

selves by the side of rights, and that the highest liberty consists in obedience to law." With Tennyson disorder of thought of feeling and of will, is the evil of evils, "whereas, self-knowledge, and self-control, the recognition of a divine order, and one's place in that order, faithful adhesion to the law of one's highest life—these are the elements from which is formed the ideal of human character." Thus we see that in matters involving moral principles Tennyson may be said to be generally on the safe side, but in matters purely spiritual or rather doctrinal, his guidance cannot always be relied upon. The objection to Tennyson's religious views rests not so much on any pronounced antagonism of his against revealed doctrine, as on the vagueness and indefiniteness of his creed, if such it may be called. He would combine the doctrine of the redemption with the theory of the evolutionist and the speculations of the encyclopedist. But this lack of positive faith reflects the unsettled condition, in the spiritual domain of the times in which he lived.

The ardent hopes of the revolution, were buried in his infancy. It had been greeted by its votaries as a new revelation. A revelation which was not to come from the mysterious realms of the infinite, but which was to spring from man's own yearning heart and teeming brain. Man's passionate love for freedom so long repressed, with one bold movement was to break his bonds and destroy his oppressors, and it promised to give him full possession of this life's coveted treasures. Whereas science, in the ardor of her newly discovered strength, held out glorious hopes for the future, and vouched to unravel the enigma of man's existence, from the newly opened book of nature.

But alas for human hopes based upon human expedients! The age of Tennyson, instead of seeing the fulfilment of all these Utopian dreams, sees only their vanity and discomfiture. Human liberty is firmly established throughout the civilized world, and the millennium is not yet in view, and the mysteries of life are as impenetrable as ever, except when viewed in the illuminating brightness of the truth of Christ.

Thus the age of Tennyson, except for those that stand upon the firm platform of Catholic belief, is an age of shattered

ideals, and of a confusion of principles, and, under the circumstances, it is greatly to the credit of his heart and of his mind, that he was able to preserve for himself that buoyancy and hope and faith in the future, which his writings exhibit, and which is almost exceptional among the great poets of our day.

With the luminary of Tennyson's greatness already on the wane, the question naturally arises, on whose shoulders his pallium will fall, when the sun of his fame shall have set. The two other names that have become conspicuous in the field of English verse, beside Tennyson, are Robert Browning and Charles Algernon Swinburn. Both have gained unquestioned distinction, the former by the force and concentration of his verse, the latter by the melody of his song. Besides these two no other author could hope to contend successfully for the palm in the temple of English fame. But to us Catholics this alternative presents little attraction. For Robert Browning, the author of Bishop Blougram, an avowed caricature on the life of Cardinal Manning, and the reviler of the motives and character of Catholic priests and dignitaries in many of his later productions, does not very strongly appeal to our sympathy.

Much less can this be said of Swinburne, the open assailant, not only of the Church of Christ and his religion, but even of the Deity himself, whom, with fiendish exultation, he has vowed to destruction. Nor can the sweet harmonious cadence of his poetry atone for the ribald voluptuousness it often conceals.

Besides the altar of his God there is nothing which the Englishman regards with more reverence and devotion than the shrine of his own home. Whoever attacks these two centres of his affections decrees his own speedy discomfiture and extinction. Lifting our eyes, therefore, beyond the discordant turmoil of the contending schools and systems of our day, we look for a new inspiration, to spring from a nobler source.

A new sun has risen in the firmament of English literature, slowly, grandly, before which all have bowed in silent admiration. The brightness of its lustre has reached as far as the English tongue is heard, and its benign influence has touched every heart. This new luminary