

THE ANTIDOTE

IS Published every Saturday at the offices, 171 and 173 St. James Street Montreal. It is issued by the JOURNAL OF COMMERCE plant and machinery, in time for the evening suburban trains. Personal inquiries may be made of the proprietor. Subscription ONE DOLLAR per annum, single copies FIVE CENTS. May be obtained at all the leading stationers and newsdealers in Montreal, Toronto, Quebec, Hamilton, Ottawa, London, Halifax, St. John's, Kingston, Winnipeg, Victoria, Vancouver, &c. All communications and remittances should be addressed "THE ANTIDOTE," 171 and 173 St. James Street, Montreal. We do not undertake to return unused MSS. or sketches. Published by M. S. FOLBY at the above address.

OUR PRIZE LIST

TO any one obtaining for us One Thousand new annual subscribers before 1st January, 1893, we will send one first-class Upright Seven Octave Piano-forte; for Five Hundred subscribers we will give one first-class ticket to Europe and return; for Two Hundred and Fifty subscribers, one first-class Sewing Machine; for One Hundred subscribers, a Gold Watch; or Fifty subscribers, a New Webster's Dictionary, Unabridged; and for Twenty-five a Silver Watch.

THE LATE LORD TENNYSON

It has been said that the Battle of Waterloo destroyed the poetic spirit of the age. Be this as it may, few men of culture will be found to dispute the fact that the poets of the second and third quarters of this century can scarcely, as a whole, be favorably compared with those of the first quarter. A comparison is at once suggested between the titled poets of the said respective eras. Let any lover of poeie read over the third and fourth cantos of "Childe Harold," and then take up any of the longer poems of Lord Tennyson, and he will not long hesitate in his choice. In our enjoyment of the new author, we fail to remember the old, much as while endeavouring to fully understand and appreciate Wagner, we forget that we have nothing better than Beethoven or Mozart. Canning once remarked that, the man who says he prefers dry champagne to sweet,—lies. This may be accepted with some reservation, as it doubtless depends somewhat on age of the drinker.

There are numbers of people however, who affect or really have an appreciation of the fine polish of Tennyson where the original thought is so chiselled and embroidered that it almost eludes the reader, and makes him admire the finish of the workmanship rather than the work itself. The productions of our greatest modern poets, Tennyson, Browning, Arnold, and Swinburne, are over exacting on the reader, who rises from a half hour in their company with

a sense rather of fatigue than of enjoyment. It is not so with Byron, Scott, Burns, Moore; we are borne along as it were "on the wings of song," and regret when the final line has been reached.

At a time when the whole world of culture is doing honor to the dead Laureate, it is scarcely fit to enter into a criticism of his writings, but our readers will perhaps excuse our just touching on their leading characteristics. We yield to none in our admiration of the giant poet who has just passed away, whose own fine poem "In Memoriam" must be his greatest hold on posterity. Tennyson is the poet of sorrow, and a perusal of one of his longer poems affects us like a musical evening among Chopin's compositions. A little of it is delightful; much of it arouses a morbid feeling, a kind of melancholy and sadness, that in this material age is neither good for gods nor men. But we owe much to Tennyson. He is himself pre-eminently a lover of his kind; there is hardly a page of his that is not felt to owe its charm to the affection which he bears to the persons he has known. His simplicity of feeling is like that of a woman; as is also his constancy; but he is rather devoid of practical sagacity. Unlike the more vigorous writers of the young years of the century, he has not the vices along with the virtues of men,—no passion, inconstancy, knowledge of the world, wit, many-sidedness nor any zest in the pursuit of pleasure. He has less of passion than of tenderness, "the feminine counterpart of passion."

As everybody possesses a copy of his poems, we need only refer to the following stanza in "In Memoriam" and the four following stanzas to illustrate and justify the account we have briefly given of his character,—for instance—

"O somewhere, meek unconscious dove,
That sittest ranging golden hair;
And glad to flud thyself so fair,
Poor child that waitest for thy love:

As examples of the number of beautiful landscape images and pictures compressed into single stanzas, the following may be quoted:

And brushing ankle-deep in flowers,
We heard beneath the woodbine veil,
The milk that bubbled in the pail,
And buzzings of the honied hours."

* * * * *

"But Summer on the steaming floods,
And Spring that swells the narrow
brooks,
And Autumn with a noise of rooks,
That gather in the waning woods."—
Again the three melodiously descriptive lines from the "Princess."

"Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn,

The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees."

It has been well said that no one can express a truth of feeling in fewer words, and therefore with greater might and emphasis than Tennyson. Everybody is familiar with the lines,

"Tis better to have loved and lost,
Than never to have loved at all."

He had also the *sobriety of language*, which is so impressive; but he had not largeness of grasp. All his works consist of a series of lyrics or pictures, exquisite, but isolated. There is not the grand sweep of Byron. We read the "Princess" for the stanzas—"Tears, idle tears;"—"Home she brought her warrior dead;"—"The splendour falls on castle walls," etc. The story is a mere frame to the picture, and without the wit which gives brilliancy and meaning to trifles. It would seem to have been suggested by the idea of Boccaccio's "Decameron," a subject which some of the noble poet's friends did not quite approve of for his chaste muse.

The "Idyls of the King" have little imagination though abounding in natural pathos. His tournaments do not compare with those of Scott; but then we live in a more peaceful age. Again, can anyone fancy a man making such a speech as that addressed by Arthur to Queen Guinevere on his first meet with her after the discovery of her infidelity? Moral maxims and reasonings are not the language in which injury expresses itself. We fail to find real ability, intellect, or readiness in expedients, in this his greatest character, or in Merlin, Geraint or Lancelot. They show great feeling, and are great examples of the force of conscience, but there is nothing heroic about them.

Maud contains some beautiful poetry especially throughout the middle of the poem. The lyrics beginning, "I have led her home, my love, my only friend."—"O that 'twere possible"—and "Come into the garden, Maud" are universal favorites. The last named has been set