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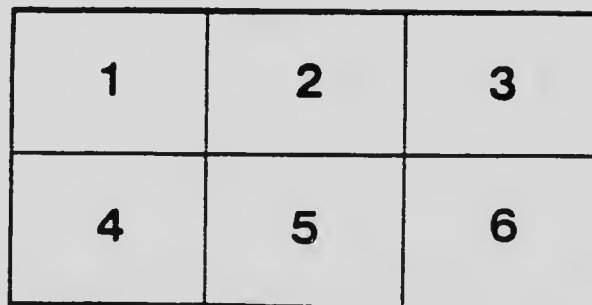
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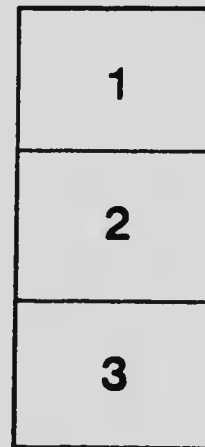
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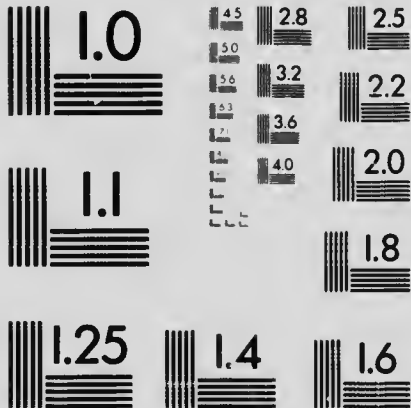
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TENNYSON

SELECT POEMS

EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES
BY PELHAM EDGAR, PH.D.

TORONTO
GEORGE N. MORANG & COMPANY, LIMITED
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EDITOR'S NOTE

I desire to acknowledge my indebtedness for valuable suggestions, and for access to valuable material, to Mr. John C. Saul, M.A., and Mr. C. C. James, M.A., both ardent students and lovers of Tennyson. Mr. Saul has also contributed the descriptive bibliography, and a majority of the review questions are from his collection.

PELHAM EDGAR



LIFE AND WRITINGS OF TENNYSON



BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

TENNYSON so jealously shielded himself from the public gaze that, while he still lived, the world knew only the outstanding events of his career; of his private life, his opinions, and his character, only so much was known as the poems revealed. Thus he would have had it remain; but realising that human curiosity must be satisfied, he placed at his son's disposal much of the valuable material which is now incorporated in the "Memoir." Since the publication of this *Life*, various brief notices and personal recollections have appeared which assist us towards a fuller knowledge of Tennyson both as man and poet.

On the strength of certain statements, sufficiently authentic, doubtless, but taken out of their true relation, the idea of Tennyson has arisen as a man in his private capacity, egotistic, selfish, petulant, and morose. By a necessary reaction these same qualities have been read into his poetry, and the heroes of *Maud* and *Locksley Hall* are too frequently regarded as illustrating definite aspects of Tennyson's character and personal opinions. On these grounds many of the strongest attacks upon Tennyson, as a poet, have been based, and it is, therefore, a matter of some importance to ascertain the true relation between his character and his poetry.

Tennyson's
character
and his
poetry.

In the sense of Tennyson's own words, that "poetry is a great deal truer than fact," his poems are the real biography of the man, from which we may derive the essential truths of his nature. If we interrogate his poetry in an intelligent spirit, we discern the image of a noble mind and nature; and over against the occasional petulancy and moroseness which he displayed in private life we may set the dignity, the sweetness, and the reverence which are, as it were, the noble music to which his poetry moves.

It does not make us lose our faith in humanity that our great men should have their whims, their caprices, their apparent imperfections. We relish their asperities as we relish the roughness on the rind of an oak. What we demand of both is that they be sound at heart.

Dignity, simplicity, reverence, are the master tones which dominate in Tennyson's poetry, and a profound sincerity of purpose. These were also the qualities which marked his habitual utterances in private life; and although there was probably mingled with some of his more sweeping denunciations a touch of humorous exaggeration, his sincerity is chiefly responsible for his bluntness of speech, his downright emphatic manner, and his apparent arrogance of opinion. When, for example, with sweeping condemnation he would say, "I hate (håate) all Frenchmen," we may comment upon the narrowness of his sympathies, but knowing Tennyson as we do, there can scarcely be any doubt as to the *sincerity* of his views; and when he found fault with his host's (Max Müller's) mutton chops,—“The staple of every second-class inn in England,” the unwarrantable rudeness and the outspoken sincerity are not to be dissociated.

Though such remarks and such incidents may be almost indefinitely multiplied, it does not, and should not, alter our conception of Tennyson. Petulant and rough in manner he may have been, but when all has been said, we feel that England has rarely produced a poet whose life was ordered with such stately simplicity and informed with such noble purpose.

Approaching the study of Tennyson's life, we are, at the outset, impressed with the apparent dearth of incident in a career that covered the greater part of an important century. Ten years of Byron's life or Shelley's contain more that deserves the name of incident than the sixty years of Tennyson's manhood. Poets who die young, by some unconscious prescience of their fate, live through their brief span with feverish intensity, and the flame burns fiercely to the socket. But Tennyson's faculties unfolded themselves in a stately progression, and the events of his life ordered themselves calmly as if with the knowledge that everything should be accomplished in the fulness of time. Nine years of creative energy were granted to Shelley, and for nine years Tennyson was silent in the same fertile period of life, refashioning his work and polishing his new poems to studied perfection, till like the magic brand "Excalibur" they should flash upon the world:

Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps,
Upon the hidden bases of the hills.

ALFRED TENNYSON was born at Somersby, Lincolnshire, on August 6th, 1809. He was the fourth of twelve children, two of whom, his elder brothers Frederick and Charles (Charles Tennyson-Turner) gained some distinction in poetry. His father, the Rev. Dr. George Clayton Tennyson, was a man of high intelligence and scholarly attainments, with a character of no little strength, but prone to melancholy. In literature his tastes were conservative, and he possessed some facility in versification after the approved classical models of the eighteenth century. Owing to an unaccountable caprice of his father he had, although the eldest son, been dispossessed of the estate of Bayons Manor, which passed into the succession of his younger brother, Charles Tennyson d'Eyncourt. At this time, and until his death in 1831, he was the rector of Somersby and Wood Enderby, and performed the clerical duties, somewhat perfunctorily we may assume, for the surrounding parishes. His disinheritance bred in him, or at least fostered, an incurable melancholy which in a mitigated degree became the birthright of his son. What other qualities Tennyson inherited from his father we must leave those skilled in the science of heredity to divine. It is of some importance to know that although the father's disappointed hopes and lack of sane philosophy wore his strong frame out before his time, he handed down to his descendants that best of all birthrights,—a healthy constitution. "You know we Tennysons never die," the poet would jestingly say.

Elizabeth Tennyson, the poet's mother, was the daughter of the Rev. Stephen Fytche, the vicar of Louth, also in the county of Lincolnshire. She is the original of the poetic portrait in "Isabel," and she

also inspired these verses towards the close of *The Princess* :—

Yet was there one thro' whom I loved her, one
 Not learned save in gracious household ways,
 Not perfect, nay, but full of tender wants,
 No Angel, but a dearer being, all dipt
 In Angel instincts, breathing Paradise,
 Interpreter between the Gods and men,
 Who look'd all native to her place, and yet
 On tiptoe seemed to walk upon a sphere
 Too gross to tread, and all male minds perforce
 Sway'd to her from their orbits as they moved,
 And girdled her with music. Happy he
 With such a mother ! faith in womankind
 Beats with his blood, and trust in all things high
 Comes easy to him, and tho' he trip and fall
 He shall not blind his soul with clay.

She was, in Fitzgera'd's estimation, " One of the most innocent and tender-hearted ladies I ever saw." Tennyson was, until 1850, in almost daily contact with this woman; and reverencing as he did the tenderness of her nature, and the serenity of her faith, it is not extravagant to ascribe to her influence something of the poet's spiritual development.

At the age of seven, Tennyson was sent to Louth, where he lived with his grandmother, and attended Childhood and Youth. and hated the grammar-school of the place. Before he was twelve he returned home, and his real education began under his father's tuition. The boys read with avidity in the well-stocked library such authors as Shakespeare, Milton, Burke, Goldsmith, Rabelais, Sir William Jones, Addison, Swift, Defoe, Cervantes, Bunyan and Buffon; and, in addition, acquired a competent knowledge of classics and mathematics, and a smattering of the natural sciences. To quote from the "Memoir": "My father said that

he himself received a good, but not a regular classical education. At any rate, he became an accurate scholar, the author 'thoroughly drummed' into him being Horace; whom he disliked in proportion. He would lament, 'They use *me* as a lesson-book at schools, and they will call me "that horrible Tennyson."' "

The boy's interest in literature was very keen, and his literary ambitions were early formed. A story is told of how, at the age of eight, he was left at home in the garden on one occasion, and was told by his brother Charles (aged nine) to compose a poem on the flowers. Before the brother's return the boy had covered two sides of a slate with Thomsonian blank verse, which the senior gravely perused with the added remark: "Well, Alfred, you can write." The poet's recollection in 1890 of these early days is interesting: "Before I could read, I was in the habit, on a stormy day, of spreading my arms to the wind, and crying out, 'I hear a voice that's speaking in the wind,' and the words, 'far, far away,' had always a strange charm for me.* About ten or eleven Pope's *Homer's Iliad* became a favourite of mine, and I wrote hundreds and hundreds of lines in the regular Popeian metre, nay, even could improvise them, so could my two elder brothers, for my father was a poet and could write regular metre very skilfully

"At about twelve and onward I wrote an epic of six thousand lines à la Walter Scott,—full of battle, dealing too with sea and mountain scenery,—with Scott's regularity of octo-syllables, and his occasional varie-

* See the poem of that name in "Demeter and Other Poems," Collected Works, p. 811.

ties. Though the performance was very likely worth nothing, I never felt myself more truly inspired. I wrote as much as seventy lines at one time, and used to go shouting them about the fields in the dark." "If Alfred die," his father said, "one of our greatest poets will have gone." Once, when the boy had written some verses on his grandmother's death, the grandfather gave him half a guinea, saying: "Here is half a guinea for you, the first you have ever earned by poetry, and take my word for it, the last."

Such were the not altogether unhappy conditions of Tennyson's boyhood. Around him was spread the quietly impressive scenery of Lincolnshire, leading down to the Mablethorpe coast, where he first learned to love the sea, and saw in the stormy weather of the North Sea—

The hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataracts.*

He went about among the simple Lincolnshire folk, whose laughter-stirring recollection furnished him to his last day with quaintly human themes for humorous verse. Keenly sensitive to every influence, he was

* Some of Tennyson's best pictures of the sea are based upon his early recollections of Mablethorpe, as, for example, this fine simile, curiously devoted to the description of the heavy fall of a drunkard:—

And Arthur deign'd not use of word or sword,
But let the drunkard, as he stretch'd from horse
To strike him, overbalancing his bulk,
Down from the causeway heavily to the swamp
Fall, as the crest of some slow-arching wave,
Heard in dead night along that table-shore,
Drops flat, and after the great waters break
Whitening for half a league, and thin themselves.
Far over sands marbled with moon and cloud,
From less and less to nothing; thus he fell
Head-heavy;

—*The Last Tournament—Idylls of the King.*

often overwhelmed by his father's alarming melancholy, and would go out into the night and pray for death. His aunt, too, brought an element of seriousness into his life, of which the boy, doubtless, saw the humorous side. A rigid Calvinist, she would weep for hours because of God's infinite mercy. "Has He not damned most of my friends? But *me, me* He has picked out for eternal salvation; *me*, who am no better than my neighbours . . . Alfred, Alfred, when I look at you, I think of the words of Holy Scripture—'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.'"

At the age of eighteen Tennyson presented himself to that limited world to which youth appeals, as a poet. In 1827, the *Poems by Two Brothers* appeared, jointly written by Alfred and his brother Charles, with a few contributions from Frederick Tennyson. None of the poems were signed, and few perhaps deserved signing. The verses were clever but unoriginal, and we can scarcely understand the charitable temerity of the publishers, Messrs. J. & J. Jackson, of Louth, who gave £20 for the copyright, with the one sensible provision in the bargain that half this amount was to be paid in books.

In the following year, Tennyson's horizon widened. In February, 1828, he matriculated at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he remained until 1831. Those were the days when Oxford and Cambridge had fallen asleep, and there was nothing in the uninspiring lectures to stimulate an imaginative mind. Moreover Tennyson's native shyness had never been disciplined by the humanising influences of a great English Public School, and it was only natural that Cambridge

*Poems by
Two Brothers,
1827.*

*Goes up to
Cambridge,
1828.*

should repel him at the outset. This initial aversion is evident in the few lines which follow from a letter to his aunt :—" I know not how it is, but I feel isolated in the midst of society. The country is so disgustingly level, the revelry of the place so monotonous, the studies of the university so uninteresting, so much matter-of-fact. None but dry-headed, calculating, angular little gentlemen can take much delight in them."*

But if in the academic sense his university career was fruitless, so was it not with the enduring friendships he there formed. He naturally gravitated towards the most brilliant group of men in the undergraduate body, among whom may be mentioned Spedding, **The Apostles.** Milnes, Trench, Alford, Brookfield, Blakesley, and Arthur Hallam. Distinguished careers lay before all these youths, save Arthur Hallam, by universal consent the most brilliant of them all. They were unwearied in intellectual debate, and in the famous "Apostles Society," the stormy political and religious questions of the day, with excursions into the higher metaphysics, formed the subjects of discussion.

In these spirited talks Tennyson usually played a silent part, contributing at intervals a pregnant phrase or humorous allusion in the pauses of the debate. It seemed to be an accepted fact in his set that he was destined to a great career, for he impressed all his friends with the sense of power. **A description of Tennyson.** As one of them describes him at the time: " Six feet high, broad-chested, strong-limbed, his face Shakespearian, with deep eye-

* See also the verses quoted in the *Memoir*, Vol. I, p. 67.

lids, his forehead ample, crowned with dark, wavy hair, his head finely poised, his hand the admiration of sculptors, long fingers with square tips, soft as a child's, but of great size and strength. What struck one most about him was the union of strength with refinement."

In June, 1829, Tennyson won the University Prize for English verse. He had been rather reluctant to compete, but was induced to patch up an old poem in blank verse on the "Battle of Armageddon," and adapt

His prize poem, *Timbuctoo*.

it to the prescribed subject for competition,—"*Timbuctoo*." The verses showed considerable power, and a discerning critic in the *Athenæum* made bold to proclaim the advent of a great English poet. In the following year, 1830, his first individual publication appeared with the title, *Poems, chiefly Lyrical*. Arthur Hallam reviewed the

Poems, chiefly Lyrical, 1830.

book enthusiastically, and critical comment in general was not unfavourable, though Christopher North's caustic article in *Blackwood* stung the poet to an angry reply. In this year, attracted like many Englishmen by Torrijo's revolt against Ferdinand II., Tennyson visited Spain with his friend Hallam. Their enthusiasm for the insurrection quickly waned, but the scenery of the Pyrenees inspired the poem *Enone*, which was in part written in the valley of Caunteretz.

In February, 1831, owing to his father's failing health, Tennyson left Cambridge without a degree, and, save for his friends, without a regret.

Leaves Cambridge, 1831.

How far we may attribute the wider range of interests which his poetry was soon to display to fruitful contact with the "Apostles," and how far to the mere natural expansion of his faculties, it is,

of course, impossible to determine. If we seek, however, for external influences which moulded his development, it is this period of his life that must command our attention.

Shortly after his return his father died, but by an arrangement with the new incumbent, the family was enabled to remain at Somersby until 1837. They were refreshed by frequent visits from Hallam, who, in addition to his warm friendship for Tennyson, had become attached to the poet's sister Emily, the attachment soon ripening into an engagement.* In July of 1832 Tennyson journeyed with Hallam to the Rhine, and late in the same year, though dated 1833, the volume, *Poems by Alfred Tennyson*, appeared.

In this year also, 1833, Arthur Hallam died in Vienna at the age of twenty-two. His sweetness of nature and strength of intellect are commemorated not only in the *In Memoriam*, but are attested by all who had come beneath the spell of his genius. "There perhaps was no one among those who were blessed with his friendship," writes Gladstone, "who did not feel at once bound closely to him by commanding affection, and left far behind by the rapid, full and rich development of his ever-searching mind." To Tennyson the shock was temporarily overpowering. *The Two Voices* represents, in some measure at least, the keenness of his despair, while the *Ulysses*, according to his own confession, marks the effort towards recovery from a morbid condition by refuge in the heroic activities of life.

The volume
of 1833, and
death of
Hallam.

**In Memoriam* LXXXIX commemorates these happy days.

The volume of 1832-3* served to extend, if not definitely to establish, Tennyson's reputation. In the "Cambridge Union" they had already begun to debate as to whether Tennyson or Milton were the greater poet, and the reviews in general recognized that a new force had come into poetry. A vindictive article by Lockhart in the *Quarterly* seized upon certain immaturities in the poems without glancing at their extraordinary merits.

THE POETIC CONDITIONS.—Before proceeding further with the story of Tennyson's life, it is important to realise the conditions which prevailed in English poetry when his career began. Tennyson's view of the situation is conveyed in a conversation with Mr. James Knowles:†—"I soon found that if I meant to make any mark at all it must be by shortness, for all the men before me had been so diffuse and *all the big things had been done*. To get the workmanship as nearly perfect as possible is the best chance for going down the stream of time. A small vessel on fine lines is likely to float further than a great raft." And again, in a letter to Spedding in the year 1835, during his long poetic silence: "John Heath writes me word that Mill is going to review me in a new magazine, to be called the *London Review*, and favourably; but it is the last thing I wish for, and I would that you, or some other who may be friends of

* Here appeared, among others, the following well-known poems;—*The Lady of Shalott*, *Mariana in the South*, *The Miller's Daughter*, *The May Queen*, *Enone*, *The Palace of Art*, *The Lotos Eaters*, and *The Dream of Fair Women*. The four last-named were carefully revised in the 1842 volumes.

† See *Aspects of Tennyson* in the *Nineteenth Century*, January, 1893.

Mill, would hint as much to him. *I do not wish to be dragged forward again in any shape before the reading public at present,** particularly on the score of my old poems, most of which I have so corrected (particularly *Ænone*) as to make them much less imperfect, which you, who are a wise man, would own if you had the corrections."

It is sufficiently evident from these quotations that Tennyson realised that the limits of poetic art had narrowed in modern times; that all the big things had been done and all the great things said; and that the only refuge for future poets was to labour untiringly towards absolute perfection of expression.

We can readily understand this view. A period of exhaustion had followed the flood of song which ebbed with the death of Byron in 1824. Keats had died in 1821, Shelley in 1822, and from Coleridge and Wordsworth and Scott the virtue had gone. Each of these great names had stood for something more vitalising than the mere perfection of their art. In truth, Byron has been accused of having no art at all.

These children of the great Revolution had passed, as it were, through flame, and their work attests it. When such a movement as the French Revolution gathers head, and the framework of society is shaken, the most comprehensive problems are forced upon men's thoughts. They must make up their minds emphatically, and range themselves in some definite relation to their age; and, if they are poets, their poetry is the direct result of this effort of reconciliation. So Wordsworth, who in his youth sympathised more boldly than we imagine with the iconoclastic theories of the day, ulti-

* The italics are Tennyson's.

mately found his refuge and his reconciliation in Nature and in the range of homely human sympathies. His poetry, at its worst as commonplace as the peeling of potatoes, is at its highest instinct with power. Its energy is derived from the immense faith which possessed him, that the beauty and the incommunicable mystery of the outward world are an emanation of the Divine Spirit, and that in proportion as this beauty enters into our soul we are strengthened for all the offices of life. Shelley, too, and Byron, had their definite creeds of passionate hope and passionate protest, springing in the one from faith in the perfectibility of man, and in the other from scornful disbelief in all hope of regeneration. Scott and Coleridge and Keats appear to form an exception, for they had no missionary intentions. Coleridge is successful in poetry in as far as he was content to abandon fact and theory, and create an ideal world beyond the blue hills of dream. The towers of Kubla Khan are reared in that undiscovered country where only the poet's imagination leads us. That the bulk of his prose is devoted to the pursuit of phantom metaphysical theories is perhaps beside the question. Scott was probably too healthy-minded to bother at all about any reconciliation of his ideas with the age in which he lived, but by the mere fact of his spontaneous sympathy with the poetic past, he came to be regarded in all European countries as the undisputed leader of the Romantic movement. So by virtue, as it were, of his inborn qualities, and quite apart from any special influence which his century exercised upon him, Scott may be regarded as representing something of the first importance to modern literature,—the passion of mediævalism. Keats

Tennyson's
immediate
predecessors.

again, with all his apparent dissociation from the current affairs of the world, was intimately in touch, and as spontaneously if not as learnedly as Scott, with Middle Age tradition. His influence upon subsequent poetry was more profound than that of any other poet, including Shakespeare even, whose very greatness baffles imitation. And this influence of Keats, which Tennyson and the Pre-Raphaelites were proud to acknowledge, had a two-fold source,—first, in the passion of the past; and secondly, in his power of detachment from the interests of the contemporary world and the consequent absorption in his art, which has provoked the quite unnecessary comment that his poetry is devoid of human interest,—a comment which tempts one to reply that the sooner humanity takes an interest in his poems the better for humanity; for the realisation of beauty is granted to us in fuller measure than the apprehension of truth, since beauty is enduring, and the truth of one age may be the falsehood of another.

When Tennyson began to write, several alternatives lay before the young poet, and one of these was the alternative of reaction which Sir Henry Taylor* advocated. Inveighing against the “highly-coloured poetry” of recent years, notably the poetry of Byron and Shelley, he writes:†

“These poets were characterised by great sensibility and fervour, by a profusion of imagery, by force and beauty of language, and by a versification peculiarly easy and adroit, and abounding in that sort of melody which, by its very obvious cadences, makes itself most pleasing to an unpractised ear. They exhibited, therefore, many of the most attractive graces and charms of poetry,—its vital warmth not less than its external

* The author of Philip van Artevelde.

† See the preface to Philip van Artevelde, 1837.

embellishments, and, had not the admiration which they excited tended to produce an indifference to higher, graver, and more various endowments, no one would have said that it was, in any evil sense, excessive. But from this unbounded indulgence in the mere luxuries of poetry has there not ensued a want of adequate appreciation for the intellectual and immortal part?"

We may admit that Taylor, judging from so close a distance of time, set too light a value upon the intellectual worth of recent poetry. But we must admit, too, that his critical eye discerned the possible dangers that might accrue from pictorial excess. It is in this connection significant that these words were written whilst Tennyson, in his Somersby retreat, was polishing his poems to the last degree of refinement, imagining that for him, as formerly for Pope, the only hope for success lay in the perfection of his art. If he could avoid the inequalities of Wordsworth, the incompleteness of Coleridge, the occasional crudities and the frequent carelessness of Shelley and Byron, he might overcome the initial disadvantage of being born into an age in which all the great subjects had been exhausted.

Alms at perfection. In this spirit he laboured, and it is not evident that at the outset he aimed at any other originality than that of maintaining his work at a uniform height of perfection, if nowhere of outstanding excellence, yet never lapsing into dreary wastes of commonplace.

Another characteristic we note in this early volume, as also in his later work. A wide reader, especially in the Greek and Latin classics, he has so **Classical influences.** levied contribution upon the masterpieces of antiquity that certain of his poems are a veritable mosaic of classical allusion and paraphrase.* The

*See Mr. Churton Collins, *Illustrations of Tennyson*, Chatto and Windus.

result is always effective, for the borrowed details are woven into the tissue of his poetry with masterly skill.

This artistic eclecticism is again shown by the constantly increasing range of his subjects, and by his aptitude to profit by that which was new and valuable in Romantic poetry, while avoiding its wilder themes and its extravagance of sentiment. Romanticism has been variously characterised in England as marking a "Return to Nature," or a "Renascence of the Spirit of Wonder." As a partial definition the terms are satisfactory, for poetry had ceased to be purely intellectual and mundane; had opened the door of the drawing-room, and had gone out into the fields and woods, where the sense of beauty was fed, and the feeling of man's mysterious relation to the universal life grew ever more intense. If Tennyson has lost something of the rapt vision of Wordsworth, his feeling for the beauty of nature is in nowise dulled, and no poetry is more penetrated than his by the feeling of reverence and wonder which the immensity of space and the fugitiveness of our human destinies impress upon us. And, finally, in as far as Romanticism implies a fondness for Middle Age traditions, Tennyson is again a Romantic poet, and in his *St. Agnes Eve*, *Sir Galahad*, *Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere*, and the *Lady of Shalott*, he forms a link between Keats and the Pre-Raphaelite poets, Rossetti and Morris.

We may now resume the thread of Tennyson's life. Until the family left Somersby in 1837, there is not much of importance to record. Prone as we are to think of the poet as the affluent proprietor of beautiful estates in England and the Isle of Wight, it is important to note

In how far a
Romantic
poet.

that for the twenty years almost which intervened between his father's death and his accession to the Laureateship, poverty if not penury was his **His poverty.** lot. In 1835, we find him writing to his friend Spedding that he will be able to visit him, for he has recently sold his medal.* In the same year, Fitzgerald, with the utmost delicacy, proffered him a loan, which the poet seems not to have accepted.

In 1836 his brother Charles was married to Louisa Sellwood, and Emily, her elder sister, was taken into the church by Tennyson. He had met her as early as 1830, as she was walking with Arthur Hallam in the Fairy Wood near Somersby. "At a turn of the path," as the "Memoir" narrates it, "they came upon my father, who, at sight of the slender, beautiful girl of seventeen in her simple gray dress, moving 'like a light across those woodland ways' suddenly said to her: 'Are you a Dryad or an Oread wandering here?' Now, as a bridesmaid, she seemed to be even lovelier."

'O happy bridesmaid, make a happy bride!
And all at once a pleasant truth I learn'd,
For, while the tender service made thee weep,
I loved thee for the tear thou couldst not hide,
And prest thy hand, and knew the press returned.

The engagement which ensued was broken off in 1840, as the prospects of all competency to marry appeared so remote. Not until 1850, the year of their marriage, was the correspondence renewed.

So, meanwhile, in his little attic at Somersby, the poet was smoking and meditating, blowing many fine lines up the chimney or else visiting the familiar haunts he was soon to leave;

* This was the Chancellor's medal for *Timbuctoo*, which was returned to him in 1885.

Flow down, cold rivulet, to the sea
Thy tribute wave deliver ;
No more by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.*

When their enforced departure came in 1837, Tennyson, on whom, in his brother's absence, all responsibility devolved, moved the family to a house at High Beech, in Epping Forest. Proximity to London was one of the chief advantages of this new abode, as he was enabled to see something of his old friends, Fitzgerald, Spedding and others. To Emily Sellwood he writes in 1839: "I have been at this place (High Beech) all the year, with nothing but that muddy pond in prospect, and those two little sharp-barking dogs. Perhaps I am coming to the Lincolnshire coast, but I scarcely know. The journey is so expensive and I am so poor. . . . I shall never see the Eternal City, nor that dome, the wonder of the world; I do not think I would live there if I could, and I have no money for touring."

In 1840 the family removed to Tunbridge Wells, but in the following year moved again to Boxley, near Maidstone. Their motive was to be near the Lushingtons at Park House (described in *The Princess*); for Edmund Lushington had married Tennyson's sister, Cecilia, and had become one of the poet's firmest friends.

He frequently visited London during this period. "Generally he would stay at the Temple or in Lincoln's Inn Fields; dining with his friends at The Cock, and other taverns. A perfect dinner was a beef-steak, a potato, a cut of cheese, a pint of port, and afterwards a pipe (never a cigar). When joked with by his friends

* See also *In Memoriam*, cii.

about his liking for salt beef and new potatoes, he would answer humorously, 'All fine-natured men know what is good to eat.' Very genial evenings they were, with plenty of anecdote and wit. . . . At good sayings my father would sit laughing away, 'laughter often interrupted by fits of sadness.' He would take off the voices and expressions of well-known public characters, protesting that 'the oddities and angularities of *great* men should never be hawked about,' or he would dramatically give parts of Shakespeare or of Molière, or enact with grim humour Milton's 'So started up in his foul shape the fiend,' from the crouching of the toad to the explosion." (*The Memoir.*)

The year 1842 is marked by the appearance of the two volume edition of his poems, which certain critics hold to be his greatest achievement. Two years later Tennyson risked the little he owned in a disastrous venture. A certain Dr. Allan had induced **Reduced to penury.** him to invest all his principal in a fantastic wood-carving scheme, the prompt collapse of which left the poet penniless. There followed a period of such prostration that his friends feared for his life. "I have," Tennyson wrote, "drunk one of those most bitter draughts out of the cup of life, which go near to make men hate the world they move in." He removed to Cheltenham to test the efficacy of the hydropathic treatment, and there he chiefly resided until the close of 1845. His health improved, although the chief stimulus was perhaps not hydropathy. At the time of the crash, Tennyson's brother-in-law, Edmund Lushington, had insured Dr. Allan's life to cover part of the debt, and this money became available by the latter's death in January, 1845. Tennyson's pecuniary stress was further relieved in

September of the same year by the receipt of a pension from the Government of £200 a year. Sir Robert Peel, who was then Prime Minister, had been diligently canvassed for a pension to Sheridan Knowles. Monckton Milnes (Lord Houghton) urgently presented Tennyson's claims, and carried his point by inducing Peel to read *Ulysses*.

Receives
pension
from Peel.

Thomas Carlyle and Tennyson met not infrequently at this time, and perhaps no living man so roused Carlyle's admiration as the poet. An inimitable picture is found in a letter to Emerson, dated August, 1844.

"Moxon informs me that Tennyson is in town, and means to come and see me. Of this latter result I shall be glad. Alfred is one of the few British and Foreign Figures (a description of Tennyson. beautiful to me a true human soul, or some authentic approximation thereto, to whom your own soul can say, Brother! However, I doubt he will not come; he often skips me in these brief visits to town; skips everybody, indeed; being a man solitary and sad, as certain men are, dwelling in an element of gloom,—carrying a bit of Chaos about with him, in short, which he is manufacturing into Cosmos. Alfred is the son of a Lincolnshire Gentlemen Farmer, I think; indeed you see in his verses that he is a native of 'moated granges,' and green flat pastures, not of mountains and their torrents and storms. He had his breeding at Cambridge, as for the Law or Church; being a master of a small annuity on his Father's decease, he preferred clubbing with his Mother and Sisters, to live unpromoted and write poems. In this way he lives still, now here, now there; the family always within reach of London, never in it; he himself making rare and brief visits, lodging in some old comrade's rooms. I think he must be under forty—not much under it; one of the finest-looking men in the world. A great shock of rough, dusty-dark hair; bright, laughing, hazel eyes; massive aquiline face, most massive yet most delicate; of sallow-brown complexion, almost Indian-looking; clothes cynically loose, free-and-easy; smokes infinite tobacco. His voice is musical metallic—fit for loud

laughter and piercing wail, and all that may lie between ; speech and speculation free and plenteous. I do not meet, in these late decades, such company over a pipe ! We shall see what he will grow to. He is often unwell ; very chaotic—his way is through Chaos and the Bottomless and Pathless ; not handy for making out many miles upon."

In 1846 a fourth edition of the 1842 poems was published, and in 1847, *The Princess*, his first long poem, appeared. Alterations of some importance were subsequently made in this poem, especially in the third edition (1850), when the six Interlude songs were added. The *Conclusion* was also expanded then, and the political reflections therein contained are attributable, without doubt, to the poet's hostility to the movements engendered by the French Revolution of 1848.

In 1850 *In Memoriam* was published anonymously, which led one sagacious critic to state that the author was "clearly the widow of a military man." In April of this year Wordsworth died, and the Laureateship, which had first been offered to Samuel Rogers, was

**Appointed
Laureate,
1850.**

accorded to Tennyson, whom Wordsworth had already pronounced to be "decidedly the first of our living poets." Tennyson's publisher, Moxon, was now able to assure the poet an annuity. In consequence of this, his marriage with

**Marries
Emily Sell-
wood, 1850.**

Emily Sellwood was celebrated on the 13th of June, 1850, at Shiplake-on-the-Thames. Although forty-two years of life still lay before the poet, no year was to be marked by the concurrence of three such important events as his accession to the Laureateship, his marriage with a woman whose nature was in absolute sympathy with his own, and the publication of a poem which established his reputation as the first poet of his age.

If it is true that no individual year is marked by such important events as 1850, it is equally true that no period of the poet's life is so important as the nine years which intervened between the appearance of the poems of 1833 and the poems of 1842. In this interval his human sympathies, his knowledge of events, and his powers of reflection were sensibly enriched, and his art, with no loss of its early delicacy, attained a wider compass and a more unerring precision. He had now reached his artistic maturity, and his work henceforward was to be, in the truest sense of the word, that of a *representative* poet, who discerns the drift of contemporary thought, and who seeks to stem, or drifts upon, the prevailing currents of his age. No portions of Tennyson's poetry so clearly as these poems of 1842 show the range and power of his genius when at work upon limited themes. Some of them, which are mere wonderful elaborations of earlier poems, such as *Ænone* and the *Lotos Eaters*, are to be studied in order to appreciate the powers of self-criticism which a conscientious poet can exercise to the purification and strengthening of his art. But the poems of 1842,* as a whole, must be read, if only that we may assure ourselves that there is no longer any foundation for the once valid criticism that his poems are deficient in subject matter and in human interest.

The reputation which this publication brought to Tennyson is rightly attributed by a writer in the *Quarterly Review* for January, 1843, not to his artistic

* Among the important poems that first appear in this collection are the following:—*Locksley Hall*, *The Gardener's Daughter*, *Ulysses*, *St. Simeon Stylites*, *The Vision of Sin*, and *Morte d'Arthur*.

advance, nor yet to the absence of competitors, but to the changed conditions of the public:

"In 1833 the century was hardly awake to a sense of its unrest and discontent. Its confidence in the mechanical aids that were accumulating on every side, blinded it to the dangers and difficulties which lay in the near future. It felt no sentimental regret for the sacrifice of the feudal past, because it confided in the democratic and industrial present. But within the next ten years a change passed over more thoughtful minds, whose misgivings were heralded in the writings of Carlyle, in the spiritual movement of Newman, in the Christian Socialism of Kingsley and Maurice. The century grew anxious and puzzled over theories of life and society, eager for truth, yet dissatisfied with tradition, anxious to evolve order out of spiritual and political anarchy. It was then that Tennyson became the representative of the age, the interpreter of its desires, weaving its tendencies into the web of his poetry as he found them reflected in his mirror, expressing its inarticulate needs, and reducing to form its incoherent thoughts. Thoughtful men found in his despised poetry of romance and enchantment the satisfaction of a want. To a generation that sickened of scientific, mechanical, and material tyranny, the literature and art of mystical beauty opened hidden springs of refreshment. And in his newer verse he assumed that attitude towards the circumstances his age, which best adapted him to be its interpreter, though not its pioneer."

The Princess, whose appearance in 1847 has been noted, has been subjected to much adverse criticism, for the most part misapplied. The subject-
The Princess. title of the poem, "A Medley," leads us to expect something of the incongruity and caprice for which Tennyson has foolishly been blamed; for if we condemn the extravagance of fancy which the subject-matter appears to demand, we necessarily blind ourselves to the poem's purpose and its charm. The didactic portions of *The Princess* will be increasingly difficult for posterity to read with interest, or to read at all, for the issues they deal with have long since

ceased to be vital; and it is possible that even now, in spite of the sustained beauty of the workmanship throughout, the interspersed songs alone are widely read. The poem deals in mock-heroic vein with the question of "Woman's Rights,"* and especially with the theme of the higher education of women, concerning which many conflicting theories were then being advanced. Princess Ida, the heroine, has withdrawn with others of her sex far from the haunts of men, and has embodied her ideal in a woman's university, which no man may enter on pain of death. Her princely lover and two companions penetrate the sacred precincts in female disguise, and after many strange adventures it befalls that the inalienable rights of nature assert themselves, the Princess steps down from her impossible isolation on the heights, and yields her hand at last to the blue-eyed prince. The moral of the story he who runs may read.

Of more enduring interest, though dealing also to some extent with problems that have now passed into another phase, is the most widely known of

In Memo-
riam.

Tennyson's longer poems, the *In Memoriam*.

The immediate inspiration of this poem was the grief occasioned by Arthur Hallam's death in 1833, and its later development, through some fifteen years, marks the effort at recovery from this grief,—not however a recovery by growth of indifference and by submergence in other interests, but a moral recovery by the growth of faith and love. Apart, therefore, from the consummate skill of the detached lyrics, a profound moral value attaches to this poem. Nowhere has the poet more searchingly probed the question of life and the hereafter; and perhaps no poem of modern times has gone so far upon the road of unbelief, has faced so

steadfastly the issues of the agnostic philosophy, while yet retaining the confident assurance that through much toil and anguish our life leads beyond the grave to new activities.

For several years after the appearance of *In Memoriam* no extensive work occupied Tennyson until, in 1854, at Sir John Simeon's suggestion, he undertook to expand an early lyric of 1837 into the poem *Maud*. Meanwhile his two sons had been born—Hallam, the present Lord Tennyson, and Lionel, who died in 1886.

Buys Farringtonford, 1856.

Buys Aldworth, 1869.

In 1853 the poet took a lease of Farringtonford in the Isle of Wight, and purchased the property outright three years later. This beautiful place he made his permanent home, although after 1869 he used to spend the summer at Aldworth, as the climate of the Isle of Wight in that season had proved too relaxing for his wife, and the tourists too obnoxious to himself.

In June, 1855, Tennyson received the honorary degree of D.C.L. from Oxford University, and in the autumn of that year the volume containing *Maud* appeared. The two important poems of this volume, *The Ode on the Death*

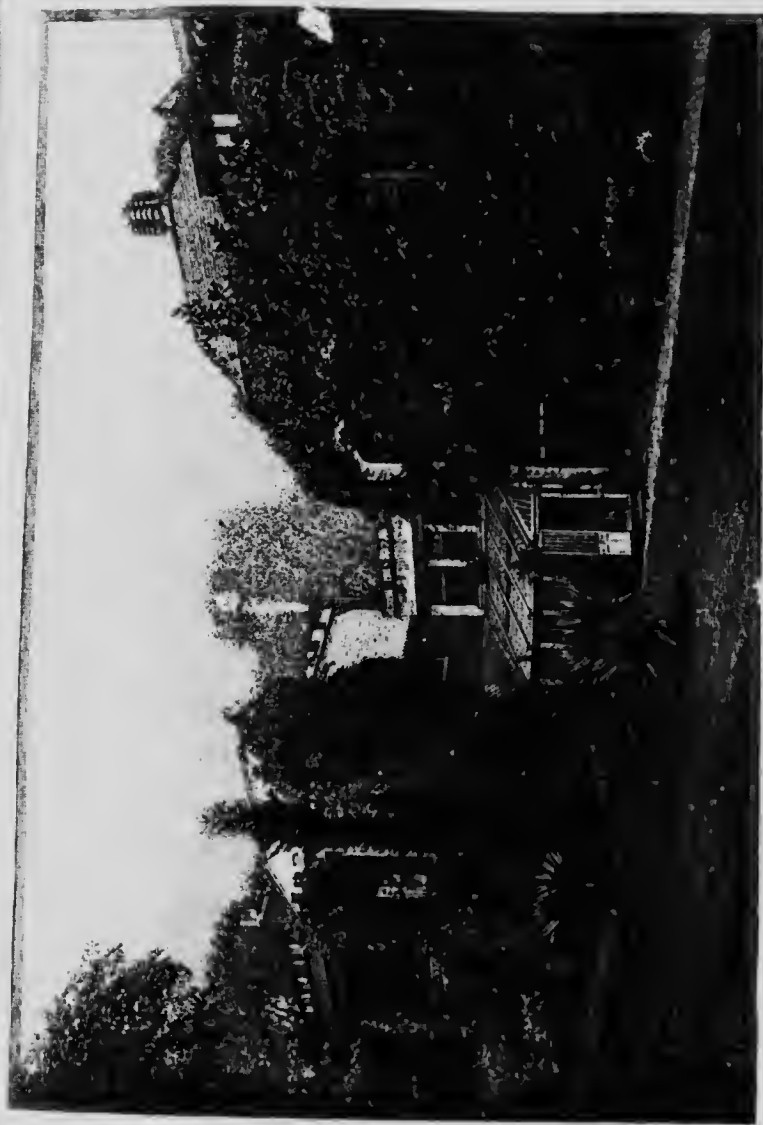
"Maud and Other Poems," 1855.

of *the Duke of Wellington*, and the title-poem itself, have run a curiously fluctuating course in criticism and in popular esteem. The *Ode*, the greatness and the dignity of which are now almost universally recognized, was received at first with a disapproval almost as universal. The criticism which has ebbed and flowed about *Maud* would fill an interesting volume. The poem was the one which Tennyson most loved to read before his friends, and he always insisted that the depreciation of *Maud* arose from a failure to appreciate its subtle gradations of passion, and its powerful analysis of morbid

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emotion. The poem is certainly like no other poem ever written. We cannot refer it to any definite standard or established model, and therefore the feeling it inspires in us of antipathy or attraction must determine our appreciation of its worth. That it is a wild and whirling production is most true, yet calmness and moderation are not commensurate with a violent theme. Analysing the adverse criticism, we realize that the chief stumbling-block lies in the character of the hero who is morbid, hysterical and vain, and in the opinions he expresses which are denunciatory of conditions which he has no desire to mend. The cleansing fire of war alone can purge the world of vice, and burn out the fever in his blood.

It is not necessary here to discuss minutely the somewhat complicated manner in which *The Idylls of the King* came before the public. The *Idylls of the King*. Arthurian theme and the legends associated with it had occupied Tennyson's mind from the outset of his career. He had glanced at the subject already in *The Lady of Shalott*, in *Sir Galahad*, and in *Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere*, and had elaborated it with wonderful skill in the poem *Morte d'Arthur*, which forms one of the chief glories of the 18,12 volumes.* But he was evidently for a long time in grave doubt as to the best method of handling a theme which possessed for him an irresistible attraction. There are evidences that Tennyson inclined at one time towards a dramatic presentation of the subject, but this method of treatment he definitely abandoned about 1840. He

* "When I was twenty-four," Tennyson said, "I meant to write a whole great poem on it, and began to do it in the *Morte d'Arthur*. I said I should do it in twenty years, but the Reviews stopped me."

commenced from this period, as his son writes, "to study the epical king Arthur in earnest," but it was not until 1855 that the poem, as a whole, began to take definite shape in his mind. In 1859 the first instalment was given to the public, consisting of four poems, *Enid*, *Vivien*, *Elaine*, and *Guinevere*.* The poem continued to grow until 1885, when *Balin and Balan* supplied the last link in the narrative. Three years later, in 1888, the eleven completed books were expanded into the orthodox epical twelve by the division of the poem *Geraint and Enid* into *The Marriage of Geraint*, and *Geraint and Enid*.

In one form or another the Arthurian story occupied Tennyson for fifty years, and the completed poem represents the philosophy of a lifetime. He traces here the history of the great King from his mystic birth to his equally mysterious death. The early *Idylls* show us the famous Order of the Round Table unsullied by the crimes and unshaken by the dissensions which ultimately effected its ruin. Soon the serene atmosphere is darkened; suspicion and treachery are abroad; Guinevere is faithless to her lord, the king; and the knights abandon the practical tasks of redressing abuses and beating back the heathen hordes, in order to "follow wandering fires," and pursue the fruitless quest of the Holy Grail. Excess of the body, and spiritual excess in those whose natures were fashioned for practical ends, prove the undoing of "The goodliest fellowship of famous knights whereof the world holds record."

The many years which went to the shaping of this poem suggest a comparison with *Faust*, which occupied

* Six copies of *Enid and Nimue* had been privately printed in 1857.

Goethe for a like period. In the matter of artistic detail the comparison is not entirely to Tennyson's disadvantage. But regarding each work as the expression of the philosophy of a life-time, the German masterpiece outranks the English poem, which it excels alike in intellectual force and dramatic intensity. It is characteristic of both poems that the human interest alone fails to sustain them, and each seeks refuge in symbol and allegory. Here Goethe again displays the greater intellectual power, and a juster sense of symbolical method. The first part of his *Faust* is a thoroughly human story with no allegory, and only so much of the supernatural as the legend itself suggested; his second part, on the other hand, is almost wholly symbolic. In Tennyson the effort is made to reconcile the human story with the allegory, and in consequence the issues are confusedly presented to our mind. Finally, each poet employs a mediæval theme to enforce a modern argument, but the incongruity arising from this source is scarcely a defect in either poem, except in as far as Tennyson has consciously moralised a story that in its original form is frankly human.

The decade between 1860 and 1870 saw the appearance of several poems of importance. In 1860 *Sea Dreams* was published, and contains some passages,—notably the dreams of the city clerk and his wife,—which are equal to the best of Tennyson's blank verse. *Aylmer's Field* came out in 1863, and was followed in 1864 by the *Enoch Arden* volume, containing among others the classical poem *Tithonus*, and his earliest humorous dialect poem, *The Northern Farmer*. Of this volume 60,000 copies were quickly sold. In 1869 appeared *The Holy Grail*, and with it the masterly poem *Lucretius*, and the metaphysical *Wages* and *The Higher Pantheism*.

The decade from 1870 to 1880 is characterised by Tennyson's ardent devotion to poetic drama, four of his plays, *Queen Mary*, *Harold*, *Becket* (published 1884), and *The Falcon*, having been produced within this period. These dramas have never enjoyed much favour with the public, or with discriminating readers. Masterly in some ways they certainly are, but they are scarcely upon the level of his ordinary poetic work, and are distinctly inferior to the Elizabethan models which Tennyson imitated.

In 1880 the poet made one of his rare visits to the Continent. He had been ordered to take a change of air, and endeavoured in the first instance to secure a passage to Canada. All the best cabins upon the first boat to sail having been taken, he was obliged, though reluctantly, to alter his plans, and go instead to Venice.

The events of the last twelve years of his life may be briefly enumerated. In 1880 *Ballads and Poems* appeared—a collection made memorable by the stirring patriotic ballad, *The Revenge*, and the powerful and pathetic poem, *Rizpah*. In 1882 *The Promise of May* was produced at the Globe Theatre, but met with a most unfavourable reception. In the following year the poet's old friend Fitzgerald (the translator of *The Rubáiyát*) died. In January, 1884, Tennyson, with Receives a Peerage. apparent reluctance, accepted a peerage upon the urgent insistence of his friend Gladstone. He had already twice declined a baronetcy, in 1873 at the hands of Gladstone, and in 1874 from Disraeli. The only hesitation which Gladstone now felt in the more distinguished offer of a peerage arose from the fear that Tennyson might insist upon wearing his wide-awake hat in the House of Lords.

At the close of 1885 *Tiresias and Other Poems* was published, containing *Balin and Balan*, which formed the last link in the completed *Idylls of the King*. The most remarkable poems in this volume are *Tiresias*, *The Ancient Sage*, *Locksley Hall Sixty Years After*, and *To Virgil*. The chords were not yet unstrung, and could still awaken the old music. *Demeter and Other Poems* appeared in

**Tiresias
and Other
Poems, 1885.**

1889, closed by the beautiful farewell poem *Crossing the Bar*, which was composed in the poet's eighty-first year, while crossing the Solent to Farringford. To his son's words, "That is the crown of your life's work," the poet answered, "It came in a moment." "He explained the 'Pilot,' as 'That Divine and Unseen Who is always guiding us.' A few days before my father's death he said to me: 'Mind you put *Crossing the Bar* at the end of all editions of my poems.'" (*Memoir*.)

Tennyson's great strength now gradually began to ebb. In 1888 he had suffered a serious illness—the first sign of weakness that his vigorous constitution had shown. The last year of his life, 1892, found him busy with the preparation of his final volume, *The Death of Ænone*. In the early summer he cruised among the Channel Islands, and on June 30th he left Farringford for the last time for Aldworth. Here he was visited by his old friend Jowett, but confessed himself unequal to the sustained discussions he had formerly delighted in.

**Death of
Ænone,
Akbar's
Dream, 1892.**

**Died
October
6th, 1892.**

He lingered through September, and died on October 6th, with the moonlight upon his bed and an open Shakespeare by his side.

TENNYSON'S HOSTILE CRITICS

The consideration of the adverse criticism which has been from time to time passed upon Tennyson's poetry, is not presented for the purpose of establishing defects in the work of the noblest poet of our age. But in order to arrive ultimately at a rational estimate of Tennyson which is not based upon mere personal enthusiasm for the poet, it is surely well to face at the outset the most significant things which have been said in his dispraise. The greater a poet is, the more searching the criticism to which he is subjected; and when he has been accorded pre-eminence in his life-time, posterity is always preternaturally active to adjust the balance. We are very jealous of our great men, and while the honour roll in English poetry lengthens with every generation, only in the interval of centuries does a poet arise to whom we accord a throne. Such kings among our English poets are Shakespeare and Milton by the suffrages of posterity. The eighteenth century did not know the royal purple. Shall we presume to crown Alfred Tennyson as the acknowledged over-lord of our poetry in the 19th century, its most august voice, its accredited representative? Or shall we simply acclaim him great among his peers, yielding here to Wordsworth, here to Shelley, and here to Browning or Arnold even, though in his own peculiar domain unrivalled? It is certainly easier, as it is wiser, to throw the burden of this answer upon posterity, but there is no reason why we should not make good the faith that is in us by an unflinching examination of the alleged deficiencies in Tennyson's poetry. By a process of elimination we may be able, before our inquiry is concluded, to arrive at a true

Tennyson's
title to
fame.

estimate of his poetry in its weakness and in its strength.

The criticism of his early poetry may have been only skin-deep, but the poet's skin was peculiarly sensitive, and that he felt the pin-pricks keenly, the "Memoir" shows. Fortunately, with this sensitiveness was allied a delicacy of artistic feeling and a soundness of judgment which enabled him to profit, as few poets have

Early
adverse
criticism.

known how to profit, by all that was valuable in these hostile but salutary judgments.

"Fusty Old Christopher" was not entirely without justification in his famous *Blackwood* article upon the "Poems" of 1830. Arthur Hallam's review in the *Englishman's Magazine* had erred perhaps on the side of generosity; and Sir John Bowring's article in the *Westminster Review*, while to us who are wise in the event it may seem to show prophetic discernment, seemed to the contemporary world the maudlin rant of a clique that was determined to foist its favourite upon the public. Keats had suffered for the sins of the Cockney coterie, and Christopher North was determined that Tennyson should suffer in his turn. The venom of the magisterial critic, you might be inclined to say; but if you read to the end of the article you will see that the harshness is not untempered by a kindly spirit of appreciation. Tennyson used to speak of his "early rot," and Christopher North perhaps too boisterously, as was his manner, proclaimed the feebleness of the slender volume. "At present," he wrote,

Charged
with lack of
human
sympathy.

"he has small power over the common feelings and thoughts of men. His feebleness is distressing at all times when he makes an appeal to their ordinary sympathies, and the reason is, that he fears to look such sympathies boldly in the face, and will be meta-

physical. What all the human race see and feel, he seems to think cannot be poetical; he is not aware of the transcendent and eternal grandeur of commonplace and all-time troubles, which are the staple of all poetry."

An interval of three years sufficed for Tennyson to outgrow many of the immaturities of the 1830 volume. He was then fated to pass from the bear-like embraces of Christopher North, impulsive yet kindly, to the tiger-claws of Lockhart and the *Quarterly*. The savageness of Lockhart's attack is unredeemed by any kindly touch of appreciation. When we realise that the volume of 1833 contained poems on such diverse themes and showing such diversity of manner as *Mariana in the South*, *The Miller's Daughter*, and in their first form, *The Lady of Shalott*, *The Dream of Fair Women*, *The Lotos Eaters* and *The Palace of Art*, we might with justice exclaim upon the blindness of the man who greeted Tennyson as "another and brighter star of that galaxy or *milky way* of poetry of which the lamented Keats was the harbinger," and who proceeded in a vein of caustic irony to demonstrate the feebleness of thought and the artistic slovenliness of the production. Yet in spite of the questionable methods which Lockhart employed to render his criticism effective, his points were certainly well made, and as to their salutary effect upon Tennyson there can be no dispute. The poet took the savagely-administered lesson to heart, and ten years of wise silence but constant activity ensued. To Lockhart's credit be it said that the 1842 volumes, and the later volumes of Tennyson's collected works contain no verse or line to which the critic had taken exception.*

* It is interesting to compare the first draft of some of his poems with their final form.

No poet can afford to be gauged by the estimates passed upon his youthful compositions. Unless, therefore, it can be held that the defects there charged against Tennyson persist throughout his maturity, these articles in *Blackwood* and *The Quarterly* need not concern us further. Disregarding the barren persiflage which is the hall-mark of old fashioned criticism, two statements alone in these articles appear to glance below the surface, and to suggest some radical weakness in the poet. Has the artificiality of style which they allege persisted in the later poems?—and is a deficiency of human interest a characteristic weakness of the poet's maturity as it was of his youth?

Tennyson has come to be universally recognised as a master of poetic style, the Virgil of our English poetry. With his noble music still sounding in our ears it might appear irreverent and futile here to question his impeccable art. But as our theme is the adverse criticism we must yield it a patient hearing.

Matthew Arnold was not a man given, like Buchanan and Alfred Austin, to railing at his brother poets, nor were his opinions upon matters of taste to be as lightly valued as theirs. In one of his essays he makes passing reference to Wordsworth's *Michael* and Tennyson's *Dora* to illustrate what he considered to be the contrast between simplicity and *simplesse*, which I take to be a contrast between genuine simplicity and its affectation.

Similar in nature, but more searching still and thorough, is an essay by Bagehot upon the pure, the ornate, and the grotesque in art, represented respectively by Wordsworth, Tennyson, and Browning. *Enoch Arden* Bagehot regards as a typical example of a poem

ruined by the intrusion of ornate ideas, artificial in themselves, and inappropriate to the theme, which is or should be the story of a common fisherman wrecked upon a desolate island. Every elaboration is a deviation from the truth. The very basket in which Enoch, the rough sailor lad of the poem, carried his fish, was not a basket, nor yet were the fish true fish, but "ocean spoil in ocean-smelling osier;" and these and his ruddy face,

**Artificiality
of diction.**

Not only to the market cross were known
But in the leafy lanes behind the down,
Far as the portal-warding lion-whelp,
And peacock-yewtree of the lonely hall,
Whose Friday fare was Enoch's ministering.

In the preference for periphrasis here and throughout the poem, we have the neo-classic aversion for the simple homely word, and in the persistent idealisation we see the modern romantic horror of the commonplace, and the romantic perversion of truth in the doubtful interest of art. Was there no scope here for poetic realism tempered by the imagination? I quote from Bagehot: "Even in the highest cases ornate art leaves upon a cultured and delicate taste the conviction that it is not the highest art, that it is somehow excessive and over-rich, that it is not chaste in itself or chastening to the mind that sees it."

Mr. Churton Collins has on the whole done ample justice to Tennyson's mastery of style, his unique power of phrasing, and the musical flow and occasional grandeur of his verse. Yet in one passage he states that, "At times Tennyson's strained endeavours to give distinction to his style by putting common things in an uncommon way led him into intolerable affectations." He proceeds to some concrete examples,

as "azure pillars of the hearth" for *ascending smoke*; "frayed magnificence" for *a shabby dress*; "the secular abyss to come" for *future ages*; and "the sinless years that breathed beneath the Syrian blue" for *the life of Christ*. For special attack he singles out a famous stanza from *In Memoriam*.

To rest beneath the clover sod,
That takes the sunshine and the rains,
Or where the kneeling hamlet drains
The chalice of the grapes of God.

The general argument as to Tennyson's elaborate art has some validity, though some of these coined phrases have a certain magic of their own, as *The azure pillars of the hearth*, to represent the column-like ascent of the blue smoke. That Mr. Collins, however, should apply the term "offensive" to the above stanza argues a strange fastidiousness of taste that is of itself an affectation.

It is doubtful, indeed, when all due subtraction is made, whether Tennyson will not be eventually considered, as he now is held to be, the supreme master of the craft of poetry in his century. If one's personal preference were to be consulted, one might wish him something less impeccable, and subject to occasional lapses from studied perfection, if only for the sake of a wilding flavour that is wanting in his verse.

Gustave Flaubert, himself so sensitive in his art that his conscience would be haunted for days by a misplaced word or an ill-judged epithet, once wrote that there were certain men so great that they did not require the adventitious ornament of style; and it was upon the same principle that Sainte-Beuve based his distinction between the supreme creative minds and those poets in whom the sense of art is paramount, a

distinction, namely, between Homer and Virgil, Molière and Racine, and we may add between Shakespeare and Tennyson. It would be a distortion of Sainte-Beuve's meaning to assert that the supreme poets do not possess a style commensurate with their power. To utter great thoughts in a great manner is their privilege, and when they are most themselves their style is inimitable, because there flows through it so impetuous a flood of creative energy; but their first concern being with the world of men and things, their natural language is instinct with life, and its very inequalities suggest something of life's infinite diversity.

Tennyson is not of that race of Titans; but the suggestion that his solicitous refinement of speech is the mark of the academic spirit which shrinks from undue contact with life, and which walks warily over the slippery places of the world, leads us to a consideration of Christopher North's charge that Tennyson's early poems lack the human element. As we are not confining ourselves to the early poems, we may repeat the question thus:—"Is a deficiency of human interest a characteristic weakness of the poet's maturity as it was of his youth?" Here we must define our terms. Tennyson could never remain a victim of the "Art for Art's Sake" heresy, and if we mean by deficiency of human interest a concern merely for sword-plays of idle fancy and dexterous feats of technical skill, the objection is meaningless. Harmony and imagination moving in a vacuum do not constitute, as Swinburne seems to think, the substance out of which great poetry is made; and though bricks may be fashioned out of almost anything, straw is scarcely the material that one would choose for the purpose.

**Tennyson's
poetry
dependent
on style.**

Yet the argument, as Taine advances it in his contrast between Tennyson and Musset, is not one to be lightly brushed aside. A certain idyllic outlook upon life, the outlook of a refined but retiring mind, he did concede to Tennyson. "He lives," Taine says, "in the country, chiefly in the Isle of Wight, amongst books

and flowers, free from the annoyances, rivalries, and burdens of society, and his life was easily imagined to be a beautiful dream, as sweet as those which he had pictured."

Maud and *Locksley Hall* mark a deviation from this idyllic complacency, and then there is a relapse into the golden languors of *The Princess* and the *Idylls of the King*. Musset, on the contrary, lived his life in the fiery furnace of Paris, and his soul was scorched by the intensity of his passions. But such a life, Taine argues, swayed by the alternating ecstasies of joy and grief, yields a poetry that is richer in human experience, and closer to the human heart. If I have read Musset aright, I discern a more intimate knowledge of vice than Tennyson ever possessed, and a fuller note of erotic passion. There, I imagine, his superiority rests, and further comparison between Tennyson and Musset on the score of art or human sympathy is unnecessary. Swinburne did Tennyson at least the justice to say that the one poem *Rizpah* in its sublime pathos outweighed all that Musset had written. In its native Swinburnese the passage reads: "Four lines of *Rizpah*, placed in one scale of the balance of judgment, would send all the loveliest verse of Musset flying up in the other, to kick the beam and vanish. Of passion such as this he knew no more than he knew of such execution."

The concession to Tennyson of this undisputed

mastery over the element of pathos is quite sufficient of itself to prove his poetry human. Let us therefore modify this untenable charge, and seek to discover whether by the possession of a wide range of human qualities, apart from his acknowledged supremacy as an artist, Tennyson will appeal to the future as the foremost poet of his age. What power does he display in his grasp of human character?—and what breadth of outlook and depth of insight does he possess in dealing with the intellectual problems of the 19th century? We approach now a consideration of the poet in his dramatic capacity, and of his worthiness to rank as a great thinker, for on these grounds, rather than on the exquisite nature of his descriptive faculty, will the permanence of his fame depend.

We must admit at the outset, and the fact is so patent as scarcely to deserve mention, that Tennyson has not created a world of men and women that can in any way compare with Shakespeare's world, or Scott's, or Thackeray's. That he was not deficient in power of characterisation his Northern Farmers attest, and the figure of Launcelot must be regarded as typifying humanity in its excess; but his graphic presentation of human life seemed largely to depend upon the accident of dialect, as, unsupported by dialect, the shadowy outline of Enoch Arden, who sees with the poet's eyes and speaks with the poet's voice, will prove. Yet there are certain of Tennyson's poems which develop one single aspect of character, the intensity of some predominant mood, with singular if not unrivalled force. A poem could scarcely with greater success than his *Ulysses* portray the infinite need of the human soul for action,

The human value of the poems.

His limitations and his power in characterisation.

nor does literature contain a more profound picture of lives given over to the languid charm of fatal repose than the *Lotos Eaters*. Here Tennyson is supreme, and may almost be said to have created a new type of poetry.

His numerous portrait studies, especially of women, stand upon a lower plane. They are wonderful specimens of pictorial art, but like Pygmalion's statue they lack the breath of life.

The dramas we search in vain for characters vigorously conceived and adequately presented; and turning to the poems we realise that it is fruitless to search them for composite studies of human nature. Princess Ida, with the mind of a geometrician, and eventually the soul of a woman, is an amusing study; the Lady Blanche is a fine example of perverted womanhood; and Lady Psyche the one warmly human element in the poem. But the men in *The Princess* are scarcely even types. They are shadows.

Indeed the truth must be strongly borne in upon even the warmest admirers of the poet that his recluse manner of life closed to him many avenues of communication with the men and women of his day, and that, whether as a result or cause of his exclusiveness, he had but little of that restless, intellectual curiosity which constantly whets itself upon new experience, finds significance where others see confusion, and beneath the apparently commonplace in human character reaches some harmonising truth. *Rizpah* and *The Grandmother* show what a rich harvest he would have reaped had he cared more frequently to walk the thoroughfares of life.

His finely wrought character studies are then very few in number, and even the range of his types is dis-

appointingly narrow. His hide-bound peasants, stiff and intractable as a stubborn soil, are drawn to the life. In a slightly higher sphere, Farmer Allen of *Dora* displays the same ox-like tenacity, with a dictatorial spirit superadded, born of his wider acres and nourished by his increased self-esteem, yet with a hidden spring of humanity beneath the rough surface crust; for as Ida's intellectual arrogance was broken by the baby fingers playing at her heart, so at last was the surly farmer's animal pride subdued by his dead son's child, till

all at once the old man burst in sobs :—

' I have been to blame—to blame, I have killed my son,
I have killed him—but I loved him—my dear son,
May God forgive me ! '

From tillers of the soil to the college-bred youth upon a holiday is a far cry, and yet Tennyson can not be said to have traversed the space between. His aristocrats are not on the whole pleasing. It is true that we have in Sir Walter Vivian a very benign type of English gentleman, and admirably portrayed. The original, as is well known, was Edmund Henry Lushington, the father of the poet's friend and brother-in-law. He is shown to us standing among his loyal tenantry, whom he has that day entertained.

In such discourse we gain'd the garden rails,
And there we saw Sir Walter where he stood,
Before a tower of crimson holly-hocks,
Among six boys, head under head, and look'd
No little lily-handed Baronet he,
A great broad-shoulder'd genial Englishman,
A lord of fat prize-oxen and of sheep,
A raiser of huge melons and of pine,
A patron of some thirty charities,
A pamphleteer on guano and on grain,
A quarter-session's chairman, abler none ;

Fair-hair'd and redder than a windy morn ;
 Now shaking hands with him, now him, of those
 That stood the nearest—now address'd to speech—
 Who spoke few words and pithy, such as closed
 Welcome, farewell, and welcome for the year
 To follow.

Less attractive is the picture of "Sir Aylmer Aylmer, that almighty man," and of "his wife, a faded beauty of the baths, insipid as the Queen upon a card." In his study of Sir Aylmer's character, Tennyson again preaches his favourite homily upon the indomitable pride that crushes the tender human affections and is finally overwhelmed in the ruin itself has made.

The "oil'd and curl'd Assyrian Bull," who is the brother in *Maud*, is too visibly a travesty, seen through the jaundiced eyes of the half-crazed lover, to be considered as a type; and the young coal-baron, the rival lover, is presented in a very harsh and disagreeable aspect. Between the hero of *Maud* and the youth in *Locksley Hall* there is an obvious resemblance, and Tennyson has suffered much abuse for creating these characters. They are both railers at society with a soul for beauty, strange compounds therefore of discord and harmony. Mr. Swinburne stigmatised them as "plaintively spiteful mannikins with the thinnest whey of sour milk in their poor fretful veins," and the late R. H. Hutton sought to shelter the poet from the charge by stating, with reference to *Maud*, that the poem was written as an arraignment of hysteria.

Mr. H. S. Salt, with even more vindictiveness than Mr. Swinburne, has expressed his contempt for Tennyson's womanly lovers. "Leolin (in *Aylmer's Field*) on receiving the news of Edith's death, can find no better comfort than in the dagger which she had

formerly given him. Lady Clara Vere de Vere is politely reminded that "Young Laurence," when his passion was unrequited, had cut his own throat. The hero of *Locksley Hall* before he takes his departure "seaward," can think of no more generous farewell to his lost love than to invoke a thunderbolt on her ancestral residence. The hero of *Maud* can find no higher aim or comfort in life than to go off to the wars and kill other people because his own affairs have gone wrong. Surely there is a terrible moral defect in such characters as these, yet as far as we can see, they are all drawn approvingly by Mr. Tennyson; certainly there is no sign of reprobation or disapproval."

Is Mr. Salt so certain that there is no sign? Shall we say that Browning condones poisoning by reason of the vivid description of the beautiful murderess of *In a Laboratory*?—or approves of hypocritical casuistry because of *Bishop Blougram's Apology*? In such poems as Mr. Salt has named condemnation can be passed upon Tennyson only for the dramatic inappropriateness of his characters, not because they are lacking in heroic qualities. In *Maud* it would be just to inquire if the lonely misanthrope were capable of inspiring the love he feels, but no greater injustice could be done to the poet than to assert that this character even approximates to his conception of the ideal man.

Tennyson has made the whole question clear for us by presenting his definite type of human perfection in three noble figures, Hallam, Wellington, and Arthur. In these three is no irresolution, no vindictiveness, and no impotent railing at a hostile destiny. Their lives move in harmony with the divine order, and though the fate which mas-

His ideal of character.

ters all things human curtails the one of the fair promise of his days, and leads the mystic King to the ruin of that noble order which he had made, the impression that remains with us is not one of broken purposes and ultimate defeat. Unlike the hysterical type of hero these men are temperate and resolute, and by their very moderation even lend colour to the charge that Tennyson's great figures are wanting in generous enthusiasm for the race. Hallam in his brief life had reached that serenity which flows from doubts allayed and from steadfast resolve. Already he possessed the

Seraphic intellect and force
To seize and throw the doubts of man ;

and in his imagined maturity the poet forecasts

A life in civic action warm,
A soul on highest mission sent,
A potent voice of Parliament,
A pillar steadfast in the storm.

Should licensed boldness gather force,
Becoming when the time has birth,
A lever to uplift the earth
And roll it on another course.

Professor Dowden's fine essay emphasises Tennyson's sense of the dignity and efficiency of law in the divine order of the universe, in human institutions, and in human character. "Energy nobly controlled, an ordered activity," he writes, "delight his imagination. Violence, extravagance, immoderate force,—these are with Tennyson the supreme manifestation of evil." The Duke of Wellington is extolled, not principally as the "foremost captain of his time," but because he was rich in the saving grace of common-sense, moderate and resolute,

And as the greatest only are
In his simplicity sublime,

and because above all things he had learned that

The path of duty was the way to glory.

Conquest over self is the master-passion of Enoch Arden's closing days, and conquest over self, bearing with it the renunciation of a deep and noble passion, is the sustaining note of the remarkable poem *Love and Duty*.

Generous impulses that overleap the bounds of prudence are not ranged by Browning in the category of human vices. His *Statue and the Bust* develops much the same theme as *Love and Duty*, but there the self-imposed renunciation is condemned as cowardice, a timid hearkening to the counsels of worldly prudence. Had Browning written his *Idylls of the King*, the pursuit of the Holy Grail would have been in one sense equally unavailing; but symbolising the unattainable ideal it would not have been fruitless and destructive of the highest good as Tennyson's interpretation of the theme implies. Browning's characters are perfect through imperfection, and succeed where most they appear to fail. Tennyson's chosen characters, unswayed by extravagance in thought or impulse, are self-poised and strong in the realisation of moderate desires.*

We have seen that whatever Tennyson's limitations may be in the presentation of complex character, there is still a rich fund of humanity in his poems. Satan and Sampson are the only characters strongly drawn by Milton, and no analysis of Milton's poetry would

* Note the speech of Pallas in *Ænone*, and also the praise of moderation in the political lyrics.

aim to establish his title to greatness upon the strength alone of these magnificent portraits. So in Tennyson's case, in spite of the varied types of character he gives us, there are no outstanding human figures upon the strength of which his fame depends. But this emphatically is not an admission that his poetry is lacking in human interest.

It is the novelist who in modern times has taken upon himself the task of showing to us men and women as they are in the daily habits of life, and all the trivial or apparently trivial happenings of the world. Our supreme concern in poetry is to know whether the poet has confronted the intellectual problems of his race and age, and has wrested from them some message for our guidance. Too confident an answer we do not desire, for the burden of the mystery of life is very great, and the poet whose serene verse is never overcast with doubt cannot convince us that he has ever faced the eternal issues.

We must now consider our last question and discover, "What breadth of outlook and depth of insight Tennyson possesses in dealing with the intellectual problems of the 19th century." These issues are too wide for exhaustive treatment, involving as they do the physical and intellectual progress of an age more fertile in material triumphs and spiritual doubts than any former period in the world's history. In the sphere of politics the democratic spirit was rapidly making head, and in the sphere of religion the limits of the old theology were growing daily more restricted before the triumphant march of science, until the simple faith of our fathers had barely standing ground and was forced to fight even for that. The age into which Tennyson was born was one in which, as

Tennyson
as philo-
sophical
poet.

George Eliot finely says, "ideas with fresh vigour were making armies of themselves." Matthew Arnold, in asserting that Tennyson's poetry was essentially un-intellectual, implied either that he shrank from dealing with these difficult problems, or that his manner of dealing with them was ineffectual. Indeed, many of the poet's warm admirers ascribe to him a certain mental timidity. He loved, they say, to hug the shore. He ventures momentarily on the stormy sea of speculation, then reefs his sails and runs beneath the lee. In politics his solution is a nerveless compromise between conservatism and progress; in religion again a timid compromise between the certitudes of science and a Christianity from which everything has been extracted save love and the hope of immortality.

His political views assuredly present difficulties. It has been objected that Tennyson places our political millennium at an uncomfortably remote distance, and that while he acquiesces in the ultimate well-being of the race, he is vehemently opposed to contemporary reform save along the well-worn groove of precedent. To complicate the matter still further, he sees clearly that the times are out of joint and demand heroic measures, and Carlyle was scarcely more denunciatory of a corrupt society than the white-haired hero of *Locksley Hall*. Yet to the poet it seems preferable to vent one's scorn in abuse rather than relieve it by some heroic action.

Tennyson's wisdom can scarcely be impugned because he did not dream, like Shelley, that the evils of the world were to be lightly shaken off in a day. His theory of an infinitely gradual amelioration of society was the outcome of a reasoned view that all evolutionary

processes are a slow growth, and his distrust of sudden measures arose from a constitutional hatred of violence as offensive to good taste and ordered decency. He had the inborn hatred of the academic spirit for the demagogue. He admitted, indeed, that change is the natural order of the universe, and held that change was good. His fulminations were reserved for revolutionary excess and all that tends to dislocate the fabric of the social order. The cooler view expressed by Lord Rosebery in his recent Etonbury speech affords a refreshing contrast. "I am beginning to be precedent. I think precedent has been the ruin of the country. It may often have been a blessing, but the case of it can hardly be over-estimated. A critical juncture like this. Indeed, as Professor Dowden has said, it is sometimes nobler to make than to follow precedents."

Whether for good or ill, we must therefore conclude that Tennyson is rigidly conservative, if not reactionary in his political teachings, intensely British to the point of insularity, and strangely hostile to the democratic impulse. Yet no poems in English literature are richer in the wisdom of prudent statesmanship and more free from the petulance which his poems often display, than the political lyrics that appeared in the volumes of 1841-42.*

Tennyson's hostile critics find the same timidity and half-way compromise in his treatment of the moral and spiritual problems of the age. Here we find those who admire him will not yield our ground. Here we find no shirking of vital issues; no irresolution; no allowable subterfuges. The definite assurance

* The speech of the Tory member's son towards the close of *The Princess* is one of the best examples of Tennyson's alleged insularity.

that all is well no man can give ; but Tennyson's poetry leads us at least " faintly to trust the larger hope."

Sir Alfred Lyall, in his coldly polite biography of the poet dismisses his contribution to moral and religious philosophy in a paragraph, as follows :—" In his religious speculations he ponders over the question, why God has created souls, knowing that they would sin and suffer, and finds it unanswerable except in that firm hope of universal good as the outcome, which is the reasoned conclusion of those who find the design of human life in this world unintelligible, unless another world is brought in to redress the balance, and which is thus the mainspring and support of belief in a future existence." And Mr. H. S. Salt, more forcibly still, reprobates the teaching of such poems as *Wages* and *Despair*, which assert that morality here depends upon the certainty of a future life elsewhere—a doctrine so strangely in conflict with the teaching of George Eliot, which holds that because there is no assurance of a future life, it behoves us here to acquit ourselves like men.

Whether we agree with Tennyson's view or not, which is but a modern rendering of the view of Marcus Antoninus, " It were well to die, if there be gods, and sad to live if there be none," the argument is still interesting as revealing the importance he attaches to the belief in personal immortality. Indeed immortality is the keystone of his philosophy, which removed he has no longer faith in anything, and virtue and courage are as meaningless as cowardice and vice.

His belief in immortality; value of this in his theory of life.

The wages of sin is death ; if the wages of virtue be dust
Would she have heart to endure for the life of the worm
and the fly?

She desires no isles of the blest, no quiet seats of the just
To rest in a golden grove, or to bask in a summer sky ;
Give her the wages of going on, and not to die.

This intense yearning of Tennyson for perpetual life constitutes at once the strength and weakness of his argument. To himself it brings, if not a definite assurance, at least a mighty faith ; and this faith is rooted not only in his feelings but in his reason, for his mind, seeking and demanding some purpose in creation, could realise this purpose only on the basis of immortal life.

But for those minds which are as constitutionally incapable of accepting an unproved immortality, as his mind was constitutionally incapable of living without this assurance, the reasoning is worthless. Rather do such men turn to the frank nihilism of *The Rubáiyat*, where the intellectual protest against annihilation is blended with the enforced submission to the inalterable decree.

It would be unjust to say of Tennyson that his argument for immortality is wholly intuitive. He lays comparatively no stress upon the promise of immortality which the Christian creed affirms, and he summarily dismisses the teleologica' argument from design. In their stead he substitutes first the argument from feeling, to which he seems to attach the chief importance; secondly the argument from mysticism, which can appeal only to the mystically minded; and thirdly the argument from metaphysics, which forecasts a future perfection from the type of perfection within our mind. How all these arguments are enforced in his poetry, free from dogmatic narrowness, with what moral earnestness and with what noble imaginative power, those who read that poetry most deeply will most deeply feel.

Tennyson's life was passed in the effort to reconcile spirituality and science. Less enviable, he once half-jestingly wrote,* is the modern poet's lot than the more gracious task of Horace, on whom had never dawned the realisation of man's insignificance before the intolerable vastness of the universe,—“Boundless inward, in the atom, boundless outward, in the whole.” The dignity which the old cosmogony conferred on man, for whom the stars and sun revolved about his central earth, can never be restored. Instead, we have the wheeling orbs of boundless systems that “brand his nothingness into man.” Is there no escape, Tennyson cries, from this intolerable insignificance? No “countercharm of space and hollow sky?” Is man merely the sport of the random winds of chance, the desolating blasts that wander through eternity, tossed hither and thither like a weak ephemeron in a storm? Are we the mere dupes of our own aspirations, the victims of our own intelligence which permits us to know that we are indeed nothing? These are the master-thoughts of Tennyson's poetry, and the recovery of man's lost dignity was the aim of all his efforts. †

**His protest
against
materialism.**

* *Epilogue to the Charge of the Heavy Brigade.*
 † The appeal of materialism and the appeal of the spirit are represented by the extracts from *In Memoriam* in the Appendix.

TENNYSON'S VERSIFICATION

Young students are frequently frightened away from the most elementary study of metrics by the imposing array of pedantic terms which greets them on the threshold of the subject. Yet, some slight knowledge of the principles of English versification is essential to an appreciation of Tennyson's poetry, where we find all the metrical resources of the language employed with consummate skill. Some poets, like Shelley, may have possessed a more natural music—bird-like notes that appear to come unbidden and without an effort; other poets, like Shakespeare and Milton, have more sonorous and majestic rhythms; but no poet has been more solicitous of perfection, or more consciously artistic in his diction, than Tennyson. Therefore, towards the fuller understanding of our poet, and at the risk of a few pedantic terms, it will be well to consider some of the more important principles of English versification. The illustrations are drawn from the poems in this collection.

The rhythmical effect of poetry is derived principally from the more or less regular succession of stressed and unstressed syllables. Taking for our example the most characteristic type of English verse, the iambic pentameter, we find that in the normal line the beats (five in number) fall with absolute regularity upon the alternate syllables, *e.g.* (*x* = unaccented, *a* = accented):—

$\overset{a}{\text{P}} \overset{x}{\text{u}} \overset{a}{\text{t}} \overset{x}{\text{e}} \overset{a}{\text{f}} \overset{x}{\text{o}} \overset{a}{\text{r}} \overset{x}{\text{m}}, \text{ and } \overset{a}{\text{c}} \overset{x}{\text{r}} \overset{a}{\text{e}} \overset{x}{\text{e}} \overset{a}{\text{p}} \overset{x}{\text{s}}$
 Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine to pine

—*Enone*, l. 4.

Such a type of line we shall, therefore, call the "norm." It will readily be understood that a suc-

cession of such lines would become monotonous from their very regularity, and it has therefore been the practice of our poets to deviate within certain limits from this fixed standard. The skill with which they attain this requisite variety is the measure of their greatness in the art of poetry.

Let us examine a number of lines from the opening of *Ulysses*. Two perpendicular strokes (||) will serve to indicate where the natural pause (cæsura) occurs in the line.

$\overset{x}{I} \overset{a}{l} \overset{x}{i} \overset{a}{t} \overset{x}{t} \overset{a}{t} \overset{x}{h} \overset{a}{t} \overset{x}{a} \overset{a}{n} \overset{x}{i} \overset{a}{d} \overset{x}{l} \overset{a}{e} \overset{x}{k} \overset{a}{i} \overset{x}{n} \overset{a}{g}$ —l. 1.

It is readily seen, or if not seen is felt, that this line deviates in some subtle fashion from the absolute regularity of the line quoted above. The difference arises from the fact that the stress is so weak, as almost to be negligible, on the word *that*. Bear in mind that this irregularity occurs immediately *after the cæsural pause*.

$\overset{x}{B} \overset{a}{y} \overset{x}{t} \overset{a}{h} \overset{x}{i} \overset{a}{s} \overset{x}{t} \overset{a}{i} \overset{x}{l} \overset{a}{l} \overset{x}{h} \overset{a}{e} \overset{x}{a} \overset{a}{r} \overset{x}{t} \overset{a}{h}, \parallel \overset{x}{a} \overset{a}{m} \overset{x}{o} \overset{a}{n} \overset{x}{g} \overset{a}{t} \overset{x}{h} \overset{a}{e} \overset{x}{s} \overset{a}{e} \overset{x}{b} \overset{a}{a} \overset{x}{r} \overset{a}{r} \overset{x}{e} \overset{a}{n} \overset{x}{c} \overset{a}{r} \overset{a}{g} \overset{x}{s},$
—l. 2.

This line may be classed as normal. Observe, however, that the word *still* must be dwelt upon in the reading of the line almost as fully as if it bore a regular stress.

$\overset{a}{M} \overset{x}{a} \overset{x}{t} \overset{a}{c} \overset{x}{h}' \overset{a}{d} \overset{x}{w} \overset{a}{i} \overset{x}{t} \overset{a}{h} \overset{x}{a} \overset{a}{n} \overset{x}{a} \overset{a}{g} \overset{x}{e} \overset{a}{d} \overset{x}{w} \overset{a}{i} \overset{x}{f} \overset{a}{e}, \parallel \overset{x}{I} \overset{a}{m} \overset{x}{e} \overset{a}{t} \overset{x}{e} \overset{a}{a} \overset{x}{n} \overset{a}{d} \overset{x}{d} \overset{a}{o} \overset{x}{l} \overset{a}{e}$
—l. 3.

The irregularity here consists of a reversal of the stress in *the opening foot*. Instead of the regular iambus ($x a$), a trochee is substituted ($a x$).

x a x a a x x a x a
 Unequal laws || unto a savage race, —l. 4.

A trochee occurs instead of an iambus *after the caesura*.

x a x a x a x a x a
 That hoard, and sleep, and feed, || and know not me. —l. 5.

Here the regularity is enforced by a succession of pauses to mark the contemptuous emphasis which Ulysses places upon words that characterise the sloth and greed of the Ithacans.

x a x a x a x a x a
 I cannot rest from travel: || I will drink —l. 6.

a x x a a a x x a
 Life to the lees: || all times I have enjoyed —l. 7.

a x x a x a x a x a
 Greatly, || have suffered greatly, || both with those —l. 8.

x a x a x a x a x a
 That loved me, || and alone; || on shore and when —l. 9.

x a x a x a x a x a
 Thro' scudding drifts || the rainy Hyades —l. 10.

a x x a a x x a x a
 Vext the dim sea : || I am become a name ; —l. 11.

These lines are grouped together for a particular reason, namely to emphasise the fact that while every line has a rhythm of its own, it must not be regarded purely as a rhythmic unit, but is to be held in close associa-

tion with the accompanying verses.* Each line colours and is coloured by the lines which surround it, both conferring, as it were, and receiving music. In free poetry, where the sense, as in the foregoing passage, flows from one line to the other, the rhythmic dependence of one upon the other is naturally more apparent.

Line 6 offers no particular difficulty. It will be at once seen that its rhythm is closely associated with the line which follows. Line 7 (in rhythmic association with l. 6 and l. 8) is much more difficult. The trochaic opening is common enough, but in the second part of the line we meet with a new peculiarity arising from a curious distribution of the accents. A delicate ear would resent the reading of this group of words according to the normal iambic stress, *e.g.*:—

^x ^a ^x ^a ^x ^a
All times I have enjoyed.

These words are entitled to and possess three stresses, of which one clearly falls on the last syllable. The word *have*, which normally should carry the stress, actually bears it almost as little as the syllable which follows (*en-*). In point of fact, the two accents are subtly distributed over the three syllables—*all times I*, and the ear, which is the final arbiter in these matters, is completely satisfied. We feel that the normal line underlies, as it were, the structure of the verse, and the iambic character of the movement is perceptible through all the apparent irregularity. Line 8 has the initial peculiarity of possessing two cæsural pauses. The first foot is trochaic. There is *enjambement*, *i.e.* the line overflows into the next. Line 9 offers much the

* The word *verse* is here used with its usual significance = *line*.

same difficulty as line 7, in the distribution of the stresses. There are evidently only four well-marked stresses in the line, but there is another stress tucked away somewhere as indicated. Again note the *enjambement*.

Line 10 is delightfully regular with, however, a pronounced overflow (*enjambement*).

Line 11 has a trochaic opening, and a trochee also follows the *cæsura*. *I* is not very strongly accented, and as if to compensate for this, the word *dim* has a slight stress.

A word as to the *cæsura*. In the first place, the irregularity of its position will be observed, and the consequent variety thus obtained. In lines 1, 6, 8, 9, the *cæsural* pause occurs in the middle of a foot (feminine *cæsura*). The substitution of trochee for iamb occurs either at the opening of a line or after the *cæsura*.

These few remarks are thrown out suggestively in the hope that some students may be stimulated to think for themselves on the subject of metre. The student with a love and an ear for poetry, will detect the rhythm of a line by an unconscious analysis, and taking verses to pieces in order to search for their hidden mechanism will scarcely add to his enjoyment. But intellectually, if not for the senses, there will be some gain, just as a knowledge of the theory of harmony conduces to a sounder appreciation of music.

The painstaking student of poetry without an ear for rhythm will see, by means of our mechanical signs, such apparent dissimilarity between line and line that he will marvel that such a sequence of verses can be referred to any set standard. The answer to be made to this objection is sufficiently simple. A poem is written to the

beat of some prevailing rhythm. If the measure is anapæstic ($x x a$) the ear is not offended, but rather is satisfied, by the occurrence of occasional iambic feet ($x a$), provided that the general character of the movement is preserved. So in the iambic five-foot (pentameter) lines that we have been considering, the poet has used every device to guard against monotony, but always we feel that each line, whatever its variations, is in subtle relation to the norm; nor are the variations capricious, but are in intimate association always with the thought. Sometimes a poet, like Milton, is so audacious in his deviations that we can scarcely reconcile his more irregular lines to any consecutive music.

A list follows of characteristic Tennysonian lines where the irregularities never wander so far from the norm as to obscure the rhythm. The examples are in blank verse, for the short rimed measures which Tennyson employs do not offer the same difficulties.

$x \quad a \quad x \quad a \quad x \quad a \quad \overbrace{x \quad x \quad x}^a \quad a$
 In cat(a)ract after cat(a)ract || to the sea.

—*Æn.* l. 9.

Here Tennyson has inserted two additional syllables as indicated by the brackets. It must not be supposed that these syllables are elided in the reading of the line. On the contrary, the line derives its rhythmic value from the subdued sounding of these superfluous syllables. In the distribution of the stress over three syllables the lines resemble *Ulysses*, l. 9, quoted above.

$x \quad a \quad x \quad \overbrace{x \quad x}^a \quad a \quad x \quad a \quad x \quad a$
 Sloped downward to her seat || from th(e) upper cliff.

—*Æn.* l. 21.

The "e" of *the*, coming before another vowel, is slurred (elision). The third, fourth and fifth syllables are of equal value, and the stress hovers between them.

Line 22 has an additional syllable at the close, a very common occurrence in dramatic verse, especially in Shakespeare's later plays.

$\overset{x}{\text{The}} \overset{a}{\text{grass}} \overset{x}{\text{hopper}} \parallel \overset{a}{\text{is}} \overset{x}{\text{silent}} \overset{a}{\text{in}} \overset{x}{\text{the}} \overset{x}{\text{grass}} \overset{a}{\text{.}}$

—*Æn.* l. 25.

Certain derivative syllables such as : -ly, -ness, -y, -er, -en, -el, -or, -est, -ing, etc., bear what is termed a secondary stress, and frequently support the rhythmical ictus in poetry. This must clearly be the case in l. 25, where the normal prose stress would be uneuphonious.* Compare the first stanza of Swinburne's *The Leper* :

"Nothing is better, I well think,
 Than love ; the hidden well-water
 Is not so delicate to drink :
 This was well seen of me and her."

Here a rhythmic stress (ictus) falls upon the usually weak final syllable of *water*, as is emphasised by the fact that it rimes with *her*.

A number of lines follow which illustrate deviations from the strict iambic line :—

And his cheek brightened as the foam-bow brightens.

—*Æn.* l. 60.

* Professor Bright, of the Johns Hopkins University, deals with such rhythms as the above in a very penetrating paper contributed to the "Publications of the Modern Language Association." N.S., Vol. VII., No. 3. His inference would be that *grasshopper* possesses a legitimate secondary stress on the final syllable, which syllable, for the exigencies of the rhythm, bears also a pitch accent and marks the regular ictus.

Violet, amaracus, and asphodel.

—*Ib.* l. 95.

With bunch and berry and flower thro' and thro'.

—*Ib.* l. 100.

Between the shadows of the vine-bunches.

—*Ib.* l. 177.

A fire dances before her, and a sound

—*Ib.* l. 260.

In the afternoon they came unto a land.

—*Lotos Eaters*, l. 3.

Were it well to obey then, if a king command

An act unprofitable, against himself?

—*Morte d'Arthur*, ll. 95-96.

So saying, from the pavement he half rose.

—*Ib.* l. 167.

The old order changeth, yielding place to new,

—*Ib.* l. 240.

Tennyson's anapæstic measures may be illustrated from the poem, *Break, break, break*.

^a Break, ^a break, ^a break

^x ^x ^a ^(a) ^x ^a ^x ^a
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!

^x ^x ^a ^x ^x ^a ^x ^a ^x
And I would that my tongue could utt | er

^x ^a ^x ^x ^a ^x ^a
The thoughts that arise in me.

The form of this stanza is anapæstic trimeter, riming a : b : c : b. The first line stands apart from the general movement of the stanza. To make it regular we have to understand compensating pauses before each syllable. It will be observed how iambic feet occur in

each line. In line 2 "gray stones" has the value of a spondee. If read with a stress upon each of the three words *co'ld gra'y sto'nes*, the effect reproduces something of the implacable regularity with which the waves fall upon the beach.

Line 3 has an additional syllable after the last foot, and is technically called *hypercatalectic*.

The finest trochaic verses in Tennyson's poetry are to be found in the two *Locksley Halls*. In the *Lady of Shalott* we have a mixture of trochaic and iambic stanzas, e.g., stanza 1 is iambic and stanza 2 is trochaic.

In stanza 1 the lines "Gazing — below" are trochaic, unless we suppose the suppression of an initial unstressed syllable.

THE HARMONY OF SOUND AND SENSE.—Tennyson was unerring in the adaptation of his metres to the meaning he sought to convey. We can go further and say that when a stanzaic form is adopted in preference to blank verse, it is because the subject-matter demanded it; and the form itself of the stanza will be found to harmonise completely with the prevailing tone of the poem. Examine any of the poems and the truth of this will be apparent, whether we note the languid beauty of form in *The Lotos Eaters*, the compact vigour of *The Two Voices*, the rippling melody of *The Brook*, the sustained dignity of *The Idylls of the King*, or the pensive grace that consorts with the elegiac measure of *In Memoriam*.

Transpose, for example, lines 1 and 2 of any stanza of this poem that will permit of transposition, and the incongruous effect of the change will illustrate how aptly chosen the present rime-system is: e.g., *In Memoriam*, LXXIII. may be transposed as follows:—

So little done, such things to be,
 So many worlds, so much to do,
 How know I what had need of thee,
 For thou wert as wrong as thou art true?

The head hath missed an earthly wreath,
 The fame is quenched that I foresaw :
 I curse not nature, no, nor death ;
 For nothing is that errs from law.

Mr. Stopford Brooke has indeed pointed out occasional failures which arise from the incongruity of subject-matter and metre, as in the effort to introduce humour into the blank verse of *The Idylls of the King*. But such failures weigh as nothing in the balance. On p. lxi, it was pointed out how closely the sense and the form of *Ulysses*, l. 5, were related. Other clear examples (which sometimes amount to imitative harmony = onomatopœia) are the following:—

And like a downward smoke, the slender stream
 Along the cliff to fall, || and pause || and fall || did seem.
 —*Lotos Eaters*, ll. 8-9.

The three cæsural pauses (the last two but faintly marked) simulate the hesitating fall of the stream, and the arrangement of the vowel sounds and the liquid consonants contribute, however intangibly, to the full realisation of the picture.

Two well-known illustrations of imitative harmony are found in the *Morte d'Arthur*:—

'What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?'
 And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :
 'I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
 And the wild water lapping on the crag.'

The second illustration gives the clangorous note of armed heels upon the rocky cliffs:—

He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
 Before. His own thought drove him like a goad.
 Dry clashed his harness in the icy caves

And barren chasms, and all to left and right
*The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he based
 His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
 Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels.*

Lines 5-8 of *Sir Galahad* admirably represent the fierce shock of a tourney.

These scattered passages of an onomatopœic character are less important, however, in forming an estimate of Tennyson's craftsmanship than the constant harmony that pervades his poetry. The first twelve lines of the *Morte d'Arthur* are unsurpassed in sonorousness of vowel sound, in the skilful combination of consonants, and in the distribution of the metrical pauses.

NATURE AND SCIENCE IN TENNYSON'S POETRY

It is a mistaken idea that the love of Nature was first kindled in English poetry towards the close of the eighteenth century. Englishmen have always enjoyed the open air, and save for a brief generation this open air delight has found an echo in our verse. But the manner in which this passion has found expression has doubtless changed from age to age. In our national epic, *Beowulf*, the hostile forces of nature are most impressively symbolised, and the result was a poetry of grim description, the primitive spirit of which could never be recaptured by the more sophisticated centuries which followed. The exultant ring of our early sea-poetry has, on the other hand, never been an alien note, though sometimes stifled for a season.

The mirth of springtime is in Chaucer's verse, and among the Elizabethans, Spenser and Shakespeare and Drummond of Hawthornden, have written variously and sweetly in praise of Nature. Thomson and Cowper were careful observers, but Wordsworth is Nature's modern hierophant. Nothing comparable to his spiritual exaltation in the beauty and the power of the outward world is to be found in Tennyson, nor could Tennyson's reserved temperament permit the rapture of Shelley that reaches its height in the *Ode to the West Wind*. In Nature Tennyson found less a spiritual refuge than a physical and an artistic delight.

A friend of his writing in the *Quarterly Review* tells us of how the poet would wander in the early morning for hours upon the downs which overlook the sea. Then, returning, he would quote perhaps but one line in which was fixed imperishably some aspect of the sea's beauty. And it is in this power of exquisite phrasing, and not in esoteric rapture that the excellence of Tennyson's Nature poetry lies. Nature had a message for Wordsworth and a message for Shelley. With Keats and Tennyson she is a rich storehouse of beauty, without joy or sorrow of her own, and heedless of our moods. This method of treating Nature may be, and doubtless is, nearer than the other method to scientific truth, but yields a poetry that is imaginatively less rich and less suggestive.

It must not be supposed that carefulness of observation and finely-wrought expression constitute Tennyson's whole claims to rank as one of the great English poets of Nature. While not endowing Nature with conscious life, he yet gives us with complete success what may be termed the characteristic mood of a landscape, whether it be the grave Homeric landscape of

the classical poems, the low-lying marsh-fed prospect of the fen country, or some inland retreat such as he so well describes in *The Palace of Art* :—

And one, an English home—gray twilight pour'd
On dewy pastures, dewy trees,
Softer than sleep—all things in order stored,
A haunt of ancient Peace.

The minuteness and delicacy of Tennyson's observation is no less remarkable than the range of visible life which his eye embraced. The references to animals are less varied, and less characteristic perhaps, than in Browning. But the birds and trees and flowers of England have never had a more loving chronicler. His dim-sighted eyes were not capable of taking in a wide range of vision, but within their scope they never played him false.

It was Tennyson's custom not to infuse his own moods into his descriptions, but rather, as in the two *Marianas*, dramatically to unite human and inanimate Nature, or else to draw upon Nature's vast store-house of imagery in order to suggest some hidden affinity between his poetic illustration and the sentiment from which it proceeded.* Thus in *The Two Voices* the poet rebukes the tempting voice that urges him to suicide :—

'Let me not cast in endless shade
What is so wonderfully made.'

But the voice replies that man is not alone wonderful in his structure :—

* *In Memoriam* has a number of passages in which the poet appears to transfer his own feelings to Nature, or sees in her moods a kinship with his own. This, however, is not characteristic of Tennyson. The opening of *Maud* affords an admirable example of how Tennyson occasionally makes Nature reflect the mood of the characters he dramatically represents. Cf. *Mariana*, and *Mariana in the South*.

'To-day I saw the dragon-fly
Come from the wells where he did lie.

'An inner impulse rent the veil
Of his old husk : from head to tail
Came out clear plates of sapphire mail.

'He dried his wings : like gauze they grew ;
Thro' crofts and pastures wet with dew
A living flash of light he flew.'

How minutely observed is this ! how exquisitely expressed ! and how close the dependence of the image upon the idea to be illustrated ! Nor is this a passage carefully chosen to exhibit the exactness of the poet and his inexorable logic. The difficulty would be to select an ill-judged description, that should be either inappropriate to the theme or incomplete in its bearing upon the central idea. A slovenly description in all Tennyson's poetry it would be impossible to find.

If we venture to speak of Tennyson as a "scientific poet," the term must be employed with caution and with certain distinct reservations. It is evident that the methods of the man of science and the poet are widely different. The scientist is concerned primarily with the patient accumulation of observed facts, which lead him ultimately to the formulation of some guiding principle that shall explain and relate these facts. He must cite his authorities, explain his experiments, and enter into the minutest microscopic detail in order to leave no link in the chain of logic incomplete. It is inevitable, therefore, that his primary appeal is to our reasoning faculty. If he can convince us, his task is done. He does not seek to stir our emotions, nor to stimulate our imagination. These imaginative results, and science not seldom attains them, are secondary.

Now that which is of secondary value for the scientist is for the poet his principal concern. In true poetry the intellectual appeal is not wanting, but the avenue of approach to the intellect is through the emotions and through the imagination. Poetry has also its own exactitude, and slovenly detail here, as in science, engenders a slovenly result. But the choice of facts is determined by the laws peculiar to poetry, and it is because certain poets are unable to suffuse their subject with feeling and imagination that their work is cold, uninspired, and prosaic. The distinction which Coleridge made one hundred years ago between science and poetry holds good to-day. The chief function of science is to instruct, and of poetry to please.

It might reasonably be argued, therefore, that the term "scientific poet" is inadmissible, that the poet is poet inasmuch as he avoids science, and that the scientist is scientist in so far as he eschews poetry. In short, we might with as much justice call Darwin a poetic scientist as call Tennyson a scientific poet.

This reasoning would be conclusive were we to confine ourselves strictly to questions of method and detail. Tennyson is scientifically exact in his descriptions, but so was Shakespeare and so was Chaucer before the age of science. It is not, we repeat, in detail but in large imaginative results that poetry and science touch and blend. In Darwin there was working some leaven of the poetic imagination, or his facts would have remained inert and dead. Nor could Galileo without that quickening power have divined the secret movements of the spheres. Lord Macaulay has asserted that modern civilization acts as a blight upon the poetic spirit, and on every hand we hear it said that poetry must pale before the growing light

of science. Let us grant the antinomy that exists between them, and give science every credit for the sordid utilitarianism of our age. But let us also remember that when the scope of poetry had shrunk to narrow limits science broadened our horizon, and flung wide the gates of mystery and wonder. We speak of the simplicity of the early ages, of their quaint credulity, and their eager thirst for marvels. Now science has thrown back the curtain of a vaster scene, always unexplored regions lure us on, and the horizon grows never nearer. If science had not advanced, the imagination would have died from preying upon itself.

We have not read far in Tennyson before we discover his delight in the great processes of Nature, whether in the unfolding of a flower or in the vast astronomy of the heavens. He is pre-eminently the poet of law, and his acquiescence in the immutable order of the physical and moral world furnishes him with a philosophy which reconciles all apparent discords in some superior harmony. Within certain limits he permits himself the privilege of railing at temporal abuses, of rebuking pettiness of spirit, and the manifold parasitic vices of society. But with these exceptions his poetry represents acquiescence, reconciliation, faith; and herein it differs from that poetry of pessimism which is the more accustomed product of the scientific philosophy. Such an apparent negation of a Divine purpose in the shaping of events as is involved in the untimely death of Hallam evokes these words:

The fame is quenched that I foresaw,
The head hath missed an earthly wreath:
I curse not nature, no, nor death;
For nothing is that errs from law.

—*In Memoriam*, LXXXII.

Tennyson's conception of law derives its cogency from its intimate association with the principle of evolution. Before Darwin formulated his famous theory of the "Origin of Species" and adduced in its support a vast body of convincing proofs, Tennyson had intuitively grasped its essential features, and it is by his fertile application of this principle that Tennyson's philosophy is relieved from commonplaceness. It is present as a diffused essence throughout his work, and his personal conquest of the doubts which spring from evolution is his crowning contribution to the thought of his century. Never indeed has a scientific theory been so triumphantly compelled to the service of the imagination as in the dream which the City Clerk's wife narrates in the poem *Sea Dreams*. Faiths and empires are swept into oblivion, as the great wave of music bears ever onward. In the words of the dying King,

The old order changeth,
And God fulfils Himself in many ways.

Realising how the scientific spirit of his century permeates the whole body of Tennyson's poetry, we can afford now to examine briefly the method in which the poet employs what we might call the detached facts of science for imaginative uses. Objection is frequently taken to passages such as the following :—

Something it is which thou hast lost,
Some pleasure from thine early years.
*Break, thou deep vase of chilling tears,
That grief hath shaken into frost!*

—*In Memoriam*, IV.

or, to the italicised lines in this passage :—

I scraped the lichen from it : Katie walks
By the long wash of Australasian seas

Far off, and holds her head to other stars,
And breathes in April-autumns.

—*The Brook.*

And even the remarkable version of Laplace's nebular hypothesis must be included in the same category :

This world was once a fluid haze of light,
 Till toward the centre set the starry tides,
 And eddied into suns, that wheeling east
 The planets: then the monster, then the man ;
 Tattoo'd or woaded, winter-clad in skins,
 Raw from the prime, and crushing down his mate ;

—*The Princess.*

The objection is surely hypercritical ; and it may with perfect justice be contended that any fact, however stubborn, that is imaginatively treated and sub-jected to poetic uses, becomes by virtue of the poet's skill a proper subject upon which to exercise his art. Cowper invested a sofa with poetic charm, and Pope immortalised the theft of a lock of hair. Shall not Tennyson be permitted, therefore, to throw a halo around facts which may also be more dully presented in a collegiate text-book ? Success is always its own justification.

Tennyson's felicitousness of phrasing and his admirable terseness of expression permit him to achieve some miracles of art. The passage quoted above from *The Princess* is a sufficiently fine example of this power. But what other poet could have condensed a succession of geological periods into two brief stanzas ?

There rolls the deep where grew the tree,
 Oh earth, what changes hast thou seen !
 There where the long street roars hath been
 The stillness of the central sea.

The hills are shadows, and they flow
From form to form, and nothing stands ;
They melt like mist, the solid lands,
Like clouds they shape themselves and go.
—*In Memoriam*, CXXIII.

GENERAL ESTIMATE

Within the brief limits of this critical account of Tennyson it has been impossible to develop all the characteristic attributes of his genius. Some of his qualities, indeed, such as his unquestionable gift of humour, have scarcely been touched upon. However, all that is essential to a general estimate of his powers has been given, and the conviction is borne in upon us that in the distinguished line of English poets a high place must be assigned to him. Four European poets, Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, command the suffrages of all ages and of every nation. They are the great creative spirits of the race, supreme in their art and supreme in their humanity. To their august company we must admit also the great Frenchman, Molière, less indeed for his poetic power than for that astonishing knowledge of life which laid bare for him all the hidden springs of human nature.

Ranged immediately below this group of world geniuses is another group, still small, of poets whose fame is secure from the fluctuations of popular favour. Here are the great tragedians of Greece, the Roman Vergil, the Italians Tasso and Petrarch, Calderon the Spaniard, and our English Chaucer, Spenser and Milton. By a strange irony of fate the fame of these poets has become one of the accepted facts of life about which there can be no question, and yet their poetry as a whole

is less familiar to the world than the work of some of our modern rimers whose verses are current coin. Still with the lapse of time the balance is adjusted, and "The Knight's Tale" will outlive "The Absent-minded Beggar."

Somewhere in the lower ranges of this group, though once supreme within it, are Dryden and Pope, and Racine and Corneille. These once autocratic spirits now yield reluctantly to make way for the throng of brilliant singers whom the nineteenth century produced. For Burns, too, of a slightly earlier period, the ranks are opened. His simplicity, his sincerity, and his passion could not be denied. There follow in swift succession Wordsworth and Scott, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley and Keats. Italy sends Leopardi, and France sends Lamartine and Hugo. From the ranks of these poets, Tennyson and Browning and Arnold cannot be excluded.

Their reputations within limits will rise and fall with the fluctuations of time, and in every generation discriminating minds will on the one hand give the preference to Browning and on the other to Tennyson. The method of their appeal is so different that it were folly to dogmatise on their respective merits. From a great poet you take away some quality only to assign to him another. Tennyson, you may say, lacks the wide intellectual range of Browning, his characters are less complex, their moral natures less profoundly probed. In reply we may urge with justice that there are corresponding gains for Tennyson and losses for Browning. The clearness and the dignity of Tennyson's art must be contrasted with the obscurity and the frequent carelessness of Browning's diction. Finally, in seeking out isolated examples of character and in his subtle analysis

of abnormal experiences, Browning loses something of the broad humanity upon which Tennyson's greatest poetry reposes.

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The authoritative life of Tennyson. Absolutely indispensable to the student who wishes to make a serious study of the poet.

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unnecessary blunders in fact. Some valuable criticism, not easily obtained elsewhere, has been discovered by the author, and is here printed.

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Not as valuable now as when first published. The *Memoir* has largely done away with the necessity for the book. Still, it contains some useful as well as curious information with reference to the poet not found elsewhere.

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A superb volume, printed on Japanese vellum paper, in a limited edition. It is now out of print, and almost impossible to obtain. It contains illustrations of most of the principal scenes connected with the life and poetry of Tennyson. The letterpress is principally devoted to a description of the illustrations.

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The title clearly indicates the scope of this book. It is, however, more ingenious than accurate. The poet himself took strong exception to some of its conclusions. It is, however, beautifully illustrated, and forms a valuable companion to the *Memoir*.

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A somewhat slender account of the poet, as the author, a friend of many years, knew him. Many valuable and rare drawings enrich the volume. The appendix contains two strong articles on "Lincolnshire and Tennyson," and on "Tennyson and Vergil."

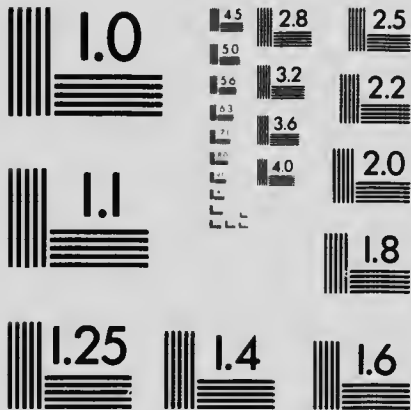
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A gossiping account of Tennyson and his family by an intimate friend, the daughter of Thackeray. The book is very pleasantly written, but is somewhat slight.



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Tennyson as a Religious Teacher. By Charles F. G. Masterman, M.A. London: Methuen & Co. 1900.

Decidedly the best treatment of the poet on the religious and philosophical side yet published. It is based on a thorough knowledge of the poems. No teacher who wishes to understand this most important element in the life of the poet should leave this work unread and unstudied.

The Mind of Tennyson: His Thoughts on God, Freedom and Immortality. By E. Hershey Sneath, Ph.D. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1900.

A clear treatment of the subject as indicated in the title. It is a clever summing up of the generally accepted views of the poet's thoughts on this subject. The ideas advanced are supported by appropriate quotations.

Tennyson: His Art and Relation to Modern Life. By Stopford A. Brooke, M.A. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1894.

On the whole, the most useful book for the student of Tennyson. The style is charming, while the descriptive essays are pleasantly written, and the criticisms of the individual poems are clear and incisive. Stress is laid on the picturesque element in the poetry. The introductory chapter is a capital summing up of the poet's teaching, though all will not agree with its conclusions.

A Study of the Works of Alfred, Lord Tennyson, Poet Laureate. By Edward Campbell Tainsh. London: Macmillan & Co. 1893.

One of the best books of Tennysonian criticism. The article on *In Memoriam* is especially worthy of mention. The criticism is keen and convincing, while the style is easy and pleasant.

Tennyson: Poet, Philosopher, Idealist. Studies of the Life, Work and Teaching of the Poet Laureate. By J. Cuming Walter. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co. 1893.

A combined life of the poet, and a criticism of his works. Somewhat marred by rhetoric, but in the main a valuable work, and useful to the student.

A Handbook to the Works of Alfred, Lord Tennyson. By Morton Luce. London: George Bell & Sons. 1897.

A studied criticism of each of the poems in the order of production. The criticism is sometimes rather peculiar, but in the main it is straightforward and sound. *A very useful book for the student.*

Tennyson. By Morton Luce. London: J. M. Dent & Co. 1901.

A small shilling primer of Tennyson, based on the author's *Handbook to the Works of Alfred, Lord Tennyson*. It has the same general characteristics as the larger book.

A Tennyson Primer with a Critical Essay. By William Macneile Dixon, Litt.D. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1896.

A charmingly written and really valuable addition to Tennysonian literature. It contains the best bibliography, by no means exhaustive however, yet published.

The Teaching of Tennyson. By John Oates. London: James Bowden. 1898.

An attempt, not entirely successful, to extract a "life lesson" from each of the poems. Not a book to be read at a sitting, but one to be studied in connection with the individual poems. It contains some very suggestive criticisms.

Illustrations of Tennyson. By John Churton Collins. London: Chatto & Windus. 1891.

An attempt to trace the origin of many of the most striking passages in the poetry of Tennyson. It is more remarkable as a testimony to the erudition of the author than convincing as a source-book of the poet's thoughts. It contains, however, some very remarkable parallels.

The Poetry of Tennyson. By Henry Van Dyke. New York : Charles Scribner's Sons. 1897.

A series of essays on various subjects connected with the life and poetry of Tennyson. The criticism is vague, and for the most part leads nowhere. A valuable feature of the book is the list of Biblical quotations paralleled in the poems of Tennyson. The chronology is poor.

Tennyson as a Thinker : A Criticism. By Henry S. Salt. London : William Reeves. 1893.

A savage attack on Tennyson as a leader of English thought in the 19th century. The criticism is so manifestly unfair that it overreaches itself. The *Idylls of the King* are especially singled out for assault.

Tennyson : A Critical Study. By Stephen Gwynn. London : Blackie & Sons. 1899.

One of the "Victorian Era" series. It contains some refreshingly original criticism, especially on the longer poems. The writer purposely abstained from consulting the mass of Tennysonian literature in order to leave his critical judgment absolutely unfettered.

A Study of English and American Poets. By J. Scott Clark, Litt. D. New York : Charles Scribner's Sons. 1900.

An eclectic treatment of the poet and his most prominent characteristics. Very useful for both teacher and student. The article is prefaced by a life of the poet and a bibliography of important works.

A New Spirit of the Age. Edited by R. H. Horne. 2 volumes. London : Smith, Elder & Co. 1844.

The first important essay on Tennyson. A large portion of it was written by Mrs. Browning. It contains, of course, notices of the poems no later than the 1842 volume.

Lessons from My Masters : Carlyle, Tennyson, and Ruskin. By Peter Bayne, M.A., LL.D. New York : Harper & Bros. 1869.

Not a recent book, but very valuable. Some of the best and soundest criticism of the poet owes its origin to the clear judgment of Dr. Bayne. The book is valuable for its treatment of the early poems.

Essays; Biographical, Critical, and Miscellaneous. By Peter Bayne. Edinburgh: Thomas Constable & Co. 1859.

Contains an essay on "Tennyson and his Teachers," characterized by the same acute criticism as is found in *Lessons from my Masters*.

Literary and General Lectures and Essays. By Charles Kingsley. London: Macmillan & Co. 1890.

A very enthusiastic essay on the poetry of Tennyson in general. It is especially favourable to *The Princess*. Not a judicial nor an impartial essay, but attractive and valuable for its enthusiastic admiration of the poet.

Literary Essays. By Richard Holt Hutton, M.A. London: Macmillan & Co. 1896.

Contains perhaps the best single article on Tennyson and his poetry. The subject is approached largely from the religious side.

The Great Poets and Their Theology. By Augustus Hopkins Strong, D.D. Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society. 1897.

Contains a remarkably strong and penetrating article on "Tennyson's Poetry as Interpreting the Divine Order." The criticism is not strikingly new, but the ideas are put in a convincing manner.

Essays. By George Brimley, M.A. Edited by William George Clark, M.A. London: Macmillan & Co. 1882.

Contains a very discriminating essay on the poet. It was first published, however, in 1855, and contains no criticism of works published subsequent to that date.

Victorian Poets. By Edmund Clarence Stedman. Boston : Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1893.

A strong essay on the poet, not always, however, either clear or convincing. There is a difficulty, sometimes, in finding out what the critic really means. A valuable chapter is "Tennyson and Theocritus," in which is discussed the debt which the poet owes to Theocritus and his fellows.

Tennyson, Ruskin, Mill, and other Literary Estimates.
By Frederic Harrison. New York : The Macmillan Co. 1900.

Contains a very enthusiastic, if sometimes entirely wrong-headed criticism of the poet. Stress is laid on the poet's mastery over the harmony of language.

The Religious Spirit in the Poets. By the Right Rev. W. Boyd Carpenter, D.D., Lord Bishop of Ripon. New York : Thomas Y. Crowell & Co. 1901.

A very pleasant essay on the religious spirit of Tennyson. The author bases his conclusions on his personal knowledge of the poet as well as on the poems.

Safe Studies. By Hon. Mr. and Mrs. Lionel A. Tolle-mache. London : William Rice. 1899.

Contains a careful, if rather a dull essay, on "The Social Philosophy of Tennyson."

Studies of Good and Evil. By Josiah Royce. New York : D. Appleton & Co. 1898.

Contains an article entitled "Tennyson and Pessimism," which is a masterly treatment of the two poems relating to *Locksley Hall*.

Landscape in Poetry, from Homer to Tennyson. By Francis Turner Palgrave. London : Macmillan & Co. 1897.

A valuable discussion of Tennyson as a poet of Nature by his life long friend. The criticism is all favourable and even enthusiastic.

History of English Literature. By H. A. Taine. 2 volumes. New York : Henry Holt & Co. 1891.

Contains the famous criticism of Tennyson, in which a comparison is made with de Musset, much to the advantage of the latter. Useful as giving a French view of the poet, but not valuable as serious criticism.

Tennyson's Idylls of the King and Arthurian Story from the XVI. Century. By M. W. MacCallum, M.A. New York : The Macmillan Co. 1894.

A very valuable treatment of the subject. Perhaps the best and sanest discussion of the allegorical tendency of the *Idylls of the King*. The style is rather heavy, but the criticism is very acute and discriminating.

The Arthurian Epic : A Comparative Study of the Cambrian, Breton, and Anglo-Norman Versions of the Story, with Tennyson's Idylls of the King. By T. Humphreys Gurteen, M.A., LL.D. New York : G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1895.

The scope of the book is indicated by the title. The author is not an enthusiastic admirer of the *Idylls of the King*, and in some instances, notably in connection with Guinevere, handles the poet very severely. Parts of the criticism are absurd, but the book is useful as showing, if too grossly, the faults in the Tennysonian treatment of the story.

Studies in the Idylls : An Essay on Mr. Tennyson's Idylls of the King. By Henry Elsdale. London : Henry S. King & Co. 1878.

A useful work, containing much discriminating criticism. It was written, however, before the publication of *Balin ar d Balan*, and consequently this poem is not considered in the discussion of the *Idylls* as a whole.

Idylls of the King. By Alfred, Lord Tennyson. Edited with Notes. By William J. Rolfe, Litt.D. Boston : Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1897.

A complete edition of the *Idylls* for school use. The notes are by no means exhaustive, but are judicious and suggestive.

The Study of the Idylls of the King. By Mrs. H. A. Davidson. Printed for the author. Albany, 1901.

A very complete guide to the study of the *Idylls of the King*. Topics are suggested, difficulties explained, and lists of books given. A very useful help in studying the *Idylls*.

A Study: With Critical and Explanatory Notes of Lord Tennyson's Poem, The Princess. By S. E. Dawson. Montreal: Dawson Bros. 1884.

The best book on the poem yet published. All other editions are compelled to acknowledge their indebtedness.

Tennyson: The Princess: A Medley. With Introduction and Notes. By Percy M. Wallace, M.A. London; Macmillan & Co. 1894.

A very fully annotated edition of the poem. The notes are exhaustive, leaving very little to the student, while the introduction is full and pointed.

Tennyson's The Princess. Edited with Notes and Introduction, by George Edward Woodberry, A.B. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1896.

Contains the best introduction of any edition of the poem. The notes are good and fairly suggestive.

A Critical Study of In Memoriam. By the Rev. John M. King, M.A., D.D. Toronto: George N. Morang & Co., Limited. 1896.

A very valuable criticism of *In Memoriam*. The poems are taken up separately, and the difficulties in each laid bare, and the thought interpreted. The criticism is luminous, and often very penetrating. The chief fault is that there is very little attempt to discuss the idea running through the poem. The point of view is distinctly sympathetic.

Tennyson's In Memoriam, Its Purpose and Its Structure: A Study. By John F. Genung. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1892.

A very valuable book. It is impossible, however, to agree with all its conclusions. The author seems to have begun with

a fixed theory, and to have bent the poem to suit that theory. There is scarcely that unity in the poem for which the author contends. Should be read and studied by every student of the poet.

A Companion to In Memoriam. By Elizabeth Rachel Chapman. London: Macmillan & Co. 1888.

A summing up in fifteen or twenty lines of the chief thought in each of the poems in the *In Memoriam*. The poet himself was delighted with the book, and gave it his cordial commendation. The book is simply an abstract, very well done, of the poem.

A Commentary on Tennyson's In Memoriam. By A. C. Bradley. London: Macmillan & Co. 1901.

This, in its revised form, ranks among the best commentaries on the poem.

Tennyson's Maud Vindicated: An Explanatory Essay.
By Robert James Mann, M.D. London: Jarrold & Sons. 1856.

A masterly treatment and defense of *Maud* against the critics. It contains the last word on the subject. It has been, however, long out of print.

Selections from Tennyson, Parts I. and II.: With Introduction and Notes. By F. J. Rowe & W. T. Webb. London: Macmillan & Co. 1893.

A very fully annotated edition—too full for school use—of selected poems. It has the advantage that the notes were revised by the present Lord Tennyson, Governor-General of Australia.

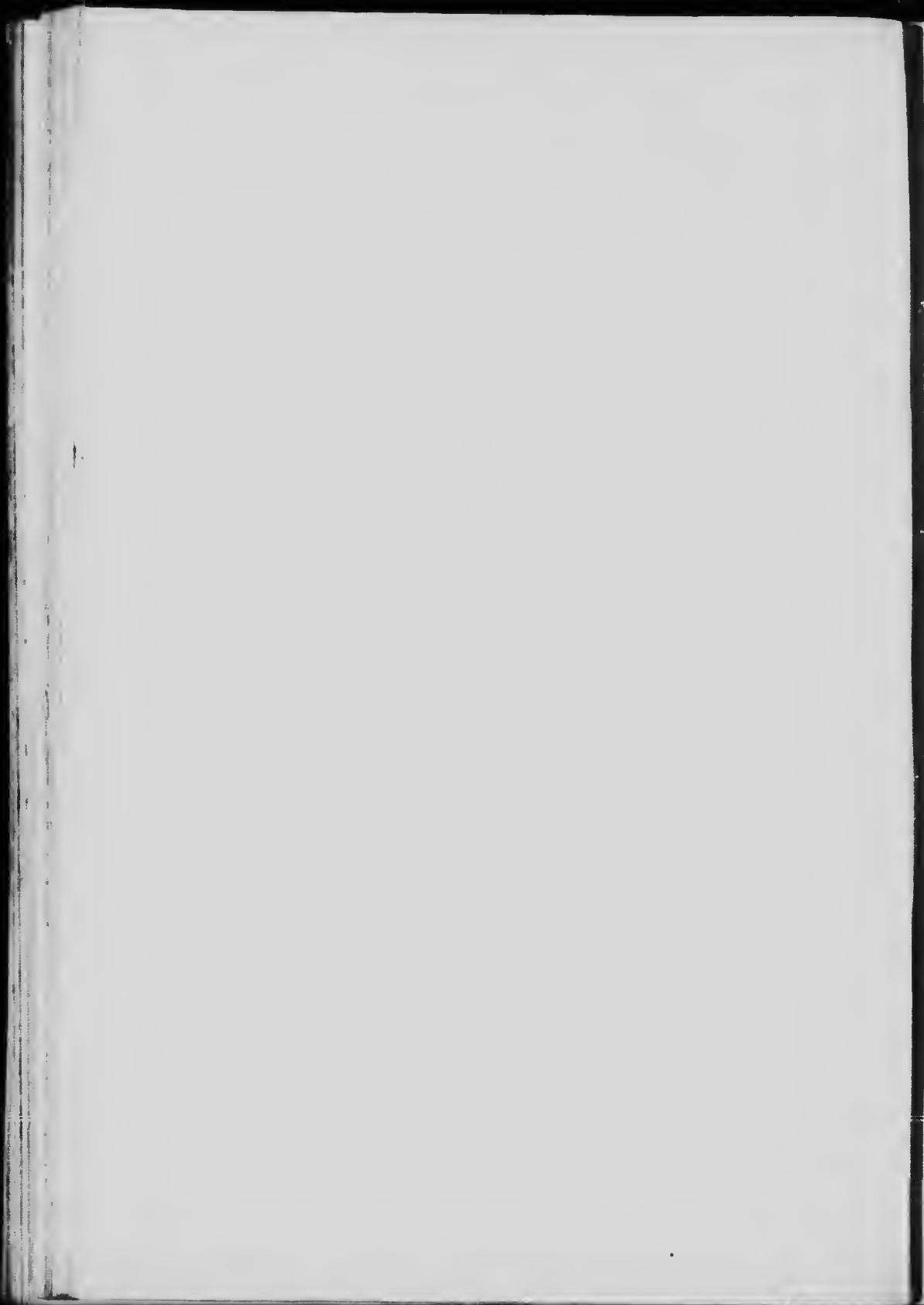
Tennyson for the Young: With Introduction and Notes.
By Alfred Ainger. London: Macmillan & Co. 1891.

A small annotated edition of the simpler poems, together with a few brief notes.

SELECTED MAGAZINE ARTICLES

- Aspects of Tennyson, No. 1. By H. D. Traill. *Nineteenth Century*, December, 1892.
- Tennyson as Nature Poet. By Theodore Watts. *Nineteenth Century*, May, 1893.
- The Classical Poems of Tennyson. By Herbert Paul. March, 1893.
- Locksley Hall and the Jubilee. By W. E. Gladstone. *Nineteenth Century*, January, 1887.
- Modern Poets and the Meaning of Life. By F. W. H. Myers. *Nineteenth Century*, January, 1893.
- Tennyson as a Prophet. By F. W. H. Myers. *Nineteenth Century*, March, 1889.
- The Poetry of Tennyson. *The Quarterly Review*, January, 1893.
- The Poetry of Tennyson. By Roden Noel. *Contemporary Review*, February, 1895.
- Tennyson's Relation to Common Life. By Lewis E. Gates. *The Critic*, June, 1900.
- Tennyson. By Edmund Gosse. Tennyson. By Herbert Paul. *The New Review*, November, 1892.
- Tennyson. By Agnes Grace Weld. *Contemporary Review*, November, 1897.
- Talks with Tennyson. By Agnes Grace Weld. *Contemporary Review*, March, 1893.
- Tennyson, Lord. *The Westminster Review*, 1892.
- Tennyson, Lord. *Blackwood's Magazine*, November, 1897.
- Tennyson, The Life of. By Hamilton Wright Mabie. *The Atlantic Monthly*, November, 1897.

SELECT POEMS OF TENNYSON





ALDWORTH II

THE LADY OF SHALOTT

PART I

On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
And thro' the field the road runs by
5 To many-tower'd Camelot;
And up and down the people go,
Gazing where the lilies blow
Round an island there below,
 The island of Shalott.

10 Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver
Thro' the wave that runs forever
By the island in the river
 Flowing down to Camelot.

15 Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
Overlook a space of flowers,
And the silent isle imbowers
 The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,
20 Slide the heavy barges trail'd
By slow horses; and unhail'd
The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd
 Skimming down to Camelot:

But who hath seen her wave her hand?
 Or at the casement seen her stand?
 35 Or is she known in all the land,
 The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early
 In among the bearded barley,
 30 Hear a song that echoes cheerly
 From the river winding clearly,
 Down to tower'd Camelot:
 And by the moon the reaper weary,
 Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
 35 Listening, whispers, "'Tis the fairy
 Lady of Shalott."

PART II

There she weaves by night and day
 A magic web with colours gay.
 She has heard a whisper say,
 40 A curse is on her if she stay
 To look down to Camelot.
 She knows not what the curse may be,
 And so she weaveth steadily,
 And little other care hath she,
 45 The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear
 That hangs before her all the year,
 Shadows of the world appear.
 There she sees the highway near
 50 Winding down to Camelot:
 There the river eddy whirls,
 And there the surly village-churls,

And the red cloaks of market girls,
Pass onward from Shalott.

- 55 Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,
Goes by to tower'd Camelot;
60 And sometimes thro' the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two:
She hath no loyal knight and true,
The Lady of Shalott.

- But in her web she still delights
65 To weave the mirror's magic sights,
For often thro' the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights,
And music, went to Camelot:
Or when the moon was overhead,
70 Came two young lovers lately wed;
"I am half-sick of shadows," said
The Lady of Shalott.

PART III

- A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves,
75 The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
Of bold Sir Lancelot.
A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd
To a lady in his shield,
80 That sparkled on the yellow field,
Beside remote Shalott.

- The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
85 The bridle bells rang merrily
 As he rode down to Camelot:
And from his blazon'd baldric slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armour rung,
90 Beside remote Shalott.
- All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burn'd like one burning flame together,
95 As he rode down to Camelot.
As often thro' the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
 Moves over still Shalott.
- 100 His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd;
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode;
From underneath his helmet flow'd
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
 As he rode down to Camelot.
105 From the bank and from the river
He flash'd into the crystal mirror,
"Tirra lirra," by the river
 Sang Sir Lancelot.
- She left the web, she left the loom,
110 She made three paces thro' the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
 She look'd down to Camelot.

Out flew the web and floated wide;
 115 The mirror crack'd from side to side;
 "The curse is come upon me," cried
 The Lady of Shalott.

PART IV

In the stormy east-wind straining,
 The pale yellow woods were waning,
 120 The broad stream on his banks complaining,
 Heavily the low sky raining
 Over tower'd Camelot;
 Down she came and found a boat
 Beneath a willow left afloat,
 125 And round about the prow she wrote
 The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse—
 Like some bold peer in a trance,
 Seeing all his own mischance—
 130 With a glassy countenance
 Did she look to Camelot.
 And at the closing of the day
 She loosed the chain, and down she lay;
 The broad stream bore her far away,
 135 The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy wh
 That loosely flew to left and right—
 The leaves upon her falling light—
 Thro' the noises of the night
 140 She floated down to Camelot:

And as the boat-head wound along
 The willowy hills and fields among,
 They heard her singing her last song,
 The Lady of Shalott.

145 Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
 Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
 Till her blood was frozen slowly,
 And her eyes were darken'd wholly,
 Turn'd to tower'd Camelot;
 150 For ere she reached upon the tide
 The first house by the water-side,
 Singing in her song she died,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
 155 By garden-wall and gallery,
 A gleaming shape she floated by,
 Dead-pale between the houses high,
 Silent into Camelot.
 Out upon the wharves they came,
 160 Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
 And round the prow they read her name,
The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this? and what is here?
 And in the lighted palace near
 165 Died the sound of royal cheer;
 And they cross'd themselves for fear,
 All the knights at Camelot:
 But Lancelot mused a little space;
 He said, "She has a lovely face;
 170 God in his mercy lend her grace,
 The Lady of Shalott."

ÆNONE

There lies a vale in Ida, lovelier
 Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.
 The swimming vapour slopes athwart the glen,
 Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine to pine,
 5 And loiters, slowly drawn. On either hand
 The lawns and meadow-ledges midway down
 Hang rich in flowers, and far below them roars
 The long brook falling thro' the clov'n ravine
 In cataract after cataract to the sea.
 10 Behind the valley topmost Gargarus
 Stands up and takes the morning: but in front
 The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal
 Troas and Ilion's column'd citadel,
 The crown of Troas.

Hither came at noon

15 Mournful Ænone, wandering forlorn
 Of Paris, once her playmate on the hills.
 Her cheek had lost the rose, and round her neck
 Floated her hair or seem'd to float in rest.
 She, leaning on a fragment twined with vine,
 20 Sang to the stillness, till the mountain-shade
 Sloped downward to her seat from the upper cliff.

“O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 For now the noontide quiet holds the hill:
 25 The grasshopper is silent in the grass:
 The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,
 Rests like a shadow, and the winds are dead.

The purple flower droops: the golden bee
Is lily-cradled: I alone awake.

30 My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love,
My heart is breaking, and my eyes are dim,
And I am all weary of my life.

“O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.

35 Hear me, O Earth; hear me, O Hills, O Caves
That house the cold crown'd snake! O mountain
brooks,

I am the daughter of a River-God,
Hear me, for I will speak, and build up all
My sorrow with my song, as yonder walls
40 Rose slowly to a music slowly breathed,
A cloud that gather'd shape: for it may be
That, while I speak of it, a little while
My heart may wander from its deeper woe.

“O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,

45 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.

I waited underneath the dawning hills,
Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy-dark,
And dewy-dark aloft the mountain pine:
Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,

50 Leading a jet-black goat white-horn'd, white-
hooved,

Came up from reedy Simois all alone.

“O mother Ida, harken ere I die.

Far-off the torrent call'd me from the cleft:
Far up the solitary morning smote

55 The streaks of virgin snow. With down-dropt eyes
I sat alone: white-breasted like a star
Fronting the dawn he moved; a leopard skin
Droop'd from his shoulder, but his sunny hair

Cluster'd about his temples like a God's;
 60 And his cheek brighten'd as the foam-bow brightens
 When the wind blows the foam, and all my heart
 Went forth to embrace him coming ere he came.

“Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 He smiled, and opening out his milk-white palm
 65 Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian gold,
 That smelt ambrosially, and while I look'd
 And listen'd, the full-flowing river of speech
 Came down upon my heart.

“ ‘My own Ænone,
 Beautiful-brow'd Ænone, my own soul,
 70 Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind ingrav'n
 “For the most fair,” would seem to award it thine,
 As lovelier than whatever Oread haunt
 The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace
 Of movement, and the charm of married brows.’

75 “Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 He prest the blossom of his lips to mine,
 And added ‘This was cast upon the board,
 When all the full-faced presence of the Gods
 Ranged in the halls of Peleus; whereupon
 80 Rose feud, with question unto whom 'twere due:
 But light-foot Iris brought it yester-eve,
 Delivering that to me, by common voice
 Elected umpire, Herè comes to-day,
 Pallas and Aphroditè, claiming each
 85 This meed of fairest. Thou, within the cave
 Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest pine,
 Mayst well behold them unbeheld, unheard
 Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of Gods.’

“Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 90 It was the deep mid-noon: one silvery cloud

Had lost his way between the piney sides
 Of this long glen. Then to the bower they came,
 Naked they came to that smooth-swarded bower,
 And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,
 95 Violet, amaracus, and asphodel,
 Lotos and lilies: and a wind arose,
 And overhead the wandering ivy and vine,
 This way and that, in many a wild festoon
 Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs
 100 With bunch and berry and flower thro' and thro'.

“O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 On the tree-tops a crested peacock lit,
 And o'er him flow'd a golden cloud, and lean'd
 Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant dew.
 105 Then first I heard the voice of her, to whom
 Coming thro' Heaven, like a light that grows
 Larger and clearer, with one mind the Gods
 Rise up for reverence. She to Paris made
 Proffer of royal power, ample rule
 110 Unquestion'd, overflowing revenue
 Wherewith to embellish state, 'from many a vale
 And river-sunder'd champaign cloth'd with corn,
 Or labour'd mines undrainable of ore.
 Honour,' she said, 'and homage, tax and toll,
 115 From many an inland town and haven large,
 Mast-throng'd beneath her shadowing citadel
 In glassy bays among her tallest towers.'

“O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 Still she spake on and still she spake of power,
 120 'Which in all action is the end of all;
 Power fitted to the season; wisdom-bred
 And throned of wisdom—from all neighbour crowns
 Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand

Fail from the sceptre-staff. Such boon from me,
 125 From me, Heaven's Queen, Paris, to thee king-born,
 A shepherd all thy life but yet king-born,
 Should come most welcome, seeing men, in power
 Only, are likest gods, who have attain'd
 Rest in a happy place and quiet seats
 130 Above the thunder, with undying bliss
 In knowledge of their own supremacy.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 She ceased, and Paris held the costly fruit
 Out at arm's-length, so much the thought of power
 135 Flatter'd his spirit; but Pallas where she stood
 Somewhat apart, her clear and bared limbs
 O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed spear
 Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold,
 The while, above, her full and earnest eye
 140 Over her snow-cold breast and angry cheek
 Kept watch, waiting decision, made reply.

"'Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
 These three alone lead life to sovereign power.
 Yet not for power, (power of herself
 145 Would come uncall'd for) but to live by law,
 Acting the law we live by without fear;
 And, because right is right, to follow right
 Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 150 Again she said: 'I woo thee not with gifts.
 Sequel of guerdon could not alter me
 To fairer. Judge thou me by what I am,
 So shalt thou find me fairest.

Yet, indeed,
 If gazing on divinity disrobed
 155 Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of fair,

Unbias'd by self-profit, oh! rest thee sure
 That I shall love thee well and cleave to thee,
 So that my vigour, wedded to thy blood,
 Shall strike within thy pulses, like a God's,
 160 To push thee forward thro' a life of shocks,
 Dangers, and deeds, until endurance grow
 Sinew'd with action, and the full-grown will,
 Circled thro' all experiences, pure law,
 Commensure perfect freedom.'

"Here she ceas'd,
 165 And Paris ponder'd, and I cried, 'O Paris,
 Give it to Pallas!' but he heard me not,
 Or hearing would not hear me, woe is me!

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 170 Idalian Aphrodite beautiful,
 Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian wells,
 With rosy slender fingers backward drew
 From her warm brows and bosom her deep hair
 Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat
 175 And shoulder: from the violets her light foot
 Shone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded form
 Between the shadows of the vine-bunches
 Floated the glowing sunlights, as she moved.

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 180 She with a subtle smile in her mild eyes,
 The herald of her triumph, drawing nigh
 Half-whisper'd in his ear, 'I promise thee
 The fairest and most loving wife in Greece.'
 She spoke and laugh'd: I shut my sight for fear:
 185 But when I look'd, Paris had raised his arm,
 And I beheld great Herè's angry eyes,
 As she withdrew into the golden cloud,

And I was left alone within the bower;
 And from that time to this I am alone,
 190 And I shall be alone until I die.

“Yet, mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 Fairest—why fairest wife? am I not fair?
 My love hath told me so a thousand times.
 Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday,
 195 When I past by, a wild and wanton pard,
 Eyed like the evening star, with playful tail
 Crouch'd fawning in the weed. Most loving is she?
 Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that my arms
 Were wound about thee, and my hot lips pressed
 200 Close, close to thine in that quick-falling dew
 Of fruitful kisses, thick as Autumn rains
 Flash in the pools of whirling Simois.

“O mother, hear me yet before I die.
 They came, they cut away my tallest pines,
 205 My dark tall pines, that plumed the craggy ledge
 High over the blue gorge, and all between
 The snowy peak and snow-white cataract
 Foster'd the callow eaglet—from beneath
 Whose thick mysterious boughs in the dark morn
 210 The panther's roar came muffled, while I sat
 Low in the valley. Never, never more
 Shall lone Ænone see the morning mist
 Sweep thro' them; never see them overlaid
 With narrow moon-lit slips of silver cloud,
 215 Between the loud stream and the trembling stars.

“O mother, hear me yet before I die.
 I wish that somewhere in the ruin'd folds,
 Among the fragments tumbled from the gables,

Or the dry thickets, I could meet with her,
 220 The Abominable, that uninvited came
 Into the fair Peleian banquet-hall,
 And cast the golden fruit upon the board,
 And bred this change; that I might speak my mind,
 And tell her to her face how much I hate
 225 Her presence, hated both of Gods and men.

“O mother, hear me yet before I die.
 Hath he not sworn his love a thousand times,
 In this green valley, under this green hill,
 Ev'n on this hand, and sitting on this stone?
 230 Seal'd it with kisses? water'd it with tears?
 O happy tears, and how unlike to these!
 O happy Heaven, how canst thou see my face?
 O happy earth, how canst thou bear my weight?
 O death, death, death, thou ever-floating cloud,
 235 There are enough unhappy on this earth,
 Pass by the happy souls, that love to live:
 I pray thee, pass before my light of life,
 And shadow all my soul, that I may die.
 Thou weighest heavy on the heart within,
 240 Weigh heavy on my eyelids: let me die.

“O mother, hear me yet before I die.
 I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts
 Do shape themselves within me, more and more,
 Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear
 245 Dead sounds at night come from the inmost hills,
 Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly see
 My far-off doubtful purpose, as a mother
 Conjectures of the features of her child
 Ere it is born: her child!—a shudder comes
 250 Across me: never child be born of me,
 Unblest, to vex me with his father's eyes!

“O mother, hear me yet before I die.
Hear me, O earth. I will not die alone,
Lest their shrill happy laughter come to me
155 Walking the cold and starless road of Death
Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love
With the Greek woman. I will rise and go
Down into Troy, and ere the stars come forth
Talk with the wild Cassandra, for she says
160 A fire dances before her, and a sound
Rings ever in her ears of armed men.
What this may be I know not, but I know
That, wheresoe'er I am by night and day,
All earth and air seem only burning fire.”

THE LOTOS-EATERS

‘Courage!’ he said, and pointed toward the land,
‘This mounting wave will roll us shoreward soon.’
In the afternoon they came unto a land,
In which it seemed always afternoon.
5 All round the coast the languid air did swoon,
Breathing like one that hath a weary dream.
Full-faced above the valley stood the moon;
And like a downward smoke, the slender stream
Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem.
10 A land of streams! some, like a downward smoke,
Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did go;
And some thro’ wavering lights and shadows broke,
Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.
They saw the gleaming river seaward flow

15 From the inner land: far off, three mountain-tops,
Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,
Stood sunset-flush'd: and, dew'd with showery
drops,
Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the woven copse.

The charmed sunset linger'd low adown
20 In the red West: thro' mountain clefts the dale
Was seen far inland, and the yellow down
Border'd with palm, and many a winding vale
And meadow, set with slender galingale;
A land where all things always seem'd the same!
45 And round about the keel with faces pale,
Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted stem,
Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they gave
30 To each, but whoso did receive of them,
And taste, to him the gushing of the wave
Far far away did seem to mourn and rave
On alien shores; and if his fellow spake,
His voice was thin, as voices from the grave;
45 And deep-asleep he seem'd, yet all awake,
And music in his ears his beating heart did make.

They sat them down upon the yellow sand,
Between the sun and moon upon the shore;
And sweet it was to dream of Fatherland,
40 Of child, and wife, and slave; but ever-more
Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the oar,
Weary the wandering fields of barren foam.
Then some one said, 'We will return no more;'
And all at once they sang, 'Our island home
45 Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer roam.'

CHORIC SONG

I

There is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
Or night-dews on still waters between walls
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;
50 Music that gentler on the spirit lies,
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes;
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the bliss-
ful skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,
55 And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

II

Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from weariness?
60 All things have rest: why should we toil alone,
We only toil, who are the first of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown:
Nor ever fold our wings,
65 And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm;
Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,
'There is no joy but calm !'
Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of
things ?

III

- 70 Lo! in the middle of the wood,
 The folded leaf is woo'd from out the bud
 With winds upon the branch, and there
 Grows green and broad, and takes no care,
 Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon
 75 Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow
 Falls, and floats adown the air.
 Lo! sweeten'd with the summer light,
 The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,
 Drops in a silent autumn night.
- 80 All its allotted length of days,
 The flower ripens in its place,
 Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no toil,
 Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

IV

- Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
 85 Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.
 Death is the end of life; ah, why
 Should life all labour be?
 Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,
 And in a little while our lips are dumb.
- 90 Let us alone. What is it that will last?
 All things are taken from us, and become
 Portions and parcels of the dreadful Past.
 Let us alone. What pleasure can we have
 To war with evil? Is there any peace
 95 In ever climbing up the climbing wave?
 All things have rest, and ripen toward the grave
 In silence; ripen, fall and cease:
 Give us long rest or death, dark death, or dream-
 ful ease.

V

How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream.
100 With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half-dream !
To dream and dream, like yonder amber light,
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on the height;
To hear each other's whisper'd speech;
105 Eating the Lotos day by day,
To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,
And tender curving lines of creamy spray;
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
To the influence of mild-minded melancholy;
110 To muse and brood and live again in memory,
With those old faces of our infancy
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn of brass!

VI

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,
115 And dear the last embraces of our wives
And their warm tears: but all hath suffer'd change:
For surely now our household hearths are cold:
Our sons inherit us: our looks are strange:
And we should come like ghosts to trouble joy.
120 Or else the island princes over-bold
Have eat our substance, and the minstrel sings
Before them of the ten-years' war in Troy,
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten things.
Is there confusion in the little isle?
125 Let what is broken so remain.
The Gods are hard to reconcile:

'Tis hard to settle order once again.
 There *is* confusion worse than death,
 Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,
 130 Long labour unto aged breath,
 Sore task to hearts worn out by many wars
 And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot-stars.

VII

But, propt on beds of amaranth and moly,
 How sweet (while warm airs lull us, blowing lowly)
 135 With half-dropt eyelid still,
 Beneath a heaven dark and holy,
 To watch the long bright river drawing slowly
 His waters from the purple hill—
 To hear the dewy echoes calling
 140 From cave to cave thro' the thick-twined vine—
 To watch the emerald-colour'd water falling
 Thro' many a wov'n acanthus-wreath divine!
 Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling brine,
 Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out beneath the
 pine.

VIII

145 The Lotos blooms below the barren peak:
 The Lotos blows by every winding creek:
 All day the wind breathes low with mellow tone:
 Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
 Round and round the spicy downs the yellow Lotos-
 dust is blown.
 150 We have had enough of action, and of motion we,
 Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard, when the
 surge was seething free,

Where the wallowing monster spouted his foam-
fountains in the sea.
Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal
mind,
In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie reclined
155 On the hills like Gods together, careless of mankind.
For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are
hurl'd
Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are
lightly curl'd
Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleam-
ing world:
Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted
lands,
160 Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring
deeps and fiery sands,
Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking
ships, and praying hands.
But they smile, they find a music centred in a
doleful song
Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient tale of
wrong,
Like a tale of little meaning tho' the words are
strong;
165 Chanted from an ill-used race of men that cleave
the soil,
Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with enduring
toil,
Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and wine and
oil;
Till they perish and they suffer — some, 'tis
whisper'd—down in hell
Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian valleys
dwell,

- 170 Resting weary limbs at last on beds of asphodel.
 Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the
 shore
 Than labour in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave
 and oar;
 O rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander
 more.

ULYSSES

- It little profits that an idle king,
 By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
 Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole
 Unequal laws unto a savage race,
 5 That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.
 I cannot rest from travel: I will drink
 Life to the lees: all times I have enjoy'd
 Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those
 That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when
 10 Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
 Vext the dim sea: I am become a name;
 For always roaming with a hungry heart
 Much have I seen and known; cities of men
 And manners, climates, councils, governments,
 15 Myself not least, but honour'd of them all;
 And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
 Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
 I am a part of all that I have met;
 Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
 20 Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades
 For ever and for ever when I move.
 How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
 To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!

As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled on life
 25 Were all too little, and of one to me
 Little remains: but every hour is saved
 From that eternal silence, something more,
 A bringer of new things; and vile it were
 For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
 30 And this gray spirit yearning in desire
 To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
 Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
 To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle—
 35 Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
 This labour, by slow prudence to make mild
 A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
 Subdue them to the useful and the good.
 Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
 40 Of common duties, decent not to fail
 In offices of tenderness, and pay
 Meet adoration to my household gods,
 When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.

There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail:
 45 There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners.
 Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought
 with me—

That ever with a frolic welcome took
 The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
 Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old;
 50 Old age hath yet his honour and his toil;
 Death closes all: but something ere the end,
 Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
 Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
 The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:
 55 The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the
 deep

Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
 'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
 Push off, and sitting well in order smite
 The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
 60 To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
 Of all the western stars, until I die.
 It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:
 It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
 And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
 65 Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
 We are not now that strength which in old days
 Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we
 are;
 One equal temper of heroic hearts,
 Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
 70 To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

THE EPIC

At Francis Allen's on the Christmas-eve,—
 The game of forfeits done—the girls all kiss'd
 Beneath the sacred bush and past away—
 The parson Holmes, the poet Everard Hall,
 5 The host, and I sat round the wassail-bowl,
 Then half-way ebb'd: and there we held a talk,
 How all the old honour had from Christmas gone,
 Or gone, or dwindled down to some odd games
 In some odd nooks like this; till I, tired out
 10 With cutting eights that day upon the pond,
 Where, three times slipping from the outer edge,
 I bump'd the ice into three several stars,
 Fell in a doze; and half-awake I heard

- The parson taking wide and wider sweeps,
 15 Now harping on the church-commissioners,
 Now hawking at Geology and schism;
 Until I woke, and found him settled down
 Upon the general decay of faith
 Right thro' the world, 'at home was little left,
 20 And none abroad: there was no anchor, none,
 To hold by.' Francis, laughing, clapt his hand
 On Everard's shoulder, with 'I hold by him.'
 'And I,' quoth Everard, 'by the wassail-bowl.'
 'Why yes,' I said, 'we knew your gift that way
 25 At college: but another which you had,
 I mean of verse (for so we held it then),
 What came of that?' 'You know,' said Frank,
 'he burnt
 His epic, his King Arthur, some twelve books'—
 And then to me demanding why? 'Oh, sir,
 30 He thought that nothing new was said, or else
 Something so said 'twas nothing—that a truth
 Looks freshest in the fashion of the day:
 God knows: he has a mint of reasons: ask.
 It pleased *me* well enough.' 'Nay, nay,' said
 Hall,
 35 'Why take the style of those heroic times?
 For nature brings not back the Mastodon,
 Nor we those times; and why should any man
 Remodel models? these twelve books of mine
 Were faint Homeric echoes, nothing-worth,
 40 Mere chaff and draff, much better burnt.' 'But I,'
 Said Francis, 'pick'd the eleventh from this hearth
 And have it: keep a thing, its use will come.
 I hoard it as a sugar-plum for Holmes.'
 He laugh'd, and I, tho' sleepy, like a horse
 45 That hears the corn-bin open, prick'd my ears;

For I remember'd Everard's college fame
 When we were Freshmen: then at my request
 He brought it; and the poet little urged,
 But with some prelude of disparagement,
 50 Read, mouthing out his hollow oes and aes,
 Deep-chested music, and to this result.

MORTE D'ARTHUR

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd
 Among the mountains by the winter sea;
 Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
 Had fallen in Lyonesse about their Lord,
 5 King Arthur: then, because his wound was deep,
 The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
 Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,
 And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
 A broken chancel with a broken cross,
 10 That stood on a dark strait of barren land.
 On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
 Lay a great water, and the moon was full.
 Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
 'The sequel of to-day unsolders all!
 15 The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
 Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep
 They sleep—the men I loved. I think that we
 Shall never more, at any future time,
 Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,
 20 Walking about the gardens and the halls
 Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
 I perish by this people which I made,—
 Tho' Merlin sware that I should come again

To rule once more—but let what will be, be,
25 I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm
That without help I cannot last till morn.
Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
Which was my pride: for thou rememberest how
In those old days, one summer noon, an arm
30 Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
Holding the sword—and how I row'd across
And took it, and have worn it, like a king:
And, wheresoever I am sung or told
35 In aftertime, this also shall be known:
But now delay not: take Excalibur,
And fling him far into the middle mere:
Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring me word.'

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere:
40 'It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus,
Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm.
A little thing may harm a wounded man.
Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word.'

45 So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he stept
And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He, stepping
down

50 By zig-zag paths and juts of pointed rock,
Came on the shining levels of the lake.
There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth
55 And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt:
For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,

Myriads of topaz-lights and jacinth-work
Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled, as he stood,
60 This way and that dividing the swift mind,
In act to throw: but at the last it seem'd
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd
There in the many-knotted waterflags,
That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.
65 So strode he back slow to the wounded King
Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
'Hast thou performed my mission which I gave?
What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?'
And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
70 'I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag.'
To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale:
'Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy name,
Not rendering true answer, as beseem'd
75 Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight:
For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again
80 As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing
I bad thee, watch, and lightly bring me word.'
Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,
Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in thought;
85 But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,
How curiously and strangely chased, he smote
His palms together, and he cried aloud,
'And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
90 Should thus be lost for ever from the earth,

Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.
What good should follow this, if this were done?
What harm, undone? deep harm to disobey,
Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.
95 Were it well to obey then, if a king demand
An act unprofitable, against himself?
The King is sick, and knows not what he does.
What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath
100 And rumours of a doubt? but were this kept,
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,
Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
Saying, "King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake.
105 Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps
Upon the hidden bases of the hills."
So might some old man speak in the aftertime
To all the people, winning reverence.
But now much honour and much fame were lost.'
110 So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,
And hid Excalibur the second time,
And so strode back slow to the wounded King.
Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily:
'What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?'
115 And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
'I heard the water lapping on the crag,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds.'
To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath:
'Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
120 Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!
Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye
That bow'd the will. I see thee what thou art,
For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,

125 In whom should meet the offices of all,
 Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt;
 Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
 Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
 Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
 130 And the third time may prosper, get thee hence:
 But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
 I will arise and slay thee with my hands.'

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,
 And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged
 135 Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd the sword,
 And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand
 Made lightnings in the splendour of the moon,
 And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an
 arch,
 Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
 140 Seen where the moving isles of winter shock
 By night, with noises of the northern sea.
 So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur:
 But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
 Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
 145 And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
 Three times, and drew him under in the mere.
 And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath:
 'Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
 150 Speak out: what is it thou has heard, or seen?'
 And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
 'Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems
 Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
 Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
 155 Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,
 So great a miracle as yonder hilt.
 Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him;

But when I look'd again, behold an arm,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
160 That caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.'

And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard :
'My end draws nigh ; 'tis time that I were gone.
Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,
165 And bear me to the margin ; yet I fear
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die.'

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
170 As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found not words,
Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,
O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,
175 And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard,
Like one that feels : nightmare on his bed
When all the house is mute. So sigh'd the King,
Muttering and murmuring at his ear, 'Quick, quick!
180 I fear it is too late, and I shall die.'

But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,
Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walk'd,
Larger than human on the frozen hills.
He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
185 Before. His own thought drove him like a goad.
Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right
The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
190 Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels—
And on a sudden, lo ! the level lake,

And the long glories of the winter moon.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,
 Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
 195 Beneath them; and descending they were ware
 That all the decks were dense with stately forms
 Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream—by these
 Three Queens with crowns of gold—and from them
 rose

A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
 200 And, as it were one voice an agony
 Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills
 All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
 Or hath come, since the making of the world,
 Then murmur'd Arthur, 'Place me in the barge.'
 205 And to the barge they came. There those three
 Queens

Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.
 But she, that rose the tallest of them all
 And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
 And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his
 hands,

210 And call'd him by his name, complaining loud,
 And dropping bitter tears against his brow
 Striped with dark blood: for all his face was white
 And colourless, and like the wither'd moon
 Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;
 215 And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops
 Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls—
 That made his forehead like a rising sun
 High from the dais-throne—were parch'd with
 dust;

Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
 220 Mix'd with the knightly growth that fringed his
 lips.

So like a shatter'd column lay the King;
 Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,
 From spur to plume a star of tournament,
 Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged
 225 Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere,
 'Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go?
 Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes?
 For now I see the true old times are dead,
 230 When every morning brought a noble chance,
 And every chance brought out a noble knight.
 Such times have been not since the light that led
 The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.

But now the whole ROUND TABLE is dissolved
 235 Which was an image of the mighty world;
 And I, the last, go forth companionless,
 And the days darken round me, and the years,
 Among new men, strange faces, other minds.'

And slowly answered Arthur from the barge:
 240 'The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
 And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
 Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.
 Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me?
 I have lived my life, and that which I have done
 245 May He within Himself make pure! but thou,
 If thou shouldst never see my face again,
 Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by
 prayer
 Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy
 voice

Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
 250 For what are men better than sheep or goats
 That nourish a blind life within the brain,
 If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer

Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
 For so the whole round earth is every way
 255 Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.
 But now farewell. I am going a long way
 With these thou seest—if indeed I go—
 (For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)
 To the island-valley of Avilion;
 260 Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
 Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
 Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard-lawns
 And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,
 Where I will heal me of my grievous wound.'
 265 So said he, and the barge with oar and sail
 Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan
 That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
 Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
 With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere
 270 Revolving many memories, till the hull
 Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,
 And on the mere the wailing died away.

Here ended Hall, and our last light, that long
 Had wink'd and threaten'd darkness, flared and
 fell:
 At which the Parson, sent to sleep with sound,
 55 And waked with silence, grunted 'Good!' but we
 Sat rapt: it was the tone with which he read—
 Perhaps some modern touches here and there
 Redeem'd it from the charge of nothingness—
 Or else we loved the man, and prized his work;
 60 I know not: but we sitting, as I said,

The cock crew loud; as at that time of year
The lusty bird takes every hour for dawn:
Then Francis, muttering, like a man ill-used,
'There now—that's nothing!' drew a little back,
65 And drove his heel into the smoulder'd log,
That sent a blast of sparkles up the flue:
And so to bed; where yet in sleep I seem'd
To sail with Arthur under looming shores,
Point after point; till on to dawn, when dreams
70 Begin to feel the truth and stir of day,
To me, methought, who waited with a crowd,
There came a bark that, blowing forward, bore
King Arthur, like a modern gentleman
Of stateliest port; and all the people cried,
75 'Arthur is come again: he cannot die.'
Then those that stood upon the hills behind
Repeated—'Come again, and thrice as fair;'
And, further inland, voices echo'd—'Come
With all good things, and war shall be no more.'
80 At this a hundred bells began to peal,
That with the sound I woke, and heard indeed
The clear church-bells ring in the Christmas-morn.

YOU ASK ME WHY

You ask me, why, tho' ill at ease,
Within this region I subsist,
Whose spirits falter in the mist,
And languish for the purple seas.
5 It is the land that freemen till,
That sober-suited Freedom chose,
The land, where girt with friends or foes
A man may speak the thing he will;

A land of settled government,
 10 A land of just and old renown,
 Where Freedom slowly broadens down
 From precedent to precedent:

Where faction seldom gathers head,
 But by degrees to fulness wrought,
 15 The strength of some diffusive thought
 Hath time and space to work and spread.

Should banded unions persecute
 Opinion, and induce a time
 When single thought is civil crime,
 20 And individual freedom mute;

Tho' Power should make from land to land
 The name of Britain trebly great—
 Tho' every channel of the State
 Should fill and choke with golden sand—

25 Yet waft me from the harbour-mouth,
 Wild wind! I seek a warmer sky,
 And I will see before I die
 The palms and temples of the South.

OF OLD SAT FREEDOM

Of old sat Freedom on the heights,
 The thunders breaking at her feet:
 Above her shook the starry lights:
 She heard the torrents meet.

5 There in her place she did rejoice,
 Self-gather'd in her prophet-mind,

But fragments of her mighty voice
Came rolling on the wind.

Then stept she down thro' town and field
10 To mingle with the human race,
And part by part to men reveal'd
The fulness of her face—

Grave mother of majestic works,
From her isle-altar gazing down,
15 Who, God-like, grasps the triple forks,
And, King-like, wears the crown:

Her open eyes desire the truth.
The wisdom of a thousand years
Is in them. May perpetual youth
20 Keep dry their light from tears;

That her fair form may stand and shine,
Make bright our days and light our dreams,
Turning to scorn with lips divine
The falsehood of extremes !

LOVE THOU THY LAND

Love thou thy land, with love far-brought
From out the storied Past, and used
Within the Present, but transfused
Thro' future time by power of thought.

3 True love turn'd round on fixed poles,
Love, that endures not sordid ends,
For English natures, freemen, friends,
Thy brothers and immortal souls.

But pamper not a hasty time,
10 Nor feed with crude imaginings
The herd, wild hearts and feeble wings
That every sophister can lime.

Deliver not the tasks of might
To weakness, neither hide the ray
15 From those, not blind, who wait for day,
Tho' sitting girt with doubtful light.

Make knowledge circle with the winds;
But let her herald, Reverence, fly
Before her to whatever sky
20 Bear seed of men and growth of minds.

Watch what main-currents draw the years:
Cut Prejudice against the grain:
But gentle words are always gain:
Regard the weakness of thy peers:

25 Nor toil for title, place, or touch
Of pension, neither count on praise:
It grows to guerdon after-days:
Nor deal in watch-words overmuch:

Not clinging to some ancient saw;
30 Not master'd by some modern term;
Not swift nor slow to change, but firm:
And in its season bring the law;

That from Discussion's lip may fall
With Life, that, working strongly, binds—
35 Set in all lights by many minds,
To close the interests of all.

For Nature also, cold and warm,
And moist and dry, devising long,

Thro' many agents making strong,
 40 Matures the individual form.

Meet is it changes should control
 Our being, lest we rust in ease.
 We all are changed by still degrees,
 All but the basis of the soul.

45 So let the change which comes be free
 To ingroove itself with that which flies,
 And work, a joint of state, that plies
 Its office, moved with sympathy.

A saying, hard to shape in act;
 50 For all the past of Time reveals
 A bridal dawn of thunder-peals,
 Wherever Thought hath wedded Fact.

Ev'n now we hear with inward strife
 A motion toiling in the gloom—
 55 The Spirit of the years to come
 Yearning to mix himself with Life.

A slow-develop'd strength awaits
 Completion in a painful school;
 Phantoms of other forms of rule,
 60 New Majesties of mighty States—

The warders of the growing hour,
 But vague in vapour, hard to mark;
 And round them sea and air are dark
 With great contrivances of Power.

65 Of many changes, aptly join'd,
 Is bodied forth the second whole.
 Regard gradation, lest the soul
 Of Discord race the rising wind;

A wind to puff your idol-fires,
70 And heap their ashes on the head;
To shame the boast so often made,
That we are wiser than our sires.

Oh yet, if Nature's evil star
Drive men in manhood, as in youth,
75 To follow flying steps of Truth
Across the brazen bridge of war—

If New and Old, disastrous feud,
Must ever shock, like armed foes,
And this be true, till Time shall close,
80 That Principles are rain'd in blood;

Not yet the wise of heart would cease
To hold his hope thro' shame and guilt,
But with his hand against the hilt,
Would pace the troubled land, like Peace;

85 Not less, tho' dogs of Faction bay,
Would serve his kind in deed and word,
Certain, if knowledge bring the sword,
That knowledge takes the sword away—

Would love the gleams of good that broke
90 From either side, nor veil his eyes:
And if some dreadful need should rise
Would strike, and firmly, and one stroke:

To-morrow yet would reap to-day,
As we bear blossom of the dead;
95 Earn well the thrifty months, nor wed
Raw Haste, half-sister to Delay.

ST. AGNES' EVE

Deep on the convent-roof the snows
Are sparkling to the moon :
My breath to heaven like vapour goes:
May my soul follow soon !
5 The shadows of the convent-towers
Slant down the snowy sward,
Still creeping with the creeping hours
That lead me to my Lord:
Make Thou my spirit pure and clear
10 As are the frosty skies,
Or this first snowdrop of the year
That in my bosom lies.

As these white robes are soil'd and dark,
To yonder shining ground;
15 As this pale taper's earthly spark,
To yonder argent round;
So shows my soul before the Lamb,
My spirit before Thee;
So in mine earthly house I am,
20 To that I hope to be.
Break up the heavens, O Lord ! and far,
Thro' all yon starlight keen,
Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,
In raiment white and clean.

25 He lifts me to the golden doors;
The flashes come and go;
All heaven bursts her starry floors,
And strows her lights below,

And deepens on and up ! the gates
 30 Roll back, and far within
 For me the Heavenly Bridegroom waits,
 To make me pure of sin.
 The sabbaths of Eternity,
 One sabbath deep and wide—
 35 A light upon the shining sea—
 The Bridegroom with his bride !

SIR GALAHAD

My good blade carves the casques of men,
 My tough lance thrusteth sure,
 My strength is as the strength of ten,
 Because my heart is pure.
 5 The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,
 The hard brands shiver on the steel,
 The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,
 The horse and rider reel:
 They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
 10 And when the tide of combat stands,
 Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
 That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend
 On whom their favours fall !
 15 For them I battle till the end,
 To save from shame and thrall:
 But all my heart is drawn above,
 My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine:
 I never felt the kiss of love,
 20 Nor maiden's hand in mine.

More bounteous aspects on me beam,
Me mightier transports move and thrill;
So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
A virgin heart in work and will.

25 When down the stormy crescent goes,
A light before me swims,
Between dark stems the forest glows,
I hear a noise of hymns:
Then by some secret shrine I ride;
30 I hear a voice, but none are there;
The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
The tapers burning fair.
Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
The silver vessels sparkle clean,
35 The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
And solemn chaunts resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
I find a magic bark;
I leap on board: no helmsman steers:
40 I float till all is dark.
A gentle sound, an awful light!
Three angels bear the holy Grail:
With folded feet, in stoles of white,
On sleeping wings they sail.
45 Ah, blessed vision! blood of God!
My spirit beats her mortal bars,
As down dark tides the glory slides,
And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne
50 Thro' dreaming towns I go,
The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,
The streets are dumb with snow.

The tempest crackles on the leads,
 And, ringing, springs from brand and mail;
 55 But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
 And gilds the driving hail.
 I leave the plain, I climb the height;
 No branchy thicket shelter yields;
 But blessed forms in whistling storms
 60 Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight—to me is given
 Such hope, I know not fear;
 I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
 That often meet me here.
 65 I muse on joy that will not cease,
 Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
 Pure lilies of eternal peace,
 Whose odours haunt my dreams;
 And, stricken by an angel's hand,
 70 This mortal armour that I wear,
 This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
 Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,
 And thro' the mountain-walls
 75 A rolling organ-harmony
 Swells up, and shakes the aisles.
 Then move the trees, the towers nod,
 Wings flutter, voices hover clear:
 'O just and faithful knight of God!
 80 Ride on! the prize is near.'
 So pass I hostel, hall, and grange;
 By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
 All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
 Until I find the holy Grail.

BREAK, BREAK, BREAK

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea !
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

5 O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play !
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay !

And the stately ships go on
10 To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still !

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea !
15 But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

TEARS, IDLE TEARS

'Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
5 And thinking of the days that are no more.

'Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the underworld,

Sad as the last which reddens over one
 That sinks with all we love below the verge;
 10 So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

'Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
 The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds
 To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
 The casement slowly grows a glimmering square;
 15 So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

'Dear as remember'd kisses after death,
 And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd
 On lips that are for others; deep as love,
 Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;
 20 O Death in Life, the days that are no more.'

AS THRO' THE LAND AT EVE WE WENT

As thro' the land at eve we went,
 And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,
 We fell out, my wife and I,
 O we fell out I know not why,
 5 And kiss'd again with tears.
 And blessings on the falling out
 That all the more endears,
 When we fall out with those we love
 And kiss again with tears!
 10 For when we came where lies the child
 We lost in other years,
 There above the little grave,
 O there above the little grave,
 We kiss'd again with tears.

SWEET AND LOW

Sweet and low, sweet and low,
 Wind of the western sea,
 Low, low, breathe and blow,
 Wind of the western sea!
 5 Over the rolling waters go,
 Come from the dying moon, and blow,
 Blow him again to me;
 While my little one, while my pretty one, sleeps.

 Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
 10 Father will come to thee soon;
 Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
 Father will come to thee soon;
 Father will come to his babe in the nest,
 Silver sails all out of the west
 15 Under the silver moon:
 Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

THE SPLENDOUR FALLS ON CASTLE WALLS

The splendour falls on castle walls
 And snowy summits old in story:
 The long light shakes across the lakes,
 And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
 5 Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
 Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

 O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
 And thinner, clearer, farther going!
 O sweet and far from cliff and scar
 10 The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!

Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river:

15 Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.

Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

THY VOICE IS HEARD

Thy voice is heard thro' rolling drums,
That beat to battle where he stands;
Thy face across his fancy comes,
And gives the battle to his hands:

5 A moment, while the trumpets blow,
He sees his brood about thy knee;
The next, like fire he meets the foe,
And strikes him dead for thine and thee.

HOME THEY BROUGHT HER WARRIOR DEAD

Home they brought her warrior dead:
She nor swoon'd, nor utter'd cry:
All her maidens, watching, said,
'She must weep or she will die.'

5 Then they praised him, soft and low,
Call'd him worthy to be loved,
Truest friend and noblest foe;
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

10 Stole a maiden from her place,
Lightly to the warrior stept,

Took the face-cloth from the face;
 Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
 Set his child upon her knee—

15 Like summer tempest came her tears—
 'Sweet my child, I live for thee.'

ASK ME NO MORE

Ask me no more: the moon may draw the sea;
 The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the
 shape

With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape;
 But O too fond, when have I answer'd thee?

5 Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: what answer should I give?

I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:

Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die!

Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live;

10 Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are seal'd:

I strove against the stream and all in vain:

Let the great river take me to the main:

No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;

15 Ask me no more.

THE BROOK

Here, by this brook, we parted; I to the East
 And he for Italy—too late—too late:
 One whom the strong sons of the world despise;
 For lucky rhymes to him were scrip and share,

5 And mellow metres more than cent for cent;
Nor could he understand how money breeds,
Thought it a dead thing; yet himself could make
The thing that is not as the thing that is.
O had he lived! In our schoolbooks we say,
10 Of those that held their heads above the crowd,
They flourish'd then or then; but life in him
Could scarce be said to flourish, only touch'd
On such a time as goes before the leaf,
When all the wood stands in a mist of green,
15 And nothing perfect: yet the brook he loved,
For which, in branding summers of Bengal,
Or ev'n the sweet half-English Neilgherry air
I panted, seems, as I re-listen to it,
Prattling the primrose fancies of the boy,
20 To me that loved him; for 'O brook,' he says,
'O babbling brook,' says Edmund in his rhyme,
'Whence come you?' and the brook, why not?
replies:

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally,
25 And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
30 And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

35 'Poor lad, he died at Florence, quite worn out,
Travelling to Naples. There is Darnley bridge,
It has more ivy; there the river; and there
Stands Philip's farm where brook and river meet.

I chatter over stony ways,
40 In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret
By many a field and fallow,
45 And many a fairy foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
50 But I go on for ever.

'But Philip chatter'd more than brook or bird;
Old Philip; all about the fields you caught
His weary daylong chirping, like the dry
High-elbow'd grigs that leap in summer grass.

55 I wind about, and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling,
And here and there a foamy flake
60 Upon me, as I travel
With many a silvery waterbreak
Above the golden gravel,
And draw them all along, and flow
To join the brimming river,

65 For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

'O darling Katie Willows, his one child!
A maiden of our century, yet most meek;
A daughter of our meadows, yet not coarse;
70 Straight, but as lissome as a hazel wand;
Her eyes a bashful azure, and her hair
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the shell
Divides threefold to show the fruit within.

'Sweet Katie, once I did her a good turn,
75 Her and her far-off cousin and betrothed,
James Willows, of one name and heart with her.
For here I came, twenty years back—the week
Before I parted with poor Edmund; crost
By that old bridge which, half in ruins then,
80 Still makes a hoary eyebrow for the gleam
Beyond it, where the waters marry—crost,
Whistling a random bar of Bonny Doon,
And push'd at Philip's garden-gate. The gate,
Half-parted from a weak and scolding hinge,
85 Stuck; and he clamour'd from a casement, "Run"
To Katie somewhere in the walks be'ow,
"Run, Katie!" Katie never ran: she moved
To meet me, winding under woodbine bowers,
A little flutter'd, with her eyelids down,
90 Fresh apple-blossom, blushing for a boon.

'What was it? less of sentiment than sense
Had Katie; not illiterate; nor of those
Who dabbling in the fount of fictive tears,
And nursed by mealy-mouth'd philanthropies,
95 Divorce the Feeling from her mate the Deed.

' She told me. She and James had quarrell'd.
Why?

What cause of quarrel? None, she said, no cause;
James had no cause: but when I prest the cause,
I learnt that James had flickering jealousies
100 Which anger'd her. Who anger'd James? I said.
But Katie snatch'd her eyes at once from mine,
And sketching with her slender pointed foot
Some figure like a wizard pentagram
On garden gravel, let my query pass
105 Unclaim'd, in flushing silence, till I ask'd
If James were coming. "Coming every day,"
She answer'd, "ever longing to explain,
But evermore her father came across
With some long-winded tale, and broke him short;
110 And James departed vext with him and her."
How could I help her? "Would I—was it
wrong?"

(Claspt hands and that petitionary grace
Of sweet seventeen subdued me ere she spoke)
"O would I take her father for one hour,
115 For one half-hour, and let him talk to me!"
And even while she spoke, I saw where James
Made toward us, like a wader in the surf,
Beyond the brook, waist-deep in meadow-sweet.

'O Katie, what I suffer'd for your sake!
120 For in I went, and call'd old Philip out
To show the farm: full willingly he rose:
He led me thro' the short sweet-smelling lanes
Of his wheat-suburb, babbling as he went.
He praised his land, his horses, his machines;
125 He praised his ploughs, his cows, his hogs, his
dogs;

He praised his hens, his geese, his guinea hens;
 His pigeons, who in session on their roofs
 Approved him, bowing at their own deserts:
 Then from the plaintive mother's teat he took
 130 Her blind and shuddering puppies, naming each,
 And naming those, his friends, for whom they were:
 Then crost the common into Darnley chase
 To show Sir Arthur's deer. In copse and fern
 Twinkled the innumerable ear and tail.
 135 Then, seated on a serpent-rooted beech,
 He pointed out a pasturing colt, and said:
 "That was the four-year-old I sold the Squire.
 And there he told a long long-winded tale
 Of how the Squire had seen the colt at gress
 140 And how it was the thing his daughter wished,
 And how he sent the bailiff to the farm
 To learn the price, and what the price he asked,
 And how the bailiff swore that he was mad
 But he stood firm; and so the matter hung;
 145 He gave them line: and five days after that
 He met the bailiff at the Golden Fleece,
 Who then and there had offer'd something more
 But he stood firm; and so the matter hung;
 He knew the man; the colt would fetch its price;
 150 He gave them line: and how by chance at last
 (It might be May or April, he forgot
 The last of April or the first of May)
 He found the bailiff riding to the farm
 And, talking from the point, he drew him in,
 155 And there he mellow'd all his heart with ale,
 Until they closed a bargain, hand in hand.

'Then, while I breathed in sight of haven, he,
 Poor fellow, could he help it? recommenced,

And ran thro' all the coltish chronicle,
 170 Wild Will, Blac' Bess, Tantivy, Tallyho,
 Reform, White Rose, Bellerophon, the Jilt,
 Arbaces, and Phenomenon, and the rest,
 Till, not to die a listener, I arose,
 And with me Philip, talking still; and so
 175 We turn'd our foreheads from the falling sun,
 And following our own shadows thrice as long
 As when they follow'd us from Philip's door,
 Arriv'd, and found the sun of sweet content
 arisen in Katie's eyes, and all things well.

I glide by lawns and grassy plots,
 I glide by hazel covers;
 I move the sweet forget-me-nots
 That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
 175 Among my shimmering swallows;
 I make the naked sunbeam dance
 Against my rippling shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars
 In brambly wildernesses;
 180 I linger by my snuggly bars;
 I loiter round my cresses;

And out again I curve and flow
 To join the brimming river,
 For men may come and men may go,
 185 But I go on for ever.

Yes, men may come and go; and these are gone,
 All gone. My dearest brother, Edmund, sleeps,
 Not by the well-known stream and rustic spire,
 But unfamiliar Arno, and the dome

190 Of Brunelleschi; sleeps in peace: and he,
 Poor Philip, of all his lavish waste of words
 Remains the lean P. W. on his tomb:
 I scraped the lichen from it: Katie walks
 By the long wash of Australasian seas
 195 Far off, and holds her head to other stars,
 And breathes in April autumns. All are gone.'

So Lawrence Aylmer, seated on a stile
 In the long hedge, and rolling in his mind
 Old waifs of rhyme, and bowing o'er the brook
 200 A tonsured head in middle age forlorn,
 Mused and was mute. On a sudden a low breath
 Of tender air made tremble in the hedge
 The fragile bindweed-bells and briony rings;
 And he look'd up. There stood a maiden near,
 205 Waiting to pass. In much amaze he stared
 On eyes a bashful azure, and on hair
 In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the shell
 Divides threefold to show the fruit within:
 Then, wondering, ask'd her 'Are you from the
 farm?'

210 'Yes' answer'd she. 'Pray stay a little: pardon
 me;
 What do they call you?' 'Katie.' 'That were
 strange.
 What surname?' 'Willows.' 'No!' 'That is
 my name.'

'Indeed!' and here he look'd so self-perplext,
 That Katie laugh'd, and laughing blush'd, till he
 215 Laugh'd also, but as one before he wakes,
 Who feels a glimmering strangeness in his dream.
 Then looking at her; 'Too happy, fresh and fair,
 Too fresh and fair in our sad world's best bloom,

To be the ghost of one who bore your name
 120 About these meadows, twenty years ago.'

'Have you not heard?' said Katie, 'we came
 back.

We bought the farm we tenanted before.
 Am I so like her? so they said on board.
 Sir, if you knew her in her English days,
 125 My mother, as it seems you did, the days
 That most she loves to talk of, come with me.
 My brother James is in the harvest-field:
 But she—you will be welcome—O, come in !'

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF
 WELLINGTON

I

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
 5 Mourning when their leaders fall,
 Warriors carry the warrior's pall,
 And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

II

Where shall we lay the man whom we deplore?
 Here, in streaming London's central roar.
 10 Let the sound of those he wrought for,
 And the feet of those he fought for,
 Echo round his bones for evermore.

III

Lead out the pageant : sad and slow,
As fits an universal woe,
15 Let the long long procession go,
And let the sorrowing crowd about it grow,
And let the mournful martial music blow;
The last great Englishman is low.

IV

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,
20 Remembering all his greatness in the Past.
No more in soldier fashion will he greet
With lifted hand the gazer in the street.
O friends, our chief state-oracle is mute:
Mourn for the man of long-enduring blood,
25 The statesman-warrior, moderate, resolute,
Whole in himself, a common good.
Mourn for the man of amplest influence,
Yet clearest of ambitious crime,
Our greatest, yet with least pretence,
30 Great in council and great in war,
Foremost captain of his time,
Rich in saving common-sense,
And, as the greatest only are,
In his simplicity sublime.
35 O good gray head which all men knew,
O voice from which their omens all men drew,
O iron nerve to true occasion true,
O fall'n at length that tower of strength
Which stood four-square to all the winds that blew!
10 Such was he whom we deplore.
The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.
The great World-victor's victor will be seen no
more.

V

All is over and done:
 Render thanks to the Giver,
 45 England, for thy son.
 Let the bell be toll'd.
 Render thanks to the Giver,
 And render him to the mould.
 Under the cross of gold
 50 That shines over city and river,
 There he shall rest for ever
 Among the wise and the bold.
 Let the bell be toll'd:
 And a reverent people behold
 55 The towering car, the sable steeds:
 Bright let it be with its blazon'd deeds,
 Dark in its funeral fold.
 Let the bell be toll'd:
 And a deeper knell in the heart be knoll'd;
 60 And the sound of the sorrowing anthem roll'd
 Thro' the dome of the golden cross;
 And the volleying cannon thunder his loss;
 He knew their voices of old.
 For many a time in many a clime
 65 His captain's-ear has heard them boom
 Bellowing victory, bellowing doom;
 When he with those deep voices wrought,
 Guarding realms and kings from shame;
 With those deep voices our dead captain taught
 70 The tyrant, and asserts his claim
 In that dread sound to the great name,
 Which he has worn so pure of blame,
 In praise and in dispraise the same,
 A man of well-attemper'd frame.

75 O civic muse, to such a name,
To such a name for ages long,
To such a name,
Preserve a broad approach of fame,
And ever-echoing avenues of song.

VI

80 Who is he that cometh, like an honour'd guest,
With banner and with music, with soldier and with
priest,
With a nation weeping, and breaking on my rest?
Mighty Seaman, this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea.
85 Thine island loves thee well, thou famous man,
The greatest sailor since our world began.
Now, to the roll of muffled drums,
To thee the greatest soldier comes;
For this is he
90 Was great by land as thou by sea;
His foes were thine; he kept us free;
O give him welcome, this is he
Worthy of our gorgeous rites,
And worthy to be laid by thee;
95 For this is England's greatest son,
He that gain'd a hundred fights,
Nor ever lost an English gun;
This is he that far away
Against the myriads of Assaye
100 Clash'd with his fiery few and won;
And underneath another sun,
Warring on a later day,
Round affrighted Lisbon drew

The treble works, the vast designs
 105 Of his labour'd rampart-lines,
 Where he greatly stood at bay,
 Whence he issued forth anew,
 And ever great and greater grew,
 Beating from the wasted vines
 110 Back to France her banded swarms,
 Back to France with countless blows,
 Till o'er the hills her eagles flew
 Beyond the Pyrenean pines,
 Follow'd up in valley and glen
 115 With blare of bugle, clamour of men,
 Roll of cannon and clash of arms,
 And England pouring on her foes.
 Such a war had such a close.
 Again their ravening eagle rose
 120 In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadowing wings,
 And barking for the thrones of kings;
 Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown
 On that loud sabbath shook the spoiler down;
 A day of onsets of despair!
 125 Dash'd on every rocky square
 Their surging charges foam'd themselves away;
 Last, the Prussian trumpet blew;
 Thro' the long-tormented air
 Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray.
 130 And down we swept and charged and overthrew.
 So great a soldier taught us there,
 What long-enduring hearts could do
 In that world-earthquake, Waterloo!
 Mighty Seaman, tender and true,
 135 And pure as he from taint of craven guile,
 O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,
 O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,

If aught of things that here befall
 Touch a spirit among things divine,
 140 If love of country move thee there at all,
 Be glad, because his bones are laid by thine !
 And thro' the centuries let a people's voice
 In full acclaim,
 A people's voice,
 145 The proof and echo of all human fame,
 A people's voice, when they rejoice
 At civic revel and pomp and game,
 Attest their great commander's claim
 With honour, honour, honour, honour to him,
 150 Eternal honour to his name.

VII

A people's voice ! we are a people yet.
 Tho' all men else their nobler dreams forget,
 Confused by brainless mobs and lawless Powers;
 Thank Him who isled us here, and roughly set
 155 His Briton in blown seas and storming showers,
 We have a voice, with which to pay the debt
 Of boundless love and reverence and regret
 To those great men who fought, and kept it ours.
 And keep it ours, O God, from brute control;
 160 O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye, the soul
 Of Europe, keep our noble England whole,
 And save the one true seed of freedom sown
 Betwixt a people and their ancient throne,
 That sober freedom out of which there springs
 165 Our loyal passion for our temperate kings;
 For, saving that, ye help to save mankind
 Till public wrong be crumbled into dust,

And drill the raw world for the march of mind,
 Till crowds at length be sane and crowns be just.
 170 But wink no more in slothful overtrust.
 Remember him who led your hosts;
 He bad you guard the sacred *shrines*.
 Your cannons moulder on the *ward* wall;
 His voice is silent in your council-hall
 175 For ever; and whatever tempests lour
 For ever silent; even if they broke
 In thunder, silent; yet remember all
 He spoke among you, and the Man who spoke;
 Who never sold the truth to serve the hour,
 180 Nor palter'd with Eternal God for power;
 Who let the turbid streams of rumour flow
 Thro' either babbling world of high and low;
 Whose life was work, whose language rife
 With rugged maxims hewn from life;
 185 Who never spoke against a foe;
 Whose eighty winters freeze with one rebuke
 All great self-seekers trampling on the right:
 Truth-teller was our England's Alfred named;
 Truth-lover was our English Duke;
 190 Whatever record leap to light
 He never shall be shamed.

VIII

Lo, the leader in these glorious wars
 Now to glorious burial slowly borne,
 Follow'd by the brave of other lands,
 195 He, on whom from both her open hands
 Lavish Honour shower'd all her stars,
 And affluent Fortune emptied all her horn.

Yea, let all good things await
Him who cares not to be great,
200 But as he saves or serves the state.
Not once or twice in our rough island-story,
The path of duty was the way to glory:
He that walks it, only thirsting
For the right, and learns to deaden
205 Love of self, before his journey closes,
He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting
Into glossy purples, which outreden
All voluptuous garden-roses.
Not once or twice in our fair island-story,
210 The path of duty was the way to glory:
He, that ever following her commands,
On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
Thro' the long gorge to the far light has won
His path upward, and prevail'd,
215 Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled
Are close upon the shining table-lands
To which our God Himself is moon and sun.
Such was he: his work is done.
But while the races of mankind endure,
220 Let his great example stand
Colossal, seen of every land,
And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure:
Till in all lands and thro' all human story
The path of duty be the way to glory:
225 And let the land whose hearths he saved from shame
For many and many an age proclaim
At civic revel and pomp and game,
And when the long-illuminated cities flame,
Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,
230 With honour, honour, honour, honour to him,
Eternal honour to his name.

IX

Peace, his triumph will be sung
 By some yet unmoulded tongue
 Far on in summers that we shall not see:
 235 Peace, it is a day of pain
 For one about whose patriarchal knee
 Late the little children clung:
 O peace, it is a day of pain
 For one, upon whose hand and heart and brain
 240 Once the weight and fate of Europe hung.
 Ours the pain, be his the gain!
 More than is of man's degree
 Must be with us, watching here
 At this, our great solemnity.
 245 Whom we see not we revere;
 We revere, and we refrain
 From talk of battles loud and vain,
 And brawling memories all too free
 For such a wise humility
 250 As befits a solemn fane:
 We revere, and while we hear
 The tides of Music's golden sea
 Setting toward eternity,
 Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,
 255 Until we doubt not that for one so true
 There must be other nobler work to do
 Than when he fought at Waterloo,
 And Victor he must ever be.
 For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill
 260 And break the shore, and evermore
 Make and break, and work their will;
 Tho' world on world in myriad myriads roll
 Round us, each with different powers,

And other forms of life than ours,
 265 What know we greater than the soul?
 On God and Godlike men we build our trust.
 Hush, the Dead March wails in the people's ears:
 The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs and tears:
 The black earth yawns: the mortal disappears;
 270 Ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
 He is gone who seem'd so great.—
 Gone; but nothing can bereave him
 Of the force he made his own
 Being here, and we believe him
 275 Something far advanced in State,
 And that he wears a truer crown
 Than any wreath that man can weave him.
 Speak no more of his renown,
 Lay your earthly fancies down,
 280 And in the vast cathedral leave him,
 God accept him, Christ receive him.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

I

Half a league, half a league,
 Half a league onward,
 All in the valley of Death
 Rode the six hundred.
 5 'Forward, the Light Brigade!
 Charge for the guns!' he said:
 Into the valley of Death
 Rode the six hundred.

II

'Forward, the Light Brigade !'
10 Was there a man dismay'd ?
Not tho' the soldier knew
Some one had blunder'd:
Their's not to make reply,
Their's not to reason why,
15 Their's but to do and die:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

III

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
20 Cannon in front of them
Volley'd and thunder'd;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
25 Into the mouth of Hell
Rode the six hundred.

IV

Flash'd all their sabres bare,
Flash'd as they turn'd in air
Sabring the gunners there,
30 Charging an army, while
All the world wonder'd:
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right thro' the line they broke;
Cossack and Russian

35 Reel'd from the sabre-stroke
Shatter'd and sunder'd.
Then they rode back, but not,
Not the six hundred.

V

Cannon to right of them,
40 Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volley'd and thunder'd;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
45 They that had fought so well
Came thro' the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of Hell.
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

VI

50 When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made!
All the world wonder'd.
Honour the charge they made!
Honour the Light Brigade,
55 Noble six hundred!

NOTES

ON THE SELECT POEMS OF TENNYSON

NOTES

THE LADY OF SHALOTT

First published in 1832-3. Much altered and improved in 1842. As Tennyson's friend Spedding said, in his review of the poems of 1842: "The poems originally published in 1832 are many of them largely altered; generally with great judgment, and always with a view to strip off redundancies, to substitute thought for imagery, and substance for shadow. *The Lady of Shalott*, for instance, is stripped of all her finery; her pearl garland, her velvet bed, her royal apparel, and her 'blinding diamonds bright,' are all gone; and certainly in her simple white robe which she now wears, her beauty shows to much greater advantage."

SIGNIFICANCE OF NAME.—'Shalott' is derived from the French 'Escalot,' which is a form of the word 'Astolat.' Consequently, the Lady of Shalott is to be identified with Elaine "The lily maid of Astolat," whose story Tennyson told twenty-seven years later in *Lancelot and Elaine*. The poem is therefore one of Tennyson's earliest incursions into the field of Celtic romance.

MEANING OF THE POEM.—Lord Tennyson writes in the *Memoir* as follows: "The key to this tale of magic symbolism is of deep human significance, and is to be found in the lines:

Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed;
'I am half sick of shadows' said
The Lady of Shalott.

Canon Ainger in his *Tennyson for the Young*, quotes the following interpretation given him by my father:—"The new-born love for something, for some one in the wide world from whom she has been so long secluded, takes her out of the region of shadows into that of realities."

The poem is a sparkling piece of descriptive imagination with a shadowy background of human interest. Its charm lies in the combination of picturesque precision (*e.g.*, the fine detail in the picture of Lancelot) with an element of mystery that is especially appropriate in a Celtic story. The contrast too of the cheerful

life upon the river, and by the river-side, with the gloom of 'he "four gray walls, and four gray towers," heightens the effectiveness of the poem. The influence of Keats is noticeable in *The Lady of Shalott*, and through Tennyson this influence is transmitted to the Pre-Raphaelite poets, Rossetti, Morris and Swinburne.

5. **Camelot.** Arthur's capital.

11. **dusk**=to make dark (rare).

38. This line possibly symbolises the idealism of her life. She knows nothing of the world's harsh realities.

56. **ambling pad.** Slow-going horse. *Pad* is abbreviated from "pad-horse" = road-horse; "pad" being a variant of "path."

64. **still**=continually.

64-72. The sight of death cannot move her from her happy trance, but the sight of love stirs a strange yearning within her, and inspires discontent with her lot.

77. **Sir Lancelot.** The most famous of the knights of the Round Table, and King Arthur's favourite knight. To his faithlessness Arthur attributed the ruin of his Order.

78-79. The perpetuated attitude of this painted image suggests Keats's *Ode to a Grecian Urn*, St. II.

red-cross knight. The red-cross was the emblem of the Knights Templars.

The lady in the shield who receives the homage of the knight typifies the supremacy of woman in the days of chivalry.

84. **Galaxy.** The Milky Way. Tennyson more frequently than any other poet, makes poetic reference to the stars.

87. **baldric.** A belt, generally slung diagonally across the shoulders.

90. **bearded meteor.** Our word *comet* means 'having (long) hair.'

111. **three paces.** Spells were woven by paces; hence the words are subtly suggestive of mystery. Three and seven are mystic numbers.

Class Work on the Poem

1. Comment upon the poetic qualities of the poem as a whole, pointing out especially the elements of contrast it contains. (Note Part IV.)

2. By reference to the text illustrate :—
 - (a) Tennyson's precision. Note especially the descriptive adjectives throughout the poem.
 - (b) His use of colour.
 - (c) His use of mystery.
3. What human significance attaches to the poem? Make careful reference to the final stanza.
4. Describe accurately the stanzaic form, and indicate any peculiarities in the versification of the poem.
5. Bring out the force of the verbs in ll. 10-11.
6. Point out the force of the word 'unhail'd' (l. 21), and the meaning of the following words :—*wold* (l. 3), *shallop* (l. 22), *greaves* (l. 76).
7. Why should the Lady *delight* to weave into her gaily-coloured web the image of the funerals which her magic mirror reflects?
8. Lines 118-22 must be discussed in the answer to question 1. Why?
9. What is the significance of the mirror and the magic web? or are they a mere device of poetic fancy? Why are mirrors used by weavers?

Certain passages in the poem afford interesting themes for discussion. The body floating down the stream upon a boat suggests the old sea-burials such as are so poetically described in the Old English poem *Beowulf*. The points of resemblance between *The Lady of Shalott* and *Lancelot and Elaine* can also be developed. In this connection note the weaving of the web, the advent of Lancelot, the love of the maiden, and the manner of her journey to the court.

CENONE

First published in 1832-3. It received its present improved form in the edition of 1842. The story of Paris and Cenone may be read in Lemprière, or in any good classical dictionary. Briefly it is as follows :—Paris was the son of Priam, King of Troy, and Hecuba. It was foretold that he would bring great ruin on Troy, so his father ordered him to be slain at birth. The slave, however, did not destroy him, but exposed him upon Mount Ida,

where shepherds found him and brought him up as one of themselves. "He gained the esteem of all the shepherds, and his graceful countenance and manly development recommended him to the favour of CEnone, a nymph of Ida, whom he married, and with whom he lived in the most perfect tenderness. Their conjugal bliss was soon disturbed. At the marriage of Peleus and Thetis, Eris, the goddess of discord, who had not been invited to partake of the entertainment, showed her displeasure by throwing into the assembly of gods, who were at the celebration of the nuptials, a golden apple on which were written the words *Detur pulchriori*. All the goddesses claimed it as their own: the contention at first became general, but at last only three, Juno (Herè), Venus (Aphrodite), and Minerva (Pallas), wished to dispute their respective right to beauty. The gods, unwilling to become arbiters in an affair of so tender and delicate a nature, appointed Paris to adjudge the prize of beauty to the fairest of the goddesses, and indeed the shepherd seemed properly qualified to decide so great a contest, as his wisdom was so well established, and his prudence and sagacity so well known. The goddesses appeared before their judge without any covering or ornament, and each tried by promises and entreaties to gain the attention of Paris, and to influence his judgment. Juno promised him a kingdom; Minerva, military glory; and Venus, the fairest woman in the world for his wife." (Lemprière.) Paris accorded the apple to Aphrodite, abandoned CEnone, and after he had been acknowledged the son of Priam went to Sparta, where he persuaded Helen, the wife of Menelaus, to flee with him to Troy. The ten years' siege, and the destruction of Troy, resulted from this rash act. CEnone's significant words at the close of the poem foreshadow this disaster. Tennyson, in his old age concluded the narrative in the poem called *The Death of CEnone*. According to the legend Paris, mortally wounded by one of the arrows of Philoctetes, sought out the abandoned CEnone that she might heal him of his wound. But he died before he reached her, "and the nymph, still mindful of their former loves, threw herself upon his body, and stabbed herself to the heart, after she had plentifully bathed it with her tears." Tennyson follows another tradition in which Paris reaches CEnone, who scornfully repels him. He passed onward through the mist, and dropped dead upon the mountain side. His old shepherd playmates built his funeral

pyre. Cēnone follows the yearning in her heart to where her husband lies, and dies in the flames that consume him.

In Chapter IV. of Mr. Stopford Brooke's *Tennyson*, there is a valuable commentary upon *Cēnone*. He deals first with the imaginative treatment of the landscape, which is characteristic of all Tennyson's classical poems, and instances the remarkable improvement effected in the descriptive passages in the volume of 1842. "But fine landscape and fine figure-drawing are not enough to make a fine poem. Human interest, human passion, must be greater than Nature, and dominate the subject. Indeed, all this lovely scenery is nothing in comparison with the sorrow and love of Cēnone, recalling her lost love in the places where once she lived in joy. This is the main humanity of the poem. But there is more. Her common sorrow is lifted almost into the proportions of Greek tragedy by its cause and by its results. It is caused by a quarrel in Olympus, and the mountain nymph is sacrificed without a thought to the vanity of the careless gods. That is an ever-recurring tragedy in human history. Moreover, the personal tragedy deepens when we see the fateful dread in Cēnone's heart that she will, far away, in time hold her lover's life in her hands, and refuse to give it back to him—a fatality that Tennyson treated before he died. And, secondly, Cēnone's sorrow is lifted into dignity by the vast results which flowed from its cause. Behind it were the mighty fates of Troy, the ten years' battle, the anger of Achilles, the wanderings of Ulysses, the tragedy of Agamemnon, the founding of Rome, and the three great epics of the ancient world."

Another point of general interest is to be noted in the poem. Despite the classical theme the tone is consistently modern, as may be gathered from the philosophy of the speech of Pallas, and from the tender yielding nature of Cēnone. There is no hint here of the vindictive resentment which the old classical writers would have associated with her grief. Similarly Tennyson has systematically modernised the Arthurian legend in the *Idylls of the King*, giving us nineteenth century thoughts in a conventional mediæval setting.

A passage from Bayne, puts this question clearly: "Cēnone wails melodiously for Paris without the remotest suggestion of fierceness or revengeful wrath. She does not upbraid him for having preferred to her the fairest and most loving wife

in Greece, but wonders how any one could love him better than she does. A Greek poet would have used his whole power of expression to instil bitterness into her resentful words. The classic legend, instead of representing *Cenone* as forgiving Paris, makes her nurse her wrath throughout all the anguish and terror of the Trojan War. At its end, her Paris comes back to her. Deprived of Helen, a broken and baffled man, he returns from the ruins of his native Troy, and entreats *Cenone* to heal him of a wound, which, unless she lends her aid, must be mortal. *Cenone* gnashes her teeth at him, refuses him the remedy, and lets him die. In the end, no doubt, she falls into remorse, and kills herself—this is quite in the spirit of classic legend; implacable vengeance, soul-sickened with its own victory, dies in despair. That forgiveness of injuries could be anything but weakness—that it could be honourable, beautiful, brave—is an entirely Christian idea; and it is because this idea, although it has not yet practically conquered the world, although it has indeed but slightly modified the conduct of nations, has nevertheless secured recognition as ethically and socially right, that Tennyson could not hope to enlist the sympathy and admiration of his readers for his *Cenone*, if he had cast her image in the tearless bronze of Pagan obduracy."

1. **Ida.** A mountain range in Mysia, near Troy. The scenery is, in part, idealised, and partly inspired by the valley of Causeretz. See *Introduction*, p. xvi.

2. **Ionian.** Ionia was the district adjacent to Mysia. 'Ionian,' therefore, is equivalent to 'neighbouring.'

10. **topmost Gargarus.** A Latinism, cf. *summus mons*.

12. **Troas.** The Troad (Troas) was the district surrounding Troy.

Illon = Ilium, another name for Troy.

14. **crown** = chief ornament.

22-23. **O mother Ida—die.** Mr. Stedman, in his *Victorian Poets*, devotes a valuable chapter to the discussion of Tennyson's relation to Theocritus, both in sentiment and form. "It is in the *Cenone* that we discover Tennyson's earliest adaptation of that refrain, which was a striking beauty of the pastoral elegiac verse;

'O mother Ida, hearken ere I die,'

is the analogue of (Theocr. II).

'See thou, whence came my love, O lady Moon,' etc.

Throughout the poem the Syracusan manner and feeling are strictly and nobly maintained." Note, however, the modernisation already referred to.

Mother Ida. The Greeks constantly personified Nature, and attributed a separate individual life to rivers, mountains, etc. Wordsworth's *Excursion*, Book IV., might be read in illustration, especially from the line beginning—

"Once more to distant ages of the world."

many-fountain'd Ida. Many streams took their source in Ida. Homer applies the same epithet to this mountain.

24-32. These lines are in imitation of certain passages from Theocritus. See Stedman, *Victorian Poets*, pp. 213f. They illustrate Tennyson's skill in mosaic work.

30. **My eyes—love.** Cf. Shakespeare, 2 Henry VI. ii. 3. 17:

"Mine eyes are full of tears, my heart of grief."

36. **cold crown'd snake.** "Cold crown'd" is not a compound epithet, meaning "with a cold head." Each adjective marks a particular quality. *Crown'd* has reference to the semblance of a coronet that the hoods of certain snakes, such as cobras, possess.

37. **the daughter of a River-God.** Cenone was the daughter of the river Cebrenus in Phrygia.

39-40. **As yonder walls—breathed.** The walls of Troy were built by Poseidon (Neptune) and Apollo, whom Jupiter had condemned to serve King Laomedon of Troas for a year. The stones were charmed into their places by the breathing of Apollo's flute, as the walls of Thebes are said to have risen to the strain of Amphion's lyre. Compare *Tithonus*, 62-63:

"Like that strange song I heard Apollo sing,
When Ilion, like a mist, rose into towers."

And cf. also *The Princess*, iii. 326.

42-43. **That—woe.** Compare *In Memoriam*. V.

50. **White hooved.** Cf. "heaves" for *hoofs*, in the *Lady of Shalott*, l. 101.

51. **Simois.** One of the many streams flowing from Mount Ida.

65. **Hesperian gold.** The fruit was in colour like the golden apples in the garden of the Hesperides. The Hesperides were three (or four) nymphs, the daughters of Hesperus. They dwelt in the remotest west, near Mount Atlas in Africa, and were appointed to guard the golden apples which Herè gave to Zeus on the day of their marriage. One of Hercules' twelve labours was to procure some of these apples. See the articles *Hesperides* and *Hercules* in Lemprière.

66. **smelt ambrosially.** Ambrosia was the food of the gods. Their drink was nectar. The food was sweeter than honey, and of most fragrant odour.

72. **whatever Oread.** A classical construction. The Ore-ads were mountain nymphs.

78. **full-faced—Gods.** This means either that not a face was missing, or refers to the impressive countenances of the gods. Another possible interpretation is that all their faces were turned full towards the board on which the apple was cast. Compare for this epithet *Lotos Eaters*, 7; and *Princess*, ii. 166.

79. **Peleus.** All the gods, save Eris, were present at the marriage between Peleus and Thetis, a sea-deity. In her anger Eris threw upon the banquet-table the apple which Paris now holds in his hand. Peleus and Thetis were the parents of the famous Achilles.

81. **Iris.** The messenger of the gods. The rainbow is her symbol.

82. **Delivering** = announcing.

89-100. These lines, and the opening lines of the poem are among the best of Tennyson's blank verse lines, and therefore among the best that English poetry contains. The description owes some of its beauty to Homer. In its earlier form, in the volume of 1832-3, it is much less perfect.

132. **a crested peacock.** The peacock was sacred to Herè (Juno).

103. **a golden cloud.** The gods were wont to recline upon Olympus beneath a canopy of golden clouds.

104. **dropping fragrant dew.** Drops of glittering dew fell from the golden cloud which shrouded Herè and Zeus. See *Iliad*, XIV., 341 f.

105 f. Herè was the queen of Heaven. Power was therefore the gift which she naturally proffered.

114. Supply the ellipsis.

121-122. **Power fitted—wisdom.** Power that adapts itself to every crisis; power which is born of wisdom and enthroned by wisdom (*i.e.* does not owe its supremacy to brute strength).

121-122. **from all—allegiance.** Note the ellipsis and the inversion.

128-131. **who have attained — supremacy.** Cf. *Lotos Eaters*, l. 155 f, and *Lucretius*, 104-108.

The gods, who haunt
The lucid interspace of world and world
Where never creeps a cloud, or moves a wind,
Nor ever falls the least white star of snow,
Nor ever lowest roll of thunder moans.

137. **O'erthwarted with** = crossed by.

142 f. Compare the tone of Pallas' speech with what has been said in the *Introduction*, p. liv f., concerning Tennyson's love of moderation and restraint, and his belief in the efficacy of law.

Compare also the general temper of the *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*, and especially ll. 201-205.

144—148. Yet these qualities are not bestowed with power as the end in view. Power will come without seeking when these great principles of conduct are observed. The main thing is to live and act by the law of the higher life,—and it is the part of wisdom to follow right for its own sake, whatever the consequences may be.

151. **Sequel of guerdon.** To follow up my words with rewards (such as Herè proffers) would not make me fairer.

153-164. Pallas reads the weakness of Paris's character, but disdains to offer him a more worldly reward. An access of moral courage will be her sole gift to him, so that he shall front danger and disaster until his powers of endurance grow strong with action, and his full-grown will having passed through all experiences, and having become a pure law unto itself, shall be commensurate with perfect freedom, *i.e.*, shall not know that it is circumscribed by law.

This is the philosophy that we find in Wordsworth's *Ode to Duty*.

Stern Lawgiver! Yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace;
Nor know we anything so fair

As is the smile upon thy face :
 Flowers laugh before thee on their beds
 And fragrance in thy footing treads ;
 Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong,
 And the most ancient heavens, through thee,
 are fresh and strong.

105-107. Note how dramatic this interruption is.

170. **Idalian Aphrodite.** Idalium was a town in Cyprus, an island where the goddess was especially worshipped. She was frequently called Cypria or the Cyprian.

171. **Fresh as the foam.** Aphrodite was born from the waves of the sea, near the Island of Cyprus.

new-bathed in Paphian wells. Paphos was a town in Cyprus. Aphrodite was said to have landed at Paphos after her birth from the sea-foam. She is sometimes called the Paphian or Paphia on this account.

184. **She spoke and laugh'd.** Homer calls her "the laughter-loving Aphrodite."

195-197. **a wild—weed.** The influence of beauty upon the beasts is a common theme with poets. Cf. *Una* and the lion in Spenser's *Faery Queen*.

204. **They cut away my tallest pines.** Evidently to make ships for Paris's expedition to Greece.

235-240. **There are—die.** Lamartine in *Le Lac* (written before 1820) has a very similar passage.

242-247. **I will not—purpose.** CEnone has a premonition of her own death and that of Paris.

250. **Cassandra.** The daughter of King Priam, and therefore the sister of Paris. She had the gift of prophecy.

260. **A fire dances.** Signifying the burning of Troy.

Class Work on the Poem

1. Point out and explain the most striking metaphors in the poem.
2. Scan any five consecutive lines to illustrate how Tennyson varies the rhythm. Write a note also on his treatment of vowel and consonant sounds in these lines. Scan also ll. 21, 25, 97, 100, 177, 180.
3. Explain all the mythological references.
4. Explain 38-40, 56-57, 60-61, 178, 185, 196.

5. Explain "married brows" (l. 74).
6. Paraphrase clearly ll. 108-117.
7. Contrast in detail the description of Pallas (ll. 135-147) with that of Aphrodite (ll. 170-178) to emphasize the character of each goddess.
8. Show how ll. 142-148 are in keeping with Tennyson's philosophy. Make reference to other poems in which the same ideas are developed.

LOTOS EATERS

First published in 1832-3. Revised and wonderfully improved in the volume of 1842. The origin of this poem which Mr. Andrew Lang fittingly calls "a flawless masterpiece," is to be found in a few unadorned verses of Homer's *Odyssey* (Bk. ix). "On the tenth day we set foot on the land of the lotus-eaters, who eat a flowery food. So we stepped ashore and drew water, and straightway my company took their midday meal by the swift ships. Now, when we had tasted meat and drink, I sent forth certain of my company to go and make search what manner of men they were who here live upon the earth by bread, and I chose out two of my fellows, and sent a third with them as herald. Then straightway they went and mixed with the men of the lotus-eaters, and so it was that the lotus-eaters devised not death for our fellows, but gave them of the lotus to taste. Now, whosoever of them did eat the honey-sweet fruit of the lotus, had no more wish to bring tidings, nor to come back, but there he chose to abide with the lotus-eating men, ever feeding on the lotus, and forgetful of his homeward way. Therefore I led them back to the ships weeping, and sore against their will, and dragged them beneath the benches, and bound them to the hollow barques. But I commanded the rest of my well-loved company to make speed and go on board the swift ships, lest haply any should eat of the lotus and be forgetful of returning. Right soon they embarked and sat upon the benches, and sitting orderly, they smote the grey sea water with their oars."

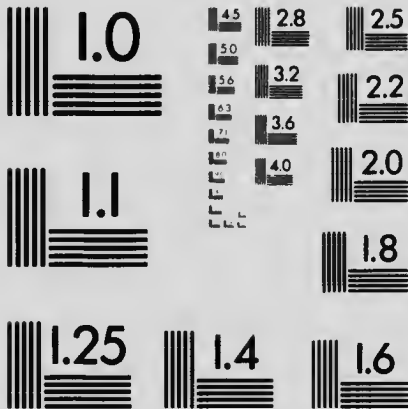
—Trans. Butcher and Lang.

Further Sources. Mr. Stedman in his chapter on Tennyson and Theocritus in *Victorian Poets* maintains, and supports his contention by ample quotations, that *The Lotos Eaters* "is charged from beginning to end with the effects and very language of the



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Greek pastoral poets [*i.e.* Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus]. As in *Ænone*, there is no consecutive imitation of any one idyl; but the work is curiously filled out with passages borrowed here and there, as the growth of the poem recalls them at random to the author's mind." Certain of these passages are quoted in their proper place below.

A further literary inspiration was afforded Tennyson in Spenser's *Faery Queen* (II. vi.), and Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*, I.

The poem *Ænone* foreshadowed the siege of Troy. The city has now fallen, and Ulysses, vindictively pursued by the anger of Poseidon, is on his adventurous homeward voyage. He has been driven by a storm across the Mediterranean to the Libyan (African) coast, and here it is that he encounters the dreamy-eyed Lotophagi, or Lotos-eaters. After he had broken free from their spell, or rather from the spell of their drowsy land, he encounters the no less potent spell of Circe, the Sirens, and Calypso, all of which adventures are set forth in the world's greatest book of adventure, *The Odyssey*.

The poem exhibits less a philosophy than a mood. Its spirit of languorous repose, the aversion to painful toil that it expresses, and its listless indifference to fate place it in forceful contrast with the pulsing vigour which throbs through the *Ulysses*, and urges the old wave-worn hero, though he has abundantly earned his brief repose,

"To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

1. **he**, namely Ulysses. See the note on Ulysses, p. 87.

3. **In the afternoon**. Mr. Stedman, *loc. cit.*, writes:

"The Argonauts (Theoc. XIII.) come in the afternoon to a land of cliffs and thickets and streams; of meadows set with sedge, whence they cut for their couches sharp flowering rush and the low galingale" (see line 23).

7. **Full-faced**. The volume of 1830 contained one poem closely related in theme to *The Lotos Eaters*, namely, *The Sea Fairies* (see *Additional Poems* p. —). *The Hesperides* of 1832-3 is somewhat similar in subject, and doubtless because of its slighter treatment was eventually abandoned. It yielded the revised *Lotos Eaters* the epithet "full-faced."

In the first edition of *The Lotos Eaters* the present line was:

Above the valley burned the golden moon.

The epithet in *The Hesperides* is not applied to the moon. The line is as follows:—

But when the full-faced sunset yellowly

11. **Slow-dropping veils**, etc. Tennyson once wrote an invaluable letter to Mr. S. E. Dawson, now of Ottawa, in which he refers to certain alleged plagiarisms in his poetry. Referring to this line he said: "When I was about twenty or twenty-one, I went on a tour to the Pyrenees. Lying among those mountains before a waterfall that comes down one thousand or twelve hundred feet, I sketched it (according to my custom then), in these words:

Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn.

When I printed this, a critic informed me that "lawn was the material used in theatres to imitate a waterfall," and graciously added: 'Mr. T. should not go to the boards of a theatre, but to nature herself, for his suggestions.' And I *had* gone to nature itself.

I think it is a moot point whether—if I had known how that effect was produced on the stage—I should have ventured to publish the line."

19. **charmed sunset** Either because the whole land was under a spell, or else to indicate that the sunset lingered because the scene was so full of beauty.

21. **yellow down**. Covered with the yellow flower of the lotos (see l. 149), or bathed in the "amber light" of the sunset (see line 102).

34. **His voice was thin**. *Thin* is an epithet applied to the voices of the dead in classical poetry.

Cf. Tennyson's *The Voyage of Maeldune*, ll. 21-22.

And we hated the beautiful Isle, for whenever we strove
to speak,

Our voices were thinner and fainter than any flitter-mouse
shriek.

It is interesting to read this whole poem, especially sections V. and VIII., in connection with *The Lotos Eaters*. Mr. Stedman has pointed out several undoubted parallels in this Choric Song with beautiful passages in Moschus and Theocritus.

42. **the wandering fields**. *Cf.* Vergil, *Æneid* VI., 724.

campi liquentes, a d 'the unvintaged sea' of Homer.

44. **Our island Iome**, *i.e.* Ithaca.

Choric Song. A song chanted in chorus.

66. **slumber's holy balm**. Shakespeare invokes sleep in *Macbeth* II., ii.

The innocent sleep ;

Sleep that knits up the ravelled sleave of care,

The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,

Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,

Chief nourisher in life's feast.

83. **Fast-rooted**, etc. Contrast l. 42.

84. **Hateful**, etc. Compare Vergil: "Tædet cœli eonvexa tueri." It wearies to behold the hollow spaces of the sky.

The dark sky (dark-blue?) that hangs over the lotus land (see l. 136) is welcome, but hateful is it for the mariners to behold that same sky stretched above an endless expanse of sea which they must painfully traverse.

86-87. **Death is—be**. "If the dead are not raised, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." 1 Cor. xv, 32.

92. **parcels** = little parts.

99-101. Compare with these lines, Thomson's verses :

A pleasing land of drowsihed it was,

Of dreams that wane before the half-shut eye.

102-103. Compare lines 19 and 20.

114 f. Section VI. was added in 1842. It is needless to say how the humanity of the poem is heightened thereby.

117. **our household hearths**. The hearth and the altar are the sacred symbols of home. This line and the two which follow have their counterpart in *In Memoriam* XC, 1-16 (see *Additional Poems*, p. —).

120. **the island princes**. During Ulysses' protracted absence from Ithaca, many suitors from the neighbouring islands sued for the hand of his wife, Penelope. The minstrel Phemius (l. 121) amused their leisure hours.

133. **moly**. A fabulous plant with magical virtues. Hermes armed Ulysses with it against the wiles of Circe.

136. This line has been referred to above. It has been suggested, though inconclusively, that a soft moonlight effect is here represented. The expression "long bright river," l. 137

might not conflict with this, but "the purple hill" of line 138 indicates the soft sunlight of the late afternoon. Compare ll. 3 and 4:

In the afternoon they came unto a land
In which it seemed always afternoon.

Notice also the references to sunset throughout the poem. This hour, when nature inclines towards sleep, is for them the most welcome portion of the day.

149 f. From here to the end the movement of the poem is trochaic.

Line 149 has seven feet, with an additional (hypermetrical) syllable. Technically we may then describe it as trochaic heptameter hypercatalectic.

Line 150 has six feet with a hypermetrical syllable, and is therefore trochaic hexameter hypercatalectic.

The lines vary between these two types. The last two lines have also each an additional syllable before the first foot.

It should be noted that Tennyson at this point made radical changes in 1842 from the original version, which had been purely pictorial, and quite devoid of the deep significance of the present passage. The philosophy which depicts the carelessness of the gods and the futile misery of mankind is that which Lucretius so forcibly presented in his *De Rerum Natura*. Bayne was probably the first to suggest the interesting parallel with the song of the Fates in Goethe's *Iphigenie auf Tauris*:

Sie aber, sie bleiben	But they, they remain
In ewigen Festen	Eternally feasting
An goldenen Tischen.	At golden tables.
Sie schreiten vom Berge	They stride from mountain
Zu Berge hinüber:	To mountain across ;
Aus Schlünden der Tiefe	From the abyss of the deeps
Dämpft ihnen der Athem	To them rises the breath
Erstickter Titanen,	Of stifled Titans,
Gleich Opfergerüchen,	Like odours of sacrifice
Ein leichtes Gewölke.	A light vapour.

158. **golden houses.** Compare the notes on *Ænone* for the epithet "golden" as applied to the gods. Zeus was supposed to dwell upon the top of Mount Olympus.

162. **a music centred in a doleful song.** Compare Wordsworth:

The still sad music of humanity

—*Tintern Abbey*.

164. **Like a tale of little meaning.** Compare Shakespeare:
a tale

Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,

Signifying nothing.

—*Macbeth*, V. 5, 26-28.

167. **little dues** = small returns.

Class Work on the Poem

NOTE. This poem should be read in conjunction with *Ulysses*.

1. State as briefly as possible: (a) The story related in the poem. (b) The significance of the poem.

2. Is the subject in any way modernised in Tennyson's treatment?

3. How does the treatment of Nature compare with that in *Ænone?* in *The Lady of Shalott*? Is the landscape invented, or realistically described?

4. Show the poetic qualities of your favourite passage in the poem. In this answer discuss the imagery—its appropriateness, beauty, etc.; the choice of words, especially the descriptive epithets; and the emotional and intellectual appeal which the passage conveys.

5. Point out the significance of the following words: *Courage* (l. 1); *aged* (l. 16); *alien* (l. 33); *gleaming* (l. 49); *woo'd* (l. 71); *dreadful* (l. 92); *whisper'd* (l. 104); *pilot-stars* (l. 132); *acanthus-wreath divine* (l. 142); *hollow* (l. 154). A hint may be given as to how this question should be answered. The word *Courage*, for example, denotes the heroic resolve of the leader of the expedition, and his manful effort to put vigour into the weary hearts of his fellow-mariners.

6. Discuss in detail the following phrases and passages: *And round—came* (ll. 25-27); *wandering—foam* (l. 42), and show its relation to Homer's phrase "the unvintaged sea"; *the long-leaved flowers weep* (l. 55); *the roof and crown of things* (l. 69); *In ever—wave* (l. 95); *roaring deeps and fiery sands* (l. 160); *Elysian valleys* (l. 169); *beds of asphodel* (l. 170).

7. Point out in detail the structure of the Spenserean stanza. (Any stanza among the first five may be examined.)

8. It has been held that the stanzas in the Choric Song were chanted alternately by half the chorus. Justify this view by showing the similarity in theme of I, III, V, VII, and the similarity of II, IV, VI, VIII.

9. How is each detail in stanza III in harmony with the mood of the Lotos Eaters?

ULYSSES

First published in 1842. Ulysses (Odysseus) was a famous hero of the Trojan war, the companion-in-arms of Achilles, Ajax and the host of Grecian warriors. Not lacking in courage, he was still more conspicuous for his craft. When the war was first projected, Achilles went disguised as a woman to the court of Lycomedes. Ulysses presently repaired thither in disguise, offering for sale ornaments of dress and military arms. By his choice of the arms, Achilles revealed his sex, and was compelled to join in the expedition. Many other details of Ulysses' cunning are narrated in the writings of the ancients. The strange perils that delayed his homeward journey were occasioned by the anger of Poseidon and Zeus.

SOURCES OF THE POEM.—Mr. Churton Collins, in speaking of the sources of this poem writes: "The germ, the spirit, and the sentiment of this poem are from the 26th canto of Dante's *Inferno*. As is usual with him in all cases where he borrows, the details and minor portions of the work are his own; he has added grace, elaboration and symmetry; he has called in the assistance of other poets (particularly of Homer and Vergil). A rough crayon draft has been metamorphosed into a perfect picture." The passage in Dante, Mr. Collins translates as follows (Ulysses is speaking): "Neither fondness for my son, nor reverence for my aged sire, nor the due love which ought to have gladdened Penelope, could conquer in me the ardour which I had to become experienced in the world, and in human vice and worth. I put out into the deep open sea with but one ship, and with that small company which had not deserted me. . . . I and my companions were old and tardy when we came to that narrow pass where

Hercules assigned his landmarks (*i.e.* the Strait of Gibraltar). 'O brothers,' I said, 'who through a hundred thousand dangers have reached the West, deny not this to the brief vigil of your senses that remain—experience of the unpeopled world beyond the sun. Consider your origin; ye were not formed like the brutes, but to follow virtue and knowledge.' Night already saw the pole with all its stars, and ours so low that it rose not from the ocean floor."

Ulysses' ten years of adventurous wandering are the theme of Homer's *Odyssey*. Dante, with his accustomed brevity, emphasizes the hero's untempered desire for wider experience, and it is this aspect of Ulysses' character which inspires the essentially modern philosophy of Tennyson's poem.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE POEM.—Apart from its general philosophical bearing the poem has the significance of a confession, as registering the strenuous resolve of the poet to be unsubdued by the personal sorrows which had befallen him. In a conversation with Mr. James Knowles upon the subject of *In Memoriam* (see *Nineteenth Century*, Jan. 1893), Tennyson said: "There is more about myself in *Ulysses*, which was written under the sense of loss and that all had gone by, but that still life must be fought out to the end. It was more written with the sense of his (Hallam's) loss upon me than many poems of *In Memoriam*." And in the *Memoir* (Vol. I., 196) we again have the poet's statement: "*Ulysses* was written soon after Arthur Hallam's death, and gave my feeling about the need of going forward, and braving the struggle of life perhaps more simply than anything in *In Memoriam*."

OPINIONS ON THE POEM.—The poem *Ulysses* has received unstinted praise from the critics. Mr. Stedman writes: "For virile grandeur and astonishingly compact expression, there is no blank verse poem, equally restricted as to length, that approaches the *Ulysses*: conception, imagery, and thought are royally imaginative, and the assured hand is Tennyson's throughout." Mr. Stopford Brooke contrasts the methods of Keats and Tennyson in the treatment of classical themes, the latter concerning himself not only with the beauty, but also with the ethic power of these stories: "Not like Keats, that he might find in ancient times a refuge from the baseness of the present, but that he might bring thoughts out of the past to rejoice and illuminate the present.

The speech of Pallas to Paris is spoken to England; the song of the Lotos-eater is a warning to the drifters and dreamers of our world; in the thoughts of Ulysses is held the power and the glory of England. Nevertheless, though these poems have an ethical direction, it is subordinate to their first direction, which is to represent the beauty of their subjects. No one who has any sense of art will presume to accuse them of being didactic rather than artistic."

TREATMENT OF CLASSICAL THEMES.—This poem amply justifies Tennyson's method of treating classical themes. He does not attempt laboriously to reconstruct with perfect accuracy the conditions of long distant ages. He aims at something better than this vain attempt to achieve an impossible result. Realising that he is a man of the modern age, he enters naturally into the splendid poetic inheritance which is the legacy of the past. These old world themes embody noble and enduring stories, the charm of which their continuance attests. The first artistic gain is therefore to have chosen a tale which has in it a permanent appeal for all succeeding generations. Another advantage is that by virtue of Tennyson's exquisite art the lover of the classics is perpetually reminded, sometimes in subtle fashion and sometimes directly, of phrases and expressions that have haunted the minds of men for centuries, and have become, as it were, the golden coin of thought. Finally, the poet has something new, and of the coinage of his own brain to contribute to this golden store—a message to this strange yearning modern world of ours that strives perpetually towards an ever-shifting goal.

And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge like a sinking star
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

2. **among these barren crags.** Ulysses' home in Ithaca, an island near the Gulf of Corinth.

10. **the rainy Hyades.** The Hyades were the five sisters of Hyas and they died with grief when he was killed by a boar. They became stars after their death, and may now be seen near Taurus, one of the twelve signs of the Zodiac. It was supposed that the rising and the setting of these stars was always attended with rain. Vergil calls them *pluvias Hyadas*.

15. **Myself not least** = myself not being least. An absolute construction.

17. **ringing plains**, *i.e.* from the sound of clanging armour. Compare Homer's *Iliad* Bk. V. "And he fell with a crash, and his armour clanged upon him." This is a constantly recurring expression in the *Iliad*.

windy Troy. The epithet "windy," as applied to Troy, is also Homeric.

19-21. However full our life has been of action there still gleams beyond us, as through an arch, the world of possible achievement. To this goal we urge onward, but the horizon ever recedes as we move. The arch typifies, perhaps, the limitation of our knowledge.

23. **To rust—use**. Note the appropriateness of these metaphors in a soldier's speech. Compare ll. 41-42 of *Love Thou Thy Land*.

27. **something more**. Nay, it is more than a mere hour saved, it brings with it a store of new experience.

30. **And this—desire**. These words may be in objective relation to the preceding verbs. Is there another possible explanation of the construction?

31-32. **To follow—thought**. Read the passage from Dante quoted above.

33. **Telemachus**. Telemachus was the first of Ulysses' family to discover the identity of his father when, after an absence of twenty years, he returned to Ithaca in the guise of a beggar.

35. **discerning** = sufficiently discerning. These lines are not devoid of sarcasm.

41. **offices of tenderness**, *i.e.* towards his mother, Penelope.

45. **gloom**. Compare a similar use of the word "dusk" in *The Lady of Shalott*, l. 11.

My mariners. We feel how much more congenial is the bluff companionship of these trusty mariners than the staid society of son and wife. In point of fact, Ulysses had returned alone to Ithaca, for all his vessels had been lost. "Tennyson's Ulysses is, after all, an Englishman of the Nelson wars rather than a Greek, and his feeling for his old salts is a distinctively Christian sentiment. So, indeed, is his desire for effort, discovery, labour to the end. It never would have occurred to Homer that Ulysses

could want anything for the rest of his life but pork-chops and Penelope."—(Rayne).

53. strove with Gods. Ulysses encountered the wrath of Neptune, because he had slain Polyphemus, the son of the sea-god. Jupiter was also angry at him, because his sailors had killed the herds of Helios.

55. Note the slow metrical movement of this line, another example of Tennyson's power to harmonize sound and sense. The whole passage is as exquisite as it is expressive.

58-59. and sitting—furrows. Homer's *Odyssey* has many similar lines, e.g.—“And sitting in order they smote the hoary sea with their oars.”

59. holds = holds firm.

60-61. To sail—stars. To sail ever westward until I die. These two lines afford a happy example of Tennyson's skill in poetical periphrasis. He also embodies the ancient idea that the stars actually sank into the sea. Cf. Homer's *Iliad*, XVIII., 488-489:—“And the bear that men call also the Wain, her that turneth in her place and that watcheth Orion, and alone hath no part in the baths of Ocean.” Dante describes Ulysses as yearning for “experience of the unpeopled world beyond the sun.” Cf. *supra*.

63. the Happy Isles. These are the *Fortunatæ Insulæ* of the ancients, and are supposed to be the present Canary Islands to the west of Africa. “They were represented as the seats of the blessed, where the souls of the virtuous were placed after death. The air was wholesome and temperate, and the earth produced an immense number of various fruits without the labour of men.” (Lemprière.) They might be engulfed in the sea, and so reach the “Happy Isles.”

64. the great Achilles—the hero of the Trojan war. His mother, Thetis, one of the sea-deities, plunged him as a child into the River Styx, and thus made all his body invulnerable except the heel by which she held him. While he was still young, she asked him whether he preferred a long life, spent in obscurity and retirement, or a few years of military fame and glory. He chose the latter alternative, and at the close of the Trojan war received a death wound in his vulnerable heel. The arrow which slew him was aimed by Paris, whose seizure of Helen had caused the war.

Class Work on the Poem

1. Develop the irony of the first five lines.
2. Justify the following statement: "Antithetically and grandly opposed to the nerveless sentiment of *The Lotos Eaters* is the masculine spirit of the lines on Ulysses, one of the healthiest as well as most masterly of all Tennyson's poems." (Bayne.)
3. Write a short essay on the career and character of Ulysses as revealed in Homer and the ancient writers.
4. Write an essay upon the character of Ulysses as depicted in the present poem. Mark in what respect Tennyson's hero differs from the Ulysses of classical story. Point out the important modern elements in the poem.
5. Explain carefully the meaning of the following:—
Thro' scudding drifts (l. 10); *Vext the dim sea* (l. 11); *And drunk—peers* (l. 16); *I am—met* (l. 18); *As tho'—life* (l. 24); *For some three suns* (l. 29) (what figure is this?); *To follow—thought* (ll. 31-32); *decent—tenderness* (ll. 40-41).
6. *I am become a name* (l. 11.) Does this mean that in my present inactivity "I am become *merely* a name?" or does it mean that because I have seen and known and fought much I am become *famous*?"
7. Paraphrase this passage: *I am a part—thought* (ll. 18-32).
8. Show the appropriateness of the simile in ll. 31-32.
9. What elements in the character of Telemachus were apparently uncongenial to the father?

THE EPIC AND MORTE D'ARTHUR

First published, with the epilogue as here printed, in 1842. The *Morte d'Arthur* was subsequently taken out of the present setting, and with substantial expansion appeared as the final poem of the *Idylls of the King*, with the new title, *The Passing of Arthur*.

Walter Savage Landor doubtless refers to the *Morte d'Arthur* as early as 1837, when writing to a friend, as follows:—"Yesterday a Mr. Moreton, a young man of rare judgment, read to me a manuscript by Mr. Tennyson, being different in style from his printed poems. The subject is the Death of Arthur. It is

more Homeric than any poem of our time, and rivals some of the noblest parts of the *Odyssey*." A still earlier composition is assured by the correspondence of Edward Fitzgerald who writes that, in 1835, while staying at the Speddings in the Lake Country, he met Tennyson and heard the poet read the *Morte d'Arthur* and other poems of the 1842 volume. They were read out of a MS., "in a little red book to him and Spedding of a night 'when all the house was mute.'"

In *The Epic* we have specific reference to the Homeric influence in these lines :

"Nay, nay," said Hall,
 "Why take the style of those heroic times ?
 For nature brings not back the Mastodon,
 Nor we those times ; and why should any man
 Remodel models ? these twelve books of mine
 Were faint Homeric echoes, nothing-worth," . . .

Critics have agreed for the most part in considering the *Morte d'Arthur* as the most Homeric of Tennyson's poems. Bayne writes : "Not only in the language is it Homeric, but in the design and manner of treatment. The concentration of interest on the hero, the absence of all modernism in the way of love story or passion painting, the martial clearness, terseness, brevity of the narrative, with definite specification, at the same time, are exquisitely true to the Homeric pattern." Bradley notes, with probably greater precision, that : "They are rather Virgilian than Homeric echoes ; elaborate and stately, not naive and eager to tell their story ; rich in pictorial detail ; carefully studied ; conscious of their own art ; more anxious for beauty of workmanship than interest of action."

It has frequently been pointed out in this book how prone Tennyson is to regard all his subjects from the modern point of view :

a truth
 Looks freshest in the fashion of the day.

The Epic and the epilogue strongly emphasize this modernity in the varied modern types of character which they represent, with their diverse opinions upon contemporary topics. "As to the epilogue," writes Mr. Brooke (p. 130), "it illustrates all I have been saying about Tennyson's method with subjects drawn

from Greek or romantic times. He filled and sustained those subjects with thoughts which were as modern as they were ancient. While he placed his readers in Camelot, Ithaca, or Ida, he made them feel also that they were standing in London, Oxford, or an English woodland. When the *Morte d'Arthur* is finished, the hearer of it sits rapt. There were 'modern touches here and there,' he says, and when he sleeps he dreams of

King Arthur, like a modern gentleman
Of stateliest port ; and all the people cried,
'Arthur is come again, he cannot die.'
Then those that stood upon the hills behind
Repeated—'Come again, and thrice as fair :'
And, further inland, voices echoed--'Come
With all good things and war shall be no more.

The old tale, thus modernised in an epilogue, does not lose its dignity, for now the recoming of Arthur is the recoming of Christ in a wider and fairer Christianity. We feel here how the new movement of religion and theology had sent its full and exciting wave into Tennyson. Arthur's death in the battle and the mist is the death of a form of Christianity which, exhausted, died in doubt and darkness. His advent as a modern gentleman is the coming of a brighter and more loving Christ into the hearts of men. For so ends the epilogue. When the voices cry, 'Come again, with all good things,'

At this a hundred bells began to peal,
That with the sound I woke, and heard indeed,
The clear church-bells ring in the Christmas-morn."

THE ALLEGORICAL ELEMENT.—The statement is made on p. xxxv of this book that in *The Idylls of the King* "the effort is made to reconcile the human story with the allegory, and in consequence the issues are confusedly presented to our mind." It is characteristic of the *Morte d'Arthur* fragment that it is apparently free from all allegorical intention. It is merely a moving human story with a fascinating element of mystery inspired by the original Celtic legend. An element of allegory lies in the epilogue, and *The Passing of Arthur* still further enforces the allegorical purpose. But here, as Mr. Brooke again writes (p. 371), "we are close throughout to the ancient tale. No allegory, no ethics, no rational

soul, no preaching symbolism, enter here, to dim, confuse, or spoil the story. Nothing is added which does not justly exalt the tale, and what is added is chiefly a greater fulness and breadth of humanity, a more lovely and supreme Nature, arranged at every point to enhance into keener life the human feelings of Arthur and his knight, to lift the ultimate hour of sorrow and of death into nobility. Arthur is borne to a chapel nigh the field—

A broken chancel with a broken cross,
That stood on a dark strait of barren land;
On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

What a noble framework—and with what noble consciousness it is drawn! All the landscape—than which nothing better has been invented by any English poet—lives from point to point as if Nature herself had created it; but even more alive than the landscape are the two human figures in it—Sir Bedivere standing by the great water, and Arthur lying wounded near the chapel, waiting for his knight. Take one passage, which to hear is to see the thing:

So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he stept,
And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang
Shrill, chill with flakes of foam. He, stepping down
By zigzag paths, and juts of pointed rock,
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

Twice he hides the sword, and when Arthur asks: 'What hast thou seen, what heard?' Bedivere answers:

'I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag,'

—lines so steeped in the loneliness of mountain tarns that I never stand in solitude beside their waters but I hear the verses in my heart. At the last he throws it.

The great brand
Made lightnings in the splendour of the moon,
And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,

Seen where the moving isles of winter shock
By night, with noises of the northern sea.

'So flashed and fell the brand Excalibur,' and never yet in poetry did any sword, flung in the air, flash so superbly.

The rest of the natural description is equally alive, and the passage where the sound echoes the sense, and Bedivere, carrying Arthur, clangs as he moves among the icy rocks, is as clear a piece of ringing, smiting, clashing sound as any to be found in Tennyson:

Dry clashed his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right
The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rung
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels.

We hear all the changes on the vowel *a*—every sound of it used to give the impression—and then, in a moment, the verse runs into breadth, smoothness and vastness: for Bedivere comes to the shore and sees the great water:

And on a sudden lo! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon,

in which the vowel *o*, in its changes is used, as the vowel *a* has been used before.

The questions and replies of Arthur and Bedivere, the reproaches of the King, the excuses of the Knight, the sorrow and the final wrath of Arthur, are worthy of the landscape, as they ought to be; and the dominance of the human element in the scene is a piece of noble artist-work. Arthur is royal to the close, and when he passes away with the weeping Queens across the mere, unlike the star of the tournament he was of old, he is still the King. Sir Bedivere, left alone on the freezing shore, hears the King give his last message to the world. It is a modern Christian who speaks, but the phrases do not sound out of harmony with that which might be in Romance. Moreover, the end of the saying is of Avilion or Avalon—of the old heathen Celtic place where the wounded are healed and the old made young."

In the final analysis, therefore, the significance of the *Morte d'Arthur* is a significance of beauty rather than moralistic pur-

pose. It has been said that the reading of Milton's *Lycidas* is the surest test of one's powers of poetical appreciation. I fear that the test is too severe for many readers who can still enjoy a simpler style of poetry. But any person who can read the *Morte d'Arthur*, and fail to be impressed by its splendid pictures, and subdued to admiration by the dignity of its language, need scarcely hope for pleasure from any poetry.

THE EPIC

3. **sacred bush.** The mistletoe. This plant was sacred to the Celtic tribes, and was an object of particular veneration with the Druids, especially when associated with the oak-tree.

8. **Or gone**=either gone.

18. **the general decay of faith.** The story of Arthur is intended to show how faith survives, although the form be changed. See esp. *Morte d'Arthur*, ll. 240-242.

27-28. **'he burnt—some twelve books.'** This must not be taken literally. See, however, p. xxxiii. of the Biographical Sketch, as to Tennyson's hesitation in treating the subject.

48-51. This is self-portraiture. Lord Tennyson's method of reading was impressive though peculiar.

MORTE D'ARTHUR

The Arthurian Legend. Throughout the mediæval period three great cycles of stories commanded the imagination of the poets. Of these cycles one, the tale of Troy in its curious mediæval guise, attested the potent spell of antique legend.* The two other great cycles were of later origin, and centred around the commanding historical figures of Charlemagne, and the phantom glory of the legendary Arthur.

The origin of the Arthurian story is involved in obscurity. The crudest form of the myth has doubtless a core of historic truth, and represents him as a mighty Celtic warrior, who works havoc among the heathen Saxon invaders. Accretions naturally are added, and a miraculous origin and a mysterious death throw

* The extraordinary interest in the half legendary career of Alexander the Great must be noticed here, as also the profound respect amounting to veneration for the Roman poet, Vergil.

a superstitious halo around the hero. When the brilliant personality of Lancelot breaks into the tale, and the legend of the Holy Grail is superadded, the theme exercised an irresistible fascination upon the imagination of mediæval Europe.

The vicissitudes of the Celtic inhabitants of Britain are as romantic as any of which history holds record. After the departure of the Roman invaders from the island, the native population swiftly reasserted itself. The Picts of Caledonia and the Scots of Ireland were their natural foes, but conflict with these enemies served only to stimulate the national life. But actual disaster threatened them when in the fifth and sixth centuries the heathen Angles and Saxons bore down in devastating hordes upon the land. It is at this critical period in the national history that Arthur must have lived. How long or how valiant the resistance was we cannot know. That it was vain is certain. A large body of Britons fled from annihilation across the channel, and founded in the region of Armorica in France, a new Brittany. Meanwhile, in the older Britain, the foe pressed hard upon their fellow-countrymen, and drove them into the western limits of the island into the fastnesses of Wales, and the rocky parts of Cornwall. Here, and in Northern France, proud in their defeat and tenacious of the instincts of their race, they lived and still live, in the imaginative memories of the past. For them the future held little store of earthly gain, and yet they made the whole world their debtor.

Even in the courts of the conqueror Saxon their strange and beautiful poetry won favour, and in a later century the Norman kings and barons welcomed eagerly the wandering minstrels from Brittany and Wales. But it was not from these scattered sources that Celtic traditions became a European possession, as a brief statement of literary history will clearly show.

The first recorded mention of Arthur's name occurs in a brief and anonymous *History of the Britons*, written in Latin in the tenth century, and attributed to Nennius. This history is curiously amplified in the twelfth century by Geoffrey of Monmouth, first in a story dealing with the prophecies of Merlin, and later in a *History of the Kings of Britain*. This book, with its brilliant description of the court of Arthur, gave the legend a widespread popularity. It was four times within the same century translated into French verse, the most famous of these renderings being the version of Wace, called *Le Brut*, which makes some

addition to Geoffrey's original, gathered from Breton sources. In the same century, too, Chrétien de Troyes, the foremost of Arthurian poets, composed his famous cycle of poems.

Of all these manifold sources Tennyson was confessedly ignorant. Where the details are not of his own invention, his *Idylls of the King* rest entirely upon Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, which Caxton printed in 1485, supplemented in the case of *Enid* and *Geraint*, and *The Marriage of Geraint* by a translation of the Welsh *Mabinogion* by Lady Charlotte Guest.

THE STORY OF THE IDYLLS.—It is well to remember the events that led up to Arthur's death. Guinevere's guilty love for Lancelot had been discovered and revealed by Arthur's nephew, the traitor Modred. The Queen fled the court and sought refuge with the nuns of Almesbury. Lancelot fled to his castle in the north, where the King in vain besieged him. Meanwhile Modred had stirred up a revolt, and leaguings himself with the Saxon invaders, had usurped Arthur's throne. On his march southward to resist his nephew, Arthur halts at the nunnery of Almesbury, and in the Guinevere idyll the moving story of their last farewell is told. Then the King advanced to meet Modred. The description of that "last weird battle in the west" is given in *The Passing of Arthur*, and leads up to the impressive line with which our present poem opens. Towards the close of that fateful day, there came—

A bitter wind, clear from the North, and blew
 The mist aside, and with that wind the tide
 Rose, and the pale King glanced across the field
 Of battle: but no man was moving there;
 Nor any cry of Christian heard thereon,
 Nor yet of heathen; only the wan wave
 Broke in among dead faces, to and fro
 Swaying the helpless hands, and up and down
 Tumbling the hollow helmets of the fallen,
 And shiver'd brands that once had fought with Rome,
 And rolling far along the gloomy shores
 The voice of days of old and days to be.

The King speaks despairingly to Bedivere, who answering, swears to him undying allegiance, and points to the traitor, Modred, who still stands unharmed:

Thereupon :—

the King

Made at the man : then Modred smote his liege
Hard on the helm which many a heathen sword
Had beaten thin ; while Arthur at one blow,
Striking the last stroke with Excalibur,
Slew him, and all but slain himself, he fell.

4. **Lyonnesse.** The geography of the *Idylls of the King* is designedly vague. The region of Lyonnesse was supposed to be adjacent to Cornwall, and the sea now covers it. The Scilly Islands are held to have been the western limit of this fabulous country.

6. **The bold Sir Bedivere.** The epithet "bold" is used repeatedly in this vaguely descriptive fashion with Sir Bedivere's name. Cf. lines 39, 69, 115, 151, 226. The use of "permanent epithets" in narrative poetry has been consecrated by the example of Homer, who constantly employs such expressions as "the swift-footed Achilles," "wide-ruling Agamemnon," etc.

Bedivere is described in *The Coming of Arthur* as follows:—

For bold in heart and act and word was he
Whenever slander breathed against the King.

12. **A great water.** This expression has occasioned much unnecessary comment on the score of its alleged artificiality. There might be a gain in definiteness in substituting "lake," or "river," as the case might be, but there would be a corresponding loss in poetry and in meaning at this particular place. "Had 'a great lake' been substituted for it, the phrase would have needed to be translated by the mind into water of a certain shape and size, before the picture was realized by the imagination." (Brimley.) It would have, consequently, been more precise, but "less poetic and pictorial."

If further justification for the expression were needed it might be stated that "water" stands for lake in certain parts of England, e.g. "Dewentwater," etc.; and, what is of more importance, that Malory uses "water" in the same sense: "The king . . . saw afore him in a great water a little ship." *Morte d'Arthur* iv. 6.

21. **Of Camelot.** Arthur's capital, as noted in *The Lady of Shalott*. In speaking of the allegorical meaning of *The Idylls of*

the King, Tennyson states that "Camelot, for instance, a city of shadowy palaces, is everywhere symbolical of the gradual growth of human beliefs and institutions, and of the spiritual development of man." Always bear in mind that Tennyson has also said: "There is no single fact or incident in the *Idylls*, however seemingly mystical, which cannot be explained without any mystery or allegory whatever."

22. **I perish—made.** In *The Coming of Arthur* this thought is amplified :

For first Aurelius lived and fought and died,
And after him King Uther fought and died,
But either failed to make the kingdom one.
And after these King Arthur for a space,
And thro' the puissance of his Table Round
Drew all their petty principdoms under him,
Their king and head, and made a realm, and reigned.

And in *The Passing of Arthur* we read :

Ill doom is mine
To war against my people and my knights.
The king who fights his people fights himself.

23. **Tho' Merlin sware—again.** Merlin was the great wizard of Arthur's court. In the allegorical view of the poem he typifies the intellect, or in Tennyson's words: "the sceptical understanding."

This prophecy concerning Arthur is again referred to in *The Coming of Arthur* :

And Merlin in our time
Hath spoken also, not in jest, and sworn,
Though men may wound him, that he will not die,
But pass and come again.

This belief is common to all the Arthurian sources. Compare, for example, Wace's *Brut*: "Arthur, if the story lies not, was mortally wounded in the body: he had himself borne to Avalon to heal his wounds. There he is still; the Britons await him, as they say and understand . . . The prophet spoke truth, and one can doubt, and always will doubt whether he is dead or living." Dr. Sykes writes that, "The sleep of Arthur associates the British story with the similar stories of *Conlemagne* and

Frederick Barbarossa of Germany, Brian in Ireland, Boabdil el Chico in Spain, etc."

27. **Excalibur.** Arthur's magical sword. It is described in *The Coming of Arthur*, ll, 295 f., as :

the sword

That rose from out the bosom of the lake,
And Arthur rowed across and took it—rich
With jewels, elfin Urim, on the hilt,
Bewildering heart and eye—the blade so bright
That men are blinded by it—on one side,
Graven in the oldest tongue of all this world,
"Take me," but turn the blade and ye shall see,
And written in the speech ye speak yourself,
"Cast me away."

It has been variously held that Excalibur typifies temporal authority, or spiritual power. The casting away of the sword, therefore, represents the inevitable change in which human things are involved, and even faith itself. Compare *Morte d'Arthur*, ll. 240-241.

Magical weapons and enchanted armour are a portion of the equipment of almost all the great legendary heroes. Their swords and their horses usually bear distinctive names. Roland's sword was *Durandal*, and Charlemagne's was *Joyeuse*.

37. **fling him.** The sword is viewed as possessing life.

the middle mere. Compare a similar classical construction in *Æneid*, l. 10, *topmost Gargarus*.

53-55. **the winter moon—hilt.** The frosty air made the moonlight more than usually brilliant.

60. **This way—mind.** An echo of Vergil's line, *Æneid*, VIII. 20. *Atque animum nunc huc celerem, nunc dividit illuc.* "And he divides his swift mind now this way, now that."

63. **many-knotted water flags.** Dr. Sykes has a careful note on this expression (*Select Poems of Tennyson* : Gage & Co.). "The epithet many-knotted is difficult to explain. The possible explanations would refer the description to (1) the root-stock of the flag, which shows additional bulbs from year to year ; (2) the joints in the flower stalks, of which some half-dozen may be found on each stalk ; (3) the large seed-pods that terminate in stalks, a very noticeable feature when the plant is sere ; (4) the various bunches or knots of iris in a bed of the plants, so that the

whole phrase suggests a thickly matted bed of flags. I favour the last interpretation, though Tennyson's fondness of technical accuracy in his references makes the second more than possible."

70-71. **I heard—crag.** It is interesting to read Chapter V., Book XXI. of Malory in connection with Tennyson's version of the story. He is throughout true to the spirit of the original. *A propos* of lines 70-71, we find in Malory: "What saw thou, there?" said the King. "Sir," he said, "I saw nothing but the waters wap and the waves wan." Tennyson, in these two lines, gives us a consummate example of creative imitation.

84. **Counting the dewy pebbles.** This aptly describes the absorption of his mind.

85 f. and 56-58 supra. Compare the description of Excalibur, and of Bedivere's hesitancy, in Malory's book. "So Sir Bedivere departed, and by the way he beheld that noble sword, that the pommel and haft were all of precious stones, and then he said to himself, 'If I throw this rich sword in the water, thereof shall never come good, but harm and loss.' And then Sir Bedivere hid Excalibur under a tree."

104. **The lonely maiden of the lake.** The "Lady of the Lake" was present at the crowning of Arthur. In the *Coming of Arthur* she is described as dwelling—

Down in a deep ; calm, whatsoever storms
May shake the world, and when the surface rolls
Hath power to walk the waters like our Lord.

Arthur's first meeting with her is described in Malory:—"So they rode till they came to a lake, the which was a fair water and broad, and in the midst of the lake Arthur was ware of an arm clothed in white samite, that held a fair sword in that hand. 'Lo,' said Merlin, 'yonder is that sword that I spake of.' With that they saw a damsel going upon the lake: 'What damsel is that?' said Arthur. 'That is the Lady of the Lake,' said Merlin; 'and within that lake is a rock, and therein is as fair a place as any upon earth, and richly beseen.'"

In *Gareth and Lynette* the Lady of the Lake is mystically figured forth upon the great gate of Camelot.

105-106. **Nine years—hills.** Hallam, Lord Tennyson, in the *Memoir*, quotes Fitzgerald's short account of a row on Lake Windermere with the poet: "'Resting on our oars one calm day

on Windermere, whither we had gone for a week from dear Spedding's (Mirehouse), at the end of May, 1835; resting on our oars, and looking into the lake quite unruffled and clear, Alfred quoted from the lines he had lately read us from the MS. of *Morte d'Arthur* about the lonely lady of the lake and Excalibur:

Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps,
Under the hidden bases of the hills.

—Not bad, that, Fitz, is it?

This kind of remark he would make when rendering his own or others' poetry when he came to lines that he particularly admired from no vanity but from a pure feeling of artistic pleasure." (Vol. I. pp. 152-153).

112. Note the slowness of the movement expressed in the rhythm of this line, and compare with it line 168. Contrast the swiftness and energy expressed in ll. 133-136.

121. **Authority—king.** This line has been described as Shakespearian. Its strength is derived from the force of the metaphorical personification. The boldness of the poetical construction is carried into the metaphor in the next line.

129. **for a man.** Because a man.

132. **and slay thee with my hands.** Compare Malory: "And but if thou do now as I bid thee, if ever I may see thee, I shall slay thee with mine own hands, for thou wouldest for my rich sword see me dead." In Rowe and Webb's edition it is suggested that 'with my hands' is added for one of two reasons,—either "because he had now no sword; or more probably, these words are introduced in imitation of Homer's habit of mentioning specific details: *cf.* 'he went taking long steps with his feet.'" This explanation is ingenious, but unnecessary in view of the quotation from Malory. The note proceeds: "Notice the touch of human personality in the king's sharp anger; otherwise Arthur is generally represented by Tennyson as a rather colourless being, and as almost 'too good for human nature's daily food.'"

133-142. Brimley in his valuable essay on Tennyson, analyses this poem in some detail. Of this passage he writes: "A series of brilliant effects is hit off in these two words, 'made lightnings,' 'Whirl'd in an arch,' is a splendid instance of sound answering to sense, which the older critics made so much of; the additional syllable which breaks the measure, and necessitates an increased

rapidity of utterance, seeming to express to the ear the rush of the sword up its parabolic curve. And with what lavish richness of presentative power is the boreal aurora, the collision, the crash, and the thunder of the meeting icebergs, brought before the eye. An inferior artist would have shouted through a page, and emptied a whole pallet of colour, without any result but interrupting his narrative, where Tennyson in three lines strikingly illustrates the fact he has to tell,—associates it impressively with one of Nature's grandest phenomena, and gives a complete picture of this phenomenon besides." The whole essay deserves to be carefully read.

143. **dipt the surface.** A poetical construction.

157. Note the personification of the sword.

182-183. **clothed—hills.** His breath made a vapour in the frosty air through which his figure loomed of more than human size. Tennyson gives us the same effect in *Guinevere*, 597 :

The moving vapour rolling round the King,
Who seem'd the phantom of a Giant in it,
Enwound him fold by fold.

But the classical example is found in Wordsworth's description of the mountain shepherd in *The Prelude*, Book VIII.

When up the lonely brooks on rainy days
Angling I went, or trod the trackless hills
By mists bewildered, suddenly mine eyes
Have glanced upon him distant a few steps,
In size a giant, stalking through thick fog,
His sheep like Greenland bears, or as he stepped
Beyond the boundary line of some hill-shadow,
His form hath flashed upon me, glorified
By the deep radiance of the setting sun.

191-192. **And on a sudden—moon.** "Do we not," writes Brimley, "seem to burst from the narrow steep path down the ravine, whose tall precipitous sides hide the sky and the broad landscape from sight, and come out in a moment upon—

the level lake,

And the long glories of the winter moon!"

193. **hove** = hove in sight.

The closing scene in this drama is impressively described by Malory. "So Sir Bedivere came again to the King, and told

him what he saw. 'Alas,' said the King, 'help me hence, for I dread me I have tarried over long.' Then Sir Bedivere took the King upon his back, and so went with him to that water side. And when they were at the water side, even fast by the bank hove a little barge, with many fair ladies in it, and among them all was a queen, and all they had black hoods, and all they wept and shrieked when they saw King Arthur. 'Now, put me into the barge,' said the King: and so they did softly. And there received him three queens with great mourning, and so they set him down, and in one of their laps King Arthur laid his head; and then that queen said; 'Ah, dear brother, why have ye tarried so long from me? Alas, this wound on your head hath caught overmuch cold.' And so then they rowed from the land; and Sir Bedivere beheld all those ladies go from him. Then Sir Bedivere cried: 'Ah, my Lord Arthur, what shall become of me now ye go from me, and leave me here alone among mine enemies?' 'Comfort thyself,' said the King, 'and do as well as thou mayest, for in me is no trust for to trust in. For I will into the vale of Avilion, to heal me of my grievous wound. And if thou hear never more of me, pray for my soul.' But ever the queens and the ladies wept and shrieked, that it was pity to hear. And as soon as Sir Bedivere had lost the sight of the barge, he wept and wailed, and so took the forest, and so he went all that night."

It is interesting to note how the poet suggests here and there the phrasing of his original, but even more interesting to note his amplifications. It may be doubted whether Tennyson has here surpassed his original. For its touching simplicity he has substituted a dignified grandeur, and has involved plain statements in gorgeous rhetoric, as in his passage upon the efficacy of prayer. The unadorned original had said only "pray for my soul."

198. **Three Queens with crowns of gold.** "That one was King Arthur's sister, Morgan le Fay; the other was the Queen of Northgales (Wales); the third was the Lady of the lake." *Malory.*

215-216. **dash'd with drops—Of onset.** Words are sometimes poetical from their precision, and sometimes, as here, they suggest without definite reference. The meaning is "dashed with drops of blood" from the onset or encounter.

216-220. Arthur is again described in *The Last Tournament*:

That victor of the Pagan throned in hall,
His hair, a sun that rayed from off a brow
Like hillsnow high in heaven, the steel-blue eyes,
The golden beard that cloth'd his lips with light.

228. **my forehead and my eyes.** Compare the note to line 132. Here the specific terms are used according to the epical manner instead of the general term "face."

232-233. Compare the Gospel of *Matthew* ii. 11.

240-242. These often-quoted lines have been already referred to above. Their very intellectuality is alien to the spirit of the original. In Tennyson's conception they afford the central meaning of the poem, and also of the completed *Idylls*. We must bow to the will of God who brings all things in their due season. Good customs too deeply rooted are like clear waters grown stagnant.

254-255. **For so—God.** The idea that the earth is bound by a gold chain to heaven is comparatively common in literature from Homer downwards. Archdeacon Hare has a passage in his sermon on *Self-Sacrifice* which doubtless was familiar to Tennyson: "This is the golden chain of love, whereby the whole creation is bound to the throne of the Creator."

257-258. **If indeed I go—doubt.** There is no reason to suppose that these lines indicate Tennyson's personal misgivings on the subject of immortality.

259. **the island valley of Avilion.** Mr. Rhys in his *Studies in the Arthurian Legend* combats the old idea that Avalon (Avilion) meant the "Island of Apples" (Welsh *aval*, apple). The name implies the Island of King Avalon, a Celtic divinity, who presided among the dead.

The valley of Avalon was supposed to be near Glastonbury, in Somersetshire, where Joseph of Arimathea first landed with the Holy Grail.

67 ff. There is an evident symbolical meaning in this dream. Indeed Tennyson always appears to use dreams for purposes of symbol. The lines are an application of the expression: "The old order changeth," etc. The parson's lamentation expressed in line 18, "Upon the general decay of faith," is also directly answered by the assertion that the modern Arthur will arise in modern times. There is a certain grotesqueness in the likening

of King Arthur to "a modern gentleman of stateliest port." But Tennyson never wanders far from conditions of his own time. As Mr. Stopford Brooke writes: "Arthur, as the modern gentleman, as the modern ruler of men, such a ruler as one of our Indian heroes on the frontier, is the main thing in Tennyson's mind, and his conception of such a man contains his ethical lesson to his countrymen."

Class Work on the Poem.

1. Give a sufficient account of the story of King Arthur in order to understand this poem.
2. Where are the sources of the legend to be found? and upon what books did Tennyson base his version?
3. What is the meaning of the word "allegory"?
4. Point out any indications of allegorical purpose in these Arthur poems (including *The Epic* ll. 1-51, 52-82).
5. Point out and discuss any expressions in the poem which have been criticized on the score of undue artificiality.
6. What purpose is served by *The Epic*?
7. Write explanatory notes on: *sacred bush* (l. 3); *wassail-bowl* (l. 5); *Then half-way ebb'd* (l. 6); *three several* (l. 12); *hawking at* (l. 16); (*The Epic*) and *King Arthur's table* (l. 3); *Lyonnesse* (l. 4); *a great water* (l. 12); *The sequel—record* (ll. 14-16); *Camelot* (l. 21); *Merlin* (l. 23); *Excalibur* (l. 27); *samite* (l. 31); *jacinth-work* (l. 57); *conceit* (l. 110); *moving isles of winter* (l. 140); *harness* (l. 186); *the long glories* (l. 192); *A cry that shivered to the tingling stars* (l. 199); *the springing east* (l. 214); *greaves, cuisses* (l. 215); *Which was an image of the mighty world* (l. 235); *Crown'd with summer sea* (l. 263); (*Morte d'Arthur*).
8. Is the term "faint Homeric echoes" (l. 39, *The Epic*) justly used with reference to the *Morte d'Arthur*?
9. Enforce the metaphor, "shot thro' the lists" (l. 224) by reference to the context.
10. Comment on ll. 57-58,—*Perhaps—nothingness*, (*The Epic*).

POLITICAL LYRICS

These three lyrics were first published in 1842, but were written as early as 1833. Aubrey de Vere's comment (*Memoir* II., 506) is valuable. "Two short poems of an extraordinary strength and majesty were written at this time; one would have

thought that they had been written at a maturer period ; but, if I remember right, they were suggested by some popular demonstrations connected with the Reform Bill of 1832, and its rejection by the House of Lords. Their political teaching shows that when but twenty-three years of age Tennyson's love of Liberty, which at all periods so strongly characterized his poetry, was accompanied by an equally strong conviction that Liberty must ever be a Moral Power beginning upon the spiritual 'heights' of wisdom, mutual respect and self-control ; and that no despotism could be more fatal than that *tyranny of a majority* in which alone a material omnipotence is united with a legal one. These two poems begin respectively with the lines : 'You ask me, why, tho' ill at ease,' and 'Of old sat Freedom on the heights.' Their massive grandeur results mainly from their brevity, and the austere simplicity of their diction, which belongs to what has sometimes been called the 'lapidary' style. Each might, indeed, have been carved upon the entablature of a temple ; and I remember hearing an aged statesman exclaim that they reminded him of what he felt when, driving across the lonely plain of Paestum, he found himself confronted by its two temples. Their power consists largely in the perfection of poetic form with which each of them is invested. In this respect they may be profitably contrasted with a third poem which begins : 'Love thou thy land, with love far-brought.' In thought and imagination the poem is equal to the former two ; yet it bears no comparison with them as regards weight and effectiveness, because the same perfection of form was forbidden to it by the extent and complexity of its theme. It could not have been caused by want of pains on the part of the poet. An anecdote will illustrate his solicitude on the subject of poetic form, the importance of which was, perhaps, not as much appreciated by any other writer since the days of Greek poetry. One night, after he had been reading aloud several of his poems, all of them short, he passed one of them to me and said ; 'What is the matter with that poem ?' I read it and answered : 'I see nothing to complain of.' He laid his finger on two stanzas of it, the third and fifth, and said : 'Read it again.' After doing so, I said : 'It has now more completeness and totality about it ; but the two stanzas that you cover are among the best.' 'No matter,' he rejoined, 'they make the poem too long-backed, and they must go, at any sacrifice.' 'Every short poem,' he remarked, 'should have a

definite shape, like the curve, sometimes a single, sometimes a double one, assumed by a severed tress or the rind of an apple when flung on the floor.'"

Such eminent critics as Bagehot, Mr. Stopford Brooke, and Professor Dowden, are impatient of Tennyson's self-restraint upon so burning a question as that of political liberty. It is only fair to give their point of view, which is perhaps best represented in Mr. Stopford Brooke's *Introduction*. "Again, take the idea of human freedom, which, thrown as it was by Shelley into the arena where the young emotions of the present contend with grey-haired theories of the past, became a much more actual consideration in all national life after 1832. That idea is not only freedom to speak the thing we will, or freedom of act or contract, or such national liberty only as all Englishmen enjoy—but the setting free of all members of the State by the State from all that hinders the full development of every citizen. That is what it has now become within the last thirty years. But it was nothing like that in 1832. It was a bourgeois, not a popular, reform which was then initiated; and the poor were as much neglected by it as the middle class had been before it. But the disturbance it caused extended downwards to the labouring classes, then quite uneducated; and the riots and excesses that arose made short-sighted persons doubt the expediency of even the measure of Reform given in 1832. These riots and violences were caused by the misery and by the neglect of the poor, and they seemed mere mob-furies to men of a quiet type, like Tennyson. Such men felt themselves forced to consider over again the idea of freedom; and the reaction from what seemed revolutionary action on the one side, and on the other side from Utopias like Shelley's, was extreme.

"One would have thought that a poet, touched by the reality of misery, and its exceeding bitter cry, would have held the balance equally poised at least, and not yielded too far to the reaction: that he would have had indignation at the state of society, and been inwardly urged to give, in the manner of a prophet, some prediction of a hope near at hand for the woes and weakness of the oppressed. But though there are many passages where Tennyson does try to hold an equal balance, and to excuse or even to advocate the impassioned rising of the oppressed in speech or act against their fate, these passages are short, are tentative: he is, as it were, forced into them, and the main line he

takes is the line of careful protection of the old against the onset of the new, of steady but very prudent advance through obedience to existing law, of protest against that which he calls 'raw haste,' of discouraging of indignant speech and act on the part of the people, of distrust, even of contempt, for what seemed to him the mob, and for their 'lawless din;' and, in consequence of all this, he puts off the regeneration of society to a period so far away that it may be counted by thousands and thousands of years. It is with almost a scientific analysis of the whole question of the future society, and with arguments drawn from geology (as if humanity were in close analogy to Nature) that he predicts the enormous time in which the betterment or the perfection of society will be wrought. He had really little or no faith in man as man, but he had faith in man as conducted, in reasonable obedience, to the final restitution by an entity which he called law, and which was, in reality, his own conception of the Constitution of England built up into power, not by the people, but by a few great men, and by the bulk of the educated and landed classes, who alone were fit to direct the blind forces of the people. I do not say that he did not slide out of this position here and there in his poetry. He could scarcely help it as a poet, but nevertheless this was his main position, and on the whole, he kept to it all his life. It was not altogether his standing-place when he was young. A different spirit inflames the lines which begin:

And Freedom rear'd in that august sunrise
 Her beautiful bold brow,
 When rites and forms before his burning eyes
 Melted like snow.

That, and the rest of them, smack of the passionate poet. But this vague fire did not last. A batch of poems: *You ask me why tho' ill at ease; Of old sat Freedom on the heights; Love thou thy land*—mark his new position—that of a man who, like the constitution of a land—

Where Freedom slowly broadens down
 From precedent to precedent,

'regards gradation, lest the soul of Discord race the rising wind,' and sits (distrusting all that is not accurately balanced, all that shares in political emotion whether of wrath or eager love)

apart from those stormier miseries of man which seem to double whenever men eagerly desire for their lives a greater freedom of development. I do not presume to blame him for this. On the contrary, this position towards the progress of man in freedom, this 'nor swift, nor slow to change, but firm;' this quiet maturing, in self-control, of liberty; make this close respect for law a standing-place necessary to be preserved. It is, in fact, that of the sturdy good sense of England, led to this conclusion by careful reasoning on the past, and by an intellectual analysis of the course of its history. I should be very sorry to lose the ballast of the boat.' "

With these three poems compare Pallas's speech in *Ænone*, the *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*, *Freedom* ("Tiresias and Other Poems"), and the poem written before 1833, entitled *The Statesman*. (See *Memoir* p. 110).

YOU ASK ME WHY

These stanzas are erroneously said to have been based upon a speech of Spedding's, delivered in the Cambridge Union in 1832. Spedding sent this speech on Liberty to Tennyson at Somersby; but, according to the *Memoir*, the poem was not "an edition of this speech versified. My father said to me that he and Spedding freely interchanged their political views, and that, therefore, it was not unlikely that there should be a similarity of thought and language. He did not think that he had ever read the speech when he wrote the poem." The meaning of the poem is briefly as follows:—"You ask me why I remain in a fog-bound country, when in my depression I long for the purple seas of the south. I remain here because my country is still a free land. But if the time should ever come when a man is persecuted for his individual opinions, however spacious the might of England may have grown, then I would seek a warmer sky, and 'the palms and temples of the South.' "

6. **sober-suited freedom**. Not clothed in the specious and glittering raiment of a Republic.

11. This line originally read: "Where freedom broadens slowly down." The change was made to avoid the clashing of the two s's.

Compare with ll. 11-12, two stanzas, 8 and 9, of *The Statesman*.

The poem breathes rather the spirit of Individualism than of Collectivism. Carlyle is the most vehement exponent of the individual spirit, and protests urgently against the spread of communistic ideas. The plea here is for individual freedom.

OF OLD SAT FREEDOM

Freedom was in the early ages a remote and inaccessible ideal, and only broken fragments of her speech were wafted down from the heights. Then she revealed herself to man, and was seen to wear the badge and emblem of Britain's power. She gazes down from her island altar-throne (Britain), grasping the trident, which is the symbol of naval supremacy, and wearing the crown, which represents the freedom of constitutional monarchy.

15. **God-like.** Neptune was the God of ocean.

24. **The falsehood of extremes.** Compare *The Statesman*:

Ill fares the people passion-wrought,
A land of many days that cleaves
In two great halves, when each one leaves
The middle road of sober thought!

LOVE THOU THY LAND

This poem is an amplification of the concluding lines of the preceding poem. It is so difficult for young students as to justify the paraphrase which follows:

1. Love your land with a love that reverences the Past, operates in the Present, and forecasts the Future;
2. A love that is not fickle nor sordid, but cleaves to the freedom of England, your brothers and immortal souls.
3. Do not yield to a rash and precipitate age, nor deceive with crude thoughts the weak and panic-prone multitude whom every sophister [=subtle yet untrustworthy reasoner] can lead astray (ensnare).
4. While it is not wise to entrust great tasks (such as, e.g. the task of reforming abuses) to natures too weak to perform, it is also wrong to hide the truth from those who are not

too blind to see its light, and yearn for it, though they are now enveloped in the mists of ignorance and doubt.

5. Let knowledge be universal, but let knowledge be always attended by reverence.

6. Observe the tendencies of the time: be ruthlessly severe to your own prejudices, but it is more profitable to deal gently with the weakness of your fellow-men.

7. Do not work for personal honours, profit, or praise: if you abstain from this selfishness it will be to your profit in after-days: nor excite men by sounding phrases [such as Liberty, Equality, Fraternity,] save in due moderation.

8. Do not cling to old cant phrases, nor be mastered by new ones: be not swift or slow to change, but be resolute when change must come; and in its due season introduce the law,

9. which wise discussion endues with life that has power to bind men by its strength,—such a law as has been viewed by many minds upon every side, and is capable of embracing the interests of all.

10. For Nature in like manner, pondering deeply, matures and makes strong her individual forms by her manifold agencies of heat and cold, moisture and drought. [Thus human laws are matured by subjecting them first to the deliberation of many types of mind, the ardent and the temperate, etc.]

11. It is right that our life should be subject to change, or we would rust in sloth. Our bodies and our minds change from day to day, and from year to year, "all but the basis of the soul."

12. But let every change fit naturally into the place of that which passes away, and let it move in sympathy with the general machinery of government ["a joint of state," *i.e.* fitted into existing laws as a joint is fitted in a mechanism. The old joint is removed, and a new one takes its place].

13. It is hard to practise what we preach, for all change in the past has been accomplished by revolution. [The precise meaning of the last line of the stanza is obscure. Perhaps it is that whenever new theories of government have striven to blend with established custom (*i.e.* Fact) the marriage of the two is precluded by war].

14. Even now in England we hear in the spiritual gloom the inward strife of new developments,—the spirit of change (the spirit of the future) is yearning to blend with the present.

15. The slow development of our strength will be attended by painful experiences ; the poet sees in the dim future the phantoms of other forms of government, and the birth of Mighty States,

16. the guardians of the future, though so far off as to be indistinct, and as it were shrouded in vapour, and around them the organized strength of their mighty navies makes dark the sea and air.

17. The second [and more perfect] form of society is attained by the harmonious adjustment of existing conditions. Avoid extremes in your legislation, for fear of stirring revolt and anarchy, which are swift as the wind ;

18. the wind, namely, of revolution, that will blow upon the fires of your idols [the institutions you worship], and scatter their ashes upon your head to disprove your frequent boast that we are wiser than our sires.

19. Yet, if Nature's evil star drive men now as when the world was younger to test the truth of their course in war,—

20. if the New and the Old must ever clash, and if Principles are always established with shedding of blood ;

21. yet the wise man in the midst of shame and guilt would not cease to hope, but would walk through the troubled land, diffusing peace, but ready to strike down abuse and crime if necessary (line 3) ;

22. and in spite of the cries of Faction with which he is assailed, would save his fellow-men in deed and word, assured that knowledge first needs the sword, and then discards it :

23. would cherish good wherever he might catch a gleam of it ; and in extreme need would strike firmly, and shatter the abuse at one stroke.

24. So each morrow would reap the harvest of to-day, as we inherit the virtues of the dead (benefit by their labours). Merit the time that is granted you by employing it wisely ; and do not be precipitately rash, for Raw Haste is half-sister to Delay. That which is done without deliberation must be undone.

17-18. **Make knowledge — fly.** Cf. The prologue to *In Memoriam* :

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell.

and also *In Memoriam*, cxiv.

Class Work on the Political Lyrics

1. Paraphrase lines 13-20 (*You Ask Me Why*).
2. Explain the metaphors in ll. 23-24.
3. Explain ll. 4, 6 (*Of Old Sat Freedom*).
4. Explain "part by part" (line 11).
5. Criticise the metaphors in ll. 11-12 (*Love Thou Thy Land*).
6. Explain the grammatical relation of "That" (l. 33).
7. What is Tennyson's attitude towards political change?
8. What is his conception of Freedom?
9. Justify the epithet "brazen" (l. 76),

ST. AGNES' EVE

Published first in *The Keepsake* in 1831, under the title of St. Agnes; reproduced in the *Poems* of 1842; and the present title substituted in 1855.

Keats has written a masterly poem with a similar title, but the theme and treatment are radically different. The Saint Agnes of history was a Roman virgin who suffered martyrdom at the age of thirteen in the reign of Diocletian (284-305 A.D.), for refusing to marry the heathen son of the Prætor. Her festival is celebrated on January 21st, by the Greek, Roman, and Anglican Churches. Keats seized upon the legend on its earthly, human side. One stanza near the beginning of the poem rehearses the superstition:—

They told her how, upon St. Agnes' Eve,
Young virgins might have visions of delight,
And soft adorings from their loves receive
Upon the honeyed middle of the night,
If ceremonies due they did aright;
As, supperless to bed they must retire,
And couch supine their beauties, lily white;
Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require

Of Heaven with upward eyes for all that they desire.

Tennyson, doubtless, felt that a religious treatment best suited this sacred theme, and accordingly the virgin of his poem awaits not a human but a heavenly bridegroom.

Three poems, written by Tennyson at almost the same period, deal with three several aspects of mediæval Catholicism. The

St. Agnes' Eve breathes the mysticism of the cloister, the yearning for spiritual communion with God manifesting itself in a pure yet human rapture for the Saviour. The knight Sir Galahad is the Christian mystic militant, whose sacred duties lie in the world of shock and action :

My good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure.

St. Simeon Stylites represents the ideal of Christian virtue in the harsh light of a repellent asceticism.

These three poems are dramatic monologues displaying by self-analysis and by confession the mood and intellectual temper of the speaker. It is a species of poetry which Browning employed to represent a vast series of characters.

16. **argent round.** Full moon.

19. **mine earthly house.** *Cf.* 2 Corinthians, v, 1: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

21. **Break up.** Break open. *Cf.* 2 Kings, xxv., 4, and Matt. xxiv. 43.

35. **th^o shining sea.** *Cf.* Revelation, xv., 2; "I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast . . . stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God."

SIR GALAHAD

Published 1842; written about 1834. As Tennyson wrote in a letter to Spedding: "He was intended for something of a male counterpart to *St. Agnes*." The same stainless purity, the same stainless ecstasy are, in *Sir Galahad*, translated into strenuous activity. Like the stalwart Arthurian Knight that he is, he rides about "redressing human wrongs." "A 'maiden knight' he embraces the mediæval doctrine of the peculiar sanctity of virginity: and in his solitary raptures, his musings over the vague 'pure spaces clothed in living beams,' in his self-conscious recog-

tion of his own saintliness, we see the mysticism which Tennyson has in *The Holy Grail* so definitely blamed as one of the causes of the breaking up of the Round Table." (Rowe and Webb).

Galahad was the purest of all Arthur's knights. To him alone was vouchsafed the full vision of the Holy Grail (see the note below), when all other knights had failed in the quest. Lancelot had seen the holy vessel veiled, and Percival, save Galahad the purest of the knights, had seen it afar off when Galahad was caught up into the spiritual city.

15-16. **For them—thrall.** On every loyal knight were imposed the duties of chivalry—namely, to defend the weak, the innocent and oppressed.

21-22. **More bounteous—thrill.** A reference to his vision of the Grail.

25. **stormy crescent.** The crescent moon in a stormy sky.

42. **the holy Grail.** The holy Grail is supposed to have been the vessel in which Joseph of Arimathea caught some of the blood of Christ as he hung upon the cross. Joseph brought this vessel to England, where it was lost. The Grail was endowed with mystical and supernatural virtues, and only the pure in heart could hope to see it. Percival was originally the knight of the Holy Grail, but the unstained knight, Sir Galahad, was later substituted. In Tennyson's idyll, *The Holy Grail*, he narrates how the whole of Arthur's court are seized with mystical fervour, and abandon present duties for a fantastic quest.

The word "Grail" is derived from the old French *graal*, Low Latin, *gradale*, which is connected with the Greek word *κρατήρ*, a cup, because Joseph of Arimathea's dish was confused with the cup from which Christ drank at the Last Supper.

64. **Pure lilies.** The lily is the symbol in Christian art of purity.

Class Work on the Two Preceding Poems

1. Point out the features which these two poems have in common.
2. Examine the metrical structure of each poem.
3. Write explanatory notes on the following words and phrases in *Sir Galahad*:—*casques* (l. 1); *strength of ten* (l. 3);

shattering (l. 5); *brands* (l. 6); *on whom* (l. 14); *crypt* (l. 18); *More bounteous aspects* (l. 21); *in work and will* (l. 24); *stalls* (l. 31); *silver vessels* (l. 34); *stoles* (l. 43); *My spirit beats her mortal bars* (l. 46); *As down dark tides* (l. 47); *dumb with snow* (l. 52); *crazzles on the leads* (l. 53); *ringing, springs from brand and mail* (l. 54); *hostel* (l. 81); *grange* (l. 81); *pale* (l. 82).

BREAK, BREAK, BREAK

This exquisite lyric appeared in the volume of 1842. It was written at the time when the first lyrics of the *In Memoriam* were shaping themselves in the poet's mind, and commemorates, as they do, the death of Arthur Hallam. It was written, not by the sea-shore, but "in a Lincolnshire lane, at 5 o'clock in the morning, between blossoming hedges."

These brief stanzas represent the perfection of lyrical poetry as the impassioned expression of a personal mood. As in all great lyrics, the subjective emotion of the artist becomes the subjective emotion of the poet, and appeals to us all as the reflection of our own experience.

The development of the ideas is simple and continuous,—the sea beating eternally upon the cold shore like some great thought yearning for speech; the impotent desire to express the thoughts that surge in his own breast; the sight of the happy life around him that is not familiar with grief; the stately ships that sail on to their appointed haven; and the realisation that the restless sea will beat on forever, that joy will always spring up afresh about him, and that for all things human there is a sure goal appointed, but that for him life can never again be that which once it was:

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

The subtle change in the second line of this stanza is noteworthy. The first stanza gives us the appropriate atmosphere of grief, with the waves breaking upon the "cold gray stones." In the last stanza as if with the fruitlessness of despair the sea breaks at the base of its inaccessible crags.

SONGS FROM THE PRINCESS

The interlude songs were inserted in the third edition of *The Princess* in 1850. According to the scheme of the poem, the story of *The Princess* is supposed to be narrated impromptu by seven young men in a group of men and ladies gathered on a summer day in a ruined abbey. The interlude songs are supposed to be sung by the ladies :

the women sang
Between the rougher voices of the men,
Like linnets in the pauses of the wind.

For a brief summary of the story of *The Princess* see "Biographical Sketch," pp. xxx.-xxxi. The adjustment of woman's true place and function in society is the motive of the poem, and to avoid undue didacticism, this serious subject is treated in a spirit of sympathetic humour. Tennyson realised that the "two great social questions impending in England were 'the housing and education of the poor man before making him our master, and the higher education of women;' and that the sooner woman finds out, before the great educational movement begins, that 'woman is not undeveloped man, but diverse,' the better it will be for the progress of the world." (*Memoir* I., 249).

PURPOSE OF THE SONGS.—Tennyson's contention is that his Princess Ida has taken up a false and unnatural position. Woman was not meant to isolate herself upon the intellectual heights, but to diffuse the charm of human sympathy in a world that sorely needs it. Consequently, we find that the interlude songs dwell exclusively upon the tenacity of human affection, while of the six songs four emphasize the healing and the purifying power of the love of children. This is in harmony with Tennyson's admission that Lady Psyche's child, and not the Lady Ida, is the true heroine of the piece. Throughout all the stubborn extravagance of the Princess, her love for this child causes to vibrate in her heart, although unconsciously, the chords of human sympathy. Mr. S. E. Dawson, of Ottawa, developed this fact in his admirable study of *The Princess*, and his review evoked from Tennyson the most valuable literary confession which he ever penned. In this letter he writes of the songs as follows:—"I may tell you that the songs were not an afterthought. Before the first

edition came out I deliberated with myself whether I should put songs in between the separate divisions of the poem; again, I thought, the poem will explain itself; but the public did not see that the child, as you say, was the heroine of the piece, and at last I conquered my laziness and inserted them." (See also *Memoir* I. 254).

TEARS, IDLE TEARS

This is not one of the interlude songs, but is imbedded in the story. The students and professors of Princess Ida's College have spent a summer afternoon in scientific exploration,

Hammering and clinking, chattering stony names
Of shale and hornblende, rag and trap and tuff,
Amygdaloid and trachyte.

Then from the wrinkled precipices they descended with the setting sun to the lamp-lit tent :

There leaning deep in broider'd down we sank
Our elbows : on a tripod in the midst
A fragrant flame rose, and before us glow'd
Fruit, blossom, viand, amber wine, and gold.

Then she " Let some one sing to us : lightlier move
The minutes fledged with music ; " and a maid,
Of those beside her, smote her harp, and sang :
" Tears, idle tears "—

In the *Nineteenth Century* for January, 1893, Mr. James Knowles relates a conversation with Tennyson upon this poem : " It is in a way like St. Paul's 'groanings which cannot be uttered.' It was written at Tintern when the woods were all yellowing with autumn seen through the ruined windows. It is what I have always felt, even from a boy, and what as a boy I called the 'passion of the past.' And it is so always with me now; it is the distance that charms me in the landscape, the picture and the past, and not the immediate to-day in which I move."

This passion of the past forms the theme of the exquisite verses, *Far, far away*, and the same inarticulate regret for the

vanished past enters into various passages throughout the poems, as for example in *The Two Voices*:

Moreover, something is or seems
That touches me with mystic gleams,
Like glimpses of forgotten dreams,
Of something felt like something here,
Of something done I know not where,
Such as no language may declare.

Another similar passage occurs in *The Ancient Sage*:

To-day? but what of yesterday? for oft
On me, when boy, there came what then I call'd,—
Who knew no books and no philosophies,
In my boy-phrase, "The Passion of the Past."
The first gray streak of earliest summer-dawn,
The last long stripe of waning crimson gloom,
As if the late and early were but one—
A height, a broken grange, a grove, a flower
Had murmurs "Lost and gone, and lost and gone!"
A breath, a whisper—some divine farewell—
Desolate sweetness—far and far away.

The haunting memories of a prenatal past are in Wordsworth's great ode an intimation of immortality.

It will be noted that this poem is in blank verse.

7. **from the underworld.** From below the horizon.

THE INTERLUDE SONGS

It is not necessary to discuss these in separate detail. The first poem reveals the reconciling power of the love of children. The lullaby commemorates the love of a father for his child. The memories of wife and child will draw the sailor father homeward over the western sea. In the third poem we realise the transiency of earthly echoes. But the echoes of the soul endure for ever. In the next lyric the thought of home and family nerves the soldier's arm in battle. In the following poem we learn how it is the love of children which preserves the heart from breaking after grievous loss. The last song is different in character,

and is closely associated with Part VII. of the poem of which it forms the prologue. Princess Ida has consented to nurse the wounded Prince, and her reluctant yielding to the passion of love is foreshadowed in this lyric.

AS THRO' THE LAND

Originally lines 6-9 did not form part of the poem. The poem is stronger without them.

SWEET AND LOW

Lines 14 and 15 are grammatically unrelated to the context. A thought connection suffices.

THE SPLENDOUR FALLS

This lyric was written on the Lake of Killarney. Mr. Dawson, in his *Study of the Princess*, writes: "The theme is a sharp antithesis, arising out of a surface analogy between the echoes of a bugle on a mountain lake, and the influences of soul upon soul through growing distances of time. In the case of the 'Horns of Elfland'—

They die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill, or field, or river.

Fainter comes the echo in proportion to the receding distance.
But how different with the influences of the soul :

Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And *grow* for ever and for ever.

The stress of meaning is on the word *grow*. The song is evidently one of married love, and the growing echoes reverberate from generation to generation, from grandparent to parent and grandchild. Once more it is unity through the family. In the first song, a unity through the past; in the second, a unity in the present; and in this, a unity for the future."

ASK ME NO MORE

Notice the preponderance of monosyllables in this lyric.

THE BROOK

Published in 1855 in the volume, *Maud and other Poems*. *The Brook* is one of the most successful of Tennyson's idylls, and is in no degree, as the earlier poem *Dora* was, a Wordsworthian imitation. The brook itself, which bickers in and out of the story as in its native valley, was not the Somersby brook, which does not flow "to join the brimming river," but pours into the sea. The graylings and other details are imaginary. A literary source has been suggested (see Dr. Sykes' note) in Goethe's poem, *Das Bächlein*, which begins:

Du Bächlein, silberhell und klar,	Thou little brook, silver bright and clear,
Du eilst vorüber immerdar,	Thou hastenest ever onward,
Am Ufer steh' ich, sinn' und sinn:	I stand on the brink, think and think;
Wo kommst du her? Wo gehst du hin?	Whence comest thou? Where goest thou?

The Brook replies:

'Ich komm' aus dunkler Felsen Schoss,	I come from the bosom of the dark rocks,
Mein Lauf geht über Blum' und Moss'.	My course goes over flowers and moss.

The charm of the poem lies in its delicate characterization, in its tone of pensive memory suffused with cheerfulness, and especially in the song of the brook, about which the action revolves. Twenty years have wrought many changes in the human lives of the story, but the brook flows on forever, and Darnley bridge still spans the brimming river, and shows for only change a richer growth of ivy.

6. **how money breeds**, *i.e.* by producing interest at loan.

8. **The thing that—is**. The poet's function is thus described by Shakespeare:

As imagination bodies forth
 The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
 Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
 A local habitation and a name.

—*Midsummer Night's Dream*, V., 1.

17. **half-English Neilgherry air.** The Neilgherry Hills are in Madras. The climate resembles somewhat that of England.

37. **more ivy, i.e.** than twenty years ago.

46. **willow weed and mallow.** These are marsh plants.

92-95. **not illiterate—Deed.** Katie was not without reading; but she was not of those who jabble in sentimental novels (the source of imaginary tears), and saturate themselves with unctuous charities; and whose powers to act are sapped by their excess of feeling.

105. **Unclaim'd.** As having nothing to do with her. Katie resented the implication in the question of line 100. She therefore disdained to answer it. Messrs. Rowe and Webb hold that line 100 is a hint that the speaker, Lawrence Aylmer, was responsible for James's fit of jealousy.

125 f. Note the art with which the old man's garrulousness is expressed. The cautious precision of lines 151-152 is particularly apt.

176. **netted sunbeam.** The sunlight reflected like a network on the bottom. The ripples on the surface would have this effect.

189. **Arno.** A river in Italy which flows past Florence.

189-190. **dome Of Brunelleschi.** Brunelleschi (Broonelles'-ké) was an Italian architect (1377-1444), who completed the cathedral of Santa Maria in Florence. Its dome is of great size and impressiveness.

194. **By—seas.** Tennyson was fond of quoting this line as one of his most successful individual lines. Its rhythm is indeed sonorous.

195-196. **and holds—April-autumns.** Objection has been taken to the somewhat pedantic precision of these lines. See, however, the reference on pp. lxxii.-lxxvii. to Tennyson's employment of science in poetry.

The fact is familiar, of course, that in the Antipodes the seasons are the reverse of ours.

203. **briony rings.** Formed by the tendrils of the plant.

Class Work on the Poem

1. Explain carefully the following words and expressions, showing, where necessary, their value and appropriateness in the context:—*too late* (l. 2); *For lucky—share* (l. 4); define *scrip* (l. 4); *and mellow—cent* (l. 5); *the thing—is* (l. 8); *branding* (l. 16); *primrose fancies* (l. 19); *coot and hern* (l. 23); *bicker* (l. 26); *thorps* (l. 29); *fret* (l. 43); *fallow* (l. 44); *fairy foreland* (l. 45); *set* (l. 45); *high-elbow'd grigs* (l. 54); *grayling* (l. 58); *waterbreak* (l. 61); *lissome* (l. 70); *a bashful azure* (l. 71); *a hoary eyebrow for the gleam* (l. 80); *Fresh apple-blossom—boon* (l. 90); *fictive tears* (l. 93); *mealy-mouth'd philanthropies* (l. 94); *flickering jealousies* (l. 99); *a wizard pentagram* (l. 103); *meadow-sweet* (l. 118); *in session* (l. 127); *bowing—deserts* (l. 128); *twinkled—tail* (l. 134); *serpent-rooted* (l. 135); *talking from the point* (l. 154); *hazel covers* (l. 171); *I gloom, I glance* (l. 174); *netted sunbeam* (l. 176); *shingly bars* (l. 180).

2. Bring out the force of the following metaphors in their context:—*flourish'd etc.* (l. 11); *mist of green* (l. 14); *scolding hinge* (l. 84); *his wheat-suburb* (l. 123); *gave them line* (l. 145).

3. Analyse the passage beginning "In our school-books" (l. 9) as far as "replies" (l. 22), so as to show clearly the relation of the clauses to one another.

4. Comment on the use of numerals in stanza 2 of the lyric.

5. Point out instances of onomatopœa in the lyric.

6. Comment on the poetical use made of Nature in *The Brook*.

7. Analyse the various characters in the poem.

8. Paraphrase ll. 91-95.

9. Tell the story of the poem in your own words. Occupy about twenty-five lines. Occupy about ten lines.

10. Refer to the poem to show Tennyson's views of what the modern woman should, and should not be.

11. Scan line 134.

12. What is the effect of the repetition in ll. 206 ff. ?

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON

Published on the day of the Duke's funeral, on November 18th, 1852. Revised and reprinted in 1853, and finally revised for the *Maud* volume in 1855. On its first appearance it met with small favour, but with each revision its popularity increased,

and it is now considered as one of the finest patriotic poems in the language.

The Duke of Wellington died on September 14th, 1852, at Walmer Castle, which was his official residence as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. The State funeral at St. Paul's Cathedral was one of the most impressive of the century.

Mr. Stopford Brooke, in his *Tennyson* (London and New York, 1894), says of this ode: "This is one of his finest poems. It was fitting that the foremost man in England, who had worn his honours with a quiet simplicity for so many years in the 'fierce light' which shines on a world-wide fame, and in whom the light never found anything mean or fearful, should, after his death, receive this great and impassioned tribute.

"Let all England mourn her greatest son; let all England thank God for him, and bury him with honour upon honour"—that is the motive of the beginning of the poem; and it is worthy to be felt by a poet and a nation. Magnanimity and magnificence, great-mindedness and great-doing, are the life-blood of a people. To celebrate them with a lavish splendour when he who embodied them in life is dead, is a lesson in a people's education. Then Tennyson passes to the Duke's glory in war, and perhaps in all commemorative odes there is nothing finer than his imagination of Nelson waking from his grave in St. Paul's and wondering who was coming, with this national mourning, to lie beside him

"This is as great a poem as the character was which it celebrated. The metrical movement rushes on where it ought to rush, delays where it ought to delay. Were the poem set by Handel, its rhythmical movements could scarcely be more fit from point to point to the things spoken of, more full of stately, happy changes. Moreover, the conduct of the piece is excellent. It swells upward in fuller harmony and growing thought till it reaches its climax in the division (vi.) about Nelson and Wellington. Then it slowly passes downwards in solemn strains like a storm dying in the sky, and at the end closes in soft spiritual passages of ethereal sound, like the lovely clouds about the setting sun when the peace of evening has fallen on a tempestuous day. Its conduct is then the conduct of one form of the true lyric, that whose climax is in the midst, and not at the close."

24. **blood.** Used figuratively.
37. **iron nerve.** He was known as the "Iron Duke."
46. **the bell.** The great bell of St. Paul's is tolled only upon the rarest occasions.
- 47-48. **Render—mould.** The repetition of the word "render" in a separate connection is not commendable.
49. **cross of gold.** The dome of St. Paul's is surmounted by a gilded cross.
97. **Nor ever—gun.** He told Lord Ellesmere: "I don't think I ever lost a gun in my life." The few that were lost were recovered.
99. **Assaye.** A small town of Hindostan. Here Wellington, as General Wellesley, commenced his victorious career by defeating the Mahratta army in 1803. They numbered forty thousand to his five thousand.
104. **The treble works.** These were the famous lines of Torres Vedras, behind which Wellington withstood a winter's siege from the French general, Massena, in 1810-1811. In March he pursued the French, and defeating them with loss, ultimately drove them from the country.
112. **Till o'er the hills.** Wellington saved the Peninsula by the battle of Vittoria in June, 1813.
- her eagles.** The French standards.
123. **On that loud sabbath.** Waterloo was fought on Sunday, June 18th, 1815.
- 128-129. **Thro'—ray.** "As they (the British and the Prussians) joyously sprang forward against the discomfited masses of the French, the setting sun broke through the clouds and glittered on the bayonets of the allies."—(Creasy, *Decisive Battles.*)
- 151-155. **a people yet—showers.** Compare *The Princess*, Conclusion, 51-55:—
- God bless the narrow sea which keeps her off,
And keeps our Britain, whole within herself,
A nation yet.
153. **lawless Powers.** A reference to the revolutions throughout Europe of the year 1848. England remained uninfluenced by these outbreaks.
161. **whole.** Unrent by faction and revolution.
168. **And drill**=and ye drill.

170. **But wink—overtrust.** Do not slothfully disregard danger. "Britons guard your own!" In 1852 the House of Commons rejected a bill for the reorganization of the militia. At this time there was a suspicion that Napoleon III., who had possessed himself of the French throne, had hostile designs upon England. Tennyson voiced the national sentiment in three stirring lyrics contributed to the *Examiner*. "Britons guard your own!" "Third of February, 1852," and "Hands all round."

172. **He bad—coasts.** Wellington drew up a paper in 1848, urging the fortification of the Channel Islands and English seaport towns, and an increase of the army and the militia. His advice was disregarded.

183. **Whose life—rife.** "Certain of Wellington's sayings, such as 'A great country ought never to make little wars,' have passed into aphorisms." (Rowe and Webb).

186-187. **Whose—right.** An unmistakable reference to Napoleon III.'s usurpation of power by the *coup d'état*.

215-217. **Shall find—sun.** Duty is apostrophized by Wordsworth in a similar spirit:

Stern lawgiver! Yet thou dost wear
The godhead's most benignant grace,
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face.

Class Work on the Poem

1. Justify the epithet 'Great' as applied to Wellington: (a) By reference to his career; (b) by reference to this poem.
2. From your knowledge of Wellington's career, explain the references in the following lines:—l. 30; l. 42; l. 64; l. 73, *dispraise*; ll. 96-97; l. 99; l. 103; l. 127; l. 137.
3. Amplify the metaphors in ll. 38-39, ll. 125-126, l. 133.
4. Comment on the metrical peculiarities of the poem, and on the value of the repetitions.
5. Who is supposed to be the speaker in the three opening lines of Part VI?
6. Write a short note on Tennyson as a patriotic poet. Is he insular?
7. Comment on the expressions, "brainless mob," and "lawless Powers," l. 153.
8. Write Part VII. in your own words.

9. Compare in some detail the political sentiment in Part VII. with that expressed in the political lyrics.
10. What is 'the one true seed of freedom' in line 162?
11. Bring out the force in the epithet "temperate," l. 165.
12. Explain clearly lines 201-217.
13. Give a definition of the word "ode," and mention six great odes in English poetry.
14. What characteristic of the ode does the present poem display?

CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

First published in the London *Examiner*, December 9th, 1854. Revised in the following year for the *Maud* volume. The revision not proving acceptable, the present form, which is closer to the original poem, was adopted. To the quarto sheet of four pages on which the poem was printed, Tennyson added the following note:—

"Having heard that the brave soldiers before Sebastopol, whom I am proud to call my countrymen, have a liking for my ballad on the 'Charge of the Light Brigade,' I have ordered a thousand copies to be printed for them. No writing of mine can add to the glory they have acquired in the Crimea; but if what I have heard be true, they will not be displeased to receive these copies of the ballad from me, and to know that those who sit at home love and honour them.

"ALFRED TENNYSON

"8th August, 1855."

The charge which this poem commemorates was as useless as it was heroic. The six hundred and thirty men had to traverse a deadly gap of a mile and a half before closing with a vastly superior force. They captured the guns, only to find themselves surrounded and unsupported. The remnant of this little band wheeled about and cut their way back to their own lines, mowed down as they retired by the Russian batteries. They then once more "wheeled round to face the enemy, dressed up as if on parade, and burst into a cheer of exultation and defiance."

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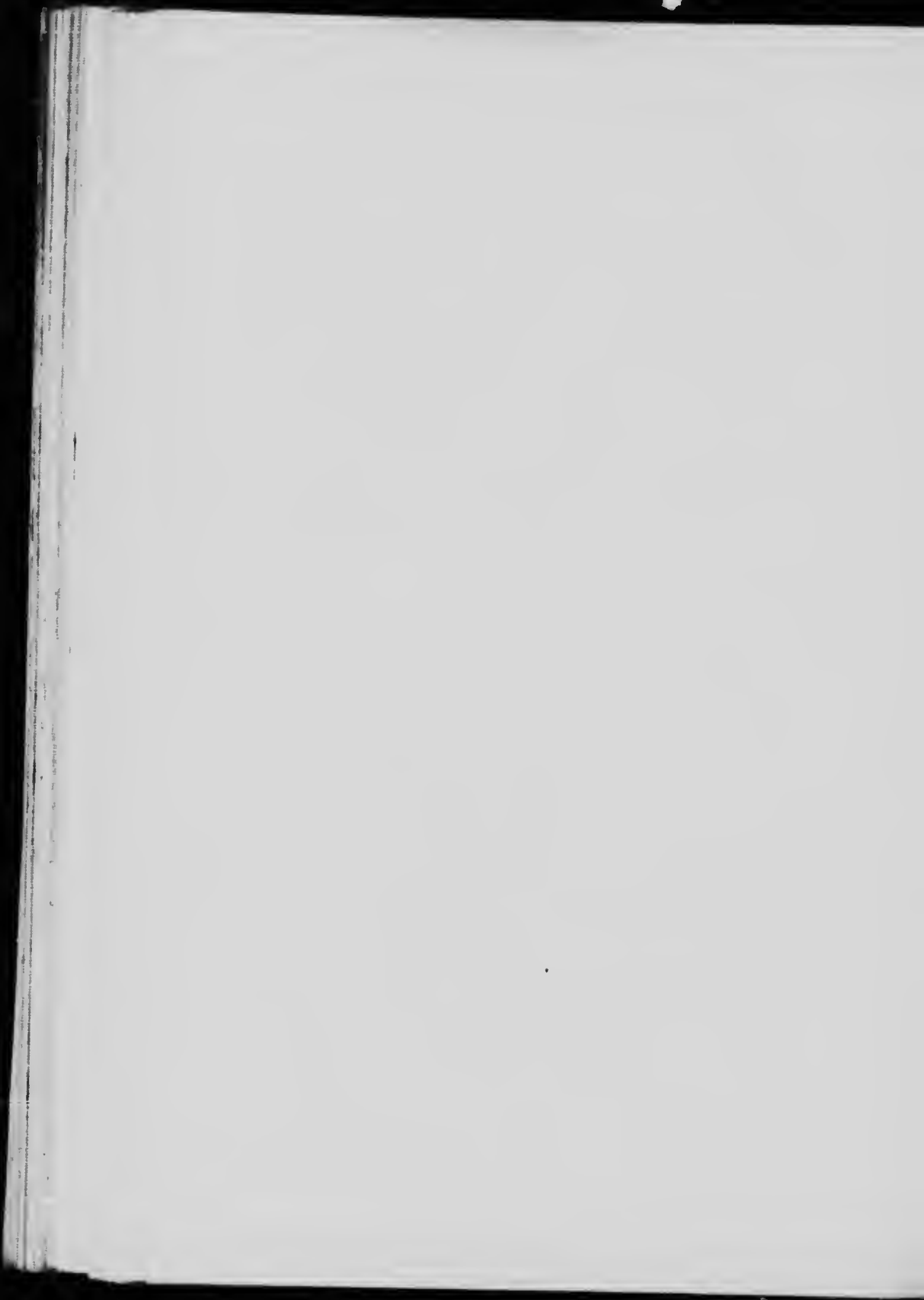
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REVIEW QUESTIONS



REVIEW QUESTIONS

THE LADY OF SHALOTT

1. Trace the progress of the narrative, showing the place of each division in the progress of the story.
2. Describe in your own words the following :—(a) The island and castle of Shalott ; (b) the sights seen in the mirror ; (c) Sir Lancelot ; (d) the voyage to Camelot.
3. What impression does Tennyson wish to leave on the reader after each part ? Has he succeeded ?
4. Account for the way that Tennyson has described the island and castle.
5. Tennyson has given us no hint as to the personal appearance of the lady. What do you take to be his reason for this ? Would you prefer that some hint had been given ?
6. What part is played in the poem by the following :—(a) The web ; (b) the mirror ; (c) Lancelot ; (d) the reapers ; (e) Camelot ; (f) the curse ?
7. (a) Is there any particular significance in the pictures that flash into the mirror, and the order in which they appear ? (b) Why is the spectacle of the young lovers presented immediately after the funeral ? (c) Account for the gorgeous description of Lancelot. (d) What is the significance of the last four lines of the poem ? Show their fitness as a conclusion.
8. Which stanza of this poem do you consider the most beautiful ? Which the most pathetic ? Which the brightest ? And which best illustrates Tennyson's descriptive powers ?
9. Point out in this poem typical instances of the use of : (a) alliteration ; (b) sound echoing sense ; (c) compound adjectives ; (d) close and accurate observation of Nature.
10. Is there any symbolism in this poem ? If so, what is the key to it ?
11. What is the significance of the lines :
 " I am half sick of shadows," said
 The Lady of Shalott ?
12. " The poet teaches here and always that the soul must awake to actualities and be willing to suffer the curse involved

in mortal passions, that it may win its highest life of sacrifice." Do you agree with this statement?

13. "*The Lady of Shalott* is a pleasant piece of play with his readers—simplicity in a mask of mysticism." Discuss this statement in detail.

14. Hallam, Lord Tennyson, states in his recent memoir of his father, that the key to the symbolism of the *The Lady of Shalott* is to be found in the lines :

Or when the moon was overhead
Came two young lovers lately wed :
" I am half sick of shadows," said
The Lady of Shalott.

In the light of this positive and authoritative statement, how do you interpret the poem? Treat very fully.

15. "In *The Lady of Shalott* the scene changes to harmonize with the situation of the heroine." Illustrate.

16. "In *The Lady of Shalott* we have one of Tennyson's most characteristic poems, one in which his mastery of technique reaches its highest point." Taking this statement as true, examine in detail any two stanzas so as to bring out this fact.

CENONE

1. Give the substance of the speech of Pallas and Herè. Compare them as to (a) appropriateness to speakers ; (b) persuasive ability ; (c) moral elevation.

2. What is significant in the laugh of Aphrodite ?

3. In her seeking for the prize, is there anything inconsistent with the character of Pallas, as portrayed in her speech? Justify your answer.

4. Why not Tennyson described Herè at the same length as Pallas and Aphrodite ?

5. What is the object of the poet in the constant repetition of the lines :

"O Mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,
Dear Mother Ida, harken ere I die?"

6. (a) Quote in full the speech of Pallas. (b) "The speech of Pallas is the speech of the nineteenth century poet himself; it breathes of his sobriety, his love of order and law, his wisdom and his goodness." Prove this statement by specific references to the speech itself.

7. Describe in your own words the background to the figure of Ænone. What has Tennyson gained by thus picturing her surroundings?

8. Do you consider that there is too much natural description in the poem? Give your answer, either for or against, fully and with specific reference to the poem.

9. What is the purpose of the author in this poem? Do the natural descriptions in this poem contribute to this end?

10. What is the dominant emotion of this poem? Is this overshadowed by the beauty of detail?

11. "Ænone is an example of Tennyson's practice of infusing a modern spirit into a classical theme." Explain clearly the meaning of this statement. How has Tennyson accomplished this?

12. Explain clearly the reference in the following:—

(1) A fruit of pure Hesperian gold.

(2) On the tree-tops a crested peacock lit,
And o'er him flow'd a golden cloud and lean'd
Upon him slowly dropping fragrant dew.

(3) A shepherd all thy life, but ye' king-born.

(4) The Abominable that uninvited came,
Into the fair Peleian banquet hall.

(5) I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts
Do shape themselves within me, more and more,
Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear
Dead sounds at night come from the inmost hills,
Like footsteps upon wool.

(6) Talk with the wild Cassandra, for she says
A fire dances before her, and a sound
Rings ever in her ears of armed men.

THE LOTOS EATERS

1. Describe the Lotos Land, giving special attention to sequence of details.
2. After reading Tennyson's description of the Lotos Land, have you a clear picture in your mind? Fill in the sketch.
3. Show clearly the relation between the first five stanzas of the poem and the Choric Song. Is anything gained by throwing the complaint of the sailors into this form?
4. Trace the argument of the singers throughout the chorus.
5. State briefly the argument drawn from Nature in support of their contention. Show clearly the fatal fallacy in this argument
6. Is the argument of the singers a connected logical sequence, or is there a break in the chain? If so, where?
7. "There is confusion worse than death."
In printing this poem Tennyson always insisted that the word "is," in the above line, should be printed in italics. Why?
8. Give, in your own words, the opinion held by the singers in regard to the Gods. Is this opinion the direct consequence of their condition and method of thinking? Discuss fully.
9. "In the *Lotos Eaters* Tennyson creates a charming landscape, in harmony with, and lending emphasis to, the central human figures." Discuss fully.
10. The poem is largely descriptive, but the description is not intended merely to bring pictures before the mental vision, but to express a human mood and experience. Discuss fully.
11. What is the permanent effect of the philosophy of the Lotos Eaters?
12. Has Tennyson any message in this poem for each and all of us? If so, what?
13. Is there anything in the poem to show that at any time the choric singers were touched with remorse? If so, quote lines.
14. What is the prevailing emotion in this poem?
15. Examine closely the first three stanzas of the poem, and the first and eighth stanzas of the Choric Song, and point out in detail the various devices used by the poet to heighten the effect of his verse.

ULYSSES

1. Trace the line of thought throughout this poem.
2. Tennyson has described this poem as a dramatic monologue. If this be true, how much of the poet's personality has entered into the poem?
3. Tennyson says: "There is more about myself in *Ulysses*, [than in *In Memoriam*] which was written under the sense of loss, and that all had gone by, but that still life must be fought to the end." Would you gather this from the poem? Quote to illustrate your answer.
4. "We have in the *Ulysses* a particularly happy example of the infusion of the poet's own mood and feeling into a character and situation, which seems to bring them out and intensify them for the reader." Discuss this statement.
5. Quote the lines that appear to form the motto of Ulysses in the enterprise he has undertaken. Have these lines any wider application than to Ulysses himself?
6. "In the thought of Ulysses is held the glory and power of England." Comment upon this statement.
7. "There is no landscape described in *Ulysses*, only sufficient is given to make us feel the time and place." How does Tennyson make us feel this?
8. From what source did Tennyson draw his material for this poem?
9. Show clearly what is contributed to the poem by the passage:

The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks :
 The long day wanes : the slow moon climbs : the deep
 Moans round with many voices.
10. "The *Ulysses* contains one of the most perfect examples in the English language of the sound echoing the sense." Quote.
11. "Tennyson's *Ulysses* is, after all, an Englishman of the Nelson wars, rather than a Greek, and his feeling for his old salts is distinctively a Christian one." Comment on this statement.
12. "The terse, laconic, almost epigrammatic vigour of language, put into the mouth of Ulysses, marks the man of action and resource, the man accustomed to obey and be obeyed." Comment upon this statement, giving typical examples of the "terse, laconic, almost epigrammatic vigour of language."

MORTE D'ARTHUR

1. Quote in full the two speeches of Arthur beginning :
 - (a) The sequel of to-day unsolders all, etc.
 - (b) The old order changeth, yielding place, etc.
2. What evidences of nineteenth century thought do you find in the poem? Answer in detail, and with specific references.
3. "If indeed I go," line 257. Show clearly the significance of this line.
4. Granting that Arthur is the representative of the human soul warring against "sense," or the lusts of the flesh, interpret his final speech, and his passing away to Avilion.
5. Following out the line of thought in 4, what place in the allegory have the following :—(a) Sir Bedivere ; (b) Excalibur ; (c) The three Queens ; (d) The Lady of the Lake ?
6. How do you interpret allegorically the desire of Arthur to throw away his sword, and Sir Bedivere's disobedience ?
7. What do you take to be the main thought of this poem? Show clearly how you arrived at this conclusion.
8. What is the effect of opening the poem with "so" ?
9. "A broken chancel with a broken cross."
Show why this is a suggestive, descriptive stroke.
10. "The secret of to-day unsolders all."
What do you think of the use of "unsolders" ?
11. "Yet I thy hest will all perform at full."
(a) What does "hest" mean? (b) Explain "at full."
12. "Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye
That bow'd the will."
Tell the meaning in plain language.
13. "But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,
Clothed with his breath."
Is "clothed with his breath" taken literally or figuratively? Explain.
14. Give prose equivalents for "place of tombs," "shining levels of the lake," "latest left," "springing east," "knightly growth that fringed his lips."

- 15 Within a compass of 20 lines give a synopsis of this poem.
16. Write short notes on the following :—(a) Excalibur ; (b) Round Table ; (c) Three Queens ; (d) Avilion ; (e) Holy Elders.
17. Give examples from the poem of the following :—
- (a) Expressive similes : comment on their aptness and beauty ;
- (b) Sound echoing sense : at least six typical examples ; (c) Alliteration ; (d) Metre used to suit the thought : treat very fully ;
- (e) Exquisite phrasing : at least six examples ; (f) Picturesque descriptive effects ; (g) Nature and feeling in accord : treat very fully ; (h) Use of archaic and unusual words ; (i) Close observation of Nature.
18. Describe the island valley of Avilion.
19. "*Morte d'Arthur* may, according to the feelings of some readers at least, be best enjoyed without thought of symbolism." Comment.
20. Would you say with Brimley that in this poem Tennyson was more anxious for beauty of workmanship than for interest of action ?"
21. "*Morte d'Arthur* represents some of the most prominent characteristics of the poet's style." Illustrate in detail.
22. "*Morte d'Arthur* represents some of the more characteristic aspects of the poet's thought." Illustrate in detail.
23. What evidence do you find in *Morte d'Arthur* that the new movements of thought in England were having a profound effect upon Tennyson ?
24. "No allegory, no ethics, no rational soul, no preaching symbolism, enter here to dim, confuse or spoil the story." Comment fully.
25. With what feeling in your mind do you watch the passing away of the funeral barge ? Comment upon the manner in which the poem closes. Is it appropriate ?
26. Tennyson's blank verse is frequently injured by mannerisms, always a vice." Do you find any mannerisms in this poem ?

POLITICAL LYRICS

1. Explain clearly and fully the circumstances under which these poems were written.
2. Why has not Tennyson given titles to these poems ? Suggest a title for each, and justify your selection.

3. (a) Give the main thought of each poem ; (b) Trace the line of thought throughout the poem ; (c) Show how each poem is related to the others ; (d) What is the dominant idea running through all these poems ? (e) Could the order of these poems be reversed ?

4. Quote the line or lines which sum up the thought of these poems.

5. Quote from the poems passages in which the thought runs parallel.

6. Has Tennyson here made poetry out of his political economy ? If so, how ?

7. Would you call Tennyson a patriotic poet ? Prove from these poems.

8. Does Tennyson believe in the progress of man ? Quote to support your view.

9. Would you say that, on the whole, Tennyson is, in these poems, optimistic or pessimistic ? Quote in support of your opinions.

10. Is Tennyson in sympathy with the great masses of mankind in their struggle for freedom ? Did he know, in reality, the suffering world of humanity ?

11. "Tennyson felt strongly the vitality of the present in which he lived ; but he also brought into the present an immense reverence for the past, and that is one of the strongest foundations of his patriotism." Show the truth of this statement by reference to the poems you have read.

12. Compare the stanza forms of these poems. Account for difference.

13. Give a clear, concise and accurate interpretation of the following stanzas, clause by clause, carefully indicating the connection of thought, with each other and with the whole poem. Take typical stanzas.

14. (a) Indicate briefly wherein consist the merits of these poems ; (b) Is your mind here more occupied with the thought than with the expression of thought ? (c) What is your opinion as to the fitness of topics of this kind for poetic treatment ?

15. Discuss "Tennyson's fondness for middle positions," and his "reverence for law," as indicated in these poems.

16. Morton Luce says of *Love Thou Thy Land*: "It would be difficult to find so much political and social good sense anywhere else in literature." Comment on this statement.

17. "Tho' ill at ease." Is there anything in the poet's own nature or special circumstances to account for this?

18. Tennyson erred—if he erred at all—on the side of freedom that grows out of law, and bears fruit of order." Discuss.

ST. AGNES' EVE

1. Describe the picture presented to your mind by stanza 1 of the poem.

2. What type of character is St. Agnes supposed to represent?

3. "St. Agnes is a type of those religious enthusiasts whose highest ideal is a life of passivity and pure devotion." Is this a good type of character? Would you consider that a strong character would be the result?

4. "*St. Agnes' Eve*, with its delicate touch and perfect colouring, is a charming picture of passive contemplative mysticism." Comment upon this statement, pointing out clearly wherein the charm lies.

5. What particular trait in the character of St. Agnes is brought out in stanza 3?

6. "Every image is in harmony with the pure young worshipper." Examine the images in detail and show that the harmony exists.

7. Swinburne regards *St. Agnes' Eve* as "the poem of the deepest charm and fullest delight of pathos and melody ever written by Mr. Tennyson" Do you agree with this opinion?

8. Are the stanzas of this poem pictorially perfect? Point out any defect.

SIR GALAHAD

1. (a) Trace the line of thought throughout this poem; (b) In what does the sequence of this poem consist?

2. Describe, in order, the different visions that appear to Galahad.

3. (a) Give the legend connected with the Holy Grail; (b) What is typified in this poem by the Holy Grail?

4. (a) Does Galahad distinguish between the reality and the vision? (b) Is there any inconsistency between the Galahad of stanza 1 and the same person in stanza 4?

5. "Galahad is a type of the combination of ascetic and knightly virtues—of the devotion to an ideal, which led the devotee to disregard earthly ties, and bodily needs, and live in a spiritual ecstasy." Support this statement from the poem.

6. What is the lesson, if any, intended to be conveyed by this poem?

7. "Galahad's ecstatic devotion to an ideal has usurped the dearer instincts of his humanity." Do you agree with this statement?

8. "Galahad is an ideal of chivalry as well as a type of religion." What is the "ideal?" and what is the "type?"

9. "The conception of the total conquest of the evil of matter; of the total indifference to all appetite and sense, so that life on earth was lived in a super-sensuous realm—was a conception of pure art—I might even say of pure romance." Comment on this.

10. Is there any "touch of earth" in the character of Galahad? Does his self-esteem interfere with your opinion of his worth?

11. Do you consider that stanza 1 of this poem is, as is often charged, overloaded with poetic ornament? Discuss this in detail, pointing out the various means used to heighten the effect of the stanza.

12. Point out as many onomatopœic effects as you can in the poem.

13. In stanza 5, does line 5 strike you as being an effective one, coming, as it does, immediately after the fine line,

"The streets are dumb with snow?"

14. What relation have the following lines to the poem?—
(a) "Because my heart is pure;" (b) "So keep I fair through faith and prayer, a virgin heart in work and will;" (c) "A maiden knight;" (d) "Until I find the Holy Grail."

15. Discuss fully the use made of Nature in this poem.

SONGS FROM THE PRINCESS

1. Quote these songs. Give the theme of each.
 2. (a) What is the prevailing emotion in these poems? (b) What is their chief characteristic?
 3. "In *The Princess* Tennyson celebrates love in six of its various phases—in six delightful and happy songs." What are the various phases of love celebrated? What is the predominant phase?
 4. "*Tears, Idle Tears*, is suggestive of deep musings and tender broodings over the past—and not the past of human life alone—for some of them are musings of some antenatal dream." Is this statement true?
 5. Is there a progress of emotion in *Tears, Idle Tears*? Trace the thought throughout the poem in order to bring this out clearly.
 5. Why did Tennyson write *Tears, Idle Tears* in unrimed verse? Do you miss the rime in reading the poem? What has Tennyson given us to compensate for the absence of rime?
 7. "*The Bugle Song* is the most powerful lyric in the English language since the time of Shakespeare." Show in detail wherein the lyrical excellence of this poem lies.
 8. What characteristic of Tennyson's "technique" are to be found in these songs?
 9. Which of these songs is your favourite? Why?
 10. "Silver sails, all out of the West
Under the silver moon!"
- Does the fact that these two lines have no grammatical relation to the context, affect the feeling of the lyric?
11. What is the analogy of *The Bugle Song*? Do you consider it far-fetched? Explain clearly the meaning of "Our echoes roll from soul to soul," showing its relation to the whole poem.
 12. In *Ask Me No More*, does this song gain in your estimation from the fact that all but six of its 125 words are monosyllables, and these six are dissyllables?
 13. In *Home They Brought Her Warrior*, describe clearly the successive pictures presented to your mind. Account for the order in which they are presented. Trace clearly the progress of the emotion throughout the poem.

COMPARATIVE QUESTIONS

1. (a) Compare the spirit of Ulysses and that which animates the Lotos Eaters ; (b) What is the effect of the opinions expressed by each upon their respective characters ; (c) Compare the attitude of each towards the Gods.
2. "Ulysses' activity and the Lotos Eaters' passivity both come out of motives that may be found in the circle of human thoughts and wishes." Comment on this statement.
3. "The speech of Pal'as to Paris is spoken to England ; the song of the Lotos Eaters is a warning to the drifters and dreamers of the world ; in the thoughts of Ulysses is held the power, and the glory of England." Comment fully upon this statement.
4. Stopford Brooke says of *Ænone*, *Ulysses*, and the *Lotos Eaters* : "Nevertheless, although these poems have an ethical direction, it is subordinate to their first direction, which is to represent the beauty in their subjects. No one who has any sense of art will presume to accuse them of being didactic, rather than artistic." Apply this statement to the poems. Treat fully.
5. Compare the three Grecian poems, the one with the others, as to the use made of Nature in each. Why the difference, if any?
6. Compare the same three poems as to : (a) Emotional intensity ; (b) Human interest ; (c) Artistic effect.
7. How has Tennyson succeeded in conveying to the invented landscape of these Grecian poems an appearance of reality?
8. (a) Compare St. Agnes with Galahad as to the spirit which animates each ; (b) Which appears to you to be the most admirable character?
9. Compare the activity of Galahad with that of Ulysses, and the passivity of Agnes with that of the Lotos Eaters.
10. Compare the use made of Nature in *Sir Galahad* and *St. Agnes' Eve*.
11. Compare any two of the poems as to form, subject matter, method of treatment, dominant emotion, progress in action, metre, poetical devices, use of Nature, etc.

GENERAL QUESTIONS ON TENNYSON

1. "Tennyson, ever watchful of natural details, was pleased if he felt that he had put successfully into verse some little-noticed phenomenon." Give three examples of this from the poems you have read.
2. "In Tennyson's treatment, the picture drawn or the allusion indicated, is always appropriate to the human interest of the poem, to what one might call the landscape of the heart." Illustrate from the poems.
3. "Tennyson had to perfection the rare gift of flashing the landscape before us in a word or two." Give instances of this from the poems.
4. Discuss generally the use made of Nature and science by Tennyson. Base your opinion on the poems you have read, and quote in support of your view.
5. "The most universal and characteristic quality of Tennyson's work is its perfection in details—the finished technique, the beauty which pertains to each line and phrase." Illustrate fully from the poems.
6. "Tennyson's earliest efforts are marked by paucity of thought, absence of intense feeling, but by exuberant richness of expression." Prove or contradict this statement by reference to the early poems you have read.
7. "In Tennyson's diction, while he does not avoid the vocabulary of ordinary life, he on the whole prefers a word or phrase with distinctly poetic associations." In the light of the above statement, characterize the vocabulary and diction of Tennyson, drawing your illustrations from the poems read.
8. "The poet excels in the *indirect* presentation of similar moods, feelings and thoughts, through an objective situation or character." Illustrate from the poems read.
9. "In the sort of poetry which soothes and charms, yields calm pleasure and pure, yet sensuous delight, Tennyson is a master." Apply this statement to your poems.
10. "But, after all, what gives Tennyson his high and unique place among the poets, is not power of thought, but power of form. He has no specially profound insight into character or broad experience of life." Discuss this statement in detail.

11. "The ordinary reader is not repelled by ideas or ways of viewing them to which he is unaccustomed: he finds the questions in which he is interested, and the current opinions in regard to them." Is this true? Discuss very fully.

12. "All that partakes of extravagance is foreign to Tennyson's nature." Illustrate fully from the poems read.

13. The cast of Tennyson's intellect is such, that his social rank, his training at an old university, and his philosophical learning, have bred in him a liberal conservatism." Point out indications of this conservatism in the poems read.

14. "One of the most conspicuous of Tennyson's limitations is indicated by a style pronounced to the degree of mannerism." Criticize.

15. "Tennyson's adroitness surpasses his invention." Criticize fully and illustrate.

16. "Tennyson's verse is more remarkable for artistic perfection than for dramatic action and inspired fervour." Criticize this statement.

17. "One of the most noticeable features of Tennyson's poetry is his comprehensive range." (a) Illustrate this "comprehensive range" from the poems you have read; (b) Classify the poems you have read, according to subject-matter and form.

18. "Tennyson's strength is that of perfection; his weakness the over-perfection which makes a still-life painter." Criticize.

19. "Tennyson is a born observer of physical nature, and whenever he applies an adjective to some object, or passingly alludes to some phenomenon which others have noted, he is almost infallibly correct." Illustrate from poems read.

20. "With few exceptions, Tennyson's most poetical types of men and women are not substantial beings, but beautiful shadows which, like the phantoms of a stereopticon, dissolve suddenly if you examine them too long and too closely." Refer this to the types in your poems.

21. Tennyson's most distinctive trait is the power of uttering a delicate, vague, yet potent emotion—one of those feelings which belong to the twilight of the heart, where the light of love and the shadow of regret are mingled in an exquisite lyric, which defines nothing, and yet makes everything clear." Illustrate from poems read.

22. "Tennyson wrote only that of which he loved to write; that which moved him to joy or reverence; that which he thought

of good report for its loveliness." Is this true? Does it detract from Tennyson as an artist?

23. Name and explain fully, with illustrative examples what you consider to be the chief characteristics of Tennyson as a poet.

24. Point out in detail what you consider to be the main faults in the poetry of Tennyson, as far as you have read. Give specific references.

25. Discuss the place and purpose of the unbeautiful in Nature, events and character in Tennyson's poems.

26. What are the sources of Tennyson's popularity? What is its extent, and what its limits?

27. Illustrate from the lyric poems you have read his distinctive merits as a lyric artist.

28. Discuss Tennyson's epithets, their position among the characteristic qualities of his style, their character and merits.

29. Discuss Tennyson's power of characterization, and methods in character portrayal.

30. Quote as many instances as you can of lines and phrases that have passed into "current coin."

31. Discuss the intellectual qualities of Tennyson's style under the following heads:—(a) Character of his subjects; (b) His vocabulary; (c) Sentence structure; (d) Concreteness; (e) Clearness of line of thought; (f) Simplicity and clearness of his figures.

32. Discuss the imaginative qualities of his style guided by the following questions:—Is his style markedly figurative? What kind of figures are most frequent? Does the extent of his use of figures and their character depend entirely on the subject he is treating? Has he a fondness for the use of figures? Quote any strikingly good figures, pointing out the merits of each. Is his style elegant or suggestive in the main? What are his principal methods of suggestion? Quote striking examples of this. Discuss the devices by which the pictorial character of his work is secured.

33. Give examples of Tennyson's ability to select stanza forms, metre, etc., exactly fitting to the thought he was seeking to embody.

34. Discuss, with illustrative examples, Tennyson's use of the following:—(a) Cæsural pause; (b) Rime; (c) Alliteration; (d)

Tone-colour; (e) Various stanza forms; (f) Blank verse; (g) unriming songs.

35. "In his many-sidedness Tennyson represents more fully than any other poet of our day the complex thought and activities of the century in which his lot has been cast." Discuss.

36. "Tennyson frequently weakens his poetry by the straining after effect; by the use of affected and uncommon forms of speech." Illustrate from the poems. Is this habit a blemish?

37. "It is difficult to find a false rime, a slovenly stanza, or a halting metre, in all the great body of his completed works." Can you find any examples in your work?

38. "It is probably in Tennyson's diversity of gifts that the great secret of his wide popularity is to be found." Enumerate these gifts.

39. "There is one quality which distinguishes his view of Nature from other poets—the scientific accuracy of his observations." Illustrate.

40. "With Tennyson Nature is neither Love nor Thought; she is Law." Prove this statement and illustrate.

41. "Tennyson knows how to be passionate, but his passion never passes into that sensuous extravagance, which is the sign of weakness." Illustrate from poems.

42. Dawson says of Tennyson: "His view of life is dull, and his opinions commonplace." Do you agree?

43. Does Tennyson's pictorial power—his ability to represent form and colour—overbalance his verbal melody? Which, if either, predominates in his poetry generally?

44. What kind of a man do you take Tennyson to have been, judging him from the poems you have read?

45. Would you call Tennyson a moralist? If so, is he any less the artist?

45. Sketch briefly the life of Tennyson.

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ADDITIONAL POEMS

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SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date;
Sometimes too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade
10 Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou growest;
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this and this gives life to thee.

—*William Shakespeare, 1564-1616.*

When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possess'd,
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
10 Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

—*William Shakespeare.*

FROM HENRY V. ACT IV., SCENE III.

Enter GLOUCESTER, BEDFORD, EXETER, ERPINGHAM, *with all his host*; SALISBURY and WESTMORELAND.

Glo. Where is the king?

Bed. The king himself is rode to view their battle.

West. Of fighting men they have full threescore thousand.

Exe. There's five to one; besides, they all are fresh.

Sal. God's arm strike with us! 'tis a fearful odds.

God be wi' you, princes all; I'll to my charge:

If we no more meet, till we meet in heaven,

Then, joyfully,—my noble Lord of Bedford,—

My dear Lord Gloucester, and my good Lord Exeter,

10 And my kind kinsman, warriors all, adieu!

Bed. Farewell, good Salisbury; and good luck go with thee!

Exe. Farewell, kind lord; fight valiantly to-day:
And yet I do thee wrong to mind thee of it,
For thou art framed of the firm truth of valour.

[*Exit Salisbury.*]

Bed. He is as full of valour as of kindness;
Princely in both.

Enter the KING.

West. O that we now had here
But one ten thousand of those men in England
That do no work to-day!

K. Hen. What's he that wishes so?
20 My cousin Westmoreland? No, my fair cousin:
If we are marked to die, we are enow

To do our country loss ; and if to live,
The fewer men, the greater share of honour.
God's will! I pray thee, wish not one man more.

By Jove, I am not covetous for gold,
Nor care I, who doth feed upon my cost ;
It yearns me not, if men my garments wear ;
Such outward things dwell not in my desires ;
But, if it be a sin to covet honour,

30 I am the most offending soul alive.

No, faith, my coz, wish not a man from England :
God's peace! I would not lose so great an honour
As one man more, methinks, would share from me
For the best hope I have. O, do not wish one more!
Rather proclaim it, Westmoreland, through my
host,

That he, who hath no stomach to this fight,
Let him depart ; his passport shall be made
And crowns for convoy put into his purse :
We would not die in that man's company

40 That fears his fellowship to die with us.

This day is called the feast of Crispian :
He, that outlives this day, and comes safe home,
Will stand a tip-toe when this day is named,
And rouse him at the name of Crispian.

He, that shall live this day, and see old age,
Will yearly on the vigil feast his neighbours,
And say 'To-morrow is Saint Crispian ;'
Then will he strip his sleeve and shew his scars,
And say, 'These wounds I had on Crispian's day.'

50 O! men forget ; yet all shall be forgot,

But he'll remember with advantages
What feats he did that day ; then shall our names,
Familiar in his mouth as household words,
Harry the king, Bedford and Exeter,

Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester,
 Be in their flowing cups freshly remember'd.
 This story shall the good man teach his son ;
 And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,
 From this day to the ending of the world,
 60 But we in it shall be rememberéd ;
 We few, we happy few, we band of brothers ;
 For he to-day that sheds his blood with me
 Shall be my brother ; be he ne'er so vile,
 This day shall gentle his condition :
 And gentlemen in England now a-bed
 Shall think themselves accursed, they were not here,
 And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
 That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.

—*William Shakespeare.*

BALLAD OF AGINCOURT

Fair stood the wind for France,
 When we our sails advance,
 Nor now to prove our chance,
 Longer will tarry ;
 But putting to the main,
 At Kaux, the mouth of Seine,
 With all his martial train,
 Landed King Harry.

And taking many a fort,
 10 Furnish'd in warlike sort,
 Marcheth towards Agincourt
 In happy hour ;
 Skirmishing day by day
 With those that stopp'd his way,

Where the French gen'ral lay
With all his power.

Which in his height of pride,
King Henry to deride,
His ransom to provide

20 To the King sending.
Which he neglects the while,
As from a nation vile,
Yet with an angry smile,
Their fall portending.

And turning to his men,
Quoth our brave Henry then,
"Though they to one be ten,
Be not amazéd.

Yet have we well begun;
30 Battles so bravely won
Have ever to the Sun
By fame been raised."

"And for myself," quoth he,
"This my full rest shall be,
England ne'er mourn for me,
Nor more esteem me.

Victor I will remain,
Or on this earth lie slain,
Never shall she sustain
40 Loss to redeem me.

"Poitiers and Cressy tell,
When most their pride did swell,
Under our swords they fell,
No less our skill is,
Than when our grandsire great,
Claiming the regal seat,

By many a warlike feat
Lopp'd the French lilies."

The Duke of York so dread,
50 The eager vanward led;
With the main Henry sped,
Amongst his hench-men.
Excester had the rear,
A braver man not there,
O Lord, how hot they were
On the false Frenchmen!

They now to fight are gone,
Armour on armour shone,
Drum now to drum did groan,
60 To hear, was wonder;
That with cries they make
The very earth did shake,
Trumpet to trumpet spake,
Thunder to thunder.

Well it thine age became,
O noble Erpingham,
Which didst the signal aim
To our hid forces;
When from a meadow by,
70 Like a storm suddenly,
The English archery
Stuck the French horses.

With Spanish yew so strong,
Arrows a cloth-yard long,
That like to se pents stung,
Piercing the weather,
None from his fellow starts,
But playing manly parts,

And like true English hearts,
80 Stuck close together.

When down their bows they threw,
And forth their bilbows drew,
And on the French they flew;
 Not one was tardy;
Arms were from shoulders sent,
Scalps to the teeth were rent,
Down the French peasants went,
 Our men were hardy.

This while our noble king
90 His broad sword brandishing,
Down the French host did ding,
 As to o'erwhelm it;
And many a deep wound lent,
His arms with blood besprent,
And many a cruel dent
 Bruiséd his helmet.

Glo'ster, that duke so good,
Next of the royal blood,
For famous England stood,
100 With his brave brother,
Clarence, in steel so bright,
Though but a maiden knight,
Yet in that furious fight
 Scarce such another.

Warwick in blood did wade,
Oxford the foe invade,
And cruel slaughter made,
 Still as they ran up;
Suffolk his ax did ply,
110 Beaumont and Willoughby

Bare them right doughtily,
 Ferrers and Fanhope.

Upon St. Crispin's day
 Fought was this noble fray,
 Which Fame did not delay,
 To England to carry;
 O, when shall English men
 With such acts fill a pen
 Or England breed again
 130 Such a king Harry!

—*Michael Drayton, 1563-1631.*

JOHNIE ARMSTRONG

There dwelt a man in fair Westmerland,
 Jonnë Armestrong men did him call,
 He had nither lands nor rents coming in,
 Yet he kept eight score men in his hall.

He had horse and harness for them all,
 Goodly steeds were all milke-white;
 O the golden bands an about their necks,
 And their weapons, they were all alike.

Newes then was brought unto the king
 10 That there was sicke a won as hee,
 That livëd like a bold out-law,
 And robbëd all the north country.

The king he writt an a letter then,
 A letter which was large and long;
 He signëd it with his owne hand,
 And he promised to doe him no wrong.

When this letter came Jonnë untill,
His heart was as blyth as birds on the tree :
“ Never was I sent for before any king,
20 My father, my grandfather, nor none but mee.

“ And if wee goe the king before,
I would we went most orderly ;
Every man of you shall have his scarlet cloak,
Laced with silver laces three.

“ Every won of you shall have his velvett coat,
Laced with silver lace so white ;
O the golden bands an about your necks,
Black hatts, white feathers, all alyke.”

By the morrow morning at ten of the clock,
30 Towards Edenborough gon was he,
And with him all his eight score men ;
Good lord, it was a goodly sight for to see !

When Jonnë came befower the king,
He fell downe on his knee ;
“ O pardon, my souveraine leige,” he said,
“ O pardon my eight score men and mee.”

“ Thou shalt have no pardon, thou traytor strong,
For thy eight score men nor thee ;
For to-morrow morning by ten of the clock,
40 Both thou and them shall hang on the gallow-
tree.”

But Jonnë looked over his left shoulder,
Good Lord, what a greivous look looked hee !
Saying, “ Asking grace of a graceless face—
Why, there is none for you nor me.”

But Jonnë had a bright sword by his side,
And it was made of the mettle so free,

That had not the king stept his foot aside,
He had smitten his head from his fair boddö.

Saying, " Fight on, my merry men all,
50 And see that none of you be taine;
For rather than men shall say we were hangd,
Let them report how we were slaine."

Then, God wott, faire Eddenburrough rose,
And so besett poore Jonnë rounde,
That fower score and tenn of Jonnës best men
Lay gasping all upon the ground.

Then like a mad man Jonnë laide about,
And like a mad man then fought hee,
Untill a falce Scot came Jonnë behinde.
60 And runn him through the faire boddee.

Saying, " Fight on, my merry men all,
I am a little hurt, but I am not slain;
I will lay me down for to bleed a while,
Then I 'le rise and fight with you again."

Newes then was brought to young Jonnë Arme-
strong,

As he stood by his nurse's knee,
Who vowed if ere he lived for to be a man,
O the treacherous Scots revengd hee'd be.

—*Old English Ballads.*

ON THE RECEIPT OF MY MOTHER'S PICTURE OUT OF NORFOLK

THE GIFT OF MY COUSIN, ANN BODHAM

Oh that those lips had language! Life has passed
With me but roughly since I heard thee last.
Those lips are thine—thy own sweet smile I see,

The same that oft in childhood solaced me;
 Voice only fails, else how distinct they say,
 "Grieve not, my child, chase all thy fears away!"

The meek intelligence of those dear eyes
 (Blessed be the art that can immortalise,
 The art that baffles Time's tyrannic claim

10 To quench it) here shines on me still the same.

Faithful remembrancer of one so dear,
 O welcome guest, though unexpected here!
 Who bidst me honour with an artless song,
 Affectionate, a mother lost so long,
 I will obey, not willingly alone,
 But gladly, as the precept were her own:
 And, while that face renews my filial grief,
 Fancy shall weave a charm for my relief,
 Shall steep me in Elysian reverie,

20 A momentary dream that thou art she.

My mother! when I learnt that thou wast dead,
 Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
 Hovered thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
 Wretch even then, life's journey just begun?
 Perhaps thou gavest me, though unfelt, a kiss:
 Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss—
 Ah, that maternal smile! It answers—Yes.
 I heard the bell tolled on thy burial day,
 I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,

30 And, turning from my nursery window, drew
 A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!
 But was it such?—It was.—Where thou art gone
 Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.
 May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
 The parting word shall pass my lips no more!
 Thy maidens, grieved themselves at my concern,
 Oft gave me promise of thy quick return.

What ardently I wished I long believed,
 And, disappointed still, was still deceived.
 40 By expectation every day beguiled,
 Dupe of *to-morrow* even from a child.
 Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,
 Till, all my stock of infant sorrow spent,
 I learnt at last submission to my lot;
 But, though I less deplored thee, ne'er forgot.
 Where once we dwelt our name is heard no more,
 Children not thine have trod my nursery floor;
 And where the gardener Robin, day by day,
 Drew me to school along the public way,
 50 Delighted with my bauble coach, and wrapped
 In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet capped,
 'Tis now become a history little known,
 That once we called the pastoral house our own.
 Short-lived possession! but the record fair
 That memory keeps, of all thy kindness there,
 Still outlives many a storm that has effaced
 A thousand other themes less deeply traced.
 Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,
 That thou mightst know me safe and warmly laid;
 60 Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,
 The biscuit or confectionery plum;
 The fragrant waters on my cheek bestowed
 By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and glowed;
 All this, and more endearing still than all,
 Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall,
 Ne'er roughened by those cataracts and brakes,
 That humour interposed too often makes;
 All this still legible in memory's page,
 And still to be so to my latest age,
 70 Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay
 Such honours to thee as my numbers may;

Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere,
Not scorned in heaven, though little noticed here.

Could Time, his flight reversed, restore the hours,
When playing with thy vesture's tissued flowers,
The violet, the pink, and jessamine,
I pricked them into paper with a pin
(And thou wast happier than myself the while,
Wouldst softly speak, and stroke my head and
smile),

80 Could those few pleasant days again appear,
Might one wish bring them, would I wish them
here?

I would not trust my heart;—the dear delight
Seems so to be desired, perhaps I might.—
But no—what here we call our life is such,
So little to be loved and thou so much,
That I should ill requite thee to constrain
Thy unbound spirit into bonds again.

Thou, as a gallant bark from Albion's coast
(The storms all weathered and the ocean cross'd)
90 Shoots into port at some well-heaven'd isle,
Where spices breathe, and brighter seasons smile.
There sits quiescent on the floods, that show
Her beauteous form reflected clear below,
While airs impregnated with incense play
Around her, fanning light her streamers gay;
So thou, with sails how swift! hast reach'd the
shore,

“Where tempests never beat nor billows roar;”
And thy lov'd consort on the dangerous tide
Of life long since has anchored by thy side.

100 But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest,
Always from port withheld, always distress'd,—
Me howling blasts drive devious, tempest-toss'd,

Sails ripped, seams opening wide, and compass lost,
 And day by day some current's thwarting force
 Sets me more distant from a prosperous course.
 Yet, oh, the thought that thou art safe, and he!
 That thought is joy, arrive what may to me.
 My boast is not that I deduce my birth
 From loins enthroned, and rulers of the earth;
 110 But higher far my proud pretensions rise,—
 The son of parents pass'd into the skies.
 And now, farewell!—Time unrevok'd has run
 His wonted course, yet what I wish'd is done.
 By contemplation's help, not sought in vain,
 I seem to have lived my childhood o'er again;
 To have renewed the joys that once were mine,
 Without the sin of violating thine;
 And while the wings of fancy still are free,
 And I can view this mimic show of thee,
 120 Time has but half succeeded in his theft,
 Thysel removed, thy power to soothe me left.

—*William Cowper, 1731-1800.*

TO A MOUSE

ON TURNING UP HER NEST WITH THE PLOUGH,
 NOVEMBER, 1785

Wee, sleekit, cowrin', tim'rous beastie,
 Oh, what a panic's in thy breastie!
 Thou needna start awa' sae hasty,
 Wi' bickering brattle! *
 I wad be laith to rin and chase thee,
 Wi' murd'ring pattle! *

* Hurrying run.

* Ploughshare.

I'm truly sorry man's dominion
 Has broken nature's social union,
 And justifies that ill opinion
 10 Which makes thee startle
 At me, thy poor earth-born companion,
 And fellow-mortal!

I doubt na, whyles,* but thou may thieve;
 What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
 A daimen icker in a thrave ‡
 'S a sma' request:
 I'll get a blessin' wi' the lave,
 And never miss't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!
 20 Its silly wa's the win's are strewin'!
 And naething now to big† a new ane
 O' foggage green!
 And bleak December's winds ensuin',
 Baith snell‡ and keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare and waste,
 And weary winter comin' fast,
 And cozie here, beneath the blast,
 Thou thought to dwell,
 Till, crash! the cruel coulter past
 30 Out through thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves and stibble
 Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!
 Now thou's turn'd out for a' thy trouble,
 But§ house or hauld,

* Sometimes.

‡ Sharp.

* One ear in 24 sheaves.

§ Without.

† Build

To thole the winter's sleety dribble,
And cranreuch* cauld!

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane,*
In proving foresight may be vain;
The best-laid schemes o' mice and men
40 Gang aft a-gley,
And lea'e us nought but grief and pain
For promised joy.

Still thou art blest, compared wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But, och! I backward cast my ee
On prospects drear!
And forward, though I canna see,
I guess and fear.

—*Robert Burns, 1759-1796.*

THE TIGER

Tiger, tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder and what art
10 Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And, when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand and what dread feet?

* Hoar frost

‡ Not alone.

What the hammer? what the chain?
 In what furnace was thy brain?
 What the anvil? what dread grasp
 Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,
 And watered heaven with their tears,
 Did He smile his work to see?
 20 Did He who made the lamb make thee?

Tiger, tiger, burning bright
 In the forests of the night,
 What immortal hand or eye
 Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

—*William Blake, 1757-1827.*

FROM THE "EXCURSION"

I have seen
 A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract
 Of inland ground, applying to his ear
 The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell:
 To which, in silence hushed, his very soul
 Listened intensely; and his countenance soon
 Brightened with joy; for from within were heard
 Murmurings, whereby the monitor expressed
 Mysterious union with its native sea.
 10 Even such a shell the universe itself
 Is to the ear of Faith; and there are times,
 I doubt not, when to you it doth impart
 Authentic tidings of invisible things;
 Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power;
 And central peace, subsisting at the heart
 Of endless agitation. Here you stand,

Adore, and worship, when you know it not;
 Pious beyond the intention of your thought;
 Devout above the meaning of your will.

20 Yes, you have felt, and may not cease to feel.
 The estate of man would be indeed forlorn
 If false conclusions of the reasoning power
 Made the eye blind, and closed the passages
 Through which the ear converses with the heart.
 Has not the soul, the being of your life,
 Received a shock of awful consciousness,
 In some calm season, when these lofty rocks
 At night's approach bring down the unclouded
 sky,

To rest upon their circumambient walls;
 30 A temple framing of dimensions vast,
 And yet not too enormous for the sound
 Of human anthems,—choral song, or burst
 Sublime of instrumental harmony,
 To glorify the Eternal! What if these
 Did never break the stillness that prevails
 Here,—if the solemn nightingale be mute,
 And the soft woodlark here did never chant
 Her vespers,—Nature fails not to provide
 Impulse and utterance. The whispering air
 40 Sends inspiration from the shadowy heights,
 And blind recesses of the caverned rocks;
 The little rills, and waters numberless,
 Inaudible by daylight, blend their notes
 With the loud streams; and often, at the hour
 When issue forth the first pale stars, is heard,
 Within the circuit of this fabric huge,
 One voice—the solitary raven, flying
 Athwart the concave of the dark blue dome,
 Unseen, perchance above all power of sight—

50 An iron knell! with echoes from afar
 Faint—and still fainter—as the cry, with which
 The wanderer accompanies her flight
 Through the calm region, fades upon the ear,
 Diminishing by distance till it seemed
 To expire; yet from the abyss is caught again,
 And yet again recovered!

—*William Wordsworth, 1770-1850.*

ODE TO THE WEST WIND

I

O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's
 being,
 Thou from whose unseen presence the leaves
 dead
 Are driven like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
 Pestilence-stricken multitudes! O thou
 Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
 Each like a corpse within its grave, until
 Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow

10 Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
 (Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
 With living hues and odours plain and hill;

Wild Spirit which art moving everywhere;
 Destroyer and preserver; hear, oh hear!

II

Thou on whose stream, mid the steep sky's
 commotion,
 Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are
 shed,
 Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and
 Ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning! there are spread
 On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
 20 Like the bright hair uplifted from the head
 Of some fierce Mænad, even from the dim verge
 Of the horizon to the zenith's height,
 The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge
 Of the dying year, to which this closing night
 Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
 Vaulted with all thy congregated might
 Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere
 Black rain, and fire, and hail, will burst: Oh hear!

III

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams
 30 The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
 Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams,
 Beside a pumice isle in Baiæ's bay,
 And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
 Quivering within the wave's intenser day,
 All overgrown with azure moss, and flowers
 So sweet the sense faints picturing them! Thou
 For whose path the Atlantic's level powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
 The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
 40 The sapless foliage of the ocean know

Thy voice and suddenly grow grey with fear,
 And tremble and despoil themselves: Oh hear!

IV

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
 If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
 A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share

The impulse of thy strength, only less free
 Than thou, O uncontrollable! if even
 I were as in my boyhood, and could be

The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
 50 As then, when to outstrip thy skiey speed
 Scarce seemed a vision,—I would ne'er have
 striven

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
 Oh lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
 I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!

A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed
 One too like thee—tameless, and swift, and proud.

V

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:
 What if my leaves are falling like its own?
 The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

60 Will take from both a deep autumnal tone,
 Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,
 My spirit! Be thou me, imetuous one!

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe,
 Like withered leaves, to quicken a new birth;
 And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
 Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
 Be through my lips to unawakened earth

The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind,
 70 If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

—*Percy Bysshe Shelley, 1792-1822.*

THE LORD OF BURLEIGH

In her ear he whispers gayly,
 "If my heart by signs can tell,
 Maiden, I have watch'd thee daily,
 And I think thou lov'st me well."

She replies in accents fainter,
 "There is none I love like thee."

He is but a landscape painter,
 And a village maiden she.

He to lips, that fondly falter,
 10 Presses his without reproof:

Leads her to the village altar,
 And they leave her father's roof.

"I can make no marriage present:
 Little can I give my wife.

Love will make our cottage pleasant,
 And I love thee more than life."

They by parks and lodges going
 See the lordly castles stand:

Summer woods about them blowing,
 20 Made a murmur in the land.

From deep thought himself he rouses,
Says to her that loves him well,
"Let us see these handsome houses
Where the wealthy nobles dwell."
So she goes by him attended,
Hears him lovingly converse,
Sees whatever fair and splendid
Lay betwixt his home and hers;
Parks with oak and chestnut shady,
30 Parks and order'd gardens great,
Ancient homes of lord and lady,
Built for pleasure and for state.
All he shows her makes him dearer:
Evermore she seems to gaze
On that cottage growing nearer,
Where they twain will spend their days.
O but she will love him truly!
He shall have a cheerful home;
She will order all things duly,
40 When beneath his roof they come.
Thus her heart rejoices greatly,
Till a gateway she discerns
With armorial bearings stately,
And beneath the gate she turns;
Sees a mansion more majestic
Than all those she saw before:
Many a gallant gay domestic
Bows before him at the door.
And they speak in gentle murmur
50 When they answer to his call,
While he treads with footsteps firmer
Leading on from hall to hall.
And while now she wonders blindly,
Nor the meaning can divine,

Proudly turns he round and kindly,
 " All of this is mine and thine."
Here he lives in state and bounty,
• Lord of Burleigh, fair and free,
Not a lord in all the county
60 Is so great a lord as he.
All at once the colour flushes
 Her sweet face from brow to chin:
As it were with shame she blushes,
 And her spirit changed within.
Then her countenance all over
 Pale again as death did prove.
But he clasp'd her like a lover,
 And he cheer'd her soul with love.
So she strove against her weakness,
70 Tho' at times her spirit sank:
Shaped her heart with woman's meekness
 To all duties of her rank:
And a gentle consort made he,
 And her gentle mind was such
That she grew a noble lady,
 And the people loved her much.
But a trouble weigh'd upon her,
 And perplex'd her, night and morn,
With the burden of an honour
80 Unto which she was not born.
Faint she grew, and ever fainter,
 And she murmur'd, " Oh, that he
Were once more that landscape-painter,
 Which did win my heart from me!"
So she droop'd and droop'd before him,
 Fading slowly from his side:
Three fair children first she bore him,
 Then before her time she died.

Weeping, weeping late and early,
 90 Walking up and pacing down,
 Deeply mourn'd the Lord of Burleigh,
 Burleigh-house by Stamford-town.
 And he came to look upon her,
 And he look'd at her and said,
 "Bring the dress and put it on her,
 That she wore when she was wed."
 Then her people, softly treading,
 Bore to earth her body, drest
 In the dress that she was wed in,
 100 That her spirit might have rest.

—*Alfred Tennyson.*

IN MEMORIAM

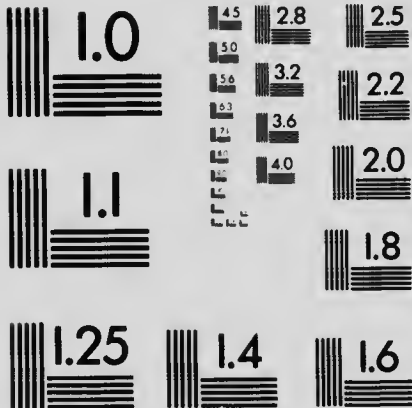
LIV

Oh yet we trust that somehow good
 Will be the final goal of ill,
 To pangs of nature, sins of will,
 Defects of doubt, and taints of blood;
 That nothing walks with aimless feet;
 That not one life shall be destroy'd,
 Or cast as rubbish to the void,
 When God hath made the pile complete;
 That not a worm is cloven in vain;
 10 That not a moth with vain desire
 Is shrivell'd in a fruitless fire,
 Or but subserves another's gain.
 Behold, we know not anything;
 I can but trust that good shall fall
 At last—far off—at last, to all,
 And every winter change to spring.



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So runs my dream; but what am I?
 An infant crying in the night:
 An infant crying for the light:
 30 And with no language but a cry.

LV

The wish, that of the living whole
 No life may fail beyond the grave,
 Derives it not from what we have
 The likest God within the soul?
 Are God and Nature then at strife,
 That Nature lends such evil dreams?
 So careful of the type she seems,
 So careless of the single life;
 That I, considering everywhere
 30 Her secret meaning in her deeds,
 And finding that of fifty seeds
 She often brings but one to bear,
 I falter where I firmly trod,
 And falling with my weight of cares
 Upon the great world's altar-stairs
 That slope thro' darkness up to God,
 I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
 And gather dust and chaff, and call
 To what I feel is Lord of all,
 40 And faintly trust the larger hope.

LVI

"So careful of the type?" but no.
 From scarp'd cliff and quarried stone
 She cries, "A thousand types are gone:
 I care for nothing, all shall go.

“Thou makest thine appeal to me:
 I bring to life, I bring to death:
 The spirit does but mean the breath:
 I know no more.” And he, shall he,

Man, her last work, who seemed so fair,
 50 Such splendid purpose in his eyes,
 Who roll'd the psalm to wintry skies,
 Who built him fanes of fruitless prayer,

Who trusted God was love indeed
 And love Creation's final law—
 Tho' Nature, red in tooth and claw
 With ravine, shriek'd against his creed—

Who loved, who suffer'd countless ills,
 Who battled for the True, the Just,
 Be blown about the desert dust,
 60 Or seal'd within the iron hills?

No more? A monster then, a dream,
 A discord. Dragons of the prime,
 That tare each other in their slime,
 Were mellow music match'd with him.

O life as futile, then, as frail!
 O for thy voice to soothe and bless!
 What hope of answer, or redress?
 Behind the veil, behind the veil.

LVII

Peace; come away: the song of woe
 70 Is after all an earthly song:
 Peace; come away: we do him wrong
 To sing so wildly: let us go.

Come; let us go: your cheeks are pale;
But half my life I leave behind:
Methinks my friend is richly shined;
But I shall pass; my work will fail.

Yet in these ears, till hearing dies,
One set slow bell will seem to toll
The passing of the sweetest soul
80 That ever look'd with human eyes.

I hear it now, and o'er and o'er,
Eternal greetings to the dead;
And "Ave, Ave, Ave," said,
"Adieu, adieu," for evermore.

LVIII

In those sad words I took farewell:
Like echoes in sepulchral halls,
As drop by drop the water falls
In vaults and catacombs, they fell;

And, falling, idly broke the peace
90 Of hearts that beat from day to day,
Half-conscious of their dying clay,
And those cold crypts where they shall cease.

The high Muse answer'd: "Wherefore grieve
Thy brethren with a fruitless tear?
Abide a little longer here,
And thou shalt take a nobler leave."

--*Tennyson.*

THE ENGLISH FLAG*

Above the portico a flag-stuff, bearing the Union Jack, remained fluttering in the flames for some time, but ultimately when it fell the crowds rent the air with shouts, and seemed to see significance in the incident.—

Daily Papers.

Winds of the World, give answer? They are
whimpering to and fro—

And what should they know of England who only
England know?—

The poor little street-bred people that vapour and
fume and brag,

They are lifting their heads in the stillness to yelp
at the English Flag!

Must we borrow a clout from the Boer—to plaster
anew with dirt?

An Irish liar's bandage, or an English coward's
shirt?

We may not speak of England; her Flag's to sell
or share.

What is the Flag of England? Winds of the
World, declare!

The North Wind blew :—“ From Bergen my steel-
shod van-guards go;

10 I chase your lazy whalers home from the Disko
floe;

By the great North Lights above me I work the
will of God,

That the liner splits on the ice-field or the Dogger
fills with cod.

* Printed with permission of George N. Morang & Company,
Limited, Toronto.

"I barred my gates with iron, I shuttered my
 doors with flame,
 Because to force my ramparts your nutshell navies
 came;
 I took the sun from their presence, I cut them down
 with my blast,
 And they died, but the Flag of England blew free
 ere the spirit passed.

"The lean white bear hath seen it in the long, long
 Arctic night,
 The musk-ox knows the standard that flouts the
 Northern Light:
 What is the Flag of England? Ye have but my
 bergs to dare,
 20 Ye have but my drifts to conquer. Go forth, for it
 is there!"

The South Wind sighed:—"From The Virgins my
 mid-sea course was ta'en
 Over a thousand islands lost in an idle main,
 Where the sea-egg flames on the coral and the
 long-backed breakers croon
 Their endless ocean legends to the lazy, locked
 lagoon.

"Strayed amid lonely islets, mazed amid outer
 keys,
 I waked the palms to laughter—I tossed the scud
 in the breeze—
 Never was isle so little, never was sea so lone,
 But over the scud and the palm-trees an English flag
 was flown.

“I have wrenched it free from the halliard to hang
for a wisp on the Horn;
30 I have chased it north to the Lizard—ribboned and
rolled and torn;
I have spread its fold o'er the dying, adrift in a
hopeless sea;
I have hurled it swift on the slaver, and seen the
slave set free.

“My basking sunfish know it, and wheeling
albatross,
Where the lone wave fills with fire beneath the
Southern Cross.
What is the Flag of England? Ye have but my
reefs to dare,
Ye have but my seas to furrow. Go forth, for it is
there!”

The East Wind roared:—“From the Kuriles, the
Bitter Seas, I come,
And me men call the Home-Wind, for I bring the
English home.
Look—look well to your shipping! By the breath
of my mad typhoon
40 I swept your close-packed Praya and beached your
best at Kowloon!

“The reeling junks behind me and the racing seas
before,
I raped your richest roadstead—I plundered Singa-
pore!
I set my hand on the Hoogli; as a hooded snake
she rose,
And I flung your stoutest steamers to roost with
the startled crows.

“ Never the lotos closes, never the wild-fowl wake,
But a soul goes out on the East Wind that died for
England’s sake—

Man or woman or suckling, mother or bride or
maid—

Because on the bones of the English the English
Flag is stayed.

“ The desert dust hath dimmed it, the flying wild’
ass knows

50 The scared white leopard winas it across the taint-
less snows.

What is the Flag of England? Ye have but my
sun to dare,

Ye have but my sands to travel. Go forth, for it
is there !”

The West Wind called :— “ In squadrons the
thoughtless galleons fly

That bear the wheat and cattle lest street-bred
people die.

They make my might their porter, they make my
house their path,

Till I loose my neck from their rudder and overwhelm
them all in my wrath.

I draw the gliding fog-bank as a snake is drawn
from the hole;

They bellow one to the other, the frightened ship-
bells toll,

For day is a drifting terror till I raise the shroud
with my breath,

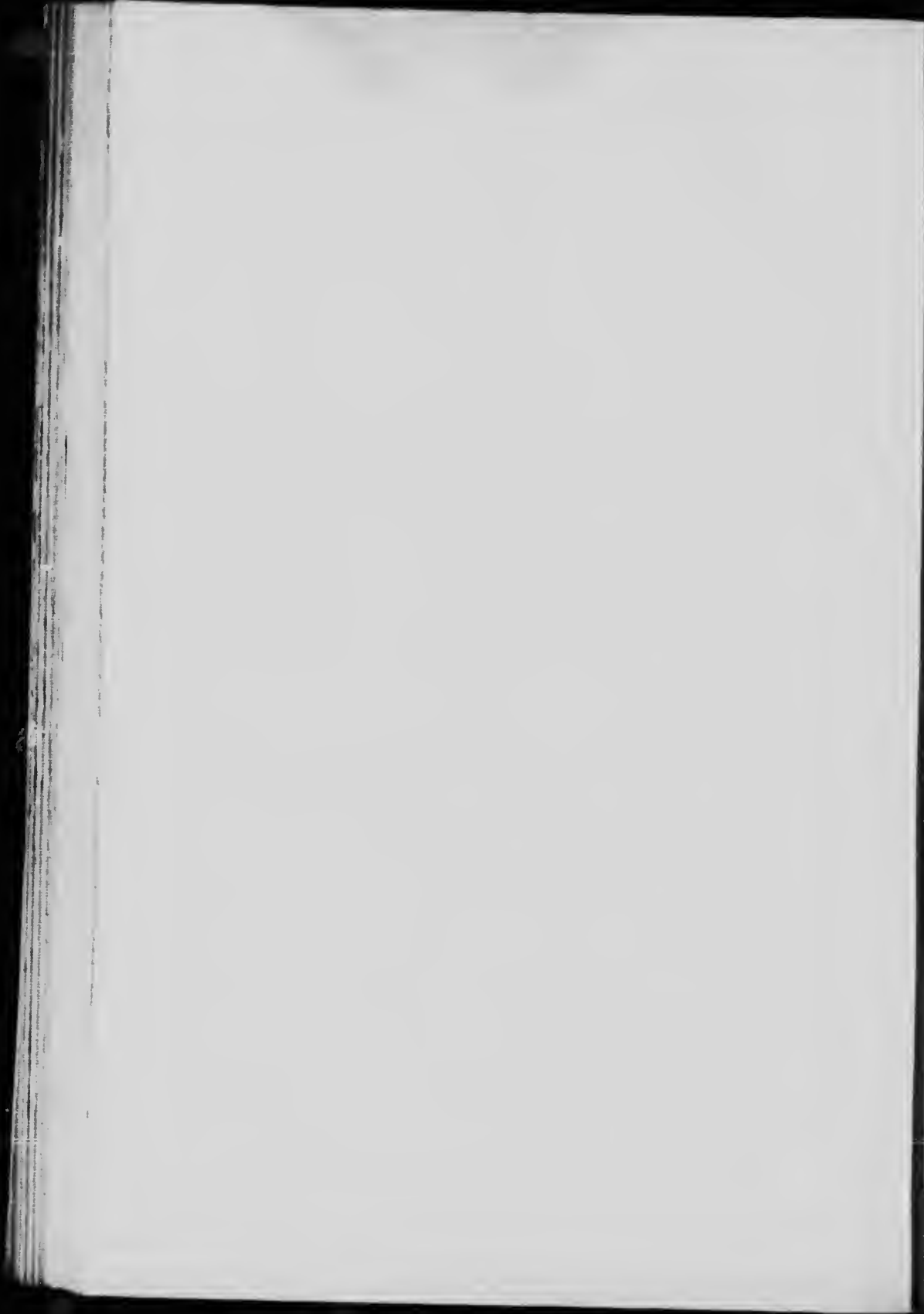
60 And they see strange bows above them and the
two go locked to death.

“ But whether in calm or wrack-wreath, whether
by dark or day,
I heave them whole to the conger or rip their plates
away,
First of the scattered legions, under a shrieking
sky,
Dipping between the rollers, the English Flag
goes by.

“ The dead dumb fog hath wrapped it—the frozen
dews have kissed—
The naked stars have seen it, a fellow-star in the
mist.
What is the Flag of England? Ye have but my
breath to dare,
Ye have but my waves to conquer. Go forth, for
it is there !”

—*Rudyard Kipling.*

Lord Tennyson wrote to Mr. Kipling congratulating him on these verses. The repetition of the word “dare” is characteristic, and was much relished by the older poet. “When the private in the ranks is praised by the general, he cannot presume to thank him, but he fights the better next day.”



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