

DEVENISH.

I.

'Twas years since I had heard the name,
When, seen in print, before my eyes,
The old Round Tower seemed to rise,
With silent scorn of noisy fame.

II.

Our little boat, like water bird
Touches the still lake, breast to breast;
No sound disturbs the solemn rest
Save kiss of dar and whispered word.

III.

All nature wears a placid smile
Of gold, and blue, and tender green,
And in the setting of the scene
Lies, like a gem, the Holy Isle.

IV.

Hushed is the music of the oar,
A little hand is placed in mine;

My blood runs wildly, as with wine—
We stand together on the shore.

V.

O boyish days! O boyish heart!
In vain I wish you back again!
O boyish fancy's first, sweet pain,
How glorious, after all, thou art!

VI.

The old Round Tower, the ruined walls,
Where mould'ring bones once reft in prayer,
The Latin legend, winding stair,
These any "tourist's book" recalls.

VII.

But oh! the love, the wild delight,
The sweet romance of long-ago,
All these have vanished, as the glow
Of even flame dies out at night.

JOHN READE.

ESSAYS ON MODERN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

No. 2.—BROWNING.

Every generation has its representative poet—a poet that is, who may or may not be the greatest of his age, but who certainly more than any other, represents the leading sympathies, aims and modes of thought of his own time. Dryden not Milton was on the whole the poet who represented society in the time of Charles II. And what Byron was to the last generation, Tennyson is to ours. Of such a poet, it is difficult for the men of his own age to form a dispassionate estimate. Our fathers were not able to see Byron's position as a poet, or his relation to other great writers, as we can. And as Byronic poetry represented the passionate and turbulent effervescence which marked the rise of the Romantic School in European literature after the first wave of the French revolution, so the Tennysonian poetry is adapted to the Victorian era; to a time of great material prosperity, of gigantic industrial progress, of peace, and steadily though calmly advancing liberalism. He is the poet of "the steamship and the railway, and the thoughts that shake mankind." He so fully represents the sympathies of our age, his writings reflect so nearly our own aspirations and energies, that we are apt for that reason to take a disproportionate view of his greatness as a poet. The whole tide of English verse writing has settled as steadily in the Tennysonian direction, as it once did in the Byronic. Even "poets of much original power are affected by it." Alexander Smith, Matthew Arnold and Owen Meredith, all have the peculiar mannerism. In the structure of their verses, no less than in the expression and tone of thought, there is always a something, not exactly borrowed, but which we feel would not have been, had not Locksley Ha