

"I hold it true whate'er befall,
 I feel it when I sorrow most;
 'Tis better to have loved and lost
 Than never to have loved at all"

When a poet first begins to write, his works aglow with youthful passion, he speaks of emotions born out of his own life and not out of the life of the world without him. His work is individual not universal. "The weight and trouble of the world of men, the cry of the questioning souls of humanity, the massive problems of the whole race have not sent their waves of emotion on him with sufficient force to put his individuality into a second place. There is no room for these outward and world-wide emotions until the personal emotions of youth are expressed and exhausted in expression." But when the youthful passions have been uttered, the soul is empty. On this waiting soul the great trouble of mankind flows in with full tide and brings with it the passions and griefs of mankind. It does more, it stirs in the poet himself powers before unknown to him—the by which he is fitted to deal with great and universal questions, and to pierce the realm of the unseen there to witness things invisible. At the inward rush of the vast trouble of the world of man, these powers spring into life and dwell in the place personal feeling¹ once occupied alone. Such was the preparation of Alfred Lord Tennyson, the circumstance which directed him toward the universal was the death of his dearest friend. Their college days had been spent together, their hearts had become knitted like those of David and Jonathan. A bright future promised to young Hallam and his loss seemed a loss to mankind. The grief of his family and of all who knew him came to be representative of the sorrow of the world. This vision touched the sorrowing poet until in humble grief he breathes.—

"Strong son of God, immortal Love
 When we that have not seen thy face,
 By faith and faith alone embrace
 Believing where we cannot prove."

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"Thou wilt not leave us in the dust,
 Thou madest man; he knows not why,
 He thinks he was not made to die,
 And thou has made him: Thou art just."

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"We have his faith: we cannot know;
 For knowledge is of things we see,
 And yet we trust it comes from Thee
 A beam in darkness; let it grow."

Thus the powers of Tennyson are directed outward. His soul is touched by the laws of human sorrow for the loss of those who are loved—sorrow as infinite as the passion of love,—sorrow which covers the entire experience of man, sorrow felt as keenly by the grief-stricken generations of centuries past, as by the poet himself. Only one of in-