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All articles, contributions, and letters on matters pertaining to the editorial department should be addressed to the Editor, and not to any person who may be supposed to be connected with the paper.

THE greatest poet of a century prolific of great poets is dead. We are not, we hope, given to extravagant eulogizing, but we should scarcely do more than record our own conviction were we to express the opinion that the greatest poet, take him all in all, of all the centuries died when Lord Tennyson "crossed the bar" on the 6th inst. But in a question of that kind nearly everything depends upon the point of view. Each naturally prefers the poet who appeals most closely to his own idiosyncracies of mind and heart. By some professional critics the above would be scouted as an absurd estimate of the genius of the departed laureate. The future must decide. Both the poetry and the personality of the venerable bard are still, and will be for many years to come, quite too near the eye to be seen in their true perspective, or through any medium not more or less coloured by feeling. Other stars of the first magnitude have shone as brightly, perhaps have distinctly outshone him, in their own special fields in the poetic heavens. In the dramatic realm Shakespeare is of course, and perhaps ever will be, incomparable. But we are not sure that "The Idylls of the King" will not compare favourably, in all the higher qualities which go to make up a great epic, with even the "Iliad" or the "Æneid" or "Paradise Lost." Certainly as evidence of the capacity of the English language for the production of lofty and melodious effects in blank verse, their only place is beside the masterpiece of Milton. With equal certainty it may be said that such a piece as "Enone" takes rank with "Lycidas," in the domain of classicism, while for examples of the purely English in style and feeling, in which "the melody of the lyric is wedded to the sentiment and picture of the idyl," the works of all the English bards will be sought in vain for anything surpassing "The Miller's Daughter," "The May Queen," or "Lady Clara Vere de Vere." And where in all the domain of metrical literature will be found anything appealing more powerfully to the patriotic heart of the nation than "The Charge of the Light Brigade," which not even the most glowing periods of the author of "Scots, Wha Hae" can surpass in their power to rouse the patriotic passion. From another point of view, it may well be doubted whether any other British poet, or in fact poet of any

nation whose living works bear any comparison in point of voluminousness with those of Tennyson, has ever succeeded in attaining and maintaining so exquisite rhetorical finish and such uniformly felicitous expression. Where in all literature can these qualities be found combined in such perfection with the intensest feeling and the most stirring energy of thought and expression as in "Locksley Hall," or any one of a dozen lyrics which at once come trooping before the mind's eye? Even the gifted Tennyson undoubtedly nodded sometimes, but while the result may have been an occasional bit of very indifferent and in few cases almost vapid rhyming, he seems never to have shrunk from that laborious use of the file which is the only condition of correctness and elegance in form.

HOWEVER widely the estimates of critics may differ, and they do differ very widely upon the point, we cannot doubt that there would be very great consentaneity of opinion among ordinary students and lovers of poetry were a ballot to be taken on the question, "What is Tennyson's masterpiece?" The verdict would be, we venture to predict, even more nearly unanimous than was that of a company of authors, who were at one time asked to select the three poems of the century which each would most wish to have composed, and who are said to have every one named "In Memoriam" as either first or second. Had "In Memoriam" never been written, Tennyson's place among the immortals would still have been secure, but it would have been on a much lower plane than that which the verdict of posterity will award the builder of that marvellous mosaic. This majestic poem is in conception, in metrical form, in the profusion of intellectual wealth it displays, and in the height and depth of sentiment, now intensely pathetic, now lofty and ennobling, simply unique in the world's literature. Probably not all our readers will agree with this estimate. It is possible that some may even yet be found to endorse the opinion of Charlotte Brontë, that "it is beautiful, it is mournful, it is monotonous." A few may even go as far as Taine, who pronounced it "cold, monotonous, and too prettily arranged," and described its author as going into mourning "like a correct gentleman, with bran new gloves," wiping away his tears with a cambric handkerchief, and displaying "throughout the religious service which ends the ceremony all the compunction of a respectful and well-trained layman." But many more will, we believe, find both mind and heart echoing the sentiments of Charles Kingsley, who regarded it as "boldly surpassing the noblest English Christian poem which several centuries have seen," while not a few perhaps, and we confess ourselves of the number, will go even so far as Peter Bayne and declare it "the finest elegiac poem in the world." One of the strongest and most unmistakable evidences that Tennyson's poetry is of the very highest order is the fact which he who will may verify, that they have added more to the wealth of our English speech, in the shape of terse Anglo-Saxon words and phrases, and of true and beautiful thoughts and sentiments empearled in striking and elegant expression, than any other British writer, Shakespeare perhaps excepted. Of course we are not taking the English Bible into comparison. To this we may add one other evidence, and that on the authority and in the words of the *British Quarterly Review*, which affirmed in 1881: "We do not doubt that at this moment in England more poetry of Tennyson is known by heart, and more could be quoted, than of all the other poets in the language fused into one." We do not doubt that "In Memoriam" has contributed more largely to both these effects than any other poem.

AMONG the many worthy organizations of a philanthropic kind in Toronto there is none worthier of generous and hearty support than the "Children's Aid Society." As we have often insisted, the very quintessence of wise philanthropy consists in rescuing the waifs and strays, and as far as possible those who are growing up, even though it be in the homes of their own parents, amid degrading and vicious surroundings, and placing them under good influences and in training for respectable

and useful citizenship. This is the work which the Society above named is trying to do, with what success everyone who is sufficiently interested can ascertain. It goes without saying that those disinterested men and women who give so freely of their time and means for the promotion of such a work should be as freely aided by the sympathy and the money of their fellow-citizens. We hope, therefore, that the appeal which has been lately sent out by the Secretary of this Society for the small sum of \$300 to enable the managers to wipe out the balance against them on the operations of last season—which operations include the fresh air excursions which brought a gleam of sunlight and gave a taste of country air and country cheer to so many poor children and weary mothers—will be answered by prompt contributions to several times the amount named, that their hands may be strengthened for the winter's work. We do not know any better investment for spare dollars.

SPECIAL interest attached to the Convocation of University College and the School of Practical Science on Thursday week. This interest arose from two sources, very different in kind. As the first public meeting in connection with the University at which the familiar and venerable features of the late President were missing, the occasion was adapted to renew the feelings of sadness and the deep sense of loss which could not fail to be shared in common by those who had been his associates in labour and those who had learned to look up to him as the honoured head of the institution. As was fitting under the circumstances, words of sorrow at his death and of warm eulogy of his character and abilities, fell spontaneously from the lips of every speaker. On the other hand the meeting was the first occasion in which the new President was called on to appear publicly in his official capacity, and it became no less naturally a time for congratulations. And truly President Loudon has every reason for gratification and encouragement in view of the warm and unstinted words of approval of the Government's appointment which fell from the lips of the various speakers. His own address was quite in keeping with his reputation for modesty and efficiency. It was clear, practical and helpful, containing many useful hints for the earnest student. Amongst these none were, perhaps, wiser or more opportune than the words in which he cautioned students against the mistake, unhappily so prevalent in these days, of allowing themselves to be carried by their enthusiasm in the contests of the playground, and by the unhealthy spirit of excessive athleticism which is in the air, beyond the legitimate bounds of healthful recreation. As to the rest, two remarks made by other speakers challenge particular attention. When Chancellor Blake said that the new President had not been placed in his high position "from any narrow principles of nativism" but because he was believed to be the best man for the position who could have been found anywhere, he not only paid the highest compliment to Mr. Loudon, but announced the soundest principle to govern appointments. But when Mr. Harcourt assured his hearers that "the time for borrowing is at an end," he seems to have forgotten for the moment that the Government had just returned to the borrowing system in filling another and subordinate position, and that there are probably many good friends of the University who believe that there was really no necessity for going beyond the Canadian borders, or the list of the University's graduates, in order to find candidates well qualified to do excellent work in the chair of Political Economy.

"MARJORY DARROW" has been pretty fully discussed in our columns, and we had not intended to return to the subject. But as the observations which have been sent us have hitherto been all on the one side, it is but a matter of simple justice to give our readers an opportunity to hear something of what may be said on the other. We certainly have no desire to follow up the mild criticisms which we have made upon the poem with others of a similar kind suggested by the quotations we are about to make. We have nothing but good wishes for the highest success of the author in the field of literature in