

the rest of the poem put together, is chiefly occupied in picturing the love of Julian for Camilla, and the sudden blow he suffers on discovering that his love has not even been recognised as aught but that of a brother, and that another reigns

'in the maiden empire of her mind.'

It is whilst narrating this, that the fine descriptive passages above alluded to are introduced,—the whole having been so deeply imprinted on Julian's mind as to become indelible. As he beautifully puts it—

'They come, they crowd upon me all at once—
Moved from the cloud of unforgotten things,
That sometimes on the horizon of the mind
Lies folded.'

From this part, too, we gather that Julian is of a dreamy, contemplative nature, no Romeo flashing out with his love in speech and action, but a man of too retiring a mind to make his aspirations manifest to his much-loved foster-sister. It is in accord with such a character that he should himself lay her hand in Lionel's, call for a blessing on them, and wander away with the phantoms bred in his fantasy-stricken brain. Such a man could not be jealous; if he had had the potentiality of jealousy in him he might have married Camilla himself.

The next two parts are devoted to his reveries and dreams. He spends whole months in the forests they had haunted together, whilst—

'Over the deep graves of Hope and Fear
And all the broken palaces of the Past,
Brooded one master-passion evermore,
Like to a low-hung and a fiery sky
Above some fair metropolis, earth-shock'd,—
Hung round with ragged ruins and burning folds.'

His latest vision is told in the third part, and only occupies some sixty verses, the part being utterly disproportionate in length to the rest of the poem. He sees his love carried on a funeral bier round the level sands of a little bay, is sucked into the procession, hears the dull tolling of the distant bell storm quicker and quicker into

'A long loud clash of rapid marriage bells,—

the pall is blown far out to sea until it looks like 'a little silver cloud,' and just as he stoops to see the dead face of her he loved,

'She, from her bier
Leapt lightly, clad in bridal white—her hair
Studded with one rich Provence rose—a light
Of smiling welcome round her lips,—

and taking Lionel's hand leaves Julian standing by the vacant bier. This resurrection vision, as one may call it, clearly forecasts the 'event' narrated in 'The Golden Supper,' although the criticisms we have hitherto seen fail to point this out.

The last part, written in Tennyson's maturer years, raises some interesting thoughts. How was the fourth part originally written? for undoubtedly it must have been finished when the author went so far as to have the press set to work on the commencement of the story. If we were to hazard a suggestion, it would be that the original tale was told to its close by Julian. There are several reasons that lead us to believe this. The introduction of a stranger to complete the tale has a raw, crude look about it—but it is not the sort of crudity that would be committed by a beginner.

It is more probable that Tennyson found that the weakness of Julian's character as struck in the first three parts, appeared more distinctly when he was sent to narrate the infinitely more striking incidents of the *denouement*. Indeed, told by Julian, the catastrophe would infallibly have lost much of its power and been smothered up with sweet regretful conceits. Now when 'The Golden Supper' was given to the world we must suppose that Tennyson never expected to publish the prelude to it. We say we must suppose this, though beyond doubt it is difficult to explain why (if it were to be a whole in itself) a little more labour was not bestowed in the commencing verses, which are in themselves a perfect riddle to any one who has not read the third part,—for which the introductory and explanatory paragraph to 'The Golden Supper' was but a poor substitute. But, as already remarked, Tennyson in 1870 did not look forward to what he has now done in 1879, and was therefore at full liberty to speak his verses through whatever mouthpiece was most convenient. Taken by itself the last part was undoubtedly much improved by the course which he adopted, and even Julian's character assumes a bolder and more manly cast. But now that it has been joined to the rest of the poem, we must admit that the discrepancy is too startling. There is nothing to prepare us for the change of voice, and the shock of transition that would have been naturally felt under any circumstances on