

almost exclusively his favourite, a preference which in later years he transferred to Wordsworth and Shelley." He was a poet by nature, although far removed from being a versifier by nature. His growing intimacy with Italian poetry led him naturally to that of Dante. "No poet was so congenial to the character of his own reflective mind."

In 1828 he entered Trinity College, Cambridge, the same year as Tennyson, whom he had known for two or three years before, and with whom he here cemented the closest friendship. The two friends wrote a poem on "Timbuctoo" in competition for the Chancellor's medal, and the prize fell to Tennyson. The society in which he "lived most intimately at Eton and at the University was formed of young men, eminent for natural ability, and for delight in what he sought above all things, the knowledge of truth and the perception of beauty." Among them were Alfred Tennyson, Richard Trench, Henry Alford, Richard Monckton Milnes, W. H. Brookfield, James Spedding and J. M. Kemble. "They who lived and admired him living, and who now revere his sacred memory, as of one to whom, in the fondness of regret, they admit of no rival, know best what he was in the daily commerce of life, and his eulogy should, on every account, better come from hearts, which, if partial, have been rendered so by the experiences of friendship, not by the affections of nature."

His disposition from the earliest days, we are told, was almost faultless, and was sustained by a self-command seldom witnessed in that season of life. His early sweetness of temper "became with the advance of manhood a habitual benevolence, and ultimately ripened into that exalted principle of love towards God and man, which animated his soul during the latter period of his life. He seemed to tread the earth as a spirit from some better world."

In the year 1833, while travelling from Pesth to Vienna, he was seized with intermittent fever, which at first caused no great alarm, but a sudden rush of blood to the head put an end to his earthly career on September the 15th. He was little more than twenty-two years of age. On the following January he was laid to rest, in the old church at Clevedon, his maternal grandfather, Sir Abraham Elton, being the proprietor of Clevedon Court. This is the man the loss of whom almost rent Tennyson's heart in twain.

The sorrow of the poet found its first expression in the exquisite poem, published for the first time in 1842, "Break, break, break." Everyone knows those tender, gracious phrases.

Oh for the touch of a vanished hand,
and
The tender grace of a day that is dead.

"In Memoriam" was not published until 1850, and was probably composed by slow degrees during the seventeen years which passed from the death of Hallam to that time. One canto, the 58th, now the 59th, does not appear in the early editions. Another, the 39th, was added two or three years ago. There are now 131. The metre of "In Memoriam" is, so far, like that of the early sonnet, that the rhymes are between the first and fourth, and the second and third lines of the stanzas, but the early sonnet had fourteen lines, and they consisted of ten syllables, whereas the lines of "In Memoriam" have only eight. The metre had already been used by Ben Jonson, and before him by French writers.

The general idea of the poem was, first, to do homage to a dear and honoured friend; secondly, to put his own grief on record; thirdly, to set forth his gropings and speculations on the mysteries of life and death; and finally, to express the faith and hope based on eternal love with which he looked forward to the future. The poem has been divided into four parts, and although many of the sections in one part might seem to belong rather to another of these divisions, the general outline may be useful to the reader and is here given.

I. (cc. 1-30) Contains records of grief, expressions of the writer's sense of loss.

II. (31-78) Speculations on Life and Death, and on the Divine Government of the world.

III. Personal reminiscences and records of affectionate longings.

IV. Theodicy—Utterances of hope and assurance.

The Prologue was evidently composed after the bulk of the poem, and is the utterance of the poet's assured faith and hope, also of his sense of ignorance. Here, as so often, he sets forth at once the greatness of knowledge, yet the superior greatness of reverence and faith:—

We have but faith: we cannot know;
For knowledge is of things we see.

And again—

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell.

The same sentiments are frequent in Tennyson. We find them in "Enone," in the "Princess," and remarkably in the 114th canto of this poem, beginning: "Who loves not knowledge?" We find the keynote of the poem struck in canto 9:—

My Arthur whom I shall not see
Till all my widow'd race be run;
Dear as the mother to the son
More than my brothers are to me.

This last line is taken up at the beginning of Part III., in canto 79, in some beautiful stanzas addressed, it is said, to his brother Charles.

Speaking of his grief, he says (c. 5) that he finds some relief in utterance, and some noble lines follow (c. 6) on

the commonplaces of comfort, "other friends remain," and "loss is common to the race." In c. 8 he speaks of the change which came over all the localities with which his friend had been associated, and compares his feelings to those of a happy lover who comes "to look on her that loves him well," and learning that she is far from home finds the "place all dark" and the "chambers emptied of delight." Attention should be given to the passages relating to the bringing home of the poet's dead friend, and to his readiness to believe that he may not be gone. It is, however, a satisfaction to think that he is in England.

He compares his different moods of grief to the babbling of the Wye at low water and its silence at high tide, and beautifully compares the "lesser griefs that may be said" to the garrulous sorrow of servants, whilst the other griefs are like the children who look at the vacant chair and think, "How good! how kind! and he is gone." (C. 20.)

Speaking of his remembrance of the friendship of five years and all the grief about his heart (c. 26) he yet has no desire to learn insensibility; for his grief is a witness to his love (c. 27); and the sound of the Christmas Bells brings him thoughts of peace and even of joy, although it is mingled with sorrow.

Here we pass over to the second part, full of questions about life and death; and reference is made to the case of Lazarus. "Where wert thou, brother, those four days?" But there is no reply recorded.

He told it not; or something seal'd
The lips of the Evangelist.

But Mary had faith in the Lord, questioned not, but poured her devotion in the precious ointment on his feet.

Thrice blest whose lives as faithful prayers,
Whose loves in higher love endure;
What souls possess themselves so pure,
Or is there blessedness like theirs? (C. 32.)

And then comes an earnest exhortation to those who imagine that they have stripped off the needless integuments of religion not to disturb those of different thoughts. Tennyson was far from sympathizing with superstition. He had a sincere and deep sympathy with doubt which was honest and the outcome of earnestness of thought. In such doubt he recognized the working of a mind filled with the love of truth, doubting because it would not acquiesce, without reflection, in doctrines or theories which might turn out to be false. It is this which makes him say (c. 96):—

There lies more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds.

Yet he has no sympathy with those who under the pretence of higher spirituality would disturb those who attain a nobler life by the help of these very forms for the want of which the other fails.

Again his doubts return; but they are chased away by an appeal to those inward convictions which have been brought from twilight into day by the Incarnate Word.

And so the Word had breath, and wrought
With human hands the creed of creeds
In loveliness of perfect deeds
More strong than all poetic thought

Which he may read that binds the sheaf,
Or builds the house, or digs the grave,
And those wild eyes that watch the wave
In roarings round the coral reef. (C. 36.)

Further on he is puzzled with the thought of the existence of evil, although he feels that often good comes out of it, and he hopes that at last there will be no real loss at all

Behold we know not anything:
I can but trust that good shall fall
At last—far off—at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream; but what am I?
An infant crying in the night:
An infant crying for the light:
And with no language but a cry.

The second part closes with the return of Christmas. Calmer thoughts and feelings had come to him and his. They had the quiet sense of something lost, and he almost fears they have forgotten their loss, and he answers:—

O last regret, regret can die!
No—mixt with all this mystic frame
Her deep relations are the same,
But with long use her tears are dry.

The third part opens with the lines to his brother Charles, already mentioned, in which he refers to his previous words: "More than my brothers are to me." His brother is too noble to misunderstand him, and too sure of his love. They are one.

But thou and I are one in kind,
As moulded like in nature's mint;
And hill and wood and field did print
The same sweet forms in either mind.

The third part, consisting largely of reminiscences, contains some of the finest portions of the book, and the sections or cantos are sometimes much longer than in the earlier parts. Specially beautiful are the passages expressive of his admiration and affection for Arthur Hallam. In one place he compares himself (c. 97) to a wife whose husband has risen far above her intellectually, but who believes in his love and loves him still: "I cannot understand: I love." In another place (c. 60) he had compared himself to a girl loving one above her in rank:—

At night she weeps, "How vain am I!
How should he love a thing so low?"

In an earlier place (c. 41) he had spoken of the greatness of his reverence for him "for whose applause I strove," and hopes that in a purer state he may see nothing that will cause him to be "lessened in his love." Perhaps one of the finest of all the passages on Hallam is that in part iv., canto 111, beginning "The churl in spirit," and telling how his friend

But seemed the thing he was, and join'd
Each office of the social hour
To noble manners, as the flower
And native growth of noble mind

And thus he bore without abuse
The grand old name of gentleman,
Defamed by every charlatan
And soil'd by all ignoble use.

The fourth part from canto 106 to the end is engaged with the attempt announced by Milton at the beginning of "Paradise Lost":—

That to the height of this great argument
I may assert eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men;

and although the methods and even the secondary aims are very different, the general purpose is the same. All is well, all is right, all will be good. The keynote is given in the opening lines beginning: "Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky." There is a grandeur in them like the sound of the trump of God. The closing passages are very fine. Speaking of the bitter notes which his harp would give, he could declare: "Yet Hope had never lost her youth," and this because she rested on eternal love. "Love is and was my Lord and King"; and so all is well, though faith and form be sunder'd in the night of fear. The closing canto proclaims his undying faith in the "Living Will" that shall endure.

THE ARCHIC MAN—X.

IN the tower-library already described, Glaucus, McKnom, Helpsam and Rectus were sitting one afternoon, when in walked Mrs. Glaucus, and said:—

"Book in hand as ever—I never can get my old man away from them stupid books. Look at him now. I know he's wishing I'd be away. But I won't go for him."

Glaucus: "My dear, I am very glad to have you here. I was reading, at the request of these gentlemen, "Paradise Lost."

Mrs. Glaucus: "Paradise Lost! and Paradise Gained! I don't think you'll gain Paradise much unless you grow a little more religious. You are more likely to have your toes and finger nails burned until the Monday after eternity. Look at him now, ain't he mad? I tell you, Mr. McKnom, I sometimes think he's crazy; ha! ha! and I'm thinking I'll get some mad doctor to make a diogenes of his case. I constantly hear him in his study talking to himself. When we were first married I used to think he'd have somebody with him. One time he told me he was trying the metre—The metre! He didn't tell me whether it was short or long metre. Before he went to Cobourg I went in one day and he never saw me. He had in his left hand a cigar half smoked and out, and his right hand went up and down as if he was preaching and he was spouting some unknown tongue—which always makes me mad. He never saw me."

Helpsam: "He was in the clouds!"

Mrs. Glaucus: "In the clouds! Didn't I tell you, dear man, he was in his own study. I think I'll sit down; it's just as cheap. Go on with your Paradise Lost."

Glaucus had been reading the eighth book, where Adam recounts to Raphael the creation of Eve.

So lovely fair,
That what seem'd fair in all the world, seem'd now
Mean or in her summ'd up.

Adam's misery upon losing sight of the beautiful vision; his desolation amid all the abounding delights of Eden, when waking he looks around for her in vain; his joy

When out of hope, behold her! not far off!
Such as I saw her in my dream adorn'd
With what all earth and heaven could bestow
To make her amiable. . . .
Grace was in all her steps, heaven in her eye,
In every gesture dignity and love.

He read, in such a manner as to bring out all the music of Milton's verse, that marvellously beautiful narrative of the first courtship. His voice trembled with emotions at Adam's description of the thousand-fold charm of Eve—and as he said

Here only weak
Against the charm of beauty's powerful glance,

Mrs. Glaucus smiled, happily unmarked by her husband; but when his voice, rising on the tide of Milton's song, and thrilling with the pure passion of Adam's words, he concluded:—

And to consummate all
Greatness of mind, and nobleness their seat,
Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
About her as a grand angelic placed,

and McKnom shouted "bravo," and Rectus said he had never realized the full beauty of that passage before. Never before knew how sweet and sonorous was Milton's song. Mrs. Glaucus laughed, and said: "I guess he doesn't stand in much awe of me. Come, Glaucus, I want you to walk with me a little up the road. I have just had a note from the man who sold me them lovely peas that you enjoyed so much, and he tells me he has a wild swan for me. You know you told me you'd like a swan. What shall I tell him? Shall I write him to keep it for us?"

Glaucus: "Oh no, my dear, I don't know when we shall be back."

Rectus: "Are you like that luxurious monk in Chaucer of whom he tells us

A fat swan lov'd he best of any roast."

Glaucus had risen now and said: "Well, my dear, let us go."