

student and art critic; Sophocles, the poet and general; Hippodamus, the philosopher, traveller and architect; Hippias, the universal genius—Hippias who engraved his own rings, hammered out of metal his own strigil and oil flask, cobbled his own shoes, wove his own tunic, embroidered his own belt, and carried therein still loftier home-made wares, poems (lyric, tragic, epic), orations (on every topic), treatises on music, grammar and orthoepy, and last, but not least, one of the earliest systems of mnemonics.

If any one had asked a man like Pericles, in a mood like this, what all the stir was about, if any one had suggested that there would presently come a lull and all things would continue as they had been since the fathers fell asleep, that the people would continue to be ignorant and noisy, and the educated supercilious and selfish, he would probably have answered in the spirit of Milton, the English Pericles "Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep and shaking her invincible locks; methinks I see her as an eagle renewing her mighty youth and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam, purging and unsealing her long abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance, while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about amazed at what she means, and in their envious gabble would prognosticate a year of sects and schisms. For now the time seems come when not only our seventy elders but all the Lord's people are become prophets."

There are a few lines taken here and there from Pericles' greatest speech—the Funeral Speech—which will bear quoting as illustrating incidentally the lofty idealism in which the speaker's thoughts habitually moved. He is closing the funeral service of the Athenian soldiers who have fallen during the year by a eulogy of them and of their country, delivered at the grave in the style of modern France:—"Our foot is on every land and sea: our memorials are everywhere: of the courage of these dead whom we are here burying, their last hour gave proof: whether as the first testimony to the recruit's courage: or the last seal of the courage of the veteran. So has the foolish man hidden his foolishness under the shelter of his love for Athens; so has he wiped out the evil of his life by the self-surrender of his death; the service of the soldier atones for the faults of the man. They have given up their lives side by side, and have won each man a praise that passes not away and a tomb most memorable: not the dead stone in which they lie but the warm hearts of those who turn to think of them when the hour for action comes. The grave of heroes is the wide world; they are recorded not by the inscriptions only of their native land, but by that unwritten record which lives on among men, graven upon no tablets save those only of the heart. It is not the desperate man, who has no hope of better things, who has reason to throw away his life, but rather he who has a high estate from which to fall, to whom the loss is greatest, if he fail. To a man of courage, cowardice and disaster are more bitter than the instant unfelt death which comes to him unawares in the hour of strength and patriotic hope. Wherefore I would comfort the kinsmen of these dead and not bewail with them; chance and change are the daily lot of life, and happy they who find like these an honourable grave, like you an honourable sorrow; though it seems a hard saying this, when often and again the sight of other's happiness shall awake the memory of what was once your own. Some of you have passed your prime; these may reflect that the greater portion of their life has been for good, and that this latter end will be but short and will be soothed by the glory of the dead. For the love of honour only never waxes old and in life's dull dregs, it is not gain,—as some men say—but honour that gives comfort."

In this passage, or rather string of passages, from the Funeral Speech, the orator discards more or less avowedly two somewhat ancient and commonplace beliefs, which still have a good deal of experience and authority at their back. The opening words imply that the Athenian army—like other armies—included a large element of desperate men, whose life had been a failure and a loss to the State, though their death had redeemed their life: yet instinctively the idealism of the speaker recoils from the inference suggested, the inference that out of such sad conditions—wasted lives and shattered hopes—springs often the splendid courage of the soldier; it is not from these men, he hastens to pro-

test that the sacrifice of their lives can most confidently be expected, but from their happiest, most self respecting and most respected comrades. Well, is it so, as a matter of fact? Apart from the exceptional cases where religious fervour or fanatic superstition inspires a rare and superhuman courage—the courage of Cromwell's Ironsides and Burley's Covenanters or Osman's Turks, is Pericles' idealistic explanation the true explanation of the effective courage of an average army? The Duke of Wellington, who ought to have known, thought otherwise; he has recorded his opinion in the trenchant phrase that the best soldiers on the average are London blackguards.

So, again, in the same lofty spirit, Pericles contradicts the common philosophy of his day and of other days, which finds the ruling passion of old age in the majority of cases to be avarice; the typical craving of old age, he says, is for honour. However, we might almost translate love, a saying which harmonizes with Christian sentiment and Christian poetry—Wordsworth's poem of the Village School-Master, Matthew, for instance, rather than with the ordinary tone of the matter of fact and rather cynical Athenians of the 5th Century before Christ.

Here, then, is one phase of Athenian politics and one type of Athenian politician; the idealistic reformer; the generous enthusiast who believed in human nature not wisely perhaps but too well; the democrat to whom democracy meant the opening of an honourable career, at once intellectual and practical, to every man.

(To be Continued.)

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Tennyson as an Evolutionist.

IT is safe to assert that Tennyson owed his wide popularity more especially to the religious quality of his work. When he passed away I remember hearing people say that here was a truly great poet and,—a name not generally conceded to most poets,—an orthodox Christian. "In Memoriam" was universally spoken of as Tennyson's masterpiece. For long enough before his death portions of that famous threnody had been sung in our churches. The religious world delighted to do honour to one who had braved the storms of scepticism through so many years of change and struggle and unrest. While men of genius were everywhere adopting the gospel of unbelief and of despair, Tennyson clung to the old faith, conquered doubt, and in the end sang that last clear song of perfect trust, "Crossing the Bar," to the music of which the heart of man is still throbbing.

In the poetry of Tennyson we feel the quick pulse of this age. The keen spirit of criticism, the eager questioning of the unknown, the many coloured phases of thought in the nineteenth century, all are present in his verse. He lived in a stirring time. The excitement of the French Revolution still permeated literature. In his early life the Tractarian Controversy distracted the English clergy with its fierceness of dispute. Then Newman, confessing the weakness of individual thought to light him through the gloom, sought refuge in the bosom of the Mother Church whose infallible word precluded private opinion. Doubt stalked like a sombre giant through the land. The very foundations of religion seemed giving way. In a chill and blinding mist men were warring for truth, even as Arthur fought in "that last weird battle in the west." Darwin, Spencer, Wallace, Huxley, these were some of Tennyson's contemporaries. Science, then regarded as the deadly foe of poetry and religion, was advancing by leaps and bounds. Evolution was a word abhorred on all sides. Its advocates were promptly branded as infidels. A shadow seemed to be cast over the bright faith of Christendom, and the name of Darwin is still held up to derision in the pulpits of not a few denominations. But this principle of evolution grew and flourished. Those who love the old faith and yet cannot in reason refuse this offspring of mature scientific thought, have made it their chief care to reconcile new and old. In this respect Tennyson, I think, has been eminently successful.

Poets have never entertained much love for science. Wordsworth himself, though

"He was a priest to us all
Of the wonder and bloom of the world."