

by destroying in herself the tender heart of flesh. Though in some quarters "The Princess" did not meet with approval, for the simple reason that its import was not understood. Yet the general trend of criticism was in its favor; and like good wine, it flavor has improved with age. Mr. Stoddard ranks it with "Comus" and "Midsummer Night's Dream," while the beautiful songs which appeared in the second edition, viz: "As Through the Land," "Sweet and Low," "The Splendor Falls on Castle Walls," "Home They Brought Her Warrior Dead," "Ask Me No More," Mr. Stedman considers to be "finest group of songs produced in our century."

In 1850 appeared "In Memoriam," by the great majority of scholars and *litterateurs* considered to be Tennyson's masterpiece. Though his name did not grace the title page, yet the world soon traced its authorship to him. It is a collection of poems on a vast variety of subjects, but all united to the memory of his bosom friend, Arthur Hallam, who died seventeen years before. Hallam had been Tennyson's college companion, his sister's accepted suitor, and the dearest of all men to the poet. Mr. Gladstone calls the poem "the richest oblation ever offered by the affection of friendship at the tomb of the departed." But though undoubtedly written to the memory of his friend, Peter Bayne is right when he says, "Hallam, strictly speaking, is not the subject of the poem; he has merely furnished the occasions and suggestions for it. About 130 pieces, each complete in itself, are knit into a true poetic unity by being set to one key-note, provided with one sentiment, colored by one feeling, idea, thought. More is not required of any one of them than that it shall have some relation, even though indirect and distant, to the friendship between Hallam and Tennyson. They thus become to a very large extent autobiographical, and their autobiographical interest is higher than their biographical, in the proportion in which Alfred Tennyson is a more important and interesting person than Arthur Hallam." The same year, 1850, saw the death of Wordsworth, and the laureate crown, thus left without a wearer was, with the unanimous approval of the English people, bestowed upon

Tennyson. The laurel rested upon a worthy brow, a far worthier one than many among his predecessors in the Laureateship could boast, for whom political consideration in many cases won the distinction. It is said that when the then Minister was approached with the request to name Tennyson for the Laureateship, he answered that he did not know Mr. Tennyson, whereupon "Ulysses" was read to him. Having an ear for harmony and a taste appreciative of true poetry, the Minister said that the author of such a composition was well worthy of the crown which Wordsworth had worn, and named him for the vacancy. This year also saw him married to Miss Emily Sellwood, daughter of a Horncastle lawyer. It seems that when Tennyson first made his approaches to Miss Emily, the worthy lawyer was not very well pleased with his daughter's preference for the young poet. But at the time of their marriage his objections had doubtless been dispelled, for Tennyson had by this time acquired such fame as few men in the nation could boast, and was well on the way to fortune.

In his official capacity of Laureate Tennyson wrote very little, the "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington" and "The Charge of the Light Brigade," being the only lines worthy of note. These appeared in the same volume as "Maud," published in 1855, which met with less success than any other of the poet's more extensive compositions. The *Westminster Review* proclaimed it to be "scarcely more than a residuum of Alfred Tennyson." This year also, the University of Oxford conferred upon him the degree of D.C.L. He declined a baronetcy some years later, but in 1883, accepted a peerage as Baron Tennyson of Aldworth, Sussex, and of Freshwater, Isle of Wight.

The "Idylls of the King," upon which his fame to a great extent rests, were commenced some years later, and continued almost down to our own time. "Enoch Arden and Other Poems," published in 1864, "Queen Mary," in 1875, "Harold" in 1877, "The Lover's Tale" in 1879, "Locksley Hall, Sixty Years After," in 1886, and many others at intervening periods, make up the complement of his works. In 1852 a son was born to the poet, whom he named Hallam, after