

prolonged, have enabled him to witness a universal appreciation of his genius which for the bulk of our great poets, from Shakespeare downwards, has been awarded by posterity only. He has had his share, and more than his share, of misunderstanding and ignorant criticism; but he has had a share, rarely if ever surpassed, of ultimate influence and recognition in his own lifetime, and holds at the present moment a position in the literary world only rivalled in this century by Sir Walter Scott, in the many-sided admiration and respect which it represents. The other great name—the name also of a poet—which suggests itself in connection with contemporary fame in the same period, could never command that respect for moral elevation without which such fame lacks its highest quality. Of the many young men who sighed with Byron and were fired by his genius, only those who were disposed to catch the fever in earnest, and to be Byrons in the action of life, could give him a whole-hearted admiration.

It would be impossible in such space as we have at our command, to institute any careful inquiry into the sources of Tennyson's influence over Englishmen; but one great source of its wide extent is his many-sidedness, and his consequent appeal to very various minds. To illustrate this would require great fullness and variety of quotation. The many gradations, however, are suggested by the extremes on either side. It is not often that a writer who is familiar with the deepest problems of metaphysics, can turn in a moment, with unequalled naturalness and grace, to those simple feelings and thoughts which bring out the kinship of a whole nation, of high and low, of learned and unlearned. To satisfy the fastidious intellectualist at one moment, to tax his powers of interpretation,

and appeal to the whole range of his literary knowledge and perception, and the next moment to strike a great common chord—of pride in national glory, of reverence for the Sovereign, of the simple pathos of the joys and griefs of home, of domestic love, of English village life—this combination is not common. Tens of thousands have cried over "The Lord of Burleigh," "The May Queen," "Rizpah," "The Children's Hospital," "The Grandmother;" have laughed over "The Northern Farmer," "The Northern Cobbler," "The Village Wife;" have been fired with a soldier's enthusiasm as they read "The Charge of the Light Brigade;" have joined in a whole nation's tears at the lines, solemn and significant to all as the funeral bell itself:—

"Bury the great Duke
With an empire's lamentation.
Let us bury the great Duke
To the noise of the mourning of a mighty
nation,
Mourning when their leaders fall,
Warriors carry the warrior's pall,
And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall."

And these readers have known that the man who could utter so beautifully their own simple thoughts, or give such unsuspected delicacy of explanation to their own simple feelings, was not merely a master of melody and expression; that he dwelt in company with the deepest problems of his age; that he touched the heights of science and the depths of metaphysics. He has bridged the gulf, so often unnecessarily widened, between the uneducated mind and the educated. Each class finds food in these volumes, and often in the very same poems, whose outline is visible to the many, while their full meaning and artistic finish are appreciated by only a few. And, again, there has been a large class of cultivated readers to whom one-half of "In Memoriam," "The Ancient Sage," the "De Profundis," "Vast-