

" ' Miss Gamma ' (how my pulses beat !)
 ' We're two old fogies now ;
 This ball's my last, I'm obsolete,
 The furrows line my brow ;
 And yet my life is incomplete,
 It is so—you'll allow.

" ' I hope to try another world,
 That is, if it exist ;
 My flaunting colors shall be furled ;
 Perchance I can subsist
 A (sobersides)'—and then he twirled
 His whiskers—(had I missed ?)

" ' And yet I'd like to dance once more,
 With you—my last quadrille ;
 You won't refuse—a splendid floor—
 You'll come—I know you will ;
 Then you can open a new score'—
 (I felt a sudden chill).

" I answered that I should retire
 For ever, from that night ;
 My thoughts were his ; I did admire
 His resolution's height,
 In fact, it was my one desire
 Affection to requite.

" I took his arm, my eyes were dim,
 But nothing more he said ;
 We danced—my head was in a swim,
 The vision dear was dead ;
 I was not chosen wife by him ;
 So I went home—to bed."

MEW.

Alfred Tennyson.

But the danger, I think, is not exactly in the direction which the poet apprehended. There is an overbearing of individual opinion, a law unwritten in the Statute Book, and unenforced by courts of justice, but still more powerful than though it were inscribed in the broadest characters, or carried into operation with the solemnity of formal administration—against independence of thought and freedom of speech. It obtains throughout society and makes man an outcast if he goes beyond certain lengths in opinion. It obtains in high circles, with those amongst whom opinion is a conventionalism ; with them, creeds and forms, political and religious, are taken in their external shape, with no soul or spirit in them, but are parroted from one to another because they are the adjuncts of pecuniary emolument and political influence. There is the danger.

There are some political points in which the writings of Tennyson are more in harmony with the present time. There is, especially, a light poem which applies to the favorite system of commercial restrictions, the well-known and trite fable of the "Goose that laid the golden eggs."

But to leave what refers to politics, Tennyson, like all other poets, sings much of woman. Not as those who merely lecture and admonish her upon the fulfillment of such duties as immediately relate to man's comfort—who tell her to mind her spinning and puddings and leave matters of higher import to the exclusive consideration of the lords of creation. He practically rebuts the fallacy, so often repeated, that women have

no character. In a succession of portraits, with a fineness of appreciation and a nicety of discrimination never surpassed, he has delineated the richest diversity of person, manner, disposition, mind and character ; bounding merriment, airy gracefulness, rustic vanity and gladness, the perfect matron, the dignified, the spiritual, the fantastic, the energetic, the happy beloved and the melancholy deserted ; up to the heroism of Godiva, of the old Coventry legend, pursuing in purity and goodness her solitary ride through the town to free its inhabitants from oppression and ruin. The author who has done this has served humanity. He has best abated that coarseness which is the disgrace of so large a portion of the present generation. He has taught lessons of woman's worth and influence far more precious than those of compliment and sickly sentimentality. Nor is this all. He has touched some of the abuses of the time with a skill and power which deserve special notice. The triumph of love over pride has often been celebrated by poets. The conflicts of station with affection, the influence of rank in turning aside the feelings from their straight-forward course, has been made the subject of tragedy in modern times, as in Westland Marston's drama of "The Patrician's Daughter," but there is as deep a tragedy in the lines addressed to a high-born lady seeking only a cold amusement in tacitly exciting the fervor of unreciprocated love—the ballad of "Lady Clare Vere de Vere." The poet sings :—

" A simple maiden in her flower
 Is worth a hundred coats of arms."

He proclaims :—

" Howe'er it be, it seems true
 'Tis only noble to be good ;
 Kind hearts are more than coronets,
 And simple faith than Norman blood."

In this poem, Tennyson has dealt with evils which go deeper into the heart of society, morally, than those with which mere politicians have to struggle. Another evil of the same sort has the poet touched, and in a similar spirit he describes the influence of an ill-assorted marriage. The poem of "Locksley Hall" is mainly an embodiment of the feelings of one who is disappointed, the object of whose love has, for sordid motives, or in weakness of purpose, allied herself to a man of inferior mental rank, however much more ample his wealth.

In these emphatic delineations we see a giant hand smiting the abuses of society, striking at evils which not only corrupt the soil, but in their branches and blossomings taint the atmosphere. Not only has he a perception of this, but of the true as well as of the false, the power of the poet as well as the tortuousness of society. One of his grandest descriptions is that of the poet in his might and majesty ;

The poet in a golden chime was born,
 With golden stars above ;
 Dowered with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,
 The love of love,
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Truth was multiplied on truth, the world
 Like one great garden showed,