

dents to pass away the time, and that it afterward received a poetical dress. But it does not seem probable that a story having such a complete plot could be told off-hand even by students; and in the next place the parts are rather too well connected to be the production of seven different minds. On the other hand there are those who hold the belief that the introduction describing the incidents at the old abbey is altogether fictitious and has no other use than to serve as a convenient way of introducing the subject on which the poet wishes to write. This seems to be the right view of the case.

Yet it cannot be denied that there may have occurred some incident similar to that described in the introduction, on which Tennyson founds his poem. Be that as it may, there is manifestly some truth which he wishes to inculcate, and it is altogether unlikely that seven students, gathered together in the manner described, should, without any forethought or previously laid plan, tell a story in seven different parts, which would point so clearly to that or any other truth. Reasoning thus we are brought to the conclusion that the poet is giving expression to his own thoughts in the main body of the poem, and that it is therefore a kind of allegory.

But besides the great truth which underlies the whole poem, there are several minor truths that are more or less evident.

The first we notice is concerning the relations of landlord and tenant. Landlords seldom seem to realise that they have it greatly in their power to render the lives of their tenants not only much happier and more pleasant than they generally are, but also much more useful. In Sir Walter Vivian, Tennyson gives a fine example of the beneficent landlord. Sir Walter has the good of his people at heart and not only makes them happy but instructs them in the most pleasant and practical way, and while thus contributing to their happiness he benefits them, benefits himself and benefits society in general. How much ill-will and strife would be avoided, and worse than wasted energy saved, by the cheerful co-operation of landlord and tenant! How greatly might the usefulness of the working classes be increased, and their standard of intelligence raised by such a system of instruction as Sir Walter Vivian adopted! We like to dwell upon this beautiful picture of the mutual love and consideration of landlord and tenant.

In reading this part of Tennyson's introduction we observe that he is a scientist as well as a poet. He presses into his service and makes effective use of modern science, a subject which many might look upon as being altogether too practical ever to become the helpmeet of poetry. Tennyson takes such things as steam and water power, electricity,