

And tell her to her face how much I
hate
Her presence, hated both of Gods and
men."

As if that would do any good! But
how like a woman it is.

Again take that wonderful expression
of mother love in Rizpah—the old mother
making excuses for her boy who

"Was always so wild
And idle—and couldn't be idle—he never
could rest—
The king should have made him a soldier,
he would have been one of his best."

Contrast this with the self-satisfied self-
fishness of the old maid in "The Spin-
ster's Sweet-arts."

If it is true that "One touch of nature
makes the whole world akin," then Tenny-
son can claim kinship with everybody, for
his works abound in touches of nature.
His characters are real men and women—
idealized it is true, but not supernatural.
The great Arthur, when he found a
crown, was sufficiently human to set it on
his head. The old sailor telling the story
of "The Revenge," boasts much of what
we did. "We brought them all aboard!"
"We shook e'm off as a dog that shakes
his ears when he leaps from the water to
the land." "In perilous plight were we,
but *They* yielded to the foe."

Who has not met some "babbler who
hurt whom she would soothe and harmed
whom she would heal," and who has not
had occasion to echo the poet's words—

"The world, the world,
All ear and eye and such a stupid heart
To interpret ear and eye, and such a
tongue
To blare its own interpretation."

Tennyson's poetry sweetens life by
bringing us into contact with the truly
beautiful, which is seen both in the ideas

conveyed to us and in the language in
which they are clothed. Any reader of
his poetry knows how careful he was in
the choice of words, and knows how hap-
py he was in his use of picturesque ex-
pressions, such as "a wave, green-glim-
mering towards the summit." But, after
all, the real mission of the poet is to ele-
vate. If art cannot exist without beauty
no more can beauty exist without good-
ness, and of Tennyson we can truly say,
"He uttered nothing base," for he obeyed
to the letter the command, "Whatsoever
things are true, whatsoever things are
honest, whatsoever things are just, what-
soever things are pure, whatsoever things
are lovely, whatsoever things are of good
report; if there be any virtue and if there
be any praise, think on these things," be-
lieving that what the mind feeds on deter-
mines the character of the man. No doubt
the men of his day were no better than
those of the present, but if the existing
state of things was not the best, the poet
pointed to an ideal state. It is not always
well of write of "Things as they are." Lift-
ing the veil from vice and showing it in
all its grossness may be good as a cleans-
ing process, but it has no artistic merit.
Besides, there is such a thing as con-
tamination. So Tennyson always shows
us men when they are actively engaged at
something. His soldiers and sailors are
seen on active service, not in hours of
idleness, proving the truth of the adage.
"Satan finds some mischief still for idle
hands to do." Even his old men, though
they are

"Made weak by time and fate," are "strong
in will
To strive to seek, to find and not to
yield."

And so by recording noble acts and ex-
pressing noble thoughts Tennyson helps
us in our daily needs and raises us to
higher things.

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