

All things considered, I think myself happy in the manner of my introduction to both Tennyson and Browning. I began the voluntary study of poetry under Scott. I remember well the keen delight his best things gave me as a boy; they give the same now. Later came a little reading of Moore, less of Byron—enough of each. Their verse seemed attractive as I read, but it did not hold me. Longfellow was writing then; his poems were in the air. His agreeable versification, his serious, thoughtful setting of the everyday, his frequent near approach to the poetic, were very pleasing. So I read his lyrics and most of them are in my memory now. I think it would be difficult to find a gentle guide better fitted to conduct the unfolding mind towards—up to—the gates of that poet's paradise into which—but what am I saying? A blessing on his memory, for he too was a friend and helper, and his words yet come like the benediction that follows after prayer.

In addition there was, of course, as a part of school work the reading of selections. The verse had my preference; and many fine passage from the writings of Milton and Shakespeare became mine in this way, along with those single lyrics of classic beauty that flourish in perennial vigor, while the "complete works" of their authors have been consigned to the book-worm.

I met with Tennyson before college days began: a friend with whom I was visiting handed me a little volume and asked me to read. It was that blue and gold edition that came to us like a gift from the gods. I opened it at the *Lotos Eaters* and read. Then followed *Locksley Hall* and a few others. During the next week as I went, about my school duties I discovered certain words haunting my memory. By watching the mental process obliquely and discreetly as an angler might watch a trout pool, I succeeded in capturing a few rimes which I slowly lengthened into lines making a passage which, by warily following clues, I traced at last to the *Lotos Eaters*. This power of verse to cling to the memory and haunt the mind with suggestions until it is drawn out into distinctness has become one of my principles of criticism. I seldom return to a poem whose music or thought does not thus call to me by some echo from the halls of memory. Tennyson's best verse has this singing, memory-haunting power in an eminent degree.

At college I met with other Tennysonianians. There were good students at Acadia then; men with much moral earnestness and ambition for scholarship. We talked over the old poems and hailed the new with delight. There were eager debates and plenty of criticisms, often crude, no doubt, but wholly our own and highly charged with enthusiasm. Were the new Idylls equal to the *Morte D'Arthur*? What did he mean by the *Vision of Sin*, and *Two Voices*? Was *Maud* a great love poem? Was the *Palace of Art* really too perfect? Was not *In Memoriam* superior to *Lycidas*? I believe we