingerich, *The Amish of Canada* (Waterloo: Conrad Press, 1972).

³ On Funcken and Catholic settlement in the area see Theobald Spetz, *The Catholic Church in Waterloo County* (The Catholic Register and Extension: Toronto, 1916). For more general studies see K.M. McLaughlin, *The Germans in Canada* (Ottawa, 1985), Heinz Lehmann, *Zur Geschichte des Deutschtums in Kanada* (Stuttgart, 1931), Bd. 1, 71-90, Gottlieb Leibbrandt, *Little Paradise*.

German Orphanage in Upper-Canada.” A small quarto volume of 225 pages, its 141 lyrics are printed under six headings: songs, shorter poems, sonnets, legends and romances (comprising for the most part saints’ stories and other tales), miscellaneous poems, and epigrams.⁴

The *Gedichte* are, for the most part, competent poetic pieces unrelated except within the general categories outlined. The initial group are concerned with poetic inspiration and develop common themes of the time in typical Romantic manner. The opening poem “Source of Song” sums up Funcken’s central concern for his work as a poet not only in the volume it opens, but for the rest of his poetry as well. It indicates how significantly he viewed his role as a poet. The type of poetry he is writing is “sacred poetry”, and its source, he tells his readers, is uncreated just as is the source of eternal truth. Like truth, sacred poetry flows from this source toward the eternal clarity of the heavens in an eternally new melody. The source of the poetry is the divine itself, it appears, and like the divine can never be emptied. The millions who derive inspiration from it on earth are matched by an equal number of angels and saints in the heavens singing eternally new material. In a dreadfully mixed metaphor Funcken then goes on to describe human life as an hour-glass, the heart of which is a pendulum created from and shaped as song by and toward this holy font. Human life is the act of singing in this manner and eternal life continues the pattern:

Nur geschöpft aus diesem heil’gen Brunnen,
Nur gesungen, was dein Herz vermag,
Bis des Lebens Sanduhr ist verronnen,
Schlägt des Herzens letzter Pendelschlag.

Bis Du singst in jenen sel’gen Hallett,
Ewig folgend deinem ew’gen Ruf,
Mit den Engeln and den Heiligen allen
Ewig dem, der Dich zum Sänger schuf.

Unerschböflich wie die ew’ge Wahrheit
Ist der Quell der heil’gen Poesie,
Flieszt noch in des Himmels ew’ger Klarheit
Fort in ewig neuer Melodie.⁵

Eight of the poems of *Gedichte* are dated, allowing one to gain some insight into Funcken’s poetic development. Five of these were written before

⁴ The full title of the work is *Gedichte von Pater Eugen Funcken Apostol. Missionär in Ober-Canada. Zum Besten eines deutschen Waisen-hauses in Ober-Canada. Einsiedeln, New-York and Cincinnati O. 1868. Druck and Commissions-Verlag von Gebr. Karl and Nikolaus Benziger.*

⁵ *Gedichte*, p. 6.

his arrival in Canada. The earliest is a reasonably executed sonnet from 1852 on the “enforced” poet.⁶ The poem which proves the title correct, although unintentionally I am certain, does help one to understand Funcken’s general theme. It begins with a parallel between the poet (every human being) and the song-bird (common throughout Funcken’s work). All of us think that we are larks, but we must remember, the sonnet tells us, that we are not birds of the blue but mere frog croaks in the swamp-mists.

This earliest poem we have of Funcken provides a useful image to understand his poetic work. There is a sense in which his work presses the reader in two opposite directions, lifting one up to the heavens in joy and immediately thereafter dashing one to the earth and death. “Himmelhoch jauchzend / Zum Tode betrübt” as Klärchen sings in Goethe’s *Egmont*,⁷ or in its nineteenth-century Waterloo County misquotation, “zum Himmelhoch jauchzend, zum Erde betrübt” (drawn up to the heavens, pressed down to the earth). The phrase serves well to sum up the central motifs of Funcken’s poetry. On the one hand Funcken praises human life in terms of singing from the eternal source of poetry and matches human song with that of the saints and angels, and on the other he insists that human life is nothing but a few grunting “Unkenruf and Froschgequak im Teichen.” Without doubt, however, he agrees with the rest of Klärchen’s song: “Gründlich allein / Ist die Seele, die liebt.”

The three poems from 1853 and the one from 1854 continue the theme to some extent, but place greater emphasis on the creative aspect of the human singer, voicing praises to God even when the forest in which the singer sings is darkened by sorrow. Not surprisingly these more positive pieces appear at the beginning of *Gedichte*.

The final three dated poems in the collection all seem to relate to particular situations which concerned him. In 1861 Funcken wrote two quatrains addressed “To the present-day Screemers.”⁸ Because Peter was poor, Funcken writes, does not mean that all present-day popes should be poor. Just because all are born naked does not mean that we must continue without clothes and simply because the child is weak in its first year is no reason to suppose that one must remain that way. The beams of the sun are weak in the morning but shine strongly at noon and if we have patience (!) we will see the sun lay down its strength at the end of the day just as Peter will lay off his cloak at the close of this world. A piece from the next year

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 47

⁷ See *Egmont*, Dritter Aufzug (*Goethes Sämtliche Werke mit Einleitungen* von Karl Goedeke [Stuttgart, 1875], 3:150).

⁸ *Gedichte*, p. 32.

seems to be an admonition to priests (perhaps a particular priest) on their call.⁹

The most important dated piece, however, is the longest poem in the collection, which is inspired by the civil war in the United States. It is written, Funcken tells us, in the decisive year 1864 and is titled “America”. The war, as Funcken sees it, is the most horrendous that has ever occurred. Nothing in Europe matches it, and no excuse, not even the emancipation of the slaves justifies it, he states, unfortunately in lines disturbingly akin to the similar nineteenth-century blind spot in Carlyle’s “The Nigger Question.”¹⁰

O, warum all dies Morden, dies Vernichten?
Man schreit, es sei zum Heil der Menschlichkeit!
Die Sklavenkett’ des schwarzen Mann’s zu lichten,
Dem Tod man Millionen Weisze weiht?
O glaubt es nicht! ...

Gott selber hat die Hölle losgelassen,
Die wilden Bestien’ all im Höllenschlund,
Dasz dieses Volk es lern’, die Höll’ zu hassen,
Schliesz’ mit dem Himmel einen ew’gen Bund.

Funcken then goes on to call out his hopes for America, paralleling his own work as a poet with that of the prophet Daniel in the interpretation of the writing on the wall. It is his hope that America will understand his words, that its citizens will turn from their evil ways, and that a new age will begin. His hopes express none of the secularized eschatology of his German forefathers regarding America, however. Unlike the eighteenth-century immigrants to North America, Funcken does not see it as the wilderness in which the lily will bloom nor as the “new” world. Unlike Goethe, he does not see it as the new overwhelming the old.¹¹ Rather, he reshapes the ideals on which it was formed, a land in which all nations can become one, and relates it directly to his call for repentance.

O, möcht’ nach diesem wilden ungeheuern
Blutbad, nach dieser blut’gen Passion
Dein Volk den Auferstehungsmorgen feiern
Als ein verklärter, ew’ger Gottessohn!

O möcht’, Amerika, dein Herz es fassen
An diesem Tag, was dir zum Heil gereicht,

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 199-204.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 199-204.

¹¹ See *Goethes Sämmlische Werke*, 1:722.

Dasz nicht mit Augen, ach, mit thränennassen,
Dein Heiland, wie von Sion, von dir weicht!

Amerika, du Land der Nationen,
Die sich vereint in dir zu einem Stamm, Der Kirche Bild, drin aile Völker wohnen,
Verein' sie all im Kreuz and Gotteslamm!

II

In spite of the interest *Gedichte* provides in itself, Funcken's most significant work is the unpublished collection of poems, referred to as a whole after the title of the first part of the collection, *Immanuel*. Funcken had prepared the manuscript for publication. The piece existed in a good copy text and contained approximately 240 poems plus a manuscript play (*Schutz-Engel Bulgariens*). Why it was never published during Funcken's lifetime is not known. Why it was not published after that date is obvious. The year after Funcken's death, Rudolf of Hapsburg, to whom it is dedicated and in whom Funcken with most of Austria-Hungary placed so much hope, fulfilled the suicide pact into which he entered with Mary Vetsera at Mayerling. Unfortunately, at some point in the 1960s the final copy text of *Inmanuel* was taken from the Resurrection College archives and not returned. It was known to Heinz Kloss in 1961.¹²

In the summer of 1976, a formal cataloguing of the archives at Resurrection College was begun by the Rev. Ernest Varosi, C.R., and Brother Michael Checkly under the direction of Father Borho. During the cataloguing in 1976 two groups of loose sheets containing poetry were found. At the request of Fr. Borho, I was able to reassemble these pieces with the help of a rough list into what is an earlier draft of Funcken's *Immanuel*. This earlier draft differs significantly from the copy known to Kloss. It contains only five 'cycles' of lyric poems, whereas the other manuscript contained six. Cycles one and three of the manuscript now at Resurrection College bear the same titles as one and four of the lost manuscript. A selection of lyrics was appended to the lost manuscript. The extant manuscript has two appendices.

Immanuel is interesting in a number of ways. Not only does it contain excellent examples of nineteenth-century German poetry, but it provides valuable insights into Funcken's ecclesiology; the central theme of the opening group of poems, which provides the title for the collection, is the Church and in the extant manuscript the five cycles are all concerned with this theme. The first treats the subject of Immanuel (God with us) and the Church in a more general fashion. In the second that theme is developed in a series of lyrics which are a poetic investigation of the relationship between

¹² Heinz Kloss (hrsg.), *Ahornblätter* (Würzburg, 1961), p. 15.

the subject, Immanuel, and Mary. The second cycle is developed from the first, which is an epithalamium (marriage hymn). In the third cycle the relationship of the apostles, martyrs, confessors and virgins (the Church Triumphant) to the title is taken up. The fourth and fifth cycles move to the Church Militant, treating “Immanuel: friends and enemies” and “Immanuel and the poets’ songs” respectively. Fifteen pages of annotations are added, as are two lengthy appendices of poems. A copy of a letter to the Ambassador of Austria-Hungary introducing the cycles is preserved with the manuscript. What makes this rough draft particularly interesting is that it contains a number of revisions, not always clearly marked as revisions, and in some cases alternate possibilities for a line or group of words.

Gedichte includes, as already noted, competent pieces, but the volume is only a collection. *Immanuel* is more. In it Funcken endeavours to develop a unity, an ellipse as it were, rotating around the two thematic points which were his primary concerns on his arrival in Canada: the centrality of the Eucharist in the life of the Church and the importance of the Blessed Virgin in theology and devotion.

In *Immanuel* Funcken attempts much more than he did in his earlier work. The dedication poem is to Rudolf of Hapsburg and his wife Stephanie on the celebration of their marriage in 1881. The marriage feast is described in the poem and the hopes which were alive in Austria at the time for a rejuvenated culture are indicated. But the poem is intended to be much more than a simple epithalamium.¹³ Very early in the piece it is clear that Funcken intends to use this marriage ode as a basis for a continuing allegory of the marriage between Christ and the Church, and, in a secondary sense, between Christ and the human soul. Into this theme he ties his treatment of the Blessed Virgin, the conception of the Son of God through the Holy Spirit in her, and the complex relationship between the Virgin, the Son and the redemption of humanity. This relationship is worked at (although not worked out in a complete sense) in the second cycle. After treating “the first bride of the Lord”¹⁴ this cycle moves directly to unite the themes of Eucharist and Mary in a finely executed poem, “First communion on earth,” which treats the legend of Mary’s reception of the Sacrament from the hands of Michael.¹⁵ The cycle then continues the theme in greater detail.

The words of Goethe which I chose to characterize some central structures in Funcken’s work might be applied to the shape of his endeavour in *Immanuel*. That poem is intended as a unity and in a significant way it may have been intended as Funcken’s theological as well as his poetic magnum opus. In it he shouts to the heavens in what is without any doubt a

¹³ *Immanuel*, pp. 9-16.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 39-41.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 42-44.

major theological and poetic project, but in its execution he is drawn down to the earth. The unfortunate thing about the distant reach is not that it exceeds the grasp, but that it marks how clearly the grasp has not been achieved. Funcken's shortcomings as a poet are only too obvious as the piece is developed. The fourth cycle, "Immanuel and friends and enemies," does not maintain the level of the third, and, in fact, its polemic at times detracts from the piece as a whole. (A poem in this section on Luther makes particularly interesting reading.) The fifth cycle, "Immanuel and the Singers," in which one might well expect a return to the poetic reflections of the opening poem of *Gedichte*, is in general a collection with little genuine unity. By the third cycle, the marriage theme which opened the work is already lost.

This is not to suggest that the piece comes completely apart by its close. Some fine pieces are included and the *Magnificat* which closes the work is particularly worthy of note:

Magnificat

Nun auf, mein Lied, im Liebesflug,
Wie's einst die minn'ge Jungfrau hat,
Da sie die heil'ge Gottessaat
An ihrem keuschen Herzen trug!

Du trägst im Schoss das heil'ge Wort,
Den Friedens Vogel *Immanuel*;
Drum eil' durch Deutschlands Gaue schnell,
Und lasse Grüss and Frieden dort!

Bring' Segen jeden deutschen Weib,
Das freundlich dir and fromm gesinnt,
Und segne jedes deutsche Kind
Schon in der frommen Mutter Leib!

Und wenn dein Segen sich bewahrt,
Dann singe dein Magnificat;
Denn Wort and Segen, Beides hat
Allein der güt'ge Gott beschert.¹⁶

III

The explicit reference to Germany in this closing poem of *Immanuel* may be explained on the supposition that Funcken intended his poem primarily for a European readership, but if that is the case, what does it tell

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 219.

us about his attitude to the land in which he dwelt? Did he perhaps think primarily of Canada as the German population among whom he worked? That is, did he in this case have a sense of a ‘greater Germany’? What was his attitude to this land, and does it give us any sense of the attitudes of his parishioners? The question is somewhat taken up in a series of poems directed to Joseph Mooren, President of the Historical Society for Rheinland / Westphalia and parish priest of Wachtendonk. Funcken writes as follows:

Der Missionär

Fern von der Heimath and den Lieben alien,
Getrennt von ihnen durch das weite Meer
Und ach, vielleicht sieht er sie nimmermehr
Seht (ich den) Gottes Boten in der (einsam) Fremde wallen.

Ihm singen Lerchen nicht and Nachtigallen
In Feld and Hain, gar öd’ ist’s rings umher-
Und, o, er hört- das macht ihm’s Herz erst schwer-
Kein Freundeswort, kein deutsches Wort erschallen.
Verlassen fühlt er sich and arm, o arm! --
Doch plötzlich wird das starre Herz ihm warm,
Und er vergisst auf einmal Schmerz and Harm.
Der Nahe Gottes jahling sich bewusst,
In ihm er findet Heim and Heimathslust,
Und seine Lieben auch- an Gottes Brust.¹⁷

The ‘Heimweh’ typical of so many German poets in Canada at the time is obvious.¹⁸ But what we must take care to consider is that Funcken’s poems are not so much concerned with separation from homeland as from a particular person. Such separation is overcome in this poem in the same way Funcken overcame a similar sense of separation from his brother described earlier in his life in *Gedichte*.¹⁹ One is united with one’s friend before the altar of God.

On the whole Funcken appears more than at home in the new surroundings. Whatever the meaning of “Germany” at the close of *Immanuel*, his work does include poems which treat Canada. A good poem in *Gedichte* considers the founding of Montreal.²⁰ Likewise he translated works from

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 424.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 298ff.

¹⁹ *Gedichte*, p. 19.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 100-102.

Longfellow into German (“Excelsior” in the *Immanuel* manuscript and “Hiawatha” in *Gedichte*).²¹

Of special interest, however, are two series of poems on Canada and on Niagara and two additional poems on spring which refer directly to the Canadian experience. These poems have been published in *German-Canadian Yearbook* (1978),²² but they are deserving of attention again, particularly in light of a recent publication on Canadian culture by Gaile McGregor, *The Wacousta Syndrome: Explorations in the Canadian Langscape*.²³ Following in the tradition of Northrop Frye’s garrison and Margaret Atwood’s survival images to describe the Canadian psyche, McGregor provides us with a readable, exciting and insightful tour of Canadian culture which directs us to look out from the fort toward the overpowering and aggressive forests, mountains, and weather which must be avoided, conventionalized, domesticated, or redefined, and to reflect on the nature of our psyches as a result.

Whether or not McGregor’s thesis and its many complex and fascinating suggestions can be maintained for all of English and French literature and art is not the central question for present consideration. I have my own reservations with psychohistory of this sort (although I continue to be attracted to it) and with the search for a Canadian identity through the literature and art of the two founding nations alone (particularly if that search is undertaken without a more careful philosophical investigation or on the basis of the latest popular theory of the relationship between art and reality without any consideration of the religious framework of the literature or art). What McGregor’s book does force us to, however, is a more detailed investigation of the literary ‘experience’ of the emigrant in the nineteenth century. Funcken’s work, like many of his nineteenth-century fellow Germans (both Catholic and Protestant) is interesting in this regard.

The three sonnets on Canada take special interest in the landscape and read as follows:

Canada

1.

Auch du bist schön, mein Canada, ja schdn,
Deckt auch der Schnee sechs Monde deine Flur,
Und schwindet selbst des Lebens letzte Spur

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 141-142.

²² Peter C. Erb, “The Canadian Poems of Eugen Funcken, C.R.,” *German-Canadian Yearbook* 4 (1978), 225-233

²³ Gaile McGregor, *The Wacousta Syndrome: Explorations in the Canadian Langscape* (Toronto, 1985).

In Feld and Wald, im Strom and auf den See'n!

Auch du bist schön, and hatt' ich Nichts zu seh'n,
Als deine weissen Schneegefilde nur
Krystallbesä't, den Himmel von Azur,
Ich würd' entzückt vor deinen Reizen steh'n!

Doch schön auch bist du in des Nordlichts Glanz,
Wenn Nachts am Firmament ein Strahlenkranz
Sich flimmernd, schimmernd hebt and senkt im Tanz!

Und o, wie schdn erst am Niagara,
Wenn tausend demantzapfen glitzern da,
Du, Englands Koh-i-noor, mein Canada!*

* [Funcken adds a note to the poem indicating that Koh-i-noor means mountain of light, the famed diamond in the British crown, worth more than a half million dollars.]

2.

Ja, du bist schön, auch kalt and frosterstarrt,
Ein Marmorbild voll Leben, wenn auch todt,
Ein hehrer Leichnam, der dem Morgenroth
Des bald'gen Aufersteh'ns entgegenharrt!

Doch wenn das Schwalbenvolk die Gegenwart
Des Sommers kündet, deine Sonne loht,
Dann stehst du da, verklärt nach kurzem Tod,
Viel schöner, ha, ein Falter sel't'ner Art!
Der Landsee'n Pracht, des Montmorency Fall,
Niagara mit seiner Wogen Schwall,
Die tausend Inseln des Lorenzo-Stroms,

Der Wälder Riesen, Säulen eines Doms,
Drin Gottes Allmacht aus den Wipfeln rauscht ...
Hab' (Dafür) Rhein and Tiber ich umsonst vertauscht?

3.

O, du bist schön! Doch nicht um solchen Sold
Geschah's, dass ich mein zweifach Heim verliess,
Den Rhein and Rom, mir zweifach Paradies,
Dem selbst der Fremdling laut Bewunderung zollt.
Nicht lockte mich dein Antlitz schön and hold!

(Nicht fesselt mich) (lockte mich)
Nur weil der Himmel dich als Braut mir wies,

Mit dir sich selbst als ew'ges Heim verhiess,
Eilt'ich zu dir, kurz, weil es Gott gewollt.

Und wenn du, meine Braut, mir nun gefälltst,
An starter Brust mich noch gefesselt hältst,
Als käm' auf Erden Nichts dir gleich an Werth;
So ist das nur ein Theil vom Hundertfalt,
Das Gott mir gab in mancherlei Gestalt,
Seit ich für ihn verlassen Heim and Herd.²⁴

What we have here is no view of an overpowering nature seen from a garrison, denied or domesticated – no frightened attempt at survival. What we have, rather, is the perception and reflection of a highly sensitive and religious individual who accepts the Canadian landscape for what it is, and when he 'conventionalizes' it, does so, not within the typical romantic categories (cf. the Ontario Lutheran poet, Heinrich Rembe),²⁵ certainly not within the structure of the pastoral or the picturesque, but rather within the framework of the sublime, a theme well-known to a German of Funcken's training from the extensive treatment of the topic by Kant and more popularly by the disciple of the great philosopher, Friedrich Schiller. The pastoral brings nature within the human domain, as sublime nature stands over against the all-encompassing romantic subject and directs that subject to the beyond.

What we have in this poem, then, is no mere Canadian Catholic moralizing, but a catholicizing of the Kantian-Schillerian motif in the Canadian setting. The same pattern manifests itself in two spring poems which might provide a useful closing for these remarks, and a fitting tone with which to leave Funcken for the moment. What they point to, besides Funcken's practical realism in the face of disappointing Canadian springs (which, by the way we do well in our highly urbanized setting to remember could mean grave hardships through the next year), is a delightful combination of humour and piety, which we Amish count as the chief of the virtues and which must have attracted my ancestor Peter Litwiller to Father Funcken over a century ago.

Frühlingsphantasie bei einem Phantasiefriehling in Canada

Welch ein lustig Lenzesleben
Lacht auf Feld and Frühlingsflur!
Welch ein Schwirren, Schwarmen, Schweben,

²⁴ *Immanuel*, pp. 265-266.

²⁵ See Gerhard Friesen (hrsg.), *Hier lasst uns Hütten burden: Deutsche Gedichte lutherischer Pfarrer in Ontario, 1869-1930* (Toronto, 1984).

Rings im Reiche der Natur!

Schöner scheint des Strahl der Sonne,
Lichter lacht des Himmels Blau,
Lust'ger singt der Vöglein Wonne,
Würz'ger duftet Feld and Au.

Bunte Blumenbuhler fliegen
Dicht um duft'ge Dolden hie,
Flücht'ge Bienchen summend schmiegen
Sich an Ros' and Rosmarie.

Ailes lebt and liebt and lachelt,
Wald and Wiese, Flur and Feld,
Und ein Frühlingslüftchen fahlet,
Weil der Erdball Ostem hält.

O, wer sollt' nicht selig sinken
Auf den Rasen still and stumm,
Duft der Märzviolen trinken
Träumend vom Elysium?

Horch, was hör ich? – Windsbraut stürmet!
Ha, wie fliegt der Flocken Flaum!
Hauserhoch der Schnee sich thürmet,
Und vorüber ist mein Traum.²⁶

Spring Imaginations and Imagined Spring in Canada

What a joyous new spring dawning,
Field and flower laugh delight;
What a swirl and swarm and sweeping
Rings the realm of nature bright.

Brightly shine the streams of sunlight,
Lightly laughs the heavens blue,
Smallest birds sing joyous bounty,
Field and meadow beam new hue.

Flower colours flash and flourish
Far as any eye can see;
Flitting bees with buzz alighten
Here on rose and rosemarie.

All is living, all is laughing,
Field and meadow, forest, stream,
While a springtime breeze wafts softly,

²⁶ *Immanuel*, p. 313.

Easter joys the earth redeem.

Oh who would not pause in silence,
Kneeling still upon the lawn,
Drink the fragrance of spring violets,
Dreaming of Elysium?

Desist! What sound?
The wind-howls storming.
Ah! the bite of icy screams.
All about in house-high billows
Snow destroys my freezing dreams.

And here, finally, is a poem which still bears some of the comedy, but
wraps it in greater piety:

Canadisher Frühlingsopfer

(Der Königin des Maienmonates gewidmet im kalten Mai des Jahres 1875)

Maria, dich zu grüssen
Bei deines Mond's Beginn
Leg'ich zu deinen Füßen
Das Frühlingsopfer hin:

'Es leuchtet keine Sonne,
Es prangt kein Blütenflor,
Es hallt nicht Lenzeswonne
Aus lust'ger Vogel Chor;
Drum will die Zaubertöne
Der lieben Vögelein,
Der Marienglöcklein Schöne,
Den milden Sonnenschein

Ich dir zu Lieb' entbehren,
Und dich mein Sturmgebraus'
Und Schneeestöber ehren
Am Herd and in der Klaus'.'

Dies Opfer soll dich grüssen
Bei deines Mond's Beginn;
Ich leg's zu deinen Füßen
Statt eines Kranzes hin.²⁷

Canadian Spring Offering

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 309.

(Dedicated to the Queen of May in the cold spring of 1875)

Maid Mary, this in greeting
As your May month begins,
I lay before you humbly
My offering in spring:

'No sun shines in the heavens,
No flowers blooms deploy,
No birds in choir anthem,
New spring, new hope, new joy.

For these bright tones of magic,
These songs of smallest bird,
The first light sprouts of springtime,
The gentl'est sunbeams curled

Are absent and lamented;
But to you in their stead,
I lay my winter tumult
By hearth and hermit-bed.'

This sacrifice my greeting,
As your May month begins,
I lay before you humbly
Your crown in wint'ry spring.