

the lady mistress of the mansion. What will she be like? He, who wonders, has heard somewhere that she is singularly beautiful. But what is this to him? Even while he thinks of her he feels a chill presentiment, suggested no doubt by her close relationship to one who has already worked him so much harm, that she will bring with her a curse for him."

The hero has a predisposition to madness, which, as Tainsh says, gives to all his emotions, whether of joy or sorrow, an intensity possible only under such conditions. His emotions, when he is first brought before us, are intensely painful. He is haunted continually by the uncertain fate of his father, and the death of his broken-hearted mother. He blames all his misfortunes on one who, if he had not deliberately cheated, had at least

"Dropt off gorged from a scheme that had left us flaccid and drained."

Like the Greek in the story, from one he judges all, and the treachery of the old man at the Hall leads him to think that all the world is depraved. He is neither rich nor poor, and so has time to brood over his wrongs and those of the world, but where the one ends and the other begins, it is difficult to tell. He mistrusts and hates everybody, including himself. He is misanthropic and self-centred, lonely and alone. It is at this point that Maud appears, and the action of the poem begins.

*Maud* was always a favourite with Tennyson, perhaps because of all his poems it received at its birth the most unstinted abuse. It was the poem that he generally chose to read to his friends, many of whom have left interesting accounts of the reading and the effect upon the listener. Some of these incidents are so interesting in themselves and so characteristic of the poet, that they are given in the exact words of the writers.