

It was, as I have stated, a poetic age into which Tennyson was born—it was a memorable year, an *annus mirabilis*, in which he was born. It was the birth year of men and women who were destined to leave their impress upon the world.

Let us take them up in the order of their birth:

Edgar Allen Poe .....	Jan. 19, 1809; Oct. 7, 1849—40 years
Mendelssohn .....	Feb. 3, 1809; Nov. 4, 1847—39 years
Abraham Lincoln .....	Feb. 12, 1809; Apr. 15, 1865—56 years
Charles Darwin .....	Feb. 12, 1809; 1882—73 years
Edward Fitzgerald .....	Mar. 31, 1809; J'ne 14, 1883—74 years
Richard Monkton Milnes (Lord Houghton) ....	J'ne 19, 1809; Aug. 11, 1885—76 years
John Stuart Blackie ...	July 1809; Mar. 1895—86 years
Alfred Tennyson .....	Aug. 6, 1809; Oct. 6, 1892—83 years
Oliver Wendell Holmes..	Aug. 29, 1809; Oct. 7 1894—85 years
Wm Ewart Gladstone...	Dec. 29, 1809; May 19, 1898—88 years

The life-long friendship of Tennyson, Gladstone, Fitzgerald and Lord Houghton is worthy of note just here; while more than passing notice might be taken of the fact that Tennyson helped in verse to elaborate and illumine great truths which Darwin was teaching in plain prose.

The question that you would have me discuss in this paper is, What do the British people owe to Lord Tennyson?

First: He ennobled the English language. Language and thought, expression and sentiment are closely linked together. It is so easy to degrade written and spoken words. Loose language—loose thinking—loose morality. The downward tendency is so easy. Anyone who keeps our language clear and clean is a public benefactor, and such was Tennyson. There is no expurgated Tennyson, there is no need for such. No English poet ever wrought out his lines with greater care or fitted together ideas and words with such consummate skill.

Let me make a quotation from the life of the present Prime Minister of Great Britain:

"In opening a course of University extension lectures at Gresham College, on 11th October, 1892, Mr. Asquith paid an eloquent tribute to the memory of Tennyson. He said: 'I think we may safely say that in the whole history of English literature there is no writer any of us have read, of whom it may be more