

noted during the poet's journalistic career is his style of prose writing. It was indeed of superior quality, and might be imitated with benefit by some of our present-day editors.

Though now deeply engrossed in journalism, Bryant nevertheless had time to express his poetic feelings in such beautiful verses as "The Firmament," and "The Evening Wind." Select any part of the latter and observe the exquisite word-painting.

"Spirit that breathest through my lattice, thou,
That cool'st the twilight of the sultry day,
Gratefully flows thy freshness round my brow,
I welcome thee
To the scorched land, thou wanderer of the sea.!"

Bryant's fame as a poet rests solely on the fact that in the delineations of the beauties of nature he has no peer in American literature.

One of the most remarkable things in all his works is that quite a number of his poems treat of melancholy subjects. Principal among these are "Thanatopsis," "Hymn of Death," and "The Murdered Traveller."

His "Hymn of Death" abounds in sentiments noble and stately, depicting in solemn accents the mission of Death, the great destroyer.

"Deliverer:

God hath anointed thee to free the oppressed
And crush the oppressor." . . .

Bryant's works, like those of all other great poets, have their defects as well as their beauties, their faults as well as their merits. Some of them are rather stiff and didactic; but at the same time they possess a great charm for all his readers. Another fault that has been attributed to the poet is his meagre vocabulary, very evident in his blank verse. These, coupled with the fact that he made little or no change of style throughout his whole range of works, and that in them there is a lack of notable expressions, seem to be the extent of his faults. Both these two latter deficiencies, however, may be laid to the charge of his father, who, it is supposed, gave him in his boyhood a fixed set of rules to follow out. These naturally led him to attain a certain standard, and when this was reached he proceeded no further. However, in most of his poems there is a certain air of dignity, and notably in his blank

verse, majestic cadences which rise and fall, increase and decrease, at his will. It is in "Thanatopsis" especially that we see these at their best.

Never, throughout the whole course of Bryant's life, was he known to have spoken an unkind word, given an untimely advice, or let the needy pass by empty-handed. Slavery in particular received a just condemnation at his hands, especially in his poem, "The Death of Slavery."

"Oh Thou great Wrong, that, through the slow
paced years,
Didst hold thy millions fettered, and didst wield
The scourge that drove the laborer to the field,
And turn a stony gaze on human tears,
Thy reign is o'er;
Thy bondsmen crouch no more
In terror at the menace of thine eye."

It remain now for me to say but a few words on the later period of Bryant's life. Old age was slowly but surely creeping upon him, and weaving round him an inextricable web. Even during this period of his life the poet was not idle, but made a translation of both the "Iliad" and "Odyssey," which are said to be equal to, if not better than any yet produced by an English writer.

Showing him the same deference and appreciation in his old age as they had when he first came before them as a poet, the people often invited him to deliver addresses upon the lives of former benefactors of mankind. One day whilst on his return from one of these meetings, he happened to visit a friend's house, and after ascending the stone steps to the door, he fell backwards striking his head on the platform. The blow cost him his life. Though he lingered for a few days, the end eventually came on June 12th, 1878, in the 84th year of his age, when he passed off surrounded by his friends, leaving behind him as tokens of remembrance a stainless character and

"One of the few immortal names
That were not born to die."

America then had cause to mourn, for she had lost a true friend indeed, one who, whilst she was moping in intellectual darkness, came forth and helped to win for her a place, an everlasting place, in the world of letters.

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Third Form.