

are indisposed or unable to produce any sustained or important works, therefore, their poetry will not live," but that which appeals to the heart of man, will ever live to soothe and comfort. Longfellow, Bryant, Whittier, etc., though they may lack the philosophical thought of the older masters, yet they possess that which to mankind in general is far superior—sympathy with humanity, and simplicity.

We find in England, at the beginning of the Victorian age, that the sentiment of the Byronic school had been degraded into sentimentalism, and on its ruins have risen two distinct kinds of poetry. One may be said to still retain the chief characteristics of Wordsworth—an elevated style, yet simple and natural—speaking to the emotions of man in fervent strains, which all can understand and feel, and ever upholding the beauty of nature. The other resembles the poetry of the old schools, partakes of their classicism in a delicate, elevating way, which may be said to perpetuate the style of Keats. In the latter part of this age we have poets of both classes, while others almost combine them into one. In all writers, however, from the least of the minor poets to Tennyson—the greatest figure of the period, the refinements of the age are transferred to the poetry. It has ever been so—the literary productions partake of the social elements of the century. In this time of great social changes and improvements the difference in literature is very noticeable. Stedman says: "It is an age in poetry possessing elaborateness of finish; perfection of form and structure; richness of diction and variety of metre. * * * The genius of the present is less creative than elective and refining; and requisite rather than imaginative; diffusive rather than powerful."

But in some of the poets of these later years are the characteristics of subtilty and penetration, exercising our thought but lacking in warmth and music. This is especially true of Browning. But on the other hand, his works show a remarkable knowledge of human character, and in the heroes and heroines of his poems we recog-

nize real life. In the following we find his great originality:

"But were it so, were man all mind, he gains
A station little enviable. From God
Down to the lowest spirit ministrant,
Intelligence exists which casts our minds
Into immeasurable shades. No! No!
Love, hope, fear, faith—these make humanity,
These are its sign, and note and character;
And these I have lost—gone, shut from me forever."

Tennyson is the central figure of this later period. Of him Arnold says: "From the first he has shown himself a born poet, an artist, a master of charm, a lover of form and color, a builder of imaginary castles, an ethical instructor." He is wanting in the freedom and variety of Shakespeare and Byron, but even though one feels a constraint and desires to break away from that which chains the emotions, yet one cannot but feel the soul elevated after reading the lofty, majestic, mournful lines of "In Memoriam."

"I falter where I firmly trod,
And falling with my weight of care
Upon the world's great altar stairs
That slope through darkness up to God.

"I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope
And gather dust and chaff, and call
To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope."

His influence is wholesome and elevating as his aim has been pure and lofty. By weight of thought and poetic speech he has become a classic in his own day. Though taste may change in the coming generations, there will ever be for him a high and abiding place.

But ours is not an age for poets; they have been supplanted in the public favor, and, instead of turning to poetry, the minds of the young, middle aged and old, seek after philosophical and scientific thoughts and truths. No matter how beautiful or poetic the language may be, the sentiments are rejected, and it is discarded if not in harmony with reason.

Foreign influences and internal thought have combined to make this age prolific in prose, and of surpassing greatness. Many new departments have sprung up,