

*Tennyson's Message to
Our Generation*

—24—

“That,” says Henry Van Dyke, “is perfect poetry—simple even to the verge of austerity, yet rich with all the suggestions of wide ocean and waning light and vesper bells ; easy to understand and full of music, yet opening inward to a truth which has no words, and pointing onward to a vision which transcends all forms ; it is a delight and a consolation, a song for mortal ears, and a prelude to the larger music of immortality.”

Alfred Tennyson has crossed the bar, and now he sees his Pilot face to face. Though he has gone from earth for ever, the message of Duty and Beauty, of God and Immortality, he sang so sweetly and powerfully, remains to gladden and strengthen humanity. Because of this has been granted unto him the fulfilment of the aspiration so wistfully voiced by George Eliot :

“Oh, may I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence : live
In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring magnitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues.”