

that his works contain, and to form an idea of his genius, we must remember that he scarcely lived twenty-four years, and lived the greater portion of those years in misery and privation, and died a prey to sorrow and misfortune. He was the saddest and perhaps the most original, the most faithful and most ill-used bard England can now or ever will be able to boast.

As Keats disappeared there arose at the end of the last century another poet. One who wrote and was laughed at by the powerful critic of the *Edinburgh Review*. One who was young in years and in experience, but who "awoke one morning and found himself famous. We refer to Lord Byron.

Byron is to the 18th what Shakespeare was to the 16th century. His "Childe Harold" has placed him foremost amongst the first, not only of English poets but also of the bards of Europe. His "Isles of Greece," and "Siege of Corinth," are models for the world. In grandeur of idea and expression he has no superior in the language save Milton, and for the ordinary reader Byron is far more easily understood than the great epic poet. Byron has been attacked when alive and that very attack drew him forth, created for him a name greater than any of his age. Byron has been attacked since the sod has covered his remains, and such an attack is cowardly and unworthy of a man and above all of a woman. No matter what were his faults in private life, and we all have our share of them, his poetry stands on a sublime elevation. Those attacks are like to the mist that arises in foul vapours from the ocean, hiding the sun from our sight and not even approaching within millions of miles of the glowing orb itself. There are such people in the world who love to dance in petty triumph upon the tombs of those whom in life-time they would have feared and sought for, admired and respected. Let them raise their pigmy hands they cannot overturn the colossus that looms upon the horizon of England's literary world!

It would seem as if the muses had awaited the end of the two great epochs in English poetry before handing the lyre to a woman. In the present century we find Mrs. Hemans, whose verses

are touching and noble, Hon. Mrs. Norton, her rival in everything grand and simple and truly womanly in poetry; Miss Mulock, Eliza Cook and Elizabeth Barrett Browning whose little gems of thought set off so completely the diadem that has been set upon the brow of this century by the hands of Lord Macaulay, in his "Lays of Ancient Rome," Wm. M. Thackeray as well in his poems, as in his romances, Wm. Wordsworth through his numberless effusions and Alfred Tennyson the poet laureate of England, the author of "In Memoriam" and the "Famous charge of the Six Hundred."

There still live many of the poets of the present century and amongst them Matthew Arnold, whose productions are stamped with a glow of thought and a depth of originality almost impossible to understand or believe unless read. And we must not forget Charles Dickens. Although in another field he won his fame yet the little poem of the "Ivy Green" would be enough to rank him among the bards of England.

This age will pass over and it is to be hoped that in the next century when the land will be in peace and happiness a new series of bards may spring up, with minds as powerful as those of the 16th and 18th centuries. It is but just that England should have three such periods as well as other nations seem to have had.

Any person who would desire to study the advancement and rise of the English nation, and to mark her great events, could not do better than to hold in the left hand the works of the poets of each age while in the right hand he holds the records of the deeds of glory and the works of the people. But you will ask what is a bard? and what has he to do with the country? Denis Florence McCarthy likewise asks that question and then answers it as follows:

But who is this with tresses flowing,  
Flashing eyes and forehead glowing,  
"From whose lips the thunder-music  
Pealeth o'er the listening land."  
'Tis the first and last of preachers,  
First and last of priestly teachers;  
First and last of those appointed  
In the ranks of the anointed;  
With their songs like swords to sever  
Tyranny and falsehood's bands!  
'Tis the Poet—sum and total,