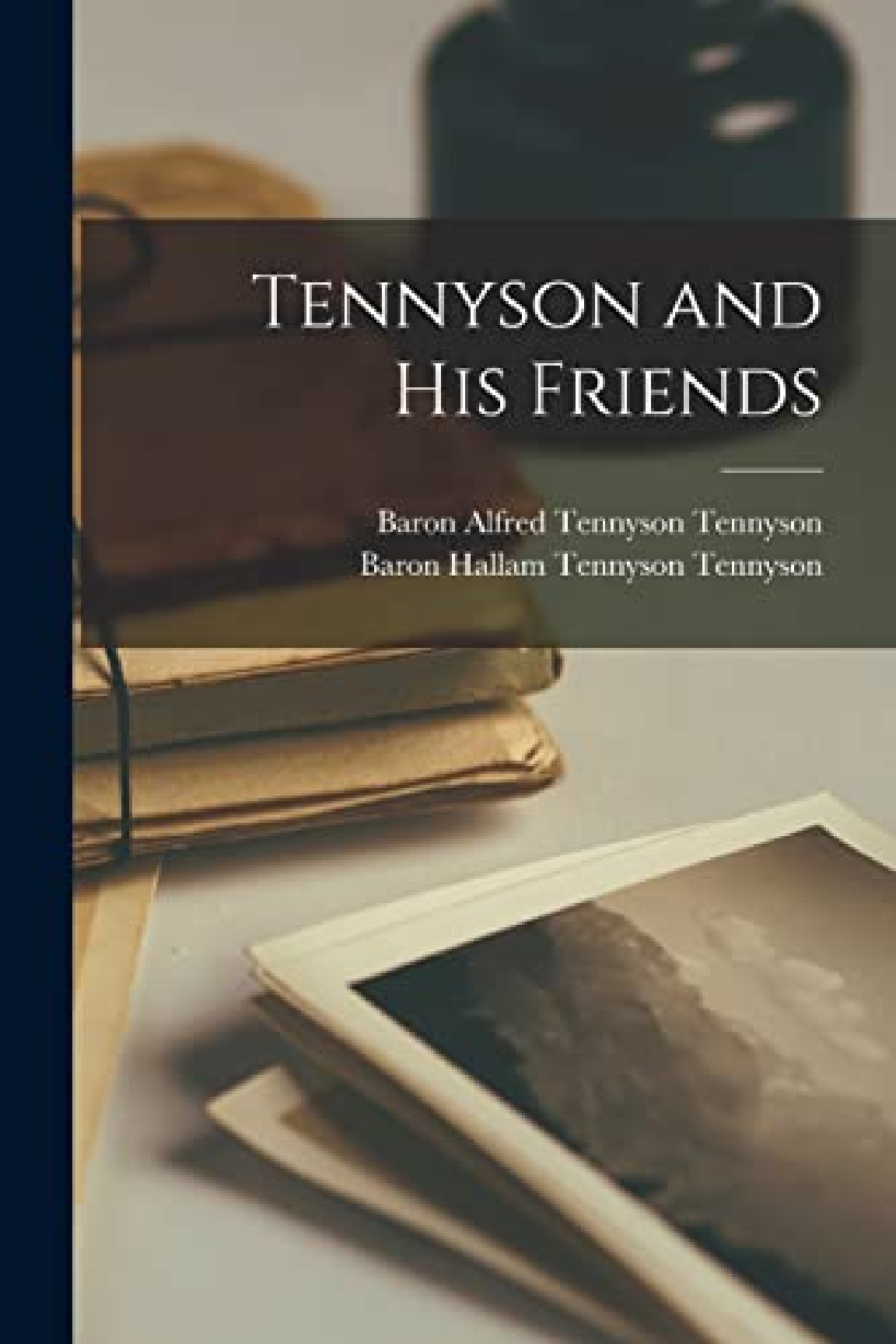


Tennyson and His Friends

Baron Alfred Tennyson Tennyson
Baron Hallam Tennyson Tennyson

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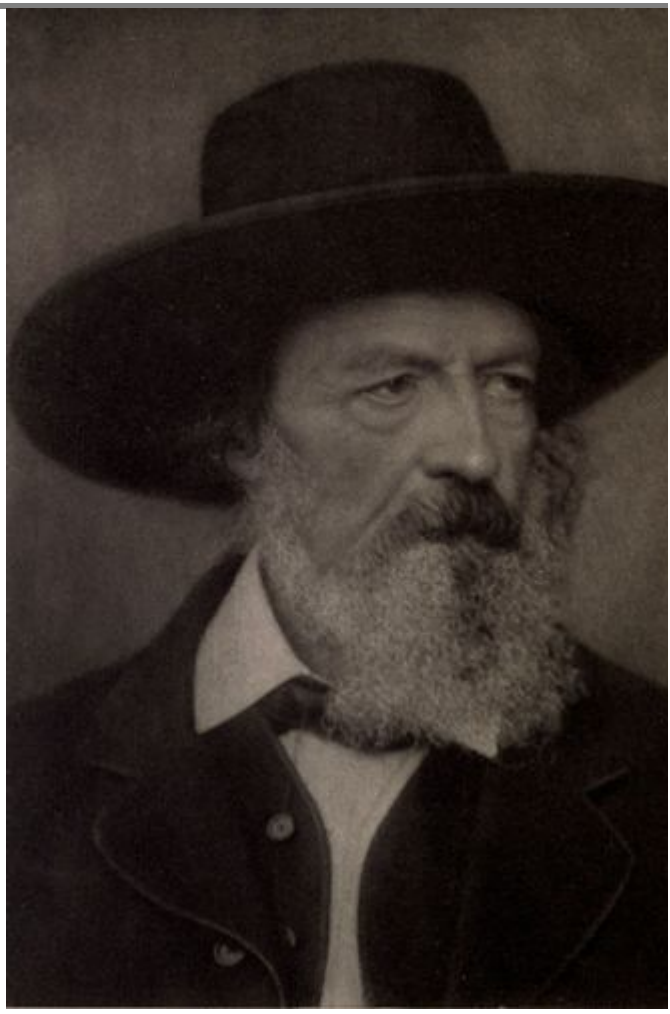
TENNYSON AND HIS FRIENDS



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Barraud, photographer Emery Walker, Ph.sc.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson
(*in his 80th year*)

TENNYSON AND HIS FRIENDS

EDITED
BY
HALLAM, LORD TENNYSON

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
ST. MARTIN'S STREET, LONDON
1911

Dedicated
TO
THE FRIENDS OF TENNYSON

BY
HIS SON

PREFACE

To those who have contributed to this volume their memories of my father, criticisms of his work, or records of his friends, I owe a deep debt of gratitude. Three of the writers, Henry Butcher, Sir Alfred Lyall, and Graham Dakyns, have lately, to my great loss, passed away—into that fuller "light of friendship"—

"a clearer day
Than our poor twilight dawn
on earth."

TENNYSON.

[The following chapters about my father are arranged, as far

as possible, according to the sequence of his life. Further reminiscences by the Duke of Argyll, Gladstone, Jowett, Lecky, Locker-Lampson, Palgrave, Lord Selborne, Tyndall, Aubrey de Vere, and other friends, will be found in *Tennyson, a Memoir*.]

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TENNYSON AND HIS FRIENDS

JUNE BRACKEN AND HEATHER

(Dedication of "The Death of Œnone" to Emily, Lady Tennyson)

There on the top of the down,
The wild heather round me and over me June's high blue,
When I look'd at the bracken so bright and the heather so brown,
I thought to myself I would offer this book to you,
This, and my love together,
To you that are seventy-seven,
With a faith as clear as the heights of the June-blue heaven,
And a fancy as summer-new
As the green of the bracken amid the gloom of the heather.





Emery Walker, Ph.sc.

Emily Lady Tennyson
from a drawing by G. F. Watts, R.A.

RECOLLECTIONS OF MY EARLY LIFE

By Emily, Lady Tennyson

Written for her son in 1896

You ask me to tell you something of my life before marriage at Horncastle in Lincolnshire. It would be hard indeed not to do anything you ask of me if within my power. To say the truth, this particular thing you want is somewhat painful. The first thing I remember of my father[1] is his looking at me with sad eyes after my mother's[2] death. Her I recollect, passing the window in a velvet pelisse, and then in a white shawl on the sofa, and then crowned with roses—beautiful in death. I recollect, too, being carried to her funeral; but I asked what they were doing, and in all this had no idea of death.

My life before marriage was in many ways sad: in one, however, unspeakably happy. No one could have had a better father, or been happier with her

two sisters, Anne and Louisa. Although, if we were too merry and noisy in the mornings, we were summoned by my Aunt Betsy (who lived with us) all three into her room, to hold out our small hands for stripes from a certain little riding-whip; or if, later in the day, our needlework was not well done we had our fingers pricked with a needle, or if the lessons were not finished, we had fools' caps put on our heads, and were banished to a corner of the room. My aunt's nature was by no means cruel; she was, on the whole, kind and dutiful to us, yet no doubt with effort on her part, for she had no instinctive love of children.

Among our neighbours we had as friends the Tennysons, the Rawnsleys, the Bellinghams, and the Massingberds. The death of my cousin, Mr. Cracroft, was among my early tragedies. He had been on public business at Lincoln: and on his return to Horncastle, was seized at our house with Asiatic cholera, a solitary case, which proved fatal. Ourselves and his daughters heard of it in a strange way. We were in a tent at a sheep-shearing, the great rustic festival of that day. A village boy came into our tent, and swarmed up the pole, saying to us, "I know something; your father is dead." We hurried home, and we, three sisters, were put by my aunt (to keep us quiet) to the hitherto-unwonted task of stoning raisins. This made me so indignant that I threw my raisins over the edge of the bowl, and forthwith my aunt caught me up, and—so rough was the treatment of children then—banged my head against the door of our old wainscoted rooms, until I called out for my father, crying aloud, "Murder"; when he rushed in and saved me.

My next memory of my father is his giving me Latin

lessons; and at this time I somehow came across a copy of *Cymbeline*, which I read with great delight. Then we had our first riding-lessons. I well recall my dislike of riding, when my pony was fastened to a circus stake, which I had to go round and round. Unfortunately, much as my father wished it, I never became a good horsewoman. He himself was so good a rider, when all the gentlemen of the county were volunteers, that he could ride horses which no one else could ride—so my grandmother would tell me with pride—adding, "Your father and his brother (both six foot three) were the handsomest men among them all." At that time he kept guard with his fellow-volunteers over the French prisoners, who, he said, were always cheerful and always singing their patriotic songs.

But to return to my sisters and myself. For exercise we generally took long walks in the country, and I remember that when staying at my father's house in Berkshire[3] we often used to wander up to a tower among our woods where a gaunt old lady lived, called Black Jane, who told our fortunes. We had our favourite theatricals, too, like other children. Our dramatic performances were frequent, and our plays were, some of them, drawn from Miss Edgeworth's tales. I was always fond of music, and used to sing duets with my soldier cousin, Richard Sellwood.

At eight years old I was sent, with my sisters, to some ladies for daily lessons, and later to schools in Brighton and London, for my father disliked having a governess in the house. So, much as he objected to young girls being sent from home, school in our case seemed the lesser evil. My sisters liked school; to me it was dreadful. As soon as I reached the Brighton seminary, I remember that for weeks I appeared to

be in a horrible dream, and the voices of the mistresses and the girls around me seemed to be all thin, like voices from the grave. I could not be happy away from my father, who was my idol, though after a while I grew more accustomed to the strange life. My father would never let us go the long, cold journey at Christmas time from Brighton to Horncastle, but came up to town for the vacation, and took us for treats to the National Gallery, and other places of interest. Great was the joy, when the summer holidays arrived, and after travelling by coach through the day and night, we three sisters saw Whittlesea-mere gleaming under the sunrise. It seemed as if we were within sight of home.

When I was eighteen, my Aunt Betsy left us to live by herself alone. We spent rather recluse lives, but we were perfectly happy, my father reading to us every evening from about half-past eight to ten, the hour at which we had family prayers. Most delightful were the readings; for instance, all of Gibbon that could be read to us, Macaulay's *Essays*, Sir Walter Scott's novels. For my private reading he gave me Dante, Ariosto, and Tasso, Molière, Racine, Corneille. Later I read Schiller, Goethe, Jean Paul Richter; and for English—Pearson, Paley's *Translation of the Early Fathers*, Coleridge's works, Wordsworth, and of course Milton and Shakespeare. We had walks and drives and music and needlework. Now and again we dined in the neighbourhood, and some of the neighbours dined with us; and once a year my father asked all the legal luminaries of Horncastle to dinner with him.

Before my sister Louy married your Uncle Charles (Tennyson-Turner) in 1836, my cousin, Catherine Franklin, daughter of Sir Willingham Franklin, took

up her abode with us, and we had several dances at our house. Two fancy-dress dances I well remember. Louy and I disliked visiting in London and in country-houses, and so we always refused, and sent Anne in our stead. My first ball, I thought an opening of the great portals of the world, and I looked forward to it almost with awe. It is rather curious that at one of my very few balls, Mr. Musters (Jack Musters his intimates called him), who married Byron's Mary Chaworth, should have asked for, and obtained, an introduction to me.

In 1842 came Catherine's marriage to our true friend, Drummond Rawnsley, the parson of the Rawnsley family; and then my sister Anne married Charles Weld. After this my father and I lived together alone. The only change we had from our routine life was a journey, one summer, to Tours, with Anne and Charles Weld, and his brother Isaac Weld, the accomplished owner of Ravenswell, near Bray, in Ireland.

At your father's home, Somersby, we used to have evenings of music and singing. Your Aunt Mary played on the harp as her father used to do. She was a splendid-looking girl, and would have made a beautiful picture. Then your Aunt Emily (beloved of Arthur Hallam) had wonderful eyes—depths on depths they seemed to have—and a fine profile. "Testa Romana" an old Italian said of her. She had more of the colouring of the South, inherited, perhaps, from a member of Madame de Maintenon's family who married one of the Tennysons. Your father had also the same kind of colouring. All, brothers and sisters, were fair to see. Your father was kingly, masses of fine, wavy hair, very dark, with a pervading shade of gold, and long, as it was then

worn. His manner was kind, simple, and dignified, with plenty of sportiveness flashing out from time to time. During my ten years' separation from him the doctors believed I was going into a consumption, and the Lincolnshire climate was pronounced to be too cold for me; and we moved to London, to look for a home in the south of England. We found one at last at Hale near Farnham, which was called by your father "my paradise." The recollection of this delightful country made me persuade your father eventually to build a house near Haslemere. We were married on June 13, 1850, at Shiplake on the Thames.

TENNYSON AND LINCOLNSHIRE

By Willingham Rawnsley

I

Tennyson's Country

Calm and deep peace on this high wold,
And on these dews that drench the furze,
And all the silvery gossamers
That twinkle into green and gold.

Calm and still light on yon great plain
That sweeps with all its autumn bowers,
And crowded farms and lessening towers,
To mingle with the bounding main.

Lincolnshire is a big county, measuring seventy-five miles by forty-five, but it is perhaps the least well known of all the counties of England. The traveller by the Great Northern main line passes through but a small portion of its south-western fringe near Grantham; and if he goes along the eastern side from Peterborough to Grimsby or Hull, he gains no insight into the picturesque parts of the county, for the line takes him over the rich flat fenlands with their black vegetable mould devoid of any kind of stone or pebble, and intersected by those innumerable dykes or drains varying from 8 to 80 feet across, which give the southern division of Lincolnshire an aspect in harmony with its Batavian name “the parts of Holland.”

The Queen of this flat fertile plain is Boston, with her wonderful church-tower and lantern 280 feet high, a marvel of symmetry when you are near it, and visible for more than twenty miles in all directions. Owing to its slender height it seems, from a distance, to stand up like a tall thick mast or tree-trunk, and is hence known to all the countryside as “Boston stump.”

At this town, the East Lincolnshire line divides: one section goes to the left to Lincoln; the other,

following the bend of the coast at about seven miles' distance from the sea, turns when opposite Skegness and runs, at right angles to its former course, to Louth,—Louth whose beautiful church spire was painted by Turner in his picture of "The Horse Fair."

The more recent Louth-to-Lincoln line completes the fourth side of a square having Boston, Burgh, Louth, and Lincoln for its corners, which contains the fairest portion of the Lincolnshire wolds, and within this square is Somersby, Tennyson's birthplace and early home. It is a tiny village surrounded by low green hills; and close at hand, here nestling in a leafy hollow, and there standing boldly on the "ridgèd wold," are some half a dozen churches built of the local "greensand" rock, from whose towers the Poet in his boyhood heard:

> The Christmas bells from hill to hill
> Answer each other in the mist—

the mist which lay athwart those "long gray fields at night," and marked the course of the beloved Somersby brook.

If we go past the little gray church with its perfect specimen of a pre-Reformation cross hard by the porch, and past the modest house almost opposite, which was for over thirty years the home of the Tennysons, we shall come at once to the point where the road dips to a little wood through which runs the rivulet so lovingly described by the Poet when he was leaving the home of his youth:

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

and again:

> Unloved, by many a sandy bar,
> The brook shall babble down the plain,
> At noon or when the lesser wain
> Is twisting round the polar star;
>
> Uncared for, gird the windy grove,
> And flood the haunts of hern and crake;
> Or into silver arrows break
> The sailing moon in creek and cove.

Northward, beyond the stream, the white road climbs the wold above Tetford, and disappears from sight. These *wolds* are chalk; the greensand ridge being all to the south of the valley, except just at Somersby and Bag-Enderby, where the sandrock crops up by the roadside, and in the little wood by the brook.

This small deep channelled brook with sandy bottom —over which one may on any bright day see, as described in "Enid,"

> a shoal
> Of darting fish, that on a summer morn...
> Come slipping o'er their shadows on the sand,
> But if a man who stands upon the brink
> But lift a shining hand against the sun,
> There is not left the twinkle of a fin
> Betwixt the cressy islets white with flower—

was very dear to Tennyson. When in his "Ode to Memory" he bids Memory

> Come from the woods which belt the gray hillside,

> The seven elms, the poplars four
> That stand beside my father's door,

he adds:

> And *chiefly* from the brook that loves
> To purl o'er matted cress and ribbèd sand,
> Or dimple in the dark of rushy coves,
> Drawing into his narrow earthen urn
> In every elbow and turn,
> The filter'd tribute of the rough woodland,
> *O! hither lead thy feet!*

If we follow this

> pastoral rivulet that swerves
> To left and right thro' meadowy curves,
> That feed the mothers of the flock,

we, too, shall hear

> the livelong bleat
> Of the thick fleecèd sheep from wattled folds
> Upon the ridgèd wolds.

And shall see the cattle in the rich grass land, and mark on the right the green-gray tower of Spilsby, where so many of the Franklin family lived and died, the family of whom his future bride was sprung.

Still keeping by the brook, we shall see, past the tower of Bag-Enderby which adjoins Somersby, "The gray hill side" rising up behind the Old Hall of Harrington, and

> The Quarry trenched along the hill
> And haunted by the wrangling daw,

above which runs the chalky "ramper" or turnpike-road which leads along the eastern ridge of the wold

to Alford, whence you proceed across the level Marsh to the sea at Mablethorpe.

The Marsh in Lincolnshire is a word of peculiar significance. The whole country is either *fen*, *wold*, or *marsh*. The wolds, starting from Keal and Alford, run in two ridges on either side of the Somersby Valley, one going north to Louth and onwards, and one west by Spilsby and Horncastle to Lincoln. Here it joins the great spine-bone of the county on which, straight as an arrow for many a mile northwards, runs the Roman Ermine Street; and but for the Somersby brook these two ridges from Louth and Lincoln would unite at Spilsby, whence the greensand formation, which begins at Raithby, sends out two spurs, one eastwards, ending abruptly at Halton, while the other pushes a couple of miles farther south, until at Keal the road drops suddenly into the level fen, giving a view—east, south, and west—of wonderful extent and colour, ending to the east with the sea, and to the south with the tall pillar of Boston Church standing up far above the horizon. This flat land is *the fen*; all rich cornland and all well drained, but with few habitations, and with absolutely no hill or even rise in the ground until, passing Croyland or Crowland Abbey, which once dominated a veritable land of fens only traversable by boats, you come, on the farther side of Peterborough, to the great North Road. Such views as this from Keal, and the similar one from Lincoln Minster, which looks out far to the south-west over a similar large tract of fen, are not to be surpassed in all the land.

But the Poet's steps from Somersby would not as a rule go westwards. The coast would oftener be his aim; and leaving Spilsby to the right, and the old twice-plague-stricken village of Partney, where the

Somersby rivulet becomes a river, he would pass from "the high field on the bushless pike" to Miles-cross-hill, whence the panorama unfolds which he has depicted in Canto XI. of "In Memoriam":

> Calm and still light on yon great plain,
> That sweeps with all its autumn bowers,
> And crowded farms and lessening towers,
> To mingle with the bounding main.

Thence descending from the wold he would go through Alford, and on across the sparsely populated pasture-lands, till he came at last to

> Some lowly cottage whence we see
> Stretched wide and wild the waste enormous marsh,
> Where from the frequent bridge,
> Like emblems of infinity,
> The trenchèd waters run from sky to sky.

This describes the third section of Lincolnshire called *the Marsh*, a strip between five and eight miles wide, running parallel with the coast from Boston to Grimsby, and separating the wolds from

> the sandbuilt ridge
> Of heaped hills that mound the sea.

This strip of land is not marsh in the ordinary sense of the word, but a belt of the richest grass land, all level and with no visible fences, each field being surrounded by a broad dyke or ditch with deep water, hidden in summer by the tall feathery plumes of the "whispering reeds." Across this belt the seawind sweeps for ever. The Poet may allude to this when, in his early poem, "Sir Galahad," he writes:

> But blessed forms in whistling storms

> Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields;

and "the hard grey weather" sung by Kingsley breeds a race of hardy gray-eyed men with long noses, the manifest descendants of the Danes who peopled all that coast, and gave names to most of the villages there, nine-tenths of which end in "by."

This rich pasture-land runs right up to the sand-dunes,—Nature's own fortification made by the winds and waves which is just outside the Dutch and Roman embankments, and serves better than all the works of man to keep out the waters of the North Sea from the low-lying levels of the *Marsh* and *Fen*.

The lines in the "Lotos-Eaters":

> They sat them down upon the yellow sand
> Between the sun and moon upon the shore,

describes what the Poet might at any time of full moon have seen from that "sand-built ridge" with the red sun setting over the wide marsh, and the full moon rising out of the eastern sea; and "The wide winged sunset of the misty marsh" recalls one of the most noticeable features of that particular locality, where, across the limitless windy plain, the sun would set in regal splendour; and when "cold winds woke the gray-eyed morn" his rising over the sea would be equally magnificent in colour.

Having crossed the "Marsh" by a raised road with deep wide dykes on either side, and no vestige of hedge or tree in sight, except where a row of black poplars or aspens form a screen from the searching wind round a group of the plainest of farm buildings, red brick with roofing of black glazed pan-tiles, you come to the once tiny village of Mablethorpe,

sheltering right under the sea-bank, the wind-blown sands of which are held together by the penetrating roots of the tussocks of long, coarse, sharp-edged grass, and the prickly bushes of sea buckthorn, gray-leaved and orange-berried.

You top the sand-ridge, and below, to right and left, far as eye can see, stretch the flat, brown sands. Across these the tide, which at the full of the moon comes right up to the barrier, goes out for three-quarters of a mile; of this the latter half is left by the shallow wavelets all ribbed, as you see it on the ripple-marked stone of the Horsham quarries, and shining with the bright sea-water which reflects the low rays of the sun; while far off, so far that they seem to be mere toys, the shrimper slowly drives his small horse and cart, to the tail of which is attached the primitive purse net, the other end of it being towed by the patient, long-haired donkey, ridden by a boy whose bare feet dangle in the shallow wavelets. Farther to the south the tide ebbs quite out of sight. This is at "Gibraltar Point," near Wainfleet Haven, where Somersby brook at length finds the sea, a place very familiar to the Poet in his youth. The skin of mud on the sands makes them shine like burnished copper in the level rays of the setting sun, which here have no sandbank to intercept them, but at other times it is a scene of dreary desolation, such as is aptly described in "The Passing of Arthur":

> a coast
> Of ever-shifting sand, and far away
> The phantom circle of a moaning sea.

It was near this part of the shore that, as a young man, he often walked, rolling out his lines aloud or murmuring them to himself, a habit which was also

that of Wordsworth, and led in each case to the peasants supposing the Poet to be “craäzed,” and caused the Somersby cook to wonder “what Mr. Awlfred was always a-praying for,” and caused also the fisherman, whom he met on the sands once at 4 A.M. as he was walking without hat or coat, and to whom he bid good-morning, to reply, “Thou poor fool, thou doesn’t knaw whether it be night or daä.”

But at Mablethorpe the sea does not go out nearly so far, and at high tide it comes right up to the bank with splendid menacing waves, the memory of which furnished him, five and thirty years after he had left Lincolnshire for ever, with the famous simile in “The Last Tournament”:

> 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.

This accurately describes the flat Lincolnshire coast with its “interminable rollers” breaking on the endless sands, than which waves the Poet always said that he had never anywhere seen grander, and the clap of the wave as it fell on the hard sand could be heard across that flat country for miles. Doubtless this is what prompted the lines in “Locksley Hall”:

> Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the sandy tracts,
> And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataracts.

"We hear in this," says the "Lincolnshire Rector,"[4] writing in *Macmillan's Magazine* of December 1873, "the mighty sound of the breakers as they fling themselves at full tide with long-gathered force upon the slope sands of Skegness or Mablethorpe on the Lincolnshire coast, nowhere is ocean grander in a storm; nowhere is the thunder of the sea louder, nor its waves higher, nor the spread of their waters on the beach wider."

It is not only of the breakers that the Poet has given us pictures. Along these sands it was his wont, no doubt, as it has often been that of the writer,

> To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,
> And tender curving lines of creamy spray,

and it is still Skegness and Mablethorpe which may have furnished him with his simile in "The Dream of Fair Women":

> So shape chased shape as swift as, when to land
> Bluster the winds and tides the self-same way,
> Crisp foam-flakes scud along the level sand,
> Torn from the fringe of spray.

Walking along the shore as the tide goes out, you come constantly on creeks and pools left by the receding waves,

> A still salt pool, lock'd in with bars of sand,
> Left on the shore; that hears all night
> The plunging seas draw backward from the land
> Their moon-led waters white.[5]

or little dimpled hollows of brine, formed by the

wind-swept water washing round some shell or stone:

> As the sharp wind that ruffles all day long
> A little bitter pool about a stone
> On the bare coast.[6]

Many characteristics of Lincolnshire scenery and of Somersby in particular are introduced in "In Memoriam."

In Canto LXXXIX. the poet speaks of the hills which shut in the Somersby Valley on the north:

> Nor less it pleased in lustier moods
> Beyond the bounding hill to stray.

In XCV. he speaks of the knolls, elsewhere described as "The hoary knolls of ash and haw," where the cattle lie on a summer night:

> Till now the doubtful dusk reveal'd
> The knolls once more where, couch'd at ease,
> The white kine glimmer'd, and the trees
> Laid their dark arms about the field:

and in Canto C. he calls to mind:

> The sheepwalk up the windy wold,

and many other features seen in his walks with Arthur Hallam at Somersby.

In "Mariana" we have:

> From the dark fen the oxen's low
> Came to her: without hope of change,
> In sleep she seem'd to walk forlorn,
> Till cold winds woke the gray-eyed morn,
> About the lonely moated grange.

But no picture is more complete and accurate and remarkable than that of a wet day in the Marsh and on the sands of Mablethorpe:

> Here often when a child I lay reclined:
> I took delight in this fair strand and free:
> Here stood the infant Ilion of the mind,
> And here the Grecian ships all seem'd to be.
> And here again I come, and only find
> The drain-cut level of the marshy lea,
> Gray sand-banks, and pale sunsets, dreary wind,
> Dim shores, dense rains, and heavy-clouded sea.

From what we have said it will be clear to the reader that while it is the *fen* land only that the railway traveller sees, it is the *Marsh* and the *Wolds*—and particularly in Lord Tennyson's mind the Wolds—that make the characteristic charm of the county, a charm of which so many illustrations are to be found throughout his poems. Certainly in her wide extended views, in the open wolds with the villages and their gray church towers nestling in the sheltered nooks at the wold foot, and also (to quote again from the "Lincolnshire Rector") "in her glorious parish churches and gigantic steeples, Lincolnshire has charms and beauties of her own. And as to fostering genius, has she not proved herself to be the 'meet nurse of a poetic child'? for here, be it remembered, here in the heart of the land, in Mid-Lincolnshire, Alfred Tennyson was born, here he spent all his earliest and freshest days; here he first felt the divine afflatus, and found fit material for his muse:

The Spirit of the Lord began to move him at

> times in the Camp of Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol."

II

The Somersby Friends

> We leave the well-beloved place
> Where first we gazed upon the sky;
> The roofs, that heard our earliest cry,
> Will shelter one of stranger race.
> .....
> I turn to go: my feet are set
> To leave the pleasant fields and farms;
> They mix in one another's arms
> To one pure image of regret.

It is no wonder that the Tennysons loved Somersby. They were a large family, and here they grew up together, making their own world and growing ever more fond of the place for its associations. "How often have I longed to be with you at Somersby!" writes Alfred Tennyson's sister, Mary,[7] thirteen years after leaving the old home. "How delightful that name sounds to me! Visions of sweet past days rise up before my eyes, when life itself was new,

> And the heart promised what the fancy drew."

Here, when childhood's happy days were over, the Tennyson girls rejoiced in the society of their brothers' Cambridge friends, and, though the village was so remote that they only got a post two or three times a week,[8] here they not only drank in contentedly the beauty of the country, but also

passed delightful days with talk and books, with music and poetry, and dance and song, when, on the lawn at Somersby, one of the sisters

> brought the harp and flung
> A ballad to the brightening moon.

Here, as Arthur Hallam said, "Alfred's mind was moulded in silent sympathy with the everlasting forms of Nature."

I have said that they made their own world; and they were well able to do it, for they were a very remarkable family. The Doctor was a very tall, dark man, very strict with his boys, to whom he was schoolmaster as well as parent. He was a scholar, and unusually well read, and possessed a good library. Clever, too, he was with his hands, and carved the stone chimney-piece in the dining-room, which his man Horlins built under his direction. He and his wife were a great contrast, for she was very small and gentle and highly sensitive.

Edward FitzGerald speaks of her as "one of the most innocent and tender-hearted ladies I ever saw"; and the Poet depicts her in "Isabel," where he speaks of her gentle voice, her keen intellect and her

> Sweet lips whereon perpetually did reign
> The summer calm of golden charity.

Mary was the letter-writer of the family, and a very clever woman, and her letters show that she knew her Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Keats, and Coleridge as well as her brother's poems.

They were a united family, but Charles and Alfred were nearest to her in age. She writes to one of her great friends: "O my beloved, what creatures men

are! my brothers are the exception to this general rule." Accordingly, of Charles she writes: "If ever there was a sweet delightful character it is that dear Charley," and of Alfred: "A. is one of the noblest of his kind. You know my opinion of men in general is much like your own; they are not like us, they are naturally *more* selfish and *not so affectionate*." She adds:

> Alfred is universally beloved by all his friends, and was long so before he came to any fame....
>
> We look upon him as the stay of the family; you know it is to him we go when anything is to be done. Something lately occurred here which was painful; we wrote to Alfred and he came immediately, after, I am told, not speaking three days scarcely to any one from distress of mind, and that *not* for himself, mind, but for others. Did this look like selfishness?

After leaving Somersby she felt the loss of these brothers sorely.

Alfred's devotion to his mother was always perfect. In October 1850 Mary writes from Cheltenham:

> Yesterday, Mamma, I, and Fanny went to look for houses, as Alfred has written to say that he should like to live by his Mother or in the same house with us, if we could get one large enough, and he would share the rent, which would be a great deal better. He wishes us to take a house in the neighbourhood of London, if we can give up ours, with him, or to take a small house for

> him and Emily[9] on the outskirts of Cheltenham till we can move; so what will be done I know not, but this I know that Alfred must come here and choose for himself, so we have written to him to come immediately, and we are daily expecting him.

But though life at Cheltenham when the brothers were all away was dull for Mary, it had not been so at Somersby; for there they had home interests sufficient to keep them always occupied, and they were not without neighbours. Ormsby was close at hand, to the north, where lived as Rector, Frank Massingberd, afterwards Chancellor of Lincoln, a man of cultivation and old-world courtesy. His wife Fanny was one of the charming Miss Barings of Harrington, which was but a couple of miles off to the east. Her sister Rosa was that "sole rose of beauty, loveliness complete," to whom the Poet wrote such charming little birthday verses; and sixty-five years afterwards Rosa, then Mrs. Duncombe Shafto, still spoke with enthusiasm of those happy days. Mrs. Baring had married for her second husband, Admiral Eden, a man of great conversational powers, and with a very large circle of interesting friends. He took the old Hall of Harrington, with its fine brick front, from the Cracrofts, who moved to Hackthorn near Lincoln, and thus the families at Harrington and Somersby saw a great deal of one another.

There were two Eden daughters, the strikingly handsome Dulcibella and her sister, who looked after the house and its guests. Hence their nicknames of "Dulce" and "Utile."

A mile or two beyond Harrington was Langton, where Dr. Johnson came to visit his friend Bennet Langton, who died only seven years before Dr. Tennyson came to Somersby. But, though the Langtons were friends of the Doctor's, this was not a house the young people much frequented. Mary, having come back to the old neighbourhood, writes from Scremby: "I am going to Langton to-morrow to spend a few days with the Langtons, don't you pity me? I hope I shall get something more out of Mrs. Langton than Indeed, Yes, No!"

Adjoining Langton the Tennysons had friends in the Swans of Saucethorpe, and a little farther eastwards was Partney, where George Maddison and his mother lived. He was a hero, of whom tales were told of many courageous deeds, such as his going single-handed and taking a desperate criminal who, being armed, had barricaded himself in an old building and set all the police at defiance. It was a question whether people most admired the courage of the man or the beauty of his charming wife, Fanny, one of the three good-looking daughters of Sir Alan Bellingham, who all found husbands in that neighbourhood. In the Lincolnshire poem, "The Spinster's Sweet-Arts," the Poet has immortalized their name:

> Goä to the laäne at the back, and loök thruf Maddison's gaäte!

From Partney the hill rises to Dalby, where lived John Bourne, whose wife was an aunt of the young Tennysons, and here they would meet the handsome Miss Bournes of Alford; one, Margaret, was dark, the other was Alice, a beautiful fair girl. They married brothers, Marcus and John Huish. Mrs. John Bourne

was the Doctor's sister Mary, and the young Tennysons would have been oftener at Dalby had it been their Aunt Elizabeth Russell[10] who lived there, of whom they always spoke in terms of the strongest affection.

The old house at Dalby was burnt down in 1841. About this Mr. Marcus Huish tells me that his mother wrote in a diary at the time:

> *Jan. 5, 1841.*—On this day Dalby House, the seat of the Bournes, and round whose simple Church, standing embosomed in trees, my family, including my dear sister Mary Hannah, lie buried, was burnt to the ground;

and on the 7th Mrs. Huish wrote:

> I have this morning received intelligence that the dear House at Dalby was on Tuesday night burnt down, and is now a wreck. I feel very deeply this disastrous circumstance, endeared as it was to me by ties of time and association. Mr. Tennyson has written to me as follows on this catastrophe.

The letter was a long one, two pages being left for it in the diary, but unfortunately it was never copied in.

The villages here are very close together, and going from Partney, two miles eastward, you come to Skendleby, where Sir Edward Brackenbury lived, whose elder brother Sir John was Consul at Cadiz, and used to send over some good pictures and some strong sherry, known by the diners-out as "the Consul's sherry." The Rector of the next village of Scremby was also a Brackenbury, and here Mary

Tennyson most loved to visit. Mrs. Brackenbury, whom she always calls “Gloriana,” was adored by all who knew her. Mary says, “She is so sweet a character, and she has always been so kind and so anxious for our family ... I look upon her as already a saint.” Two of the Rectors of Halton had also been Brackenburys—a father and son in succession, and they were followed by two generations of Rawnsleys —Thomas Hardwicke and his son Drummond.

Adjoining Scremby is Candlesby, where Tennyson’s genial friend, John Alington, who had married another of the beautiful Miss Bellinghams, was Rector; and within half a mile is Gunby, the delightful old home of the Massingberds. In Dr. Tennyson’s time Peregrine Langton, who had married the heiress of the Massingberds and taken her name, was living there.

It was from Gunby that Algernon Massingberd disappeared, going to America and never being heard of again, which gave rise to a romance in “Novel” form, that came out many years later called *The Lost Sir Massingberd*. Going on eastward still, by Boothby, where Dr. Tennyson’s friends the Walls family lived, in a house to which you drove up across the grass pasture, the sheep grazing right up to the front door, a thing still common in the Lincolnshire Marsh, you come to Burgh, with its magnificent Church tower and old carved woodwork. Here was the house of Sir George Crawford, and here from the edge of the high ground on which the Church stands you plunge down on to the level Marsh across which, at five miles’ distance, is Skegness, at that time only a handful of fishermen’s cottages, with “Hildred’s Hotel,” one good house occupied by a large tenant farmer, and a reed-thatched house right on the old

Roman sea bank, built by Miss Walls, only one room thick, so that from the same room she could see both the sunrise and the sunset. Here all the neighbourhood at different times would meet, and enjoy the wide prospect of sea and Marsh and the broad sands and the splendid air. When the tide was out the only thing to be seen, as far as eye could reach, were the two or three fishermen, like specks on the edge of the sea, and the only sounds were the piping of the various sea-birds, stints, curlews, and the like, as they flew along the creeks or over the gray sand-dunes. Mablethorpe was nearer to Somersby, but had no house of any size at which, as here, the dwellers on the wold knew that they were always welcome.

But we have other houses to visit, so let us return by Burgh and Bratoft, where above the chancel arch of the ugly brick Church is a remarkable picture of the Spanish Armada, represented as a huge red dragon, with the ships of Effingham's fleet painted in the corner of the picture.

Passing Bratoft, the next thing we come to is the Somersby brook, which is here "the Halton River," and on the greensand ridge, overlooking the fen as far as "Boston Stump," stands the fine Church of Halton Holgate. In this Church, as at Harrington, Alfred as a boy must have seen the old stone effigy of a Crusader as described in "Locksley Hall Sixty Years After"

> with his feet upon the hound,
> Cross'd! for once he sailed the sea to crush
> the Moslem in his pride.

The road ascends the "hollow way" cut through the greensand, and a timber footbridge is flung across it

leading from the Church to the Rectory. Dr. Tennyson could tell the story of how his old friend T. H. Rawnsley, the Rector, and Mr. Eden, brother of the Admiral, being in London, looked in at the great Globe in Leicester Square and heard a man lecturing on Geology. They listened till they heard "This Greensand formation here disappears" (he was speaking of Sussex) "and crops up again in an obscure little village called Halton Holgate in Lincolnshire." "Come along, Eden!" said the Rector; "this is a very stupid fellow."

Halton was the house, and Mr. and Mrs. Rawnsley the people, whom Dr. Tennyson most loved to visit. She had been previously known to him as the beautiful Miss Walls of Boothby. The Rector was the most genial and agreeable of men, and her charm of look and manner made his wife a universal favourite.

Here are two characteristic letters from Dr. Tennyson to Mr. Rawnsley:

Tuesday 28th, 1826.

DEAR RAWNSLEY—In your not having come to see me for so many months, when you have little or nothing to do but warm your shins over the fire while I, unfortunately, am frozen or rather suffocated with Greek and Latin, I consider myself as not only slighted but spifflicated. You deserve that I should take no notice of your letter whatever, but I will comply with your invitation partly to be introduced to the agreeable and clever lady, but more especially to have the pleasure of seeing Mrs. Rawnsley, whom, you may rest assured, I value considerably more than I do you. Mrs. T. is obliged by your invitation,

but the weather is too damp and hazy, Mr. Noah,—so I remain your patriarchship's neglected servant,

G. C. TENNYSON.

This letter was addressed to the Rev. T. H. Rawnsley, Halton Parsonage. The next was addressed to Halton Palace, and runs thus:

SOMERSBY, *Monday*.

DEAR RAWNSLEY—We three shall have great pleasure in dining with you to-morrow. We hope, also, that Mr. and Mrs. Clarke and yourselves will favour us with their and your company to dinner during their stay. I like them very much, and shall be very happy to know more of them.—Very truly yours,

G. C. TENNYSON.

P.S.—How the devil do you expect that people are to get up at seven o'clock in the morning to answer your notes? However, I have not kept your Ganymede waiting.

The friendship between the families, which was further cemented when the Rector's son Drummond married Kate Franklin, whose cousin, Emily Sellwood, afterwards became the Poet's wife, has been maintained for three generations. Alfred shared his father's opinion of Halton, and often wrote both to the Rector and his wife. In one letter to her, after pleading a low state of health and spirits as his reason for not joining her party at Halton, he says: "At the same time, believe me it is not without considerable uneasiness that I absent myself from a house where I visit with greater pleasure than at any

other in the country, if indeed I may be said to visit any other."

After leaving Somersby, he wrote on Jan. 28, 1838, from High Beech, Epping Forest:

> MY DEAR MRS. RAWNSLEY—I have long been intending to write to you, for I think of you a great deal, and if I had not a kind of antipathy against taking pen in hand I would write to you oftener; but I am nearly as bad in this way as Werner, who kept an express (horse and man) from his sister at an inn for two months before he could prevail upon himself to write an answer to her, and her letter to him was, nevertheless, on family business of the last importance. But my chief motive in writing to you now is the hope that I may prevail upon you to come and see us as soon as you can. I understood from some of my sisters that Mr. Rawnsley was coming in February to visit his friend Sir Gilbert. Now I trust that you and Sophy will come with him—of course he would not pass without calling, whether alone or not. I was very sorry not to have seen Drummond. I wish he would have dropt me a line a few days before, that I might have stayed at home and been cheered with the sight of a Lincolnshire face; for I must say of Lincolnshire, as Cowper said of England,
>
> With all thy faults I love thee still.
>
> You hope our change of residence is for the better. The only advantage in it is that one gets up to London oftener. The people are sufficiently hospitable, but it is not in a good

> old-fashioned way, so as to do one's feelings any good. Large set dinners with stores of venison and champagne are very good things of their kind, but one wants something more; and Mrs. Arabin seems to me the only person about who speaks and acts as an honest and true nature dictates: all else is artificial, frozen, cold, and lifeless.
>
> Now that I have said a good word for Lincolnshire and a bad one for Essex, I hope I have wrought upon your feelings, and that you will come and see us with Mr. Rawnsley. Pray do. You could come at the same time with Miss Walls when she pays her visit to the Arabins, and so have all the inside of the mail to yourselves; for though you were very heroic last summer on the high places of the diligence, I presume that this weather is sufficient to cool any courage down to zero. —Believe me, with love from all to all, always yours,
>
> A. TENNYSON.
>
> BEECH HILL, HIGH BEECH, LOUGHTON, ESSEX.

To this letter Mrs. Tennyson, the Poet's mother, adds a postscript, though she complains that Alfred has scarcely left her room to do so. The letter is dated in her hand.

The Halton family consisted of Edward, Drummond, and Sophy. The latter, with Rosa Baring, were two of Alfred's favourite partners at the Spilsby and Horncastle balls. Sophy Rawnsley became Mrs. Ed. Elmhirst; she often talked of the old Halton and

Somersby days. “He was,” she said, “so interesting, because he was so unlike other young men; and his unconventionality of manner and dress had a charm which made him more acceptable than the dapper young gentleman of the ordinary type at ball or supper party. He was a splendid dancer, for he loved music, and kept such time; but you know,” she would say, “we liked to talk better than to dance together at Horncastle, or Spilsby, or Halton; he always had something worth saying, and said it so quaintly.” Rosa at eighty-three recalled the same times with animation, and said to me, “You know we used to spoil him, for we sat at his feet and worshipped him; and he read to us, and how well he read! and when he wrote us those little poems we were more than proud. Ah, those days at Somersby and Harrington and Halton, how delightful they were!”

The Halton family were a decade younger than Charles, Alfred, and Mary Tennyson, but Drummond married eight years before Alfred. Emily Sellwood, just before her marriage with Alfred, wrote to Mrs. Drummond Rawnsley:

> MY DEAREST KATIE—You and Drummond are among the best and kindest friends I have in the world, and let me not be ungrateful, I have some very good and very kind—Thy loving sister
>
> EMILY.

The use of the *thy* is very frequent with the Sellwoods, and in all Mary Tennyson’s letters too.

It was at Halton, in the time of its next Rector, Drummond Rawnsley, that the farmer Gilbey

Robinson gave his son Canon H. D. Rawnsley the famous advice which the Poet has preserved in his Lincolnshire poem "The Churchwarden and the Curate":

> But creeäp along the hedge bottoms an thou'll be a Bishop yit.

And it was at Halton that Mr. Hoff, a large tenant farmer, lived of whom Dr. Tennyson heard many a story from the Rector. He was quite a character, and the Lord Chancellor Brougham was brought over by Mr. Eden from Harrington to see and talk with him. I knew Mr. Hoff, and have heard the Rector describe the lively afternoon they had. Farming was one of Lord Brougham's hobbies, and he talked of farming to his heart's content, and was delighted with the old fellow's shrewdness and independence, and his racy sayings in the Lincolnshire dialect, the kind of sayings which Tennyson has preserved in his "Northern Farmer." The farmer, too, was pleased with his visitor, but he said to the Rector afterwards, "He is straänge cliver mon is Lord Brougham, and he knaws a vast, noä doubt, but he knaws nowt about ploughing." It was the same farmer who was introduced by the Rector to the leading Barrister at the Spilsby sessions, where both the Rector and Dr. Tennyson were always in request to dine with the bar, when the Judge was at Spilsby, for the charm of their presence and the brightness of their conversation. Mr. Hoff had seen "Councillor Flowers" in Court in his wig and gown, but meeting him now in plain clothes, and finding him a very small man, he said to him straight out, "Why, you're nobbut a meän-looking little mon after all." These tenant farmers, whether in the Marsh, wold, or fen, were very considerable people in days when agriculture

was at its best. In the Marsh, one in particular, Marshal Heanley, was always termed the Marsh King. He it was who at the Ram-show dinner at Halton, when Ed. Stanhope, the Minister for War, had spoken of the future which was opening for the great agriculturists, and, after alluding to Lord Brougham's visit to the Shire and the sending of some farmers' sons to the Bar, had suggested the possibility of one of them arriving at the top of the tree and sitting some day on the Woolsack. The "Marsh King" got up and said, "I allus telled yer yer must graw wool; but when you've grawed it, yer mustn't sit on it, yer must sell it."

There was a good deal of humour and also of characteristic independence about both the farmers and their men in those days; the Doctor's own man, when found fault with, had flung the harness in a heap on the drawing-room floor, saying, "Cleän it yersen then." And at Halton Rectory an old Waterloo cavalryman was coachman, who kept in the saddle-room the sword he had drawn at Quatre-Bras, a delight to us boys to see and hear about. He had a way of thinking aloud, and when, driving once at Skegness, he saw the Halton schoolmaster, his particular aversion, Mrs. Rawnsley heard him say, "If there ain't that conceäted aäpe of ourn." On a later occasion, when, at a rent-day dinner, he was handing round the beer, and the schoolmaster asked, "Is it ale or porter?" in a voice heard by all the table he replied, "It's näyther aäle nor poörter, but very good beer, much too good for the likes o' you, so taäke it and be thankful." Perhaps his most famous saying was addressed to my younger brother who, when attempting to copy his elders who always jumped the quickset hedge opposite the saddle-room as a short cut to the house, had stuck in the thorns and cried,

"Grayson, Grayson, come and help me out!" The old man slowly wiped his hands, and with his usual deliberation said, "Yis, I'm a-coming." "But look sharp, confound you, it's pricking me." "Oh, if you're going to sweër you may stay theër, and be damned to you."

From Halton the way is short to Spilsby, the market town where the Franklins had lived, and the statue of Sir John resting his hand on an anchor looks down every Monday on the chaffering Market folk at one end of the Market Place, whilst the women still crowd round the old Butter-cross at the other end. In the Church is the Willoughby chapel, full of interesting monuments.

Many of the Franklin family lie in the Churchyard, and on the Church wall are three tablets to the three most distinguished brothers,—James, the soldier, who made the first ordnance survey of India; Sir Willingham, the Judge of the Supreme Court of Madras; and Sir John, the discoverer of the North-West Passage. Hundleby adjoins Spilsby where Mr. John Hollway lived, of whom the Poet wrote: "People say and I feel that you are the man with the finest taste and knowledge in literary matters here." Next to Hundleby comes Raithby, the home of the Edward Rawnsleys, where the Poet was a frequent visitor, and thence passing Mavis-Enderby on the left, the road runs on the Ridge of the Wold through Hagworthingham to Horncastle, the home of the Sellwoods. Mavis-Enderby is referred to in Jean Ingelow's poem, "The High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire, 1571":

> Play uppe, play uppe, O Boston bells!
> ……

The brides of Mavis Enderby.

After a visit to Raithby in 1874 Alfred wrote to Mrs. Edward Rawnsley:

> MY DEAR MARY—I stretch out arms of love to you all across the distance,—all the Rawnsleys are dear to me, and you, though not an indigenous one, have become a Rawnsley, and I invoke you in the same embrace of the affection, tho' memory has not so much to say about you.

At Keal, east of Mavis-Enderby, the Cracrofts, whom the Doctor knew well, were living; and below the far-famed Keal Hill, in the flat fen, lay Hagnaby Priory, the home of Thomas Coltman, whose nephews Tom and George were often there. George, a genial giant of the heartiest kind, became Rector of Stickney, half-way between Keal and Boston; he was one of the Poet's closest friends. In a letter to the Rector of Halton he says, "Remember me to all old friends, particularly to George Coltman"; and in after years he seldom met a Lincolnshire man without asking, "How is George Coltman? He was a good fellow." Agricultural depression has altered things in Lincolnshire. Among the farmers the larger holders have disappeared in many places, and in the pleasant homes of Halton and Somersby, such men as the Rectors in those Georgian and early Victorian days, Nature does not repeat.

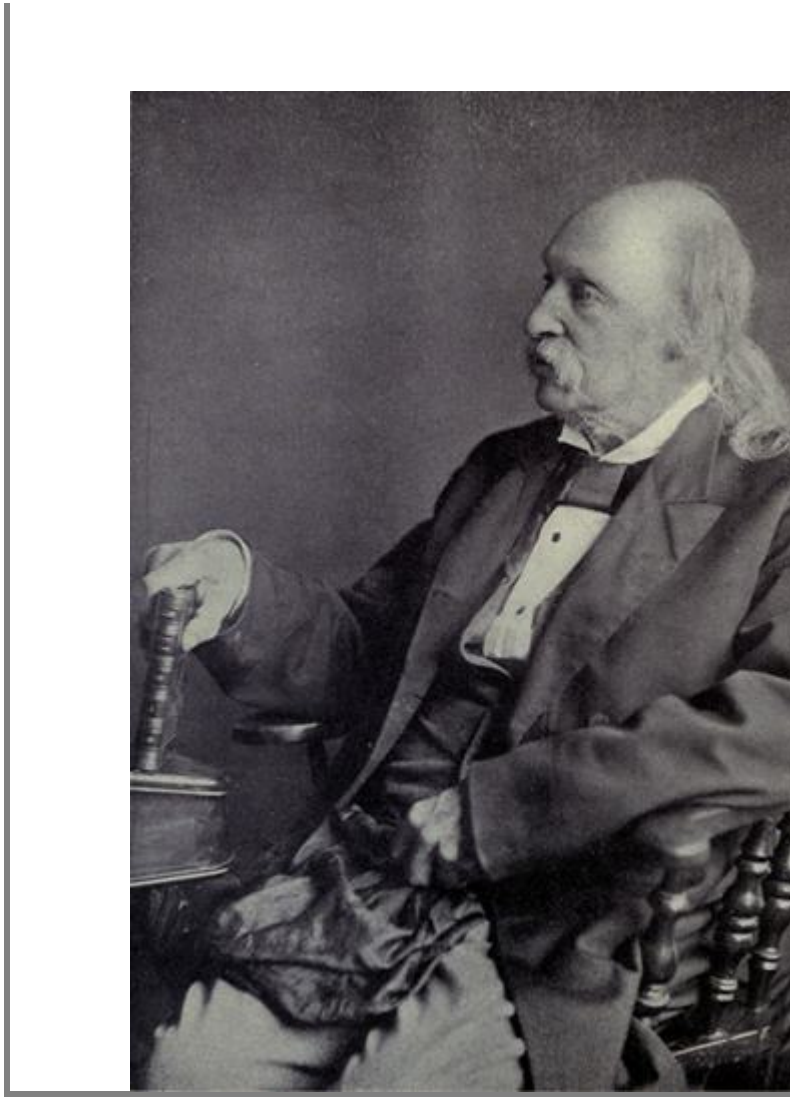
The departure of the Tennyson family made a blank which could never be filled. The villagers whom they left behind never forgot them, and even in extreme old age they were still full of memories of the family, and talked of the learning and cleverness of "the owd Doctor," the fondness of the children for their

mother and, most noticeable of all, their "book-larning,"

> And boöks, what's boöks? thou knaws thebbe naither 'ere nor theer.

The old folk all seemed to think that "to hev owt to do wi boöks" was a sign of a weak intellect. "The boys, *poor things!* they would allus hev a book i' their hands as they went along." A few years ago there was still one old woman in Somersby who remembered going, seventy-one years back, when she was eleven years old, for her first place to the Tennysons. What she thought most of was "the young laädies." She was blind, but she said, "I can see 'em all now plaän as plaän; and I would have liked to hear Mr. Halfred's voice ageän—sich a voice it wer."





FREDERICK TENNYSON.

TENNYSON AND HIS BROTHERS FREDERICK AND CHARLES

By CHARLES TENNYSON[11]

My uncle Frederick lived near St. Heliers, and my father and I visited him (1887) in his house, overlooking the town and harbour of St. Heliers, Elizabeth Castle, and St. Aubyn's Bay. The two old brothers talked much of bygone days; of the "red honey gooseberry," and the "golden apples" in Somersby garden, and of the tilts and tourneys they held in the fields; of the old farmers and "swains"; of their college friends; and of the waste shore at Mablethorpe: and then turned to later days, and to the feelings of old age. My father said of Frederick's poems that "they were organ-tones echoing among the mountains." Frederick told Alfred as they parted that "not for twenty years had he spent such a happy day."—*Tennyson: a Memoir, by his Son.*

To C. T.

True poet, surely to be found
When Truth is found again.

Of all the brothers of Alfred Tennyson the closest akin to him were Frederick and Charles. The three were born in successive years, Frederick in 1807, Charles in 1808, and Alfred in 1809. They slept together in a little attic under the roof of the old white Rectory at Somersby, they played together, read together, studied together under the guidance of

their father, and all three left home to go together to the school at Louth, which Alfred and Charles at least held in detestation until their latest years. Frederick was the first to break up the brotherhood, for, in 1817, he left Louth for Eton, but to the end of his long life—he outlived all his brothers—he seems to have looked back on the days of his childhood through the medium of this fraternal trinity. Years afterwards he wrote of their common submission to the influence of Byron, who "lorded it over them, with an immitigable tyranny," and a fire at Farringford in 1876 brings to his mind the destruction of their Aunt Mary's house at Louth, in the gardens of which he wrote: "I, and Charles, and Alfred, enthusiastic children, used to play at being Emperors of China, each appropriating a portion of the old echoing garden as our domain, and making them reverberate our tones of authority."

At school the brothers seem to have kept much to themselves; they took little interest in the school sports, in which their great size and strength would have well qualified them to excel, and passed their time chiefly in reading and wandering over the rolling wold and flat shores of their native Lincolnshire. They began at an early age their apprenticeship to poetry. Alfred, at least, had written a considerable volume of verse by the time he was fourteen, and all three contributed to the *Poems by Two Brothers*, which were published at Louth in 1827, when Frederick, the author of four of the poems, had just entered St. John's, Cambridge (his father's old College). Charles used to tell how, when the tiny volume was published, he and Alfred hired a conveyance out of the £10 which the publisher had given them, and drove off for the day to their favourite Mablethorpe, where they shouted

themselves hoarse on the shore as they rolled out poem by poem in one another's ears. The notes and headings to the poems give some idea of the breadth and variety of reading for which the brothers had found opportunity in their quiet country life, for the volume contains twenty quotations from Horace, eight from Virgil, six from Byron, five from Isaiah, four from Ossian, three from Cicero, two apiece from Moore, Xenophon, Milton, Claudian, and the Book of Jeremiah, with others from Addison, John Clare, Juvenal, Ulloa's *Voyages*, Beattie, Rennel's *Herodotus*, Savary's *Letters*, Tacitus' *Annals*, Pliny, Suetonius' *Lives of the Caesars*, Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, Racine, the *Mysteries of Udolpho*, *La Auruncana*, the *Songs of Jayadeva*, Sir William Jones (*History of Nadir Shah*, *Eastern Plants*, and *Works*, vol. vi.), Cowper, Ovid, *Burke on the Sublime and Beautiful*, Dr. Langhorne's *Collins*, Mason's *Caractacus*, Rollin, Contino's *Epitaph on Camoens*, Hume, Scott, the Books of Joel and Judges, Berquin, Young, Sale's Koran, Apollonius of Rhodes, Disraeli's *Curiosities of Literature*, Sallust, Terence, Lucretius, Coxe's *Switzerland*, Rousseau, the *Ranz des Vaches*, *Baker on Animalculae*, Spenser, Shakespeare, Chapman and various old English ballads, while many notes give odd scraps of scientific, geographical, and historical learning.

Alfred and Charles followed Frederick to Cambridge in 1828 and entered Trinity, whither their elder brother had just migrated from John's. All the three brothers attained a certain amount of rather unconventional distinction at the University; Frederick, who had taken a high place on his entrance into Eton and subsequently became Captain of the Oppidans, obtained the Browne Gold Medal for a Greek Ode (in Sapphic metre) on the Pyramids, the last cadence of which, "ὀλλυμένων γὰρ ἄχθων

ἐξαπολειται," is the only fragment which tradition has preserved. Charles obtained a Bell Scholarship in 1829, chiefly through the beauty of his translations into English (one line, "And the ruddy grape shall droop from the desert thorn," was always remembered by Alfred), and the youngest brother secured, as is well known, the University Prize for English Verse with his "Timbuctoo." None of the brothers, however, attained great distinction in the schools, though Frederick and Charles graduated B.A. in 1832. With the end of their Cambridge careers the brotherhood finally dissolved. It was at first proposed that all three should (in deference to the wish of their grandfather), become clergymen. Frederick had always shown a certain independence and intractability of character. At Eton, though a skilful and ardent cricketer, he acquired a reputation for eccentricity, and Sir Francis Doyle describes him as "rather a silent, solitary boy, not always in perfect harmony with Keate,"—a gentleman with whom most spirits, however ardent, generally found it convenient to agree.

Sir Francis recounts one typical incident: Frederick, then in the sixth form, had returned to school four days late after the Long Vacation. Keate sent for him and demanded an explanation. None was forthcoming. Keate stormed in his best manner, his prominent eyebrows shooting out, and his Punch-like features working with fury, Frederick remaining all the while cynically calm. Finally the fiery doctor insists with many objurgations on a written apology from the boy's father, whereupon the culprit leisurely produces a crumpled letter from his pocket and hands it coolly to the head-master. A fresh tirade follows, accusing Frederick of every defect of character and principle known to ethics, and

concluding, "*and showing such a temper too*"!

How little Frederick regarded himself as fitted for Holy Orders may be judged from a letter he wrote in 1832 to his friend John Frere: "I expect," he says, "to be ordained in June, without much reason, for hitherto I have made no kind of preparation, and a pretty parson I shall make, I'm thinking." The grandfather came apparently to share this conclusion, for the ordination never took place.

It must have been about this time that Frederick made the acquaintance of Edward FitzGerald, who was two years his junior. The pair maintained a close correspondence for many years, and "Fitz" became godfather to one of his friend's sons and left a legacy to be divided among his three daughters.

Frederick's fine presence and frank, tempestuous, independent nature seem to have made a powerful appeal to the younger man, for he had the great height, noble proportions, and dome-like forehead of the Tennyson family, and was so robustly built that it is said that in later years, when he lived in Florence, a new servant girl, on seeing him for the first time speeding up his broad Italian staircase in British knee-breeches, fell back against the wall in astonishment, exclaiming, "Santissima Madonna, che gambe!" Unlike his brothers, however, his hair (which he wore rather longer than was common even at that time) was fair and his eyes blue.

> "I remember," wrote Fitz in 1843, "the days of the summer when you and I were together quarrelling and laughing.... Our trip to Gravesend has left a perfume with me. I can get up with you on that everlastingly stopping coach on which we tried to travel

> from Gravesend to Maidstone that Sunday morning: worn out with it we got down at an Inn and then got up on another coach, and an old smiling fellow passed us holding out his hat—and you said, "That old fellow must go about as Homer did," and numberless other turns of road and humour, which sometimes pass before me as I lie in bed."

And in the next year he writes:

> How we pulled against each other at Gravesend! You would stay—I wouldn't—then I would—then we did. Do you remember that girl at the bazaar ... then the gentleman who sang at Ivy Green?

And seven years later Gravesend and its ἀνήριθμοι shrimps are still in his memory.

Very soon, however, after leaving Cambridge, Frederick, who had inherited a comfortable property at Grimsby, set out for Italy, and in Italy and near the Mediterranean he remained, with the exception of an occasional visit to England, until 1859.

He was passionately fond of travel, which, as he used to say, "makes pleasure solemn and pain sweet," and even his marriage in 1839 to Maria Giuliotti, daughter of the chief magistrate of Siena, could not induce him to make a settled home. In 1841 we hear of him (through "Fitz") in Sicily, playing a cricket match against the crew of the *Bellerophon* on the Parthenopaean Hills, and "*sacking* the sailors by ninety runs." "I like that such men as Frederick should be abroad," adds the writer, "so strong, haughty, and passionate," and in 1842 "Fitz" pictures him "laughing and singing, and riding into Naples

with huge self-supplying beakers full of the warm South." All the while he continued to write to FitzGerald "accounts of Italy, finer" (says the latter) "than any I ever heard."

Once he describes himself coming suddenly upon Cicero's Formian villa, with its mosaic pavement leading through lemon gardens down to the sea, and a little fountain bubbling up "as fresh as when its silver sounds mixed with the deep voice of the orator sitting there in the stillness of the noonday, devoting the siesta hours to study." FitzGerald replies with letters full of affection; he sighs for Frederick's "Englishman's humours"—for their old quarrels: "I mean quarrel in the sense of a good, strenuous difference of opinion, supported on either side by occasional outbursts of spleen. Come and let us try," he adds, "you used to irritate my vegetable blood." "I constantly think of you," he writes, "and as I have often sincerely told you, with a kind of love I feel towards but two or three friends ... you, Spedding, Thackeray, and only one or two more." And again: "It is because there are so few F. Tennysons in the world that I do not like to be wholly out of hearing of the one I know.... I see so many little natures that I must draw to the large."

All this time Frederick was writing verse and Fitz constantly urges him to publish. "You are now the only man I expect verse from," he writes in 1850, after he had given Alfred up as almost wholly fallen from grace. "Such gloomy, grand stuff as you write." Again: "We want some bits of strong, genuine imagination.... There are heaps of single lines, couplets, and stanzas that would consume the ——s and ——s like stubble."

Much of their correspondence is taken up with the discussion of music. They both agree in placing Mozart above all other composers. Beethoven they find too analytical and erudite. Original, majestic, and profound, they acknowledge him, but at times bizarre and morbid.

"We all raved about Byron, Shelley, and Keats," wrote Frederick long after, in 1885, "but none of them have retained their hold on me with the same power as that little tone poet with the long nose, knee-breeches, and pigtail." Indeed he was at different times told by two mediums that the spirit of Mozart in these same knee-breeches and pigtail accompanied him, invisibly to the eye of sense, as a familiar. Music was the passion of Frederick Tennyson's life. It was said among his friends that when he settled in Florence (as he did soon after 1850), he lived in a vast Hall designed by Michael Angelo, surrounded by forty fiddlers, and he used to improvise on a small organ until he was over eighty years of age.

> "After all," he wrote in 1874, "Music is the Queen of the Arts. What are all the miserable concrete forms into which we endeavour to throw 'thoughts too deep for tears' or too rapturous for mortal mirth, compared with the divine, abstract, oceanic utterances of that voice which can multiply a thousandfold and exhaust in infinite echoes the passions that on canvas, in marble, or even in poesy (the composite style in aesthetics), so often leave us cold and emotionless! I believe Music to be as far above the other Arts as the affections of the soul above the rarest ingenuity of the perfect orator! Perhaps you

> are far from agreeing with me. Indeed the common charge brought against her by her sisters among the Pierides—and by the transcendentalists and philosophical Critics—is that She has no type like the other Arts on which to model her creations and to regulate her inspirations. I say her inexhaustible spring is the soul itself, and its fiery inmost—the chamber illuminated from the centre of Being—as the finest and most subtle ethers are begotten of, and flow nearest to the Sun."

Frederick lived at Florence till 1857 and found there, after years of wandering, his first settled home. The idea of settling tickled his humour, and in 1853 he writes: "I am a regular family man now with four children (the last of whom promises to be the most eccentric of a humorous set) and an Umbrella." In Florence he came in contact with Caroline Norton and her son Brinsley, of the latter of whom he writes an amusing account:

> Young Norton has married a peasant girl of Capri, who, not a year ago, was scampering bare-footed and bare-headed over the rocks and shingles of that island. He has turned Roman Catholic among other accomplishments—being in search, he said, of a "graceful faith."... Parker has just published a volume of his which he entitled "Pinocchi: or Seeds of the Pine," meaning that out of this small beginning he, Brin, would emerge, like the pine, which is to be "the mast of some great Admiral," from its seedling. He is quite unable to show the applicability of this title, and, seeing that the book has been very severely handled in one

of the periodicals under the head of “Poetical Nuisances,” some are of opinion that “Pedocchi” would have been a more fitting name for it. However, to do him no injustice, he has sparks of genius, plenty of fancy and improvable stuff in him, and is, moreover, a young gentleman of that irrepressible buoyancy which, to use the language of the *Edinburgh Review*, “rises by its own rottenness....” As I said, he is not more than three-and-twenty, but is very much in the habit of commencing narrative in this manner: “In my young days when I used to eat off gold plate!” to which I reply, “Really a fine old gentleman like you should have more philosophy than to indulge in vain regrets.”

While we were located at Villa Brichieri, up drove one fine day the famous Caroline, his mother, who, not to speak of her personal attractions, is really, I should say, a woman of genius, if only judged by her novel, *Stuart of Dunleath*, which is full of deep pathos to me. I asked Brin one day what his mother thought of me. He stammers very much, and he said, “She th-th-th-thinks very well of you, but I d-d-don’t think she likes your family.” “Good heavens! here’s news,” I said. Well, afterwards she told me of having met Alfred at Rogers’, and of having heard that he had taken a dislike to her. “Why, Mrs. Norton,” I said, “that must be nearly thirty years ago, and do you harbour vindictive feelings so long?” “Oh!” she said, “why, I’m not thirty!”

> Again, one day we met her in a country house where we were invited to meet her, and soon after she had shaken hands with me she said, with a dubious kind of jocosity, "I should like to see all the Tennysons hung up in a row before the Villa Brichieri." Upon the whole, I thought her a strange creature, and she has not yet lost her beauty—a grand Zenobian style certainly, but, like many celebrated beauties, she seems to have won the whole world. Among other things she said in allusion to some incident, "What mattered it to me whether it was an old or a young man—I who all my life have made conquests?" It seemed to me that to dazzle in the great world was her principal ambition, and literary glory her second.[12]

But Frederick was too much of a man of moods to care for society. He used to describe himself as a "person of gloomy insignificance and unsocial monomania." Society he dismissed contemptuously as "Snookdom," and would liken it gruffly to a street row. The "high-jinks of the high-nosed" (to use another phrase of his) angered him, as did all persons "who go about with well-cut trousers and ill-arranged ideas." The consequence was that his acquaintance in Florence long remained narrow. In 1854, shortly after the birth of his second son, he wrote:

> Sponsors I have succeeded in hooking, one in this manner: A friend of mine called yesterday and introduced a Mr. Jones. "Sir," said I, "happy to see you. Like to be a godfather?" "Really," he said, not quite prepared for the honour, "do my best."

> "Thank you, then I'll call for you on my way to the church"; so Mr. Jones was booked.

One hears, however, of a visit of Mrs. Sartoris (Adelaide Kemble) in 1854. "I had not seen her for twenty years," writes Frederick; "she is grown colossal, but all her folds of fat have not extinguished the love of music in her." But one friendship which Frederick made in Florence was destined to be a lifelong pleasure to him. In 1853 he writes:

> The Brownings I have but recently become acquainted with. They really are the very best people in the world, and a real treasure to that Hermit, a Poet. Browning is a wonderful man with inexhaustible memory, animal spirits, and bonhomie. He is always ready with the most apropos anecdote, and the happiest bon mot, and his vast acquaintance with out-of-the-way knowledge and the quaint Curiosity Shops of Literature make him a walking encyclopaedia of marvels. Mrs. B., who never goes out—being troubled like other inspired ladies with a chest—is a little unpretending woman, yet full of power, and, what is far better, loving-kindness; and never so happy as when she can get into the thick of mysterious Clairvoyants, Rappists, Ecstatics, and Swedenborgians. Only think of their having lived full five years at Florence with all these virtues hidden in a bushel to me!

In 1854 he published his first volume of verse, *Days and Hours*. The book was, on the whole, well received. Charles Kingsley (whose early and discriminating recognition of the merits of George

Meredith places him high among the critics of his day) wrote: “The poems are the work of a finished scholar, of a man who knows all schools, who has profited more or less by all, and who often can express himself, while revelling in luxurious fancies, with a grace and terseness which Pope himself might have envied.” There was, however, a good deal of adverse criticism, and it was probably mainly owing to his irritation at many of the strictures (often futile enough) which were passed upon him at this time that he kept silence for the next thirty-six years. At any rate, he was always ready to the end of his life for a growl or a thunder at the critics.

In 1857 Frederick Tennyson left Florence and after spending some time in Pisa and Genoa finally settled in Jersey, where he made his home for nearly forty years. During all this period he maintained a regular and detailed correspondence with Mrs. Brotherton, the wife of his friend Augustus Brotherton, the artist, with whom he had begun to exchange letters while still at Florence. His life was now a very quiet one, for, except for an occasional visit to England, he never left home. His children with their families visited him from time to time. His brother Charles came with his wife to see him in 1867, as did the Brownings on their way to Italy, and Alfred also paid him visits, the last of which was in 1892. On the whole, however, his days, for one who had been so passionately fond of travel and of a life of colour, warmth, and excitement, were singularly peaceful. But he retained to the last his astonishing vitality. His health remained tolerably good in spite of the nervous irritability and reactions of melancholy which were inseparable from the extraordinary energy and vivacity of his temperament. “Poor Savile Morton used to stare at me with wonder,” he writes.

"'I cannot conceive,' he said, 'how a man with such a stomach can be subject to hypochondria.'" In 1867, at the age of sixty, he batted for an hour to his nephew Lionel's bowling, hoping thereby to be able "to revive the cricket habit," and his mind continued extraordinarily active; not a movement in world politics or thought escaped him; he read voraciously and continued to write verse in a rather desultory fashion. His appetite for beauty, too, remained as keen as ever and even developed. "The longer I live," he wrote in 1885, "the more delicate become my perceptions of beautiful nature." And that appetite found ample food in the scenery of the bowery island, the whole ambit of which, with its curling tree-tops and distant lawny spaces dappled with sunshine and surrounded, as it seemed, by the whole immensity of the globe, could be seen from a point near his house.

In his isolation, however, his active mind tended to become more and more possessed by certain ideas, with which everything he read and heard was brought into relation. While still at Florence he had (possibly under the influence of Mrs. Browning) become greatly interested in the teachings of Swedenborg and the phenomena of spiritualism which seemed to him a natural development of Swedenborg's theories. At first he was apt to speak rather lightly of spirit revelations. In 1852 he wrote to Alfred:

> "Powers the sculptor here, who is a Swedenborgian, says he once had a vision of two interwoven angels upon a ground of celestial azure clearly revealed to him by supernatural light after he had put out his candle and was lying awake in bed, and

believes that these are only the beginning of wonders; the spirits themselves announce the dawn of a new time and the coming of the Millennium, and he firmly believes that all we now do by costly material processes will in the returning Golden Age of the world be accomplished for us by ministering spirits. 'Thou shalt see the angels of heaven ascending and descending on the Son of man.' I go with him as far as to believe that these are spiritual revelations, but I confess I cannot accompany him in his belief in their beneficent intentions. God speaks to the heart of man by His Spirit, not thro' table legs; the miracles of Christ were of inestimable worth, but these unfortunate ghosts either drivel like schoolgirls or bounce out at once into the most shameful falsehoods, and by their actual presence, pretending to be in their final state, they seem to have for their object, tho' they carefully avoid touching on those subjects, to undermine in the hearts of Christians the spiritual doctrines of the Resurrection of the spiritual body and of the judgment to come. And the more effectually to unsettle the old Theology, the cant of these spirits is that God is a God of Love, Love, Love, continually repeated *ad nauseam*. So He is, but 'My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor My ways your ways,' 'He scourgeth every son that He receiveth,' 'He loveth those whom He chasteneth,' 'it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God,' 'the pitiful God trieth the hearts and the reins.' But these spirits, by for ever harping upon the Love of

> God in their insipid language, seem to me to be anxious to persuade us that He is a 'fine old country gentleman with large estate,' or something of that kind, seated in a deeply-cushioned armchair, and patting the heads of His rebellious children when they come whimpering to Him, yielding to anything in the shape of intercession, and, rather than that St. Joseph or any other saint should be offended, ready to admit a brigand into Heaven. So that I thoroughly distrust your spirits and expect no virtue will come out of them. They only seem to me last links in the chain of modern witchcrafts which will probably end with the Devil."[13] And a little later he writes: "Owen the Socialist and a host of infidels by a peculiar logical process of their own, after seeing a table in motion, instantly believe in the immortality of the Soul. To me it is astounding and even awful, that in this nineteenth century after Christ—whose resurrection of the body rests on as strong a ground of proof as many of the best attested historical events—men should be beginning again with that vague and unsatisfactory phantom of a creed which must have been old in the time of Homer."

It was not long before he became a complete convert to Swedenborgianism and firmly convinced of the reality of the Spiritualistic phenomena with which the press and literature of the day began to be flooded. Indeed at one time he believed that spirits communicated with himself by a kind of electrical ticking, which he was constantly hearing in his room at night, and used at their dictation to do a certain amount of automatic writing. The results, however,

were so unsatisfactory that he was forced to conclude the spirits to be of an evil and untrustworthy nature, and he therefore abandoned the practice of spiritualism altogether. He remained, however, convinced of the fact that living men were able to communicate with the spirits of the departed, who had been able, since the end (in 1757) of the second dispensation (according to Swedenborg) and the abolition of the intermediate state of purgatory which accompanied it, to establish direct intercourse with our world, and he believed that this rapid increase of communication was a sign of the approach of the kingdom of heaven, that is to say, of the total abolition of all barriers between the material and spiritual worlds, and the actual physical regeneration of man in the Millennium predicted by Christ and the prophets. The natural and political tumults of which the nineteenth century was so prolific seemed to him to point in the same direction, and to fall in with the prophecy of Daniel which he was never tired of quoting.

Frederick abandoned these views at the end of his life, but it is not difficult to see how they came to acquire such a hold on him. He was essentially a mystic and clung most fervently to the belief in a future life, where all good things should be taken up into the spiritual life and glorified.

> "My daylight," he wrote in 1853, "is sombered by a natural instinct of unearthliness, a looking backwards and forwards for that sunny land which Imagination robes in unfailing Summer where no tears dim the Light, and no graves lie underneath our feet, by the side of which Riches, honors, even Health the first of

> blessings, all, in short, that is commonly called Happiness, looks cold and imperfect—while the great Shadow of Death fills up the distance, and the steps to it lie over withered garlands and dry bones." And again: "For an illustration of the bliss and delight of that higher state of being which under the influence of that Spirit-Sun shall hereafter rise daily to its appointed task, whatever that may be, with full heart and mind—I go back to 'the days that are no more,' when I used to dive into the sunny morn, rejoicing in my strength, refreshed with dreamless sleep 'like a giant with wine,' carrying my whole soul with me without fears or regrets, with a joy focussed like sunlight through a lens, on the infinite present moment! Such memories, tho' mournful, are blessed if they bring with them analogies of the 'Higher State to Be.' For the angel is but the infant sublimated—the rapture and the innocence, with the Wisdom and the Power adjoined, and crowned with Immortality! That is to say his will being in all things conformable to the Divine—he receives the divine influences which are heaven! And surely my unshakable belief is that all created beings—even those who have chosen the lowest Hell—will be eventually redeemed, exalted, and glorified—or there would be an Infinite Power of Good unable or unwilling to subdue Finite Evil."

His mind, however, was too independent to accept any of the creeds of orthodoxy. He is perpetually thundering against the "frowzy diatribes of black men with white ties—too often the only white thing

about them" (one can hear him rap out the parenthesis), and the "little papacies" that dominate a country town or village. Rome he regarded with an excessive hatred, and Oxford and Cambridge, twin homes of orthodoxy, did not escape his wrath.

Indeed, he regarded most modern Christianity as a perversion of the original truth, and Atheism in all its guises he hated with an even greater bitterness, as the following letter shows:

> This, as you truly say, is the age of Atheism —both practical and professional. But it is not only Bradlaugh and Mrs. —— who distinguish it as such—multitudes of most worthy and respectable people (in their own estimation) are classifiable under this category. Indeed all worldly people whose religion consists in saving appearances, all self-interested folk whose lives are passed in struggles with their neighbour for their own advantage—all such as wear down heart and mind and even physical well-being in the feverish ambition to pile up riches, not knowing who shall gather them or purely for the renown of possessing them. All ritualists who think they get to heaven by peculiar haberdashery, and intoning the prayers, which makes a farce of them by depriving them of articulate meaning. All believers in the vicarious atonement of faith alone, which creed signifies that all *has been done* instead of all has *to be done* for them. All who hurry to conventicles on Sunday with gilt-edged prayer-books, and begin on Monday morning to slander, ill-treat, or cheat their neighbours. In short all that excludes the

> spiritual from *this* life—which generally indicates unbelief in any other and virtually denies the *necessity*, and therefore the existence, of a Divine Governor. All Professors —— and —— in Physical science, all Herbert Spencers, etc. in metaphysical—who arrive by different courses at the same conclusion, viz. that God is *unknowable* [*sic*] and that therefore they need not take the trouble to know Him. All this is but Atheism virtual and avowed.

And materialism he considered little better than rank Atheism.

It was not unnatural, therefore, that he should have come to regard the phenomena of spiritualism as the strongest evidence of those beliefs which were to him more important than life itself, and, this conviction once established, submission to the strange genius of Swedenborg followed almost as a matter of course, for by his "science of correspondencies," the new phenomena seemed to fall naturally and inevitably into their proper place in that strange dual scheme of spirit and matter into which Swedenborg had resolved the Universe. When he had once embarked upon Occultism, other curious beliefs followed in the train of these main convictions. He became greatly impressed with the work of a certain Mr. Melville who believed that he had rediscovered an ancient and long forgotten method of reading the stars which was in fact the original mystery of Freemasonry. Frederick took eagerly to this idea which seemed to fall naturally into place with the Swedenborgian science of correspondencies, and in 1872 he actually came to England with Mr. Melville in the hope of being able to convince the Freemasons that all

modern Masonry with its boasted mysteries was futile and meaningless without the key of Mr. Melville's discovery in which lay the true explanation of all the masonic signs and symbols. Unfortunately an interview with the Duke of Leinster, the then Grand Master, gave the two apostles little satisfaction. It was on this visit that Frederick saw FitzGerald for the last time, and the latter described him to Mrs. Kemble as being "quite grand and sincere in this as in all else; with the Faith of a gigantic child—pathetic and yet humorous to consider and consort with."

The influence of these ideas gradually coloured Frederick's view on all current subjects. His years in Florence had been spent in the "hubbub of imminent war," and he writes indignantly of "the rottenness of these pitiable petty States and the incredible fantastic tricks of their abominable rulers." None the less, though he hated and despised most existing monarchies, he was too much imbued with the romance and dignity of the past to look with a very favourable eye on revolution. At first he dismissed Mazzini as "deserving a hempen collar with Nana Sahib and the King of Delhi," an opinion which the experience of later years compelled him to reverse. The story of nineteenth-century Europe seemed to him chaos, but it was the chaos which was to precede the new spiritual dispensation, and political prejudice never hindered him from the true appreciation of progress. Thus he writes in 1869:

> It is certain that Evil has never been more rampant than during the last century—witness the great French Revolution, subsequent wars, minor revolutions, and minor wars throughout the globe, the

> hundreds of millions wasted on warlike machinery, the countless numbers of young men sacrificed to the fiends of ambition and racial jealousy, society honeycombed with frauds, conspiracies, and class animosities, etc. etc. On the other hand, never has knowledge of all kinds been more progressive, never have the Arts and Sciences and Literature been so rapidly multiplied and so various. Never were charitable institutions more widely extended or practically beneficent. Never, in short, were the researches into all kinds of truths, especially those which concern the relations of man to God and his neighbour, more earnest, and if this seems to contradict the notorious fact that we are living at present in a world of Atheism and Materialism—which is the same thing—it does not really do so, for the two movements, though separate, are parallel and simultaneous. In short, "The Time of the End" is a transitional state—which will eventually issue in the triumph of Good over Evil once and for ever.

France he always hated as the leader of materialism, and he would repeat with a snort of disgust the remark of M. Bert, who, during the debate in the Chamber on the secularization of Education, observed that it was superfluous to exclude what did not exist. The debacle of 1870 seemed a just if tragic retribution.

> "One cannot help, however," he wrote on October 19, 1870, "feeling for beautiful Paris as one would for a Marie Antoinette passing on her way to execution. There she is in her

> solitude and in her beauty. Around her a circle of iron and fire—within her a restless seething of tumultuous passions embittering the present—her future a prospect of burning and famine. Such a downfall is unparalleled in history, and the agonies of her expiration —if things are carried to their bitter end— promise to equal those of the terrible siege of Jerusalem."

As might be expected, he tended to Conservatism in politics; Home Rule was anathema, and Disraeli, endeared to him as the possible leader of a United Israel, he regarded as a sincerer statesman than Gladstone. None the less he was able to applaud Gladstone's action on the occasion of the Bulgarian atrocities, though "even he" seemed to have yielded so much

> ... to the delicacies and squeamish sensibility, and fluttering nerves of a lolling generation—an age of sofas and carpets—the rousing of which even in the justest of causes, the vindication of the rights of unoffending humanity outraged by savages in comparison with whom niggers and Red Indians are angels, is not to be attempted without careful thought—and though a great cry has gone through the land I fear there will be little wool. There is, however, one consolation—neither Turkey, nor Egypt, nor any ruffian with a bundle of dirty clothes upon his head instead of a hat, will ever get another farthing of *our* money.

None the less he hated a bigoted Toryism, and thought that "a proper democratic spirit which aims

at a reconstruction of society on the principle of 'each for all and all for each,' the correlation of privileges and duties, worth and honour, wealth and charity (in its best sense), the substitution of altruism for egoism, ought to find its echo in every loyal heart —and would in fact be the very 'end of Sin, and bringing in of the Everlasting Righteousness' foretold."

In literature, too, his mind—in spite of an occasional failure to recognize individual genius—was remarkably alive to the progressive movements of the day. Indeed, for a man so steeped in classicism, his freedom from prejudice was remarkable. Browning's poetry, however, in spite of his affection for the author, he could never appreciate. He wrote to Mrs. Brotherton:

> "What you say of Browning's *Ring and the Book*," he says, soon after the publication of that work, "I have no doubt is strictly applicable, however slashing.... I confess, however, that I have never had the courage to read the book. He is a great friend of mine.... But it does not follow that I should put up with obsolete horrors, and unrhythmical composition. What has come upon the world that it should take any metrical (?) arrangement of facts for holy Poesy? It has been my weakness to believe that the Fine Arts and Imaginative Literature should do something more than astonish us by *tours de force*, black and white contrasts, outrageous inhumanities, or anything criminally sensational, or merely intellectually potent. As you say a good heart is better than a clever head, so I say better a

> page of feeling than a volume of spasms. Spasms, I fear, is the order of the day. The late Lord Robertson, a legal celebrity at Edinburgh, pleading on behalf of some one, said, with his serious face, which was more tickling than the happiest efforts of Pantaloon: 'We are bound to respect his feelings as a man and a butcher.' Here the man and the butcher are bound up in one. Now, in Browning's case, I separate the man from the butcher. I have nothing to say to him in his blue apron and steel by his side, but if I meet him in plain clothes I honour him as a gentleman." And in 1885 he writes: "The Public, it would seem, is beginning to rouse itself to a perception of the unreliability of the Browningian school—I have seen several articles on that subject. How is it that it has never struck his partisans that the probability of one man being so infinitely superior to his contemporaries as to be totally unintelligible to them—is infinitely small?
>
> "One thing appears to me certain in Browning, that all his performances are pure *brain-work*—whatever that may be worth—but as for the 'divine heat of temperament,' where is it? I can find nothing but the inextricably hard and the extravagantly fantastical. On such diet I cannot live."

Nevertheless, it was always the future of Art, not its past, which stirred his interest, and a letter of his written in 1885, when he was seventy-eight, shows a youth and vitality of mind truly remarkable in one whose life had been so cloistered.

> "There can never," he says, "be a second Shakespeare, that is to say, given a man of equal Genius he cannot in this complex and analytical age of Literature embody himself in the metrical and dramatic form if his purpose is to 'hold up the mirror to Nature, and to give the Time its form and pressure.' The form of prose fiction is a vastly greater one, indeed it may be termed all-comprehensive, and admits of the introduction of lyric or epic verse, in all varieties, as well as the profoundest analysis of character and motive, and is susceptible of the highest range of eloquence and unrhythmical poetry, and whatever it may lose in metrical melody (which, however, is not greatly regarded in dramatic dialogue) it gains immeasurably in its other elements. All things considered, I am of opinion that if a man were endowed with such faculties as Shakespeare's, they would be more freely and effectively exercised in prose fiction with its wider capabilities than when 'cribbed, cabined, and confined' in the trammels of verse."

It may be that the very remoteness of his life was in part the cause of this lasting freshness and freedom of his mind. He lived so far from the world as to be almost entirely removed from any bias of self-interest —the most fruitful source of prejudice. Ambition played no part in his life.

> "Once," he wrote in 1888, "I used to have some ambition—that is when I was a boy at school—I verily believe that at that early age

I exhausted the demoniacal passion which chains you to fixed purposes like a Prometheus and preys upon you like a Vulture. Though many great works have been accomplished under the spur of this (so-called) noble passion, think how much chaotic rubbish has been projected into Space and Time which ought to have been imprisoned to Eternity—how many heart-burnings, jealousies, and disappointments—how often the love of the Beautiful and True is entirely subordinated to that of mere distinction to be won at any cost. How seldom do we hear writers of the same school speak well of one another. Especially poisonous are poets, I think, wherever they apprehend a rival—Honey-suckers like the Bee, they know how to use their stings even while sipping the flowers. The unambitious man is at any rate free to use his eyes, to walk up to and contemplate in the pure clear air and solitude of his mountain-top the face and form of Nature, and like Turner a-fishing, see wonderful effects never to be come at by the hosts of those who get on (or off) by copying one another. I daresay you will disapprove all this and attribute it to indolent epicurism.

"Latterly since the supernatural and the Future Life, and its conditions 'such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive,' have occupied and absorbed my whole soul to the exclusion of almost every subject which the Gorillas of this world most delight in, whether scientific, political, or literary—I

> have been led to see what men in general consider a proper use of their stewardship, *i.e.* ruin of body and soul by inordinate superhuman struggles for supremacy—Samson-like heavings to upset the neighbour, or supplant him—carbonic acid-breathing creepings along the dark floors of stifling caverns such as may enable them to scrape together a preponderance of a certain mineral, etc. etc.—as the most lamentable examples of Phrenitis—arising simply from the ineradicable instinct—of Immortality it is true, but misplaced Immortality—Immortality in this life."

The death of his wife in 1880 was a severe blow to him.

> "In answer to your kind letters of sympathy," he wrote to Mr. and Mrs. Brotherton, "I can say but little. Sorrow such as mine when it falls upon the aged is virtual paralysis, mental and bodily. I know not what I may do for the brief period remaining to me in this world. At present my daughter-in-law attends to household matters, and I still have the presence of children and grandchildren to remind me that I am not left entirely desolate. But my chief consolation is that the beloved of my youth and the friend of my age is already risen, and has cast off the burthen of her mortal cares and pains, and my only hope that, God willing, I may follow quickly."

A great but less tremendous shock to him was the death in 1887 of his sister Emily, once the betrothed

of Arthur Hallam. On this occasion he sent the following lines to his friend:

> Farewell, dear sister, thou and I
> Will meet no more beneath the sky:
> But in the high world where thou art
> Mind speaks to Mind, and Heart to Heart,
> Not in faint wavering tones, but heard
> As twin sweet notes that sound accord.
> Thy dwelling in the Angel sphere
> Looks forth on a sublimer whole,
> Where all that thou dost see and hear
> Is in true concord with thy soul—
> A great harp of unnumbered strings
> Answering to one voice that sings:
> Where thousand blisses spring and fade
> Swiftly, as in diviner dream,
> And inward motions are portrayed
> In outward shows that move with them:
> After the midnight and dark river
> No more to be o'erpast for ever.
> Behold the lover of thy youth,
> That spirit strong as Love and Truth,
> Many a long year gone before,
> Awaits thee on the sunny shore:
> In that high world of endless wonder
> Nor Space, nor Time can hold asunder
> Twin souls—as Space and Time have done—
> Whom kindest instincts orb in One.

It was inevitable that the later years of one so aged and so solitary should be more and more filled with the chronicle and anticipation of death. But he never sank into lethargy, as the following letter, written in his eighty-first year, shows:

> My own sorrow is indeed continually revived

> by memories continually reawakened, not only by the comparatively recent occurrence of my own temporarily final separation from my best friend—but also by that bird's-eye—so to speak—retrospect, which carries the imagination over lovely landscapes of the days of youth—out of the golden morning light of which emerge, in that unaccountable manner which is quite involuntary, even the most trivial circumstances—moments of no moment—yet somehow clothed in a more glittering light than the vast tracts drowned in the general splendour of the dawn, some tiny pinnacle that reflects the sun, some far off rillet that gushes out from the wayside.

Even when in his eighty-fourth year his sight began to fail him and the loss drove him still more back into his inner life, the old eagerness of mind remained, though finding a melancholy occupation in noting the changes to which age was daily subjecting his mental and physical constitution. The note of hope is, however, ineradicable:

> An old man of my great age is already dead—old age being the only Death—and the faculties which I once possessed receive no impulse, as of old, for activity—no joyous inspiration. The intellect is cold and frozen like the mountain streams in Winter, a moonless midnight; and were it not for the increasing illumination of the immortal spirit which already beholds the dawn of a greater Day beyond the mountains, I should indeed be desolate, lost! For I am 84 years of age next June—and in looking back through my long life—it often seems to me like a dream

—many movements, intellectual and physical, seem to me like impossibilities. When I see my little grandson Charlie skipping and hear him shouting and singing, and the light-limbed and light-hearted girls darting like living lightning down the staircase (which if I were to attempt to imitate I should undoubtedly break my neck), I say to myself, is it possible that I can ever have been like them? Alas! for old age. What can be more mournful than a retrospect of the days of childhood? But a truce to solemn thoughts—the Spring is come again, the leaves are unfolding, the birds are singing, the sun is shining, and surely, next to the human countenance, this is the most lovely emblem, the most beautiful representative material of inner spiritualities and the resurrection, and ought to have been so regarded since the dawn of Christianity; for as sure as Winter blossoms into Summer, the Winter of old age will spring into the Eternal Life. Fear not, hope all things! What a contrast to these consoling aspirations is presented in the touching fragment of the old Greek poet Moschus which no doubt expresses the scepticism of the ancient world—I give a free translation:

> Aye, aye the garden mallows, mint and thyme
> When they have wither'd in the winter clime,
> After a little space do reappear,
> And live again and see another year:
> But we, the brave, the noble, and the wise,

> When once for all pale Death hath closed our eyes,
> Sink into dread oblivion dark and deep,
> The everlasting, never-waking sleep.

With the approach of death he seemed to himself to undergo a kind of physical regeneration.

> "Apropos to spiritual matters," he writes in 1890, "I have had recently for several consecutive days some very strange experiences. One morning I awoke and seemed to have lost my natural memory. Objects daily presented to me for years seemed no longer familiar as of old—but as when a man after years of travel returning to his home and the chamber he formerly occupied takes some time and labour of thought to bring back to his recollection the whereabouts of objects once (as it were) instinctively known to him—I had the same difficulty in recovering my relations to my own surroundings. And this for days was supplemented by a strange sense of having been far away and conversant with wonderful things—movements and tumults—which only immeasurable distance deadened to my perception like great music borne away by the wind. Ever and anon there flashed up within me what I can only describe symbolically as Iridescences of feeling as when the prismatic colours of a rainbow succeed one another, or the coloured lights in Pyrotechnics cause objects in midnight darkness to assume their own hues. But all this, wonderful though it may

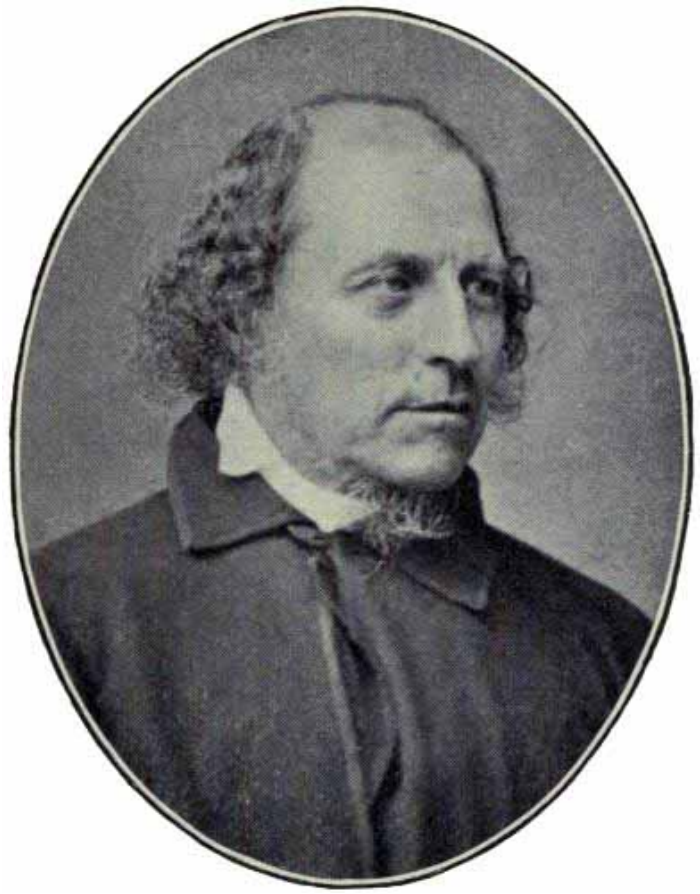
> seem, is not the only change that has come upon me—I am happy to say that simultaneously with these phenomena a revolution in my spiritual economy of far greater moment has, I believe, taken place. I have always prayed for that regeneration, or second birth ('Thou must be born again,' said the Lord to Nicodemus), to be shielded from selfhood—and as the divine answer to such prayers continually repeated, I can declare, without any self-delusion, that the answer has actually been a sensible change in the nature of my affections. Never have I felt towards those around me, such tender inclinations, such earnest desire to do them all possible good regardless of self-interest, such a spirit of forgiveness of any wrongs; and my earnest prayerful thankfulness for such inestimable benefits has been invariably acknowledged by that Voice from the Lord Himself by which He has repeatedly ratified to my spiritual ear His promise of blessing and the continuation thereof—and that 'Thou hast nothing to fear, for I am with thee night and day, body and soul!' Think of this! But for God's sake do not attribute these statements of mine, which are comprehended in a period of many years, to self-delusion or self-righteousness. God knows, from whom nothing is hid, that I have never approached Him except in the spirit of profound humility and self-condemnation, and the answer has always been, 'Thou hast nothing to fear. I am with thee.'"

As age settled upon him the violence of many of his views abated. His faith in Spiritualism and

Swedenborgianism lost their hold on him and gave way to a more philosophic condition of mind. His activity, however, continued unabated. In 1890, after a silence of thirty-six years, he published his *Isles of Greece*, and the success of the volume encouraged him to give to the world two others, *Daphne and other Poems* in 1891, and *Poems of the Day and Year* (in which were included some of the verses contained in the volume of 1854) in 1898. In 1896 he left Jersey to join his eldest son, Captain Julius Tennyson, in whose house in Kensington he died on February 26, 1898.

It would be difficult to imagine two persons more strongly contrasted in life and character than Frederick and Charles. Charles (who was always Alfred's favourite brother) had nothing of the powerful, erratic, tempestuous mind of his elder brother. One does not think of him, as FitzGerald did of Frederick, as a being born for the warmth and glow of the South, yet in appearance he was (like Alfred) far more Southern than the eldest brother. So Spanish were his swarthy complexion, brown eyes, and curly, dark hair, that Thackeray, meeting him in middle age, called him a "Velasquez *tout craché*." Like Alfred, too, he had a magnificent deep bass voice; and even in dress the two brothers seem to have maintained their affinity, for Charles used to wear a soft felt hat and flowing black cloak much like those which the Millais portrait has identified with his brother, and these garments, with the addition of white cuffs, which he wore turned back over his coat sleeves, intensified the strangely foreign effect of his appearance. But the kinship of the two brothers extended beyond purely physical resemblance. They remained inseparable companions till Charles was ordained, and there was hardly a

taste possessed by either which the other did not share. They read, played, and rambled together; both were extremely fond of dancing (one of Charles's last Sonnets was "On a County Ball") and were much sought after as partners at the balls of their countryside. The *Poems by Two Brothers*, which were almost entirely the work of Alfred and Charles, while displaying the differing qualities of each, were a joint production, the fruit of common reading and common enthusiasm. Both the brothers were regarded by their contemporaries at Cambridge as destined to achieve poetical greatness. Both possessed the unwearying patience of the craftsman, the same devotion to science and the same power of close and loving observation. Charles, however, lacked the fire and energy of temperament which made Frederick's character remarkable and was to a great extent shared by Alfred. With all Alfred's sensitiveness and shrinking from society, he had little of that sympathetic and passionate interest in the hopes and achievements of their age which drove the younger brother ever more and more into public life.



CHARLES TENNYSON-TURNER.

Nothing quieter and less eventful than Charles Tennyson's life can well be imagined. He was ordained in 1835 (three years after taking his degree) and immediately obtained a Curacy at Tealby. In the same year he became Vicar of Grasby, a small village in the Lincolnshire wolds between Caistor and Brigg.

In the following year he married Louisa Sellwood, whose sister was to become Alfred's wife, and from that time until just before his death on April 25, 1879, his life, save for an occasional holiday and too frequent lapses from health, knew little variation. Like all the Tennysons, Charles was of a nervous temperament, and this condition often induced acute suffering. So severe indeed was his struggle with this disorder and the still more perilous condition which resulted from it that at one time, soon after his marriage, he was compelled to leave his parish for some months in search of strength. Throughout these trying interludes the devotion of his wife, a woman of great humour and power of mind and character, was of the utmost service to him. Indeed, his debt to her was great at all times of his life. She would often act almost as a curate to him in the straggling parish, tirelessly visiting and nursing the sick (a duty which they both unflinchingly observed even in the epidemics of small-pox which were then frequent), keeping all his accounts, both personal and parochial, and even sometimes writing his sermons. The devotion of the pair was remarkable, retaining a certain youthful ardour to the end, and when Charles died his wife was carried to the grave within a month.

As early as 1830, Charles had published a small volume of sonnets, which (as is well known) earned the hearty commendation of Coleridge and Leigh Hunt. As in the case of Frederick, however, there followed a prolonged silence, the next volume not making its appearance till 1864; others followed in 1868 and 1873, and all were collected and republished, with a sage, benevolent, and affectionate Introduction by his friend James Spedding, in 1880. The reason for this long silence

was a slightly different one from that which was responsible for Frederick's intermission. In both cases, no doubt, the feeling that it would be impertinent for another person of the name of Tennyson to put his work before the public had some influence. In Charles's case, however, there were further considerations. The violent shock which his health sustained by that prolonged early illness and his subsequent troubles to some extent numbed his powers. "The edge of thought was blunted by the stress of the hard world," and the same cause probably increased his natural modesty till it became almost morbid. He was perpetually haunted by the fear that his poetry was not original, and the only word of satisfaction which Spedding ever heard him use of any of his sonnets was with regard to one which owed its origin to a period of deep affliction, of which the poet said that he thought it was good because he *knew* it to be true. Whatever the cause, however, during these thirty-four years Charles Turner published nothing and, indeed, hardly even wrote anything. Spedding, in his Introduction, has collected a few fragments which were gathered from the poet's notebooks, and show that his mind still occasionally noted a stray simile or description, doubtless intended to be subsequently worked up into a poem. A few of these are in his happiest manner. One may quote the following picture of goldfish in a glass bowl:

> As though King Midas did the surface touch,
> Constraining the clear water to their change
> With shooting motions and quick trails of light.
> Now a rich girth and then a narrow gleam,
> And now a shaft and now a sheet of gold.

and the lines on the opening of the tomb of Charlemagne:

> They rove the marble where the ancient King,
> Like one forspent with sacred study sate,
> Robed like a King, but as a scholar pale.

His mind, too, was always working in the same direction on his rambles about the countryside, and he would sometimes, when walking with Agnes Weld, "the little, ambling, stile-clearing niece," who was often his guest, hit on some phrase which took his fancy and was imparted to his companion, who remembers his description of the slanting light-bars on a cloudy day as "the oars of the golden Galley of the sun," and many another phrase as happy as any of the homely and perfect touches in his published works.

But though these years were barren of actual output, they were of value in many ways, and not the least as a period of incubation, for many a phrase or idea first formed in them was subsequently perfected and published. The intermission, too, left him freer to study and to labour among his parishioners. At the beginning and end of his life, poetry occupied a great deal of his time, for each of his sonnets, in spite of their apparent facility, was the result of much toil. He would work at the same lines morning after morning, and read the results aloud to his wife, or niece, or other companion after dinner, the same poem going through a great succession of forms. A letter to Miss Weld, in answer to some suggestion of a subject connected with the then recent excavations at Mycenae, shows his method of work and something of the manifold interests of his secluded

life:

> "I never can undertake to work to order," he writes, "though the order comes from the dearest of customers. If I get a good hold of that poor, noble, nodding head I will put him on board of a respectable sonnet and try to save his memory from drowning.... Mycenae is a very exciting subject, but I have Kelsey Moor Chapel to write on—a commission from Mrs. Townsend ... and a poor dead dog haunts me" (see Sonnet 97—Collected Edition).

During these barren years Charles Turner's devotion to his parochial work was intense. Grasby was a somewhat barbarous village when he obtained the living. Belief in witchcraft was still rife, and one of the popular charms against its influence was to cut a sheep in half, put the body on a scarlet cloth, and walk between the pieces. Such religion as there was among the poor was of a rather harsh spirit, as may be seen from an anecdote preserved by Miss Weld of an old cottager, who, hearing Mrs. Turner mention the name of Hobbes, exclaimed to his wife: "Why, loovey, that's the graate Hobbes that's in hell!" The climate, too, was as harsh as the character of the people, for the village stands high and bleak. Friends remember Louisa Turner going about her ministrations in clogs, and during one particularly sharp winter she writes: "I am in a castle now of double cotton wool petticoat and thick baize drawers and waistcoat." The Turners soon found it necessary to leave the house at Caistor, three miles off, where Sam Turner, Charles's uncle, the preceding vicar, had lived, for the distance made any real intimacy with the people impossible. Charles had inherited a small

property from his uncle (the event was the occasion of his change of name), and this made it possible for him to build a new vicarage and to further enrich the village with new schools and a new church. He also took the very practical step of buying the village inn and putting it in charge of a reliable servant, a scheme which, for a time at least, had excellent effects on the temperance of the inhabitants.

There were no children of the marriage, but the pair adopted the children of the whole village, opening their house and grounds to them for Christmas trees and summer festivities. Children and animals were always devoted to Charles Turner, as he to them. He was, as the villagers said, "Strangen gone upon birds and things." He never shot after that tragedy of the swallow which he never forgot (see Sonnet 200), and birds of every kind flocked to him daily as he fed them on his lawn. Flowers and trees, too, he loved almost as keenly as he did children. He quarrelled seriously with one of his curates whom he found exorcising the flowers, which were to be used for church decoration, by means of the service contained in the Directorium Anglicanum, maintaining stoutly that if any spirits dwelt in flowers they must be angels and not devils. His garden was a jungle of old-fashioned flowers, golden-rod, sweet-william, convolvulus, and rose of Sharon; figs and apricots ripened on his walls, and the house was covered with roses, honeysuckle, white clematis, and blue ceanothus. The grounds, too, boasted some fine timber, which Charles never would allow to be pruned or cut, even permitting the willow-props to outgrow and destroy the rose trees (Sonnet 270), and once, when it was proposed to fell some large trees within sight of his house, he threatened to throw up his living and leave Grasby.

In this peaceful world Charles found plenty to occupy his time. He saw little of society except when Alfred or Frederick, or one of his old college friends, came to visit him, and the resources of the neighbourhood were strained to the utmost to afford them entertainment. He found, however, a congenial companion in Mr. Townsend, a neighbouring clergyman of wide culture much interested in science. And the care of his parish occupied the greater part of his time. Theology, too, was a favourite study with him. He began life as an Evangelical, but in later years tended (partly under the influence of his wife, who would often, on the vigil of a saint, spend half the night on her knees) more and more towards the High Church.

> "I have been reading," he wrote to Alfred in 1865, "Pusey's *Daniel the Prophet*, which (thank God) completely—as I think and as very many will think with me—disposes of the rickety and crotchety arguments of those who vainly thought they had found a πoῦ στῶ in him whereby to upheave all prophecy and miracle. It is a noble book from its learning and its logic. I knew he was a holy and noble-minded and erudite man, but for some reason I had not credited him with such 'act offence' and powers of righteous satire.... I have never in my old desultory reading days found such a charm and interest as in the study of the Queen Science, as Trench calls Theology, and those who assume that they will find there no food for the mature reason will be surprised at its large provision for the intellect and rich satisfaction of the highest imagination. It is reading round about a subject and not the

> subject itself which damages the intellect so much. Maurice said the study of the Prophets had saved him from the Tyranny of books."

He and his wife also spent much time in the study of Italian, in which they were assisted by their occasional visits to and from the Frederick Tennysons. Charles's Italian Grammar is annotated with numberless quaint rhymes made to fix its rules in his memory. On one page one finds in his wonderfully neat fluent hand (strangely like those of Frederick and Alfred):

> From use of the following is no ban,
> "The fair of the fair is Mistress Ann"
> or "Smith's a learned, learned man"
> In English or Italian,
> Though the English use is far less common
> Speaking of Doctor or fine woman.

On another:

> Say profeta, profeti
> Or else I shall bate ye.

On another a couplet which has all the subtle romance of Edward Lear:

> Rare and changeless, firm and few,
> Are the Italian nouns in U.

The life at Grasby Vicarage was of the simplest. The hall-floor rattled with loose tiles, the furniture was reduced to the barest necessities. Breakfast and lunch were movable feasts, for Charles had all a poet's carelessness of time, lingering over morning prayers while his agonized guest saw the bacon cooling to the consistency of marble before his eyes, and prolonging his mid-day walk to such distances in the

study of flower and bird and butterfly that it sometimes took a half-hour's tolling of the outdoor bell to recall him. The cook (who in times of scarcity was at the service of the whole village) must have led a life of irritation, yet servants stayed long at the Vicarage.

This sweet, even life knew little variety. The days of quiet service filled the year, and were succeeded by evenings no less quiet in the book-lined study, or, if the season were warm, in the hayfield near the house, where husband and wife would sit reading and talking to each other till the evening glow died away and left the haycocks and the steep side of the wold, which backed the red-brick Vicarage, gray and cold and silent.

Troubles they had beyond the recurrent anxiety for Charles's health. A rascally agent, a man of great plausibility and charm of manner, pillaged them for some years, and they were only able to recover a portion of his plunderings (most of which Charles subsequently devoted to the repair of the church) after a great deal of trouble. It is characteristic that in after years they always spoke of this gentleman as though *he* had been the person who had suffered most in the transaction and deserved most pity. Charles was indeed possessed of an almost saintly patience, and no crisis could ever wring from him any ejaculation more forcible than a half-humorous "I wish we were all in heaven." His wife's letters occasionally give us glimpses of days when the wish must often have been upon his lips, as when he was reluctantly compelled to join in a Harvest-Festival gathering in another parish. First of all we read how "poor Cubbie" (his wife's pet name for him) "was caught and dressed in a surplice which hung about

him like a clothes bag." "Then he must join in a procession, with much singing and chanting, and then read the lessons in spite of a bad cold and hoarseness, and finally at the end of the day, in the full hubbub of a garden party, at which all the neighbourhood were present in their finery (poor Cubbie!), a cannon, which had been charged with blank cartridge for the occasion, went off unexpectedly and knocked down three boys who were standing in front of it. The boys, whose clothes were torn to rags and their faces burnt black, shrieked as though in the death agony, women fainted and men stampeded—and Cubbie 'wished we were all in heaven.'"

But Charles Turner's poems are, after all, the best mirror of his life. With Frederick it is otherwise. In spite of his great lyric gift, Frederick lacked the persistence and enthusiasm necessary for full self-expression. The want of proportion, which gave his ardent, erratic personality so much charm, prevented his longer poems being really successful. In spite of much beauty of phrase and richness of feeling, they lack architecture and have not sufficient unity to make them vital. Had he continued to work at lyrical writing after his first volume, he might have avoided falling into the desultory method, which marred his later work, and left a really large body of first-class poetry.

In the best of Charles's Sonnets, in all, that is, which spring from his daily experience, there breathes a spirit perpetually quickened by the beauty and holiness of common life and common things, an imagination which saw a life and a purpose not only in the ways of men and of all wild creatures and growing things, but in the half-human voice of the

buoy-bell ringing on the shoals, the sad imprisoned heart-beat of the water-ram in the little wood-girt field, the welcome of the sunbeam in the copse running through the yielding shade to meet the wanderer, in the “mystic stair” of the steam thrashing-machine:

> Accepting our full harvests like a God
> With clouds about his shoulders.

and the “mute claim” of the old rocking-horse:

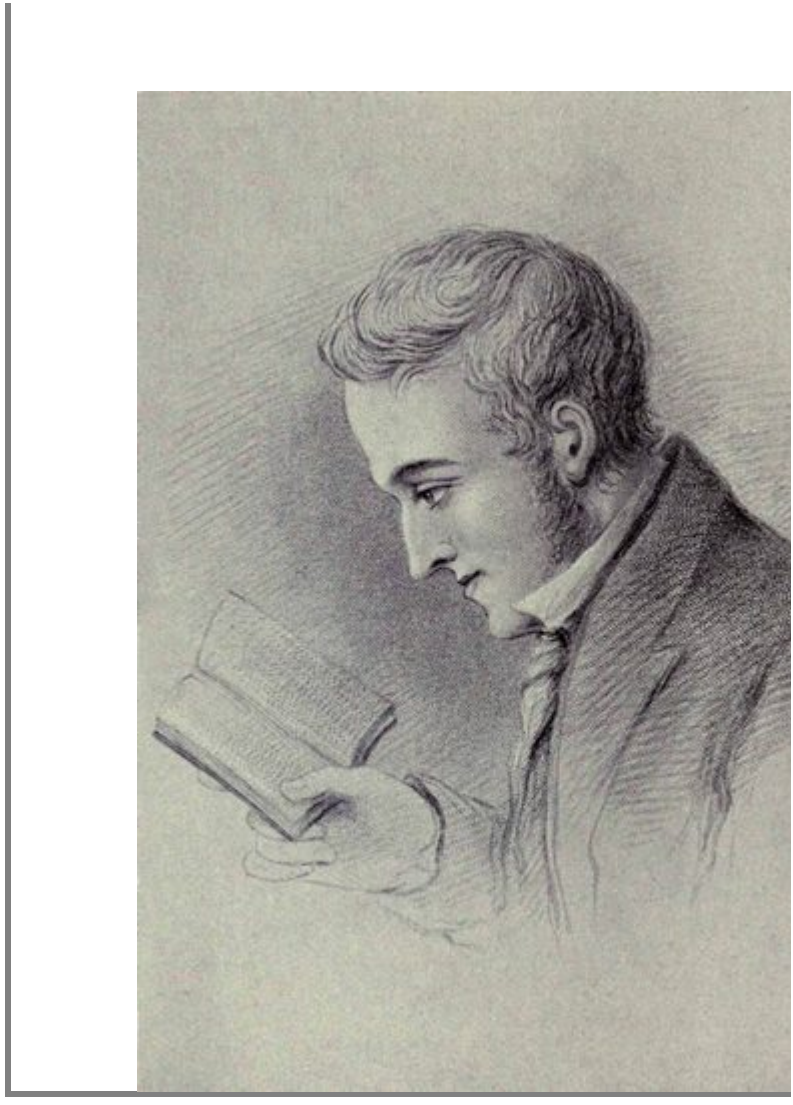
> In the dim window where disused, he stands
> While o’er him breaks the flickering limewalks’ shade;
> No provender, no mate, no groom has he—
> His stall and pasture is your memory.[14]

But in spite of the intimate correspondence between Charles Turner’s life and his art, an intimacy which only the seclusion of that life made possible, one cannot help regretting that fortune did not force upon him some calling which would have afforded a progressive stimulus to his creative powers. These years of devotion amongst the bleak hill-sides and flowery dingles of his remote parish did for him what a life of ease and sunshine did for Frederick. Both had great talents, but neither the tender felicity of Charles nor Frederick’s heart of cloud and fire ever came to full development. They represent two extremes of the Tennyson temperament, the mean and perfection of which is found in Alfred. In the elder the lyric fury, in the younger the craftsman’s humility of the more perfect poet were developed to excess, and both suffered for the affection and respect in which they held him whom they knew to be their master. Yet each has left himself a monument, some part at least of which is worthy to

rank with the more complete achievement of their younger brother.

TENNYSON ON HIS CAMBRIDGE FRIENDS





A. H. H.
Obiit 1833.

ARTHUR HENRY HALLAM

I past beside the reverend walls
In which of old I wore the gown;
I roved at random thro' the town,
And saw the tumult of the halls;

And heard once more in college fanes
The storm their high-built organs make,
And thunder-music, rolling, shake
The prophet blazon'd on the panes;

And caught once more the distant shout,
The measured pulse of racing oars
Among the willows; paced the shores
And many a bridge, and all about

The same gray flats again, and felt
The same, but not the same; and last
Up that long walk of limes I past
To see the rooms in which he dwelt.

Another name was on the door:
I linger'd; all within was noise
Of songs, and clapping hands, and boys
That crash'd the glass and beat the floor;

Where once we held debate, a band
Of youthful friends, on mind and art,
And labour, and the changing mart,
And all the framework of the land;

When one would aim an arrow fair,
But send it slackly from the string;
And one would pierce an outer ring,
And one an inner, here and there;

And last the master-bowman, he,

Would cleave the mark. A willing ear
We lent him. Who, but hung to hear
The rapt oration flowing free

From point to point, with power and grace
And music in the bounds of law,
To those conclusions when we saw
The God within him light his face,

And seem to lift the form, and glow
In azure orbits heavenly-wise;
And over those ethereal eyes
The bar of Michael Angelo.

TO JAMES SPEDDING

ON THE DEATH OF HIS BROTHER

The wind, that beats the mountain, blows
More softly round the open wold,
And gently comes the world to those
That are cast in gentle mould.

And me this knowledge bolder made,
Or else I had not dared to flow
In these words toward you, and invade
Even with a verse your holy woe.

'Tis strange that those we lean on most,
Those in whose laps our limbs are nursed,
Fall into shadow, soonest lost:
Those we love first are taken first.

God gives us love. Something to love
He lends us; but, when love is grown
To ripeness, that on which it throve
Falls off, and love is left alone.

This is the curse of time. Alas!
In grief I am not all unlearn'd;
Once thro' mine own doors Death did pass;
One went, who never hath return'd.

He will not smile—not speak to me
Once more. Two years his chair is seen
Empty before us. That was he
Without whose life I had not been.

Your loss is rarer; for this star
Rose with you thro' a little arc
Of heaven, nor having wander'd far
Shot on the sudden into dark.

I knew your brother; his mute dust

I honour and his living worth:
A man more pure and bold and just
Was never born into the earth.

I have not look'd upon you nigh,
Since that dear soul hath fall'n asleep.
Great Nature is more wise than I:
I will not tell you not to weep.

And tho' mine own eyes fill with dew,
Drawn from the spirit thro' the brain,
I will not even preach to you,
"Weep, weeping dulls the inward pain."

Let Grief be her own mistress still.
She loveth her own anguish deep
More than much pleasure. Let her will
Be done—to weep or not to weep.

I will not say, "God's ordinance
Of Death is blown in every wind";
For that is not a common chance
That takes away a noble mind.

His memory long will live alone
In all our hearts, as mournful light
That broods above the fallen sun,
And dwells in heaven half the night.

Vain solace! Memory standing near
Cast down her eyes, and in her throat
Her voice seem'd distant, and a tear
Dropt on the letters as I wrote.

I wrote I know not what. In truth,
How *should* I soothe you anyway,

Who miss the brother of your youth?
Yet something I did wish to say:

For he too was a friend to me:
Both are my friends, and my true breast
Bleedeth for both; yet it may be
That only silence suiteth best.

Words weaker than your grief would make
Grief more. 'Twere better I should cease
Although myself could almost take
The place of him that sleeps in peace.

Sleep sweetly, tender heart, in peace:
Sleep, holy spirit, blessed soul,
While the stars burn, the moons increase,
And the great ages onward roll.

Sleep till the end, true soul and sweet.
Nothing comes to thee new or strange.
Sleep full of rest from head to feet;
Lie still, dry dust, secure of change.

TO EDWARD FITZGERALD

(Dedication of "Tiresias," written in 1882)

Old Fitz, who from your suburb grange,
Where once I tarried for a while,
Glance at the wheeling Orb of change,
And greet it with a kindly smile;
Whom yet I see as there you sit
Beneath your sheltering garden-tree,
And while your doves about you flit,
And plant on shoulder, hand and knee,
Or on your head their rosy feet,
As if they knew your diet spares
Whatever moved in that full sheet
Let down to Peter at his prayers;
Who live on milk and meal and grass;
And once for ten long weeks I tried
Your table of Pythagoras,
And seem'd at first "a thing enskied"
(As Shakespeare has it) airy-light
To float above the ways of men,
Then fell from that half-spiritual height
Chill'd, till I tasted flesh again
One night when earth was winter-black,
And all the heavens flash'd in frost;
And on me, half-asleep, came back
That wholesome heat the blood had lost,
And set me climbing icy capes
And glaciers, over which there roll'd
To meet me long-arm'd vines with grapes
Of Eshcol hugeness; for the cold
Without, and warmth within me, wrought
To mould the dream; but none can say
That Lenten fare makes Lenten thought,
Who reads your golden Eastern lay,
Than which I know no version done
In English more divinely well;
A planet equal to the sun
Which cast it, that large infidel

Your Omar; and your Omar drew
Full-handed plaudits from our best
In modern letters, and from two,
Old friends outvaluing all the rest,
Two voices heard on earth no more;
But we old friends are still alive,
And I am nearing seventy-four,
While you have touch'd at seventy-five,
And so I send a birthday line
Of greeting; and my son, who dipt
In some forgotten book of mine
With sallow scraps of manuscript,
And dating many a year ago,
Has hit on this, which you will take
My Fitz, and welcome, as I know
Less for its own than for the sake
Of one recalling gracious times,
When, in our younger London days,
You found some merit in my rhymes,
And I more pleasure in your praise.

EPILOGUE AT END OF "TIRESIAS"

"One height and one far-shining fire"
And while I fancied that my friend
For this brief idyll would require
A less diffuse and opulent end,
And would defend his judgment well,
If I should deem it over nice—
The tolling of his funeral bell
Broke on my Pagan Paradise,
And mixt the dream of classic times
And all the phantoms of the dream,
With present grief, and made the rhymes,
That miss'd his living welcome, seem
Like would-be guests an hour too late,
Who down the highway moving on
With easy laughter find the gate
Is bolted, and the master gone.
Gone into darkness, that full light
Of friendship! past, in sleep, away
By night, into the deeper night!
The deeper night? A clearer day
Than our poor twilight dawn on earth—
If night, what barren toil to be!
What life, so maim'd by night, were worth
Our living out? Not mine to me
Remembering all the golden hours
Now silent, and so many dead,
And him the last; and laying flowers,
This wreath, above his honour'd head,
And praying that, when I from hence
Shall fade with him into the unknown,
My close of earth's experience
May prove as peaceful as his own.

TO JOHN MITCHELL KEMBLE

My hope and heart is with thee—thou wilt be
A latter Luther, and a soldier-priest
To scare church-harpies from the master's feast;
Our dusted velvets have much need of thee:
Thou art no sabbath-drawler of old saws,
Distill'd from some worm-canker'd homily;
But spurr'd at heart with fieriest energy
To embattail and to wall about thy cause
With iron-worded proof, hating to hark
The humming of the drowsy pulpit-drone
Half God's good sabbath, while the worn-out clerk
Brow-beats his desk below. Thou from a throne
Mounted in heaven wilt shoot into the dark
Arrows of lightnings. I will stand and mark.

TO J. W. BLAKESLEY

AFTERWARDS DEAN OF LINCOLN

I

Clear-headed friend, whose joyful scorn,
Edged with sharp laughter, cuts atwain
The knots that tangle human creeds,
The wounding cords that bind and strain
The heart until it bleeds,
Ray-fringed eyelids of the morn
Roof not a glance so keen as thine:
If aught of prophecy be mine,
Thou wilt not live in vain.

II

Low-cowering shall the Sophist sit;
Falsehood shall bare her plaited brow:
Fair-fronted Truth shall droop not now
With shrilling shafts of subtle wit.
Nor martyr-flames, nor trenchant swords
Can do away that ancient lie;
A gentler death shall Falsehood die,
Shot thro' and thro' with cunning words.

III

Weak Truth a-leaning on her crutch,
Wan, wasted Truth in her utmost need,
Thy kingly intellect shall feed,
Until she be an athlete bold,
And weary with a finger's touch
Those writhed limbs of lightning speed;
Like that strange angel which of old,
Until the breaking of the light,
Wrestled with wandering Israel,
Past Yabbok brook the livelong night,
And heaven's mazed signs stood still
In the dim tract of Penuel.

TO R. C. TRENCH

AFTERWARDS ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN

(Dedication of "The Palace of Art")

I send you here a sort of allegory,
(For you will understand it) of a soul,
A sinful soul possess'd of many gifts,
A spacious garden full of flowering weeds,
A glorious Devil, large in heart and brain,
That did love Beauty only, (Beauty seen
In all varieties of mould and mind)
And Knowledge for its beauty; or if Good,
Good only for its beauty, seeing not
That Beauty, Good, and Knowledge, are three
sisters
That doat upon each other, friends to man,
Living together under the same roof,
And never can be sunder'd without tears.
And he that shuts Love out, in turn shall be
Shut out from Love, and on her threshold lie
Howling in outer darkness. Not for this
Was common clay ta'en from the common earth
Moulded by God, and temper'd with the tears
Of angels to the perfect shape of man.

TO THE REV. W. H. BROOKFIELD

Brooks, for they call'd you so that knew you best,
Old Brooks, who loved so well to mouth my
rhymes,
How oft we two have heard St. Mary's chimes!
How oft the Cantab supper, host and guest,
Would echo helpless laughter to your jest!
How oft with him we paced that walk of limes,
Him, the lost light of those dawn-golden times,
Who loved you well! Now both are gone to rest.
You man of humorous-melancholy mark,
Dead of some inward agony—is it so?
Our kindlier, trustier, Jaques, past away!
I cannot laud this life, it looks so dark:
Σκιᾶς ὄναρ—dream of a shadow, go—
God bless you. I shall join you in a day.

TO EDMUND LUSHINGTON

ON HIS MARRIAGE WITH CECILIA TENNYSON

O true and tried, so well and long,
Demand not thou a marriage lay;
In that it is thy marriage day
Is music more than any song.

Nor have I felt so much of bliss
Since first he told me that he loved
A daughter of our house; nor proved
Since that dark day a day like this;

Tho' I since then have number'd o'er
Some thrice three years: they went and came,
Remade the blood and changed the frame,
And yet is love not less, but more;

No longer caring to embalm
In dying songs a dead regret,
But like a statue solid-set,
And moulded in colossal calm.

Regret is dead, but love is more
Than in the summers that are flown,
For I myself with these have grown
To something greater than before;

Which makes appear the songs I made
As echoes out of weaker times,
As half but idle brawling rhymes,
The sport of random sun and shade.

But where is she, the bridal flower,
That must be made a wife ere noon?
She enters, glowing like the moon
Of Eden on its bridal bower:

On me she bends her blissful eyes

And then on thee; they meet thy look
And brighten like the star that shook
Betwixt the palms of paradise.

O when her life was yet in bud,
He too foretold the perfect rose.
For thee she grew, for thee she grows
For ever, and as fair as good.

And thou art worthy; full of power;
As gentle; liberal-minded, great,
Consistent; wearing all that weight
Of learning lightly like a flower.

But now set out: the noon is near,
And I must give away the bride;
She fears not, or with thee beside
And me behind her, will not fear.

For I that danced her on my knee,
And watch'd her on her nurse's arm,
That shielded all her life from harm
At last must part with her to thee;

Now waiting to be made a wife,
Her feet, my darling, on the dead;
Their pensive tablets round her head,
And the most living words of life

Breathed in her ear. The ring is on,
The "wilt thou" answer'd, and again
The "wilt thou" ask'd, till out of twain
Her sweet "I will" has made you one.

Now sign your names, which shall be read,
Mute symbols of a joyful morn,

By village eyes as yet unborn;
The names are sign'd, and overhead

Begins the clash and clang that tells
The joy to every wandering breeze;
The blind wall rocks, and on the trees
The dead leaf trembles to the bells.

O happy hour, and happier hours
Await them. Many a merry face
Salutes them—maidens of the place,
That pelt us in the porch with flowers.

O happy hour, behold the bride
With him to whom her hand I gave.
They leave the porch, they pass the grave
That has to-day its sunny side.

To-day the grave is bright for me,
For them the light of life increased,
Who stay to share the morning feast,
Who rest to-night beside the sea.

Let all my genial spirits advance
To meet and greet a whiter sun;
My drooping memory will not shun
The foaming grape of eastern France.

It circles round, and fancy plays,
And hearts are warm'd and faces bloom,
As drinking health to bride and groom
We wish them store of happy days.

Nor count me all to blame if I
Conjecture of a stiller guest,
Perchance, perchance, among the rest,

And, tho' in silence, wishing joy.

But they must go, the time draws on,
And those white-favour'd horses wait;
They rise, but linger; it is late;
Farewell, we kiss, and they are gone.

A shade falls on us like the dark
From little cloudlets on the grass,
But sweeps away as out we pass
To range the woods, to roam the park,

Discussing how their courtship grew,
And talk of others that are wed,
And how she look'd, and what he said,
And back we come at fall of dew.

Again the feast, the speech, the glee,
The shade of passing thought, the wealth
Of words and wit, the double health,
The crowning cup, the three-times-three,

And last the dance;—till I retire:
Dumb is that tower which spake so loud,
And high in heaven the streaming cloud,
And on the downs a rising fire:

And rise, O moon, from yonder down,
Till over down and over dale
All night the shining vapour sail
And pass the silent-lighted town,

The white-faced halls, the glancing rills,
And catch at every mountain head,
And o'er the friths that branch and spread
Their sleeping silver thro' the hills;

And touch with shade the bridal doors,
With tender gloom the roof, the wall;
And breaking let the splendour fall
To spangle all the happy shores

By which they rest, and ocean sounds,
And, star and system rolling past,
A soul shall draw from out the vast
And strike his being into bounds,

And, moved thro' life of lower phase,
Result in man, be born and think,
And act and love, a closer link
Betwixt us and the crowning race

Of those that, eye to eye, shall look
On knowledge; under whose command
Is Earth and Earth's, and in their hand
Is Nature like an open book;

No longer half-akin to brute,
For all we thought and loved and did,
And hoped, and suffer'd, is but seed
Of what in them is flower and fruit;

Whereof the man, that with me trod
This planet, was a noble type
Appearing ere the times were ripe,
That friend of mine who lives in God,

That God, which ever lives and loves,
One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves.

CHARLES TENNYSON-TURNER

Midnight, June 30, 1879

I

Midnight—in no midsummer tune
The breakers lash the shores:
The cuckoo of a joyless June
Is calling out of doors:

And thou hast vanish'd from thine own
To that which looks like rest,
True brother, only to be known
By those who love thee best.

II

Midnight—and joyless June gone by,
And from the deluged park
The cuckoo of a worse July
Is calling thro' the dark:

But thou art silent underground,
And o'er thee streams the rain,
True poet, surely to be found
When Truth is found again.

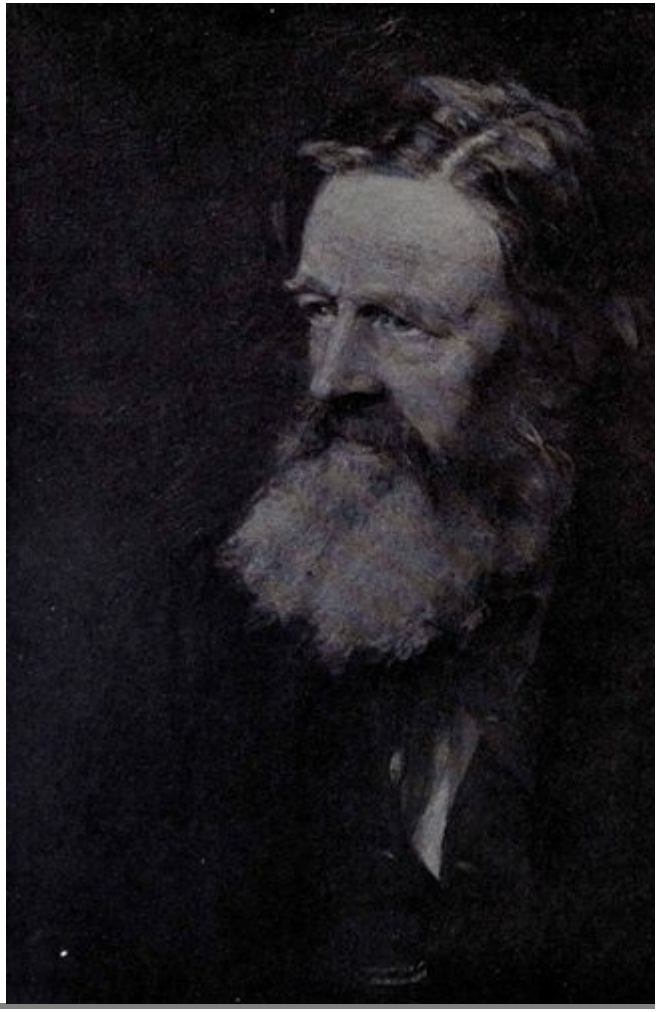
III

And, now to these unsummer'd skies
The summer bird is still,
Far off a phantom cuckoo cries
From out a phantom hill;

And thro' this midnight breaks the sun
Of sixty years away,
The light of days when life begun,
The days that seem to-day,

When all my griefs were shared with thee,
As all my hopes were thine—
As all thou wert was one with me,
May all thou art be mine!





EDMUND LUSHINGTON
(Who married Cecilia Tennyson, and was
Professor of Greek in the University of Glasgow).

TENNYSON AND LUSHINGTON

By Sir HENRY CRAIK, K.C.B., M.P.

Amongst the group of men attached to Lord Tennyson by bonds of early and life-long friendship, and of reverent affection, there is none in whose case the tie is surrounded with more of peculiar interest than Edmund Lushington. Those who in later years were privileged to know the Poet's brother-in-law, and learned to appreciate his character, could well understand the closeness of the sympathy between them.

Edmund Law Lushington was the son of Edmund Henry Lushington, who at one time held important office in Ceylon. The eldest of four[15] gifted brothers, Edmund was born on the 10th of January 1811. The family house was, at first, at Hanwell, from which, some years later, they moved to Park House, near Maidstone. That continued to be the home to which Edmund Lushington returned at every break in his work at Glasgow, and was his permanent residence from his retirement in 1875 until his death on the 13th of July 1893. Young Lushington went to Charterhouse School, and there —as afterwards for a time at Trinity—he had Thackeray as his contemporary. To the friendship thus early begun Thackeray, in long after years, paid a gracious tribute in *The Virginians*, where he cites the Professor at Glasgow and one at Cambridge (W. H. Thompson) as scholars who could more than hold their own against the great names of older days.

As his junior at Trinity, Lushington had at first no acquaintance with Tennyson, and he has himself told us how he first came to know him by sight, when

Arthur Hallam declaimed his prize essay in the College Chapel, and Tennyson sat on the bench just below listening intently to the words of his friend. Already Tennyson's name was well known in the University; many of his poems were handed about in manuscript, and the rank to which they were entitled was a topic of discussion in College societies. It was only after two years at Cambridge that Lushington's friendship with Tennyson began, and as joint members of the "Apostles'" Society they were thrown into close intercourse. In 1832 Lushington was Senior Classic in a notable list, which contained also the names of Shilleto, the famous coach; Alford, afterwards Dean of Canterbury and Biblical commentator; and William Hepworth Thompson, afterwards Master of Trinity. Six years later, in 1838, he was chosen as Professor of Greek in Glasgow from a field which comprised competitors so notable as Robert Lowe, afterwards Lord Sherbrooke, and Archibald Campbell Tait, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. As bearing on this we may quote—as a specimen of his quaint and kindly humour—a letter which Lushington wrote to Tennyson from Addington Park, where he was staying on a visit to the Archbishop on October 13, 1880:

> On Monday there came on a visit Lord Sherbrooke (R. Lowe).... It was good that yesterday morning one pony chaise held three men who, forty-two years ago, were regarded as rival candidates for the Greek Chair at Glasgow, whereby you will at once admit the cogency of the argument that if I had not become Greek Professor I should probably have been either Archbishop of Canterbury or Chancellor of the Exchequer—possibly both, as no doubt in old times the

same back has borne both offices.

This appointment, which banished young Lushington from all the scenes of his early days, did not break the friendship with Tennyson, which had quickly ripened into closest intimacy. In 1840 Tennyson came to visit at Park House,—still Lushington's home during the long summer vacation,—and in 1842 he was present at that festival of the Maidstone Institute which is described in the opening verses of "The Princess." The same summer saw the bond drawn tighter by the marriage of Lushington to the Poet's youngest and best-loved sister, Cecilia. It is that marriage which is acclaimed in immortal words in the Epilogue to "In Memoriam," and the tribute there paid to the bridegroom is one which comes home to all who knew him, as a faithful epitome of his personality:

> And thou art worthy; full of power;
> As gentle, liberal-minded, great,
> Consistent; wearing all that weight
> Of learning lightly like a flower.

The marriage became one link more in that enduring friendship. Those who knew Mrs. Lushington in later years—when jet-black hair and brilliant clearness of complexion were still marvellously preserved—can easily picture her earlier beauty, which must have had much of that "profile like that on a coin"—which, we are told, was characteristic of Emily, the betrothed of Arthur Hallam. Mrs. Lushington had a fine contralto voice, with something of the music that one felt in the Poet's rich tones.[16] She was a charming and even a brilliant companion, and, when in good health, enjoyed society. But Glasgow College —as it was then generally called, amidst the murky

surroundings of its old site, close to the reeking slums of the New Vennel—was an abode little fitted for one accustomed to warmer suns and more congenial scenes. Mrs. Lushington's health was grievously broken, and the northern chills and fogs told heavily on her spirits. She could rarely join her husband at Glasgow, and it became necessary for him, during the session which lasted through the six winter months, to take a house in Edinburgh and rejoin his wife only for week-ends. Attached as Lushington was to his home and his family, the burden of ill-health that lay heavily on his household was a grievous one. It caused him much anxiety. Long pain often racked the nerves and dulled the bright spirit of his wife; his only son died after a long and painful illness, and took the light from his life; a daughter followed that son to the grave; and his brother Henry,[17] whose brilliant poetic gifts had been fully proved in the volume of poems entitled *Points of War*, which he wrote in conjunction with his brother Franklin, died at Paris in the fulness of his powers. He learned, as he writes in one of his letters to Tennyson, that "the roots of love and sorrow are verily twined together abysmally deep." But never once, in all his letters, or in any of his views of his fellow-men, did grief or sorrow drive him into bitterness or cynicism, or make him bate a jot of his calm and reverent fortitude or of his deep and generous charity to his fellow-men.

Throughout that long life, sustained by great thoughts, enriched by wide and varied learning, and blessed by ties of closest affection, Lushington preserved consistently the ideals of the early days, and remained to the last the same strong yet gentle friend, at once generous in admiration and judicial in criticism, that he had been when Tennyson drew his

portrait in those immortal lines. We know what were the interests and tastes of these early days. Dean Bradley, in his reminiscences of visits to Park House in 1841 and 1842, tells us how the brothers, and especially the Professor—"Uncle Edmund"—seemed as much at home in the language of the Greek dramatists as if it was their native tongue; and the present writer remembers how, fifty years later, he heard Lord Tennyson recall the quotation from the *Ecclesiazousae*, by which one or other of the brothers, on an occasion at Park House which must have been almost contemporaneous with the Dean's reminiscences, marked the propensity of the ladies of the party to assiduous attendance at Church. Dean Bradley remarks how remote was their outlook on the world from that of the Oxford of his time, dominated by the Tractarian movement. Tolerance, breadth of view, balanced judgment, and deep reverence for all that was noblest in human thought and achievement—these gave the keynote to their minds and energies. Partisanship, sectarian controversy, ecclesiastical disputes, seemed to belong to an alien world.

To those who knew him as Professor at Glasgow the secret of Lushington's influence was not far to seek. He came there into surroundings singularly unlike those of his earlier days, and with little to compensate in their grimy aspect for the beauty of his home and the hallowed associations of Trinity. It was not long before he had attuned himself to the scene of his new work, and gathered about him a circle of cherished friends, and had won the respect and regard of the great body of these Scottish students drawn from every class. For those who were touched by his enthusiastic love of the Greek language and its literature, his influence was

something far deeper. He made no stirring appeals, and followed no startling methods. His perfect courtesy, combined with a firmness which needed no emphasis of manner to assert itself, sufficed to maintain absolute order amongst those large classes whose traditions made them not always amenable to discipline. But for those to whom his teaching was something of an inspiration, there was much more in his personality than this. Consummate dignity, combined with absolute simplicity of manner, a voice rich and melodious in tone, a diction graceful and harmonious but never studied or artificial—these, with a massive head and features of almost ideal beauty, made him a figure in the life of the College, deepened the impression of his calm and reverent enthusiasm for all that was noblest in thought and language, and gave to his influence an abiding force throughout the lifetime of his pupils. He offered no ready intimacy, and sought to form no following. But his words, few and well chosen, made themselves felt as pure gold, and a sentence of praise or of sympathy sank into the heart, and brought to life and work something that stirred reverence and enthusiasm. His work planted its root deeply, and sought for no outward recognition. It was only after his long career at Glasgow ended by his retirement in 1875 that what he had achieved in reviving an ideal of Greek scholarship was felt; and it was abiding enough to make him the choice of the students for an honour, rarely accorded to a former Professor—that of election as Lord Rector of the University in 1884. He pursued the even tenor of his way with no thought of self-aggrandizement; only slowly did that absolute modesty, linked with unassailable dignity, make itself felt as a power, radiating into the hearts of others his own illuminating enthusiasm for the

ideals of noblest literature.

No poet could have had, bound to him by ties of closest affection, a critic more sympathetic, more reverent, and withal, more faithful in his appreciation. In the genius of Tennyson, he found the central joy and pride of his life; but his judgment was the more valuable, in that it was at all times absolutely sincere:

> "You took my criticism on 'Maud' like an angel," he writes in 1856, "which was very good indeed of you. I wish only you could be as glad whenever I thoroughly admire your poems, as I am sorry whenever I cannot."

One reference to a hint of criticism in a letter of June 1857, after the publication of the early Idylls "Enid" and "Nimue (Vivien)" is not without interest. Lushington writes to Tennyson:

> I am very much grieved if anything that I wrote distrest you. I said it all in love, and only my love could have prompted me to say it. My tenderness for your fame will not let me be silent when I fear anything that may cast a shade upon it, and few things can be more certain to me than that these two poems, coming out by themselves, would not receive their due of admiration. It would be quite different if they were, as I hope they will be, supported by others of varied matter and interest, giving more completeness and beauty of circular grouping and relation. Such a work I want you to produce, and believe you can, which would surpass all you have written yet.

The Idylls always had a peculiar interest for Lushington, and he had long encouraged their production. “I am beyond measure delighted,” he writes in 1856, “to hear of Merlin and his compeers”; and again in the same year, and in his deepest pangs of anxiety about his boy, he does not forget the wish, “All genial inspiration from home breezes come to ‘Enid.’” “Is anything of the Arthurian plan getting into shape?” he writes again in 1859. He was fervent in his admiration of the Dedication to Prince Albert of the new edition of the Idylls in 1862: “Its truth and loftiness and tenderness will be felt in a hundred years as much as now.” “Anything of our own Arthur?” he writes again in 1866, “That’s the true subject.”

His letters (published and unpublished) to Tennyson convey not only the picture of a circle knit by warmest affection, but estimates of others always generous, and sometimes warm with enthusiastic admiration. Carlyle he met at Edinburgh in 1866, and was “struck with the beauty and sweetness of his face; through all its grimness ... there seems to be an infinite freshness of spirit with infinite sadness. His laugh is exactly like a boy’s.” In 1856 he writes: “Have you seen Browning’s new volumes? I have been trying to construe them, and no gold had ever to be digged out through more stubborn rocks. But he is a poet as well as good fellow.”

Through all these long years, with their vicissitudes of joy and sorrow, their long partings, and amid varied and widely separate occupations, the friendship remained as fresh as in the early days, an association of common delight in all that was noblest in literature, inspired by a bond of deepest poetic sympathy. To those who knew and venerated

Lushington, it might seem that his deep and abiding reverence for the genius of one knit to him, as Tennyson was, by more than a brother's love, had in it something which inspired him in his work, and came in place of all thought of personal ambition. His learning enriched his life, and gave to his work as teacher its perfection and its illumination; but it never prompted him to publication, and he gave nothing to the press under his own name except his opening address as professor, his address to the students as Lord Rector, and a short Life of his friend Professor Ferrier, whose posthumous works he edited. In the one friendship he found the chief solace of his life. In the last letter addressed to Tennyson on the anniversary of his birthday, August 6, 1892—only three months before the Poet's death —Lushington wrote:

> May the day be blest to you and all who are dear to you, and may the year bring more blessing as it goes forward, must be the warm wish of all who have felt the knowledge of you and your writings to be among the greatest blessings of their life. Year after year my deep love and admiration has grown, though I have not often of late had the opportunity of expressing it, as we now so seldom meet. But I think you know how largely indebted to you I feel for whatever is best and truest in myself—a debt one cannot hope to repay.

No better picture of the friendship could be given than that enshrined in these words. Lushington survived Tennyson less than a year.

TENNYSON, FITZGERALD, CARLYLE, AND OTHER FRIENDS

By Dr. WARREN, President of Magdalen College, Oxford, and now Professor of Poetry

Old Fitz, who from your suburb grange,
Where once I tarried for a while,
Glance at the wheeling Orb of change,
And greet it with a kindly smile;
Whom yet I see as there you sit
Beneath your sheltering garden-tree
And watch your doves about you flit,
And plant on shoulder, hand, and knee,
Or on your head their rosy feet,
As if they knew your diet spares
Whatever moved in that full sheet
Let down to Peter at his prayers.
.....
And so I send a birthday line
Of greeting; and my son, who dipt
In some forgotten book of mine
With sallow scraps of manuscript,
And dating many a year ago,
Has hit on this, which you will take
My Fitz, and welcome, as I know
Less for its own than for the sake
Of one recalling gracious times,
When, in our younger London days,
You found some merit in my rhymes,
And I more pleasure in your praise.

To E. FITZGERALD (*Tiresias and other Poems*, p. 1).

Alfred Tennyson and Edward FitzGerald; *In Memoriam* and *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*; "The Eternal Yea" and "The Eternal No," "the larger hope" and "the desperate sort of thing unfortunately at the bottom of all thinking men's minds, made Music of"—few friendships, few conjunctions, personal or literary, could be more interesting or more piquant.

What adds to the interest of the friendship is that it remained so long unknown to the literary or the general world, and is even now, perhaps, only partially appreciated. Yet it subsisted for nearly fifty years. It was close and constant. Though, as time went on, the two friends met less and less often, it was maintained by a steady interchange of letters and messages. The letters were naturally more on FitzGerald's side. Like most, though not perhaps quite all good letter-writers, FitzGerald was a great letter-writer. He was, as he often said, an idle man, and as he also said, he rather liked writing letters, "unlike most Englishmen (but I am Irish)," he added. Indeed, he seemed almost to prefer communication with his friends by letter to personal meetings, though these he enjoyed greatly when brought to the point.

Tennyson and FitzGerald were old friends, born in the same year, the notable year 1809. It is true that though they were at Cambridge together they were not then known to each other, except by sight. "I remember him there well," said FitzGerald, speaking of Tennyson, "a sort of Hyperion." They had many friendships, acquaintances, associations in common. Carlyle, Thackeray, Spedding, Merivale, Trench, W. H. Thompson, J. D. Allen, W. B. Donne, Brookfield, Cowell, Mrs. Kemble, Samuel Laurence, were known to them both. In their formative years they fell under the same influences, and read many of the same books. It was about 1835 that they became acquainted. They were brought together probably by their common and uncommon friend, James Spedding. They certainly met at his father's house, Mirehouse, near Bassenthwaite Lake, in the spring of 1835.

Tennyson had begun writing “In Memoriam” a little before this, *i.e.* early in 1834, soon after his friend Hallam’s sudden death and sad home-bringing in the winter of 1833. He kept it on the stocks, as all know, for some seventeen years. It was published, at first anonymously, in 1850. The secret of its authorship was soon revealed, the poem found immediate acceptance and popularity. It became and has remained one of the most widely read poems in the language. In the meantime Tennyson, though not so famous as “In Memoriam” made him, had become well known through the 1842 volumes.

FitzGerald, on the contrary, was at that time quite unknown, except by his friendships, and to his friends. An Irishman, with the easygoing and *dolce far niente* qualities which so often temper the brilliant genius of that race, sufficiently provided with means, he was naturally inclined for a quiet and easy, not to say indolent life. He deliberately chose from the first the *fallentis semita vitae*. He had some literary ambitions, and he wrote a few early poems, one or two of rare promise and beauty. One gift in particular was his—not, it is true, always leading him to action, yet in its passive or dynamic form constant and abundant almost to excess—loyalty in friendship. Once and fatally, it led him to take or submit to a positive step. He had been the attached friend of Bernard Barton the Quaker poet, the friend of Charles Lamb. When Barton died, from a mistaken sense of duty, FitzGerald not only collected his poems, a task more pious than profitable, but afterward, having meanwhile hesitated and halted too long in offering himself to one who was his real love, married his daughter who was not this. He left her, not indeed as is sometimes said, on the morrow of the wedding, but after separations and repeated

attempts—in town and country—at reunion, and lived, as he had done before, alone and somewhat drearily ever afterwards.

Speculation has busied itself about his unfortunate marriage. The briefest but also the best pronouncement is probably his own letter written at the time to Mrs. Tennyson:

31 PORTLAND STREET, LONDON,
March 19th, 1858.

> DEAR MRS. TENNYSON—My married life has come to an end: I am back again in the old quarters, living as for the last thirty years—only so much older, sadder, uglier, and worse!—If people want to go further for the cause of this blunder, than the fact of two people of very determined habits and temper first trying to change them at close on fifty—they may lay nine-tenths of the blame on me. I don't want to talk more of the matter, but one must say something.

The old life to which he returned was monotonous, recluse, unconventional. He spent most of his days in East Anglia, an unromantic region, yet not unbeautiful or wanting a charm of its own; in summer emerging into the sunshine, sitting on a chair in his garden as Tennyson's poem paints him, or on another chair on the deck of his boat, coasting the shores, or sailing up and down the creeks and estuaries with which that country abounds; in winter crouching over the fire, and in either chair smoking and endlessly reading.

In the earlier part of his life he moved about from one home to another, though never very far. In 1860

he settled down at Woodbridge in Suffolk, a pleasant, old-fashioned, provincial town, a sort of East Anglian Totnes, where the Deben, like the more famous Dart, seems to issue from a doorway of close-guarding hills to meet the salt tide, and begins the last stage of its cheerful journey to the open sea.

Just before this, in January of 1859, FitzGerald printed a small edition of a translation of a poem by a Persian astronomer, who died about 1123 A.D. The whole production of this famous piece seemed almost an accident. FitzGerald had been introduced, some half-dozen years earlier, to the study of Persian by his friend Mr. E. B. Cowell, a brother East Anglian, then in business in Ipswich. Cowell, wishing to pursue his studies further and take a Degree, went in 1851 as a married and somewhat mature student to Oxford, and there, in the Bodleian Library, came on a rare MS. of the "Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám." It is a beautiful little volume, written upon parchment sprinkled with gold dust, in a fine black ink, with blue headings, gold divisions, and delicate Oriental illuminations in blue, gold, and green, at the beginning and the end, and is the earliest known MS. of the poem, dating from 1450 A.D. Of this he made a copy for FitzGerald, who kept it by him, and gradually produced a translation, if not rather a paraphrase. "I also amuse myself," he wrote in December 1853, "with poking out some Persian which E. Cowell would inaugurate me with. I go on with it because it is a point in common with him and enables me to study a little together."

In 1858 he had got his version into a shape somewhat to his mind, and sent it to *Fraser's Magazine*. It was kept for about a year, when FitzGerald asked for it back, and had 250 copies

printed early in 1859. He gave away a few and sent the rest to Quaritch.

What ensued is one of the curiosities of literature. FitzGerald did not expect any success or vogue for the work. True, he had toiled at it. “Very few People,” he said, “have ever taken such Pains in Translation as I have; though certainly not to be literal.” And when he had finished he liked “to make an end of the matter by print.” But that was all. “I hardly know,” he added, “why I print any of these things which nobody buys.”

Quaritch, as FitzGerald expected, found no sale for *Omar*. He reduced the price from five shillings to one shilling, and then to one penny. Rossetti heard of it through Whitley Stokes, and showed it to Swinburne. They were attracted by it and bought sixpenny-worth. Quaritch raised his price to twopence. They carried off a few more, and the rest, a little later, were eagerly bought up at a guinea or more apiece. Yet the poem remained long known to very few. Quaritch published a second edition, again a small one, nine years later in 1868, and four years later still, a third small edition in 1872, and in 1879 a fourth edition, including Salámán and Absál. The third edition came out just about the time I was going to Oxford as an undergraduate, and it was then that I first heard of it through J. A. Symonds and H. G. Dakyns, who gave me in 1874 a copy which Symonds had presented to him, and which I still possess. Even at Oxford I found only a few, either graduates or undergraduates, who heeded it or knew anything about it. Professor Henry Smith was the only senior I can remember who spoke to me about it, telling me of the previous editions, and praising its merits one day as we turned it over together in

Parker's shop. But stealthily and underground it made its way. Edition followed edition, with increasing rapidity. Suddenly it became ubiquitously popular, and it is now certainly one of the best-known pieces of the kind in the language. Messrs. Macmillan put it, in 1899, after a dozen times reprinting it, into their Golden Treasury Series. They had to reprint three times in that year, and this edition has been in constant demand. But there are ever so many others. The poem has been reproduced in a hundred forms, both in England and America, illustrated, illuminated, decorated, annotated. A reprint of the first edition is once more sold for a penny. It has been translated into Latin verse. There is a Concordance to it. A whole literature has sprung up around it. An "Omar Khayyam Club" was founded in 1892. Pious pilgrimages have been made to the translator's tomb, and Omar's roses planted over it, and verses recited in celebration of both poet and poem.

Of all this immense vogue and success, as his letters show, FitzGerald himself never dreamed. Even when in 1885 Tennyson published, as the dedication of *Tiresias and other Poems*, the lines "To E. FitzGerald," the translator of *Omar* was still, for most readers, "a veiled prophet." To-day, when the poem has become one of the utterances of the century, lovers of paradox have even ventured to hint that instead of FitzGerald being known as the friend of Tennyson, Tennyson might be known hereafter as the friend of FitzGerald.

FitzGerald is certainly known on his own account. The publication of his letters by his loyal old friend, Dr. Aldis Wright, revealed the man himself to the world. The publication of Tennyson's Life by his son

aided the process. Every one will remember the part which FitzGerald plays there, beginning with the meeting at James Spedding's house in the Lakes in 1835, his early enthusiastic admiration, when he fell in love both with the man and his poems, and then his ever-constant friendship, tempered by grumbling, and what appears sometimes almost grudging criticism. He became the friend, it must be remembered, not only of Alfred, but of the whole family, and especially of Frederick, the eldest brother. "All the Tennysons are to be wished well," he says in a letter of 1845. Though he affected to think little of society and hated snobbery as much as Tennyson or his other friend Thackeray himself, he greatly admired the better qualities of the English gentry, and had even a kindly weakness for their foibles. When Frederick went to live in Italy he wrote: "I love that such men as Frederick should be abroad: so strong, haughty, and passionate."

When FitzGerald first met Alfred, the poetic family was still living on at Somersby after their father's death. He went there and fell in love with their mother, and with their mode of life, and with the region, where "there were not only such good seas, but such fine Hill and Dale among the Wolds as people in general scarce thought on." It was characteristic of him that he used to say that Alfred should never have left Lincolnshire.

FitzGerald kept up the friendship mainly, as he did most of his friendships, by letter. In particular, he made a point of writing to the Alfred Tennysons twice a year, once in the summer and again about Christmas time. He addressed himself sometimes to the Poet himself, sometimes to Mrs. Tennyson, and in later days to their eldest son. To Frederick Tennyson,

who went to live in Italy, as the readers of Dr. Aldis Wright's volume will remember, he wrote a whole series of letters, many of them very long and full. Of all these letters—to his father, his mother, himself, and his uncle—the present Lord Tennyson has placed a collection in my hands for the purpose of this article. The story of the friendship which it is an attempt to sketch will best be told by pretty full quotations from them. Many of them, and indeed most of those to his father and mother, are now published for the first time.

FitzGerald did not always succeed, and indeed did not expect to succeed, in drawing a reply from Tennyson himself. In a letter written in the summer of 1860 to Mrs. Tennyson he makes a very amusing reference to this, and also throws some light on his own habits:

> Thank old Alfred for his letter which was an unexpected pleasure. I like to hear of him and you once or twice in the year: but I know he is no dab at literature at any time, poor fellow. "Paltry Poet"—Let him believe it is anything but want of love for him that keeps me out of the Isle of Wight: nor is it indolence neither.—But to say *what it is* would make me write too much about myself. Only let him believe what I *do* say.

Their relations were always of this playful, intimate kind, resting on long acquaintance. If FitzGerald was amused by "Alfred," Tennyson, on the other hand, was well used to his old friend's humour. When we spoke about him, he dwelt, I recollect, on this particular trait, and told me, to illustrate it, the story which is now, I think, pretty well known, how, when

some common acquaintance had bored them with talking about his titled friends, "Old Fitz," as at last he took up his candle to go to bed, turned to Tennyson and said, quietly and quaintly, "I knew a Lord once, but he's dead."

When Tennyson spoke of *Omar* he said, what he has said in verse, that he admired it greatly:

> Than which I know no version done
> In English more divinely well;
> A planet equal to the sun
> Which cast it.

But of course he was aware that it was by no means always faithful to the original. It is indeed a liberal, rather than a literal translation—how liberal, all know who have been at the pains to compare FitzGerald's poem with any of the many literal versions to which it has given rise.

In quite the early Twickenham days, just after their marriage, he would invite himself to dine or stay with Tennyson and his wife, nay more, would ask to bring friends to see them, such as the Cowells and W. B. Donne. In 1854 he stayed at Farringford for a fortnight, a visit he always remembered, and often referred to, with pleasure. Together he and Tennyson worked at Persian. He also sketched, and botanized with the Poet. But he could not be got to repeat the visit; and indeed, as he said himself, it was the last of the kind he paid anywhere, except to Mrs. Kemble. When he reached London, just after this visit, he wrote to Tennyson:

> 60 LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS,
> *June 15th, 1854*.

> MY DEAR ALFRED—I called at Quaritch's to look for another Persian Dictionary. I see he has a copy of Eastwick's Gulistan for *ten shillings*: a translation (not Eastwick's, however, but one quite sufficient for the purpose) can be had for five shillings. Would you like me to buy them and send them down to you by the next friend who travels your way: or will you wait till some good day I can lend you *my* Eastwick (which is now at Oxford)? I could mark some of the pieces which I think it might not offend you to read: though you will not care greatly for anything in it.
>
> Oh, such an atmosphere as I am writing in!—Yours,
>
> E. F. G.
>
> I left my little Swedenborg at Farringford. Please keep it for me, as it was a gift from my sister.

The note of the letters is always the same—warm affection, deep underlying admiration and regard, superficial banter and play of humour, and humorous, half-grumbling criticism. When they met face to face, after being parted for twenty years, they fell at once into exactly the old vein. FitzGerald was surprised at this, but he need not have been. Both were the sincerest and most natural of men, and nothing but distance and absence had occurred to sever them.

From the first he had conceived an intense and almost humble-minded admiration for Alfred. One of his earliest utterances describes his feelings, and

strikes, with his keen critical perception, the true note. "I will say no more of Tennyson," he wrote, "than that the more I have seen of him, the more cause I have to think him great. His little humours and grumpinesses were so droll that I was always laughing,—I must, however say further, that I felt, what Charles Lamb describes, a sense of depression at times from the over-shadowing of a so much more lofty intellect than my own—*I could not be mistaken in the universality of his mind*."

His descriptions in *Euphranor*, published some sixteen years later, of "the only living and like to live poet he had known," tell the same tale. They speak of Tennyson's union of passion and strength. "As King Arthur shall bear witness, no young Edwin he, though as a great Poet comprehending all the softer stops of human Emotion in that Register where the Intellectual, no less than what is called the Poetical, faculty predominated. As all who knew him know, a Man at all points, Euphranor—like your Digby, of grand proportion and feature...."

There was no one for whose opinion he had so much regard, grumble though he might, and criticize as he would. He had a special preference for the poems at whose production he had assisted, which he had seen in MS., or heard rehearsed orally. Toward the later poems his feeling was not the same. The following extracts are all equally characteristic:

MARKETHILL, WOODBRIDGE,
November 20th, 1861.

MY DEAR OLD ALFRED—It gives me a strange glow of pleasure when I come upon your verses, as I now do in every other book I take up, with no name of author, as every other

person knows whose they are. I love to light on the verses for their own sake, and to remember having heard nearly all I care for —and what a lot that is!—from your own lips.

MARKETHILL, WOODBRIDGE,
December 14th, 1862.

MY DEAR OLD ALFRED—Christmas coming reminds me of my half-yearly call on you.

I have, as usual, nothing to tell of myself: boating all the summer and reading Clarissa Harlowe since. You and I used to talk of the Book more than twenty years ago. I believe I am better read in it than almost any one in existence now—No wonder: for it is almost intolerably tedious and absurd—But I can't read the "Adam Bedes," "Daisy Chains," etc., at all. I look at my row of Sir Walter Scott and think with comfort that I can always go to him of a winter evening, when no other book comes to hand.

To Frederick Tennyson.

November 15th, 1874.

I wrote my yearly letter to Mrs. Alfred a fortnight ago, I think; but as yet have had no answer. Some Newspaper people make fun of a Poem of Alfred's, the "Voice and the Peak," I think: giving morsels of which of course one could not judge. But I think he had

better have done singing: he has sung well—*tempus silere*, etc.

But his love for the man and his underlying belief in his opinion and genius never varied. “I don’t think of you so little, my dear old Alfred,” he wrote one day in the middle of their friendship, “but rejoice in the old poems and in yourself, young or old, and worship you (I may say) as I do no other man, and am glad I can worship one man still.”

His delight when he found that Alfred had really liked *Omar* was unusually *naïf* and keen. He forgot his grumbling, and wrote to Mrs. Tennyson:

To Mrs. Tennyson.

November 4/67.

To think of Alfred’s approving my old Omar! I never should have thought he even knew of it. Certainly *I* should never have sent it to him, always supposing that he would not approve anything but a literal Prose translation—unless from such hands as can do original work and therefore do *not* translate other People’s! Well: now I have got Nicolas and sent a copy to Cowell, and when he is at liberty again we shall beat up old Omar’s Quarters once more.

I’ll tell you a very pretty Book. Alfred Tennyson’s Pastoral Poems, or rather Rural Idylls (only I must hate the latter word) bound up in a volume, Gardener’s, Miller’s, Daughters; Oak; Dora; Audley Court, etc.

> Oh the dear old 1842 days and editions! Spedding thinks I've shut up my mind since. Not to "Maud, Maud, Maud, Maud." When I ask People what Bird says that of an evening, they say "The Thrush."
>
> I wish you would make one of your Boys write out the "Property" Farmer Idyll. Do now, pray.
>
> E. F. G.

When he had first "discovered" Omar, and was beginning to work upon him, Tennyson (who was then finishing the early "Idylls of the King") had been one of the first to whom he wrote. It is worth remembering that FitzGerald was then in deep depression. It was the middle of the sad period of his brief, unhappy married life. This had proved a failure in London. It was proving a failure now in the country. He wrote:

> GORLESTONE, GREAT YARMOUTH,
> *July 1857*.
>
> MY DEAR OLD ALFRED—Please direct the enclosed to Frederick. I wrote him some months ago getting Parker to direct; but have had no reply. *You* won't write to me, at which I can't wonder. I keep hoping for King Arthur—or part of him. I have got here to the seaside—a dirty, Dutch-looking sea, with a dusty Country in the rear; but the place is not amiss for one's Yellow Leaf. I keep on reading foolish Persian too: chiefly because of it's connecting me with the Cowells, now besieged in Calcutta. But also I have really got hold of an old Epicurean so desperately

impious in his recommendations to live only for *To-day* that the good Mahometans have scarce dared to multiply MSS. of him. He writes in little quatrains, and has scarce any of the iteration and conceits to which his people are given. One of the last things I remember of him is that—"God gave me this turn for drink, perhaps God was drunk when he made me"—which is not strictly pious. But he is very tender about his roses and wine, and making the most of this poor little life.

All which is very poor stuff you will say. Please to remember me to the Lady. I don't know when I shall ever see you again; and yet you can't think how often I wish to do so, and never forget you, and never shall, my dear old Alfred, in spite of Epicurus. But I don't grow merrier.—Yours ever,

E. F. G.

In 1872 he was busy with the *third* edition of *Omar*, and wrote to consult Tennyson. The first edition had contained only seventy-five quatrains. The second was a good deal longer, containing one hundred and ten. The third was again shortened to one hundred and one:

WOODBRIDGE, *March 25th, 1872*.

MY DEAR ALFRED—It would be impertinent in me to trouble you with a question about *my* grand Works. But, as you let me know (through Mrs. T.) that you liked Omar, I want to know whether you read the *First* or *Second* Edition; and, in case you saw *both,*

which you thought best? The reason of my asking you is that Quaritch (Publisher) has found admirers in America who have almost bought up the whole of the last enormous Edition—amounting to 200 copies, I think—so he wishes to embark on 200 more, I suppose: and says that he, and his Readers, like the first Edition best: so he would reprint these.

Of course *I* thought the second best: and I think so still: partly (I fear) because the greater number of verses gave more time for the day to pass from morning till night.

Well, what I ask you to do is, to tell me which of the two is best, if you have seen the two. If you have *not*, I won't ask you further: —if you have, you can answer in two words. And your words would be more than all the rest.

This very little business is all I have eyes for now; except to write myself once more ever your's and Mrs. Tennyson's,

E. F. G.

Another letter a little later refers to the same reprinting of *Omar*:

MY DEAR ALFRED—I must thank you, as I ought, for your second note. The best return I can make is *not* to listen to Mrs. Tennyson's P.S., which bids me send another Omar:—for I have only got Omar the Second, I am sure now *you* would not like him so well as the first (mainly because of "too much"). I think

he might disgust you with both.

So though two lines from you would have done more to decide on his third appearance (if Quaritch still wishes that), I will not put you to that trouble, but do as I can alone—cutting out some, and retaining some; and will send you the result if it comes into type.

You used to talk of my crotchets: but I am quite sure you have one little crotchet about this Omar: which deserves well in its way, but not so well as you write of it. You know that though I do not think it worth while to compete with you in your paltry poetical capacity, I won't surrender in the critical, not always, at least. And, at any rate, I have been more behind the scenes in this little matter than you. But I do not the less feel your kindness in writing about it: for I think you would generally give £100 sooner than write a letter. And I am—Yours ever,

E. F. G.

The next year, in 1873, he wrote again, touching on the same theme and others:

DEAR MRS. TENNYSON—I remember Franklin Lushington perfectly—at Farringford in 1854; almost the last visit I paid anywhere: and as pleasant as any, after, or before. I have still some sketches I made of the place: "Maud, Maud, Maud," etc., was then read to me, and has rung in my ears ever after. Mr. Lushington, I remember, sketched also. If he be with you still, please tell him that I hope his remembrance of me

is as pleasant as mine of him.

I think I told you that Frederick came here in August, having (of course) missed you on his way. The Mistress of Trinity wrote to me some little while ago, telling me, among other things, that she, and others, were much pleased with your son Hallam, whom they thought to be like the “Paltry Poet” (poor fellow).

The Paltry one’s Portrait is put in a frame and hung up at my *château*, where I talk to it sometimes, and every one likes to see it. It is clumsy enough, to be sure; but it still recalls the old man to me better than the bearded portraits[18] which are now the fashion.

But oughtn’t your Hallam to have it over his mantelpiece at Trinity?

The first volume of Forster’s Dickens has been read to me of a night, making me love him, up to 30 years of age at any rate; till then, quite unspoilt, even by his American triumphs, and full of good humour, generosity, and energy. I wonder if Alfred remembers dining at his house with Thackeray and me, me taken there, quite unaffected, and seeming to wish any one to show off rather than himself. In the evening we had a round game at cards and mulled claret. Does A. T. remember?

I have had my yearly letter from Carlyle, who writes of himself as better than last year. He sends me a Mormon Newspaper, with a very sensible sermon in it from the

> life of Brigham Young, as also the account of a visit to a gentleman of Utah with eleven wives and near forty children, all of whom were very happy together. I am just going to send the paper to Archdeacon Allen to show him how they manage these things over the Atlantic.
>
> About Omar I must say that *all* the changes made in the last copy are not to be attributed to my own perverseness; the same thought being constantly repeated with directions, whether by Omar or others, in the 500 quatrains going under his name. I had not eyes, nor indeed any further appetite, to refer to the Original, or even to the French Translation; but altered about the "Dawn of Nothing" as A. T. pointed out its likeness to his better property.[19] I really didn't, and don't, think it matters what changes are made in that Immortal Work which is to last about five years longer. I believe it is the strong-minded American ladies who have chiefly taken it up; but they will soon have something wickeder to digest, I dare say.
>
> I am going to write out for Alfred a few lines from a *Finnish* Poem which I find quoted in Lowell's "Among my Books"—which I think a good Book. But I must let my eyes rest now.

In September 1876 a lucky chance brought Tennyson and himself face to face again after twenty years. The Poet was travelling with his son, and together they visited him at Woodbridge. They found him, as Tennyson describes, in his garden at Little Grange.

He was delighted to see them, and specially pleased with the son's relation and attitude to his father.

Together he and Tennyson walked about the garden and talked as of old. When Tennyson complained of the multitude of poems which were sent him, Old Fitz recommended him to imitate Charles Lamb and throw them into his neighbour's cucumber frames. Tennyson noticed a number of small sunflowers, with a bee half-dying—probably from the wet season—on each, "Like warriors dying on their shields, Fitz," he said. He reverted, of course, to his favourite Crabbe, and told the story of how Crabbe (when he was a chaplain in the country) felt an irresistible longing to see the sea, mounted a horse suddenly, rode thirty miles to the coast, saw it, and rode back comforted.

FitzGerald did not compliment them on their looks, because, he said, he had always noticed men said, "How well you are looking!" whenever you were going to be very ill. Therefore he had ceased saying it to any one. He told, too, a story of a vision, how he had one day clearly seen from outside his sister and her children having tea round the table in his dining-room. He then saw his sister quietly withdraw from the room, so as not to disturb the children. At that moment she died in Norfolk.[20]

He wrote shortly after this visit to Tennyson:

LITTLE GRANGE, WOODBRIDGE,
October 31st, 1876.

MY DEAR ALFRED—I am reading delightful Boccacio through once more, escaping to it from the Eastern Question as the company he tells of from the Plague. I thought of you yesterday when I came to the Theodore and

> Honoria story, and read of Teodoro "*un mezzo meglio per la pineta entrato*"—"More than a Mile immersed within the wood," as you used to quote from Glorious John. This Decameron must be read in its Italian, as my Don in his Spanish: the language fits either so exactly. I am thinking of trying Faust in German, with Hayward's Prose Translation. I never could take to it in any Shape yet: and —*don't believe* in it: which I suppose is a piece of Impudence.
>
> But neither this, nor *The Question* are you called on to answer—much use if I did call. But I am—always yours,
>
> E. F. G.
>
> When I thought of you and Boccacio, I was sitting in the Sun on that same Iron Seat with the pigeons about us, and the Trees still in Leaf.

One of the poems after 1842 which he liked was the "Ode on the Duke of Wellington," though characteristically he made a somewhat fastidious criticism on the "vocalization" of the opening.

> "I mumble over your old verses in my memory as often as any one's," he wrote, "and was lately wishing you had found bigger vowels for the otherwise fine opening of the Duke's Funeral:
>
> > 'Twas at the Royal Feast for Persia won, etc.
> > (Dryden.)

Bury the great Duke, etc.
(A. T.)

So you see I am always the same crotchetty

FITZ."

The paradox is that it was FitzGerald who was always urging "Alfred" to go on, and finding fault with him for not doing more, and not singing in grander, sterner strains,—not becoming the Tyrtaeus of his country. In truth, Tennyson's strength and physical force and his splendid appearance in youth, added to his mental grandeur, seem to have deeply impressed his youthful contemporaries. He was, they felt, heroic, and made for heroic songs and deeds. When he did go on, in his own way, FitzGerald did not like it, or only half liked it. For Tennyson did go forward on his own lines. He had not a little to daunt and deter him. He, too, had his sensitiveness and capacity for feeling and passion not less exquisite than FitzGerald's own. FitzGerald said his friendships were more like loves. He was not alone in this attitude. "What *passions* our friendships were," wrote Thackeray, another of the set, the early friend of both FitzGerald and Tennyson. But of no friendship could such language be used more truly than of that which existed between Tennyson and Arthur Hallam. When, however, the sundering blow fell, and the friendship which was a love lay shattered, Tennyson braced himself and went on. For

It becomes no man to nurse despair,
But in the teeth of clench'd antagonisms
To follow up the worthiest till he die.

His faith, even to the last, was still at times dashed with doubt, for, with "the universality of his mind,"

he could not help seeing many sides of a question. But he "followed the Gleam," as he has himself described. FitzGerald did the opposite. He drifted, he dallied, he delayed, he despaired. He ruined his own life in great measure by his marriage. His early ambitions seemed to wither prematurely, and he let his career slide. Yet he was always, as Mr. A. C. Benson has excellently brought out, admirable in his sincerity, his friendly kindliness, his innocence, his conscientious adherence to his literary standards. Too much has been made of his unconventionality, his slovenliness and slackness, his love of low or common company. He remained a gentleman and a man of business. Thackeray, a man of the world, when he was starting for America, wanted to leave him the legal guardian of his daughters. He was an Epicurean, not a Pyrrhonist. He took life seriously. He showed at times an austerity of spirit which was surprising. His *Omar* has often, and naturally, been compared to Lucretius and to Ecclesiastes. There is probably more of Lucretius about the poem, but more of Ecclesiastes about the translator.

There is another Epicurean, with whose tenets he might have been thought to show even more sympathy—the easy-going poet-critic Horace. *Vitae summa brevis spem nos vetat incohare longam* is the constant burden of FitzGerald's strain. His friendship, early formed, with Tennyson, the contrast of their divergent views, might be compared with the friendship of Horace and Virgil. For Virgil, too, began as an Epicurean. But FitzGerald was not content with Horace. "Why is it," he wrote, "that I can never take up with Horace, so sensible, agreeable, elegant, and sometimes even grand?" It was, perhaps, just that masculine and worldly element that put him off. Yet he not seldom quotes

Horace, and perhaps liked him better than he knew. "*Naturam expellas furca, tamen usque recurret*," he wrote in a copy of Polonius which he gave to a special friend, and Nature was what he was always seeking in poetry. Still he preferred Virgil, just as he really preferred Tennyson.

Though he was destined to produce a poem which bids as fair for immortality as any of its time, he did not think highly of his own powers as a poet. But he did plume himself on being a critic. "I pretend to no Genius," he said, "but to Taste, which according to my aphorism is the feminine of Genius." This was another gift in common. Tennyson was himself a consummate critic, as FitzGerald was the first to recognize.

FitzGerald had his limitations and his prejudices—his "crotchets." He did not like many even of those whom the world has agreed to admire. He did not like Euripides or even Homer. With Goethe's poems he could not get on. He eschewed Victor Hugo. He liked, indeed, very little of the prose and none of the poetry of his contemporaries, except that of the Tennysons. He could not away with Browning. Arnold, he wrote down "a pedant." He thought very little of Rossetti and Swinburne, though the former, especially, was a great admirer not only of *Omar* but of *Jami* and some of the Spanish translations. He tried to read Morris's *Jason*, but said, "No go." He "could not read the *Adam Bedes* and the *Daisy Chains*." All this must be remembered when we read his criticism of Tennyson's later work which belonged to the period of these writers and their productions. But within certain limits he was a very fine critic. It cannot be said of him as of his special favourite among Greek poets, Sophocles, that

He saw life steadily and saw it whole.

As he was aware himself, he by no means saw it whole. But with his detachment and his critical gift, it may, perhaps, be said:

He saw life lazily, but saw it plain.

To the question of Browning's merits, or want of merits, he is always returning. A very characteristic letter is a long, discursive one, written to Tennyson himself in 1867:

MARKETHILL, WOODBRIDGE,
November 3rd, 1867.

MY DEAR OLD ALFRED—I abuse Browning myself; and get others to abuse him; and write to you about it; for the sake of easing my own heart—not yours. Why is it (as I asked Mrs. Tennyson) that, while the Magazine critics are belauding him, *not one* of the men I know, who are not inferior to the writers in the Athenæum, Edinburgh, etc., can *endure*, and (for the most part) can read him at all? I mean his last poem. Thus it has been with the Cowells, Trinity Thompsons, Donnes, and some others whom you don't know, but in whose candour and judgment I have equal confidence, men and women too.

Since I wrote to your wife, Pollock, a great friend of Browning's, writes to me. "I agree with you about Browning and A. T. I can't understand it. *Ter conatus eram* to get through the Ring and the Book—and failing to perform the feat in its totality, I have

stooped to the humiliation to point out extracts for me (they having read it *all quite through* three times) and still could not do it. So I pretend to have read it, and let Browning so suppose when I talk to him about it. But don't you be afraid"? (N.B. I am *not*, only angry) "things will come round, and A. T. will take his right place again, and R. B. will have all the honours due to his learning, wit and philosophy."

Then I had the curiosity to ask Carlyle in my yearly letter to him. He also is, or was, a friend of B.'s, and used to say that he looked on him as a sort of light-cavalry man to follow you. Well, Carlyle writes, "Browning's book I read—*insisted* on reading: it is full of talent, of energy, and effort, but totally without *backbone*, or basis of common sense. I think among the absurdest books ever written by a gifted man." (Italics are his.)

Who, then, are the people that write the nonsense in the Reviews? I believe the reason at the bottom is that R. B. is a clever London diner-out, etc., while A. T. holds aloof from the newspaper men, etc. "Long life to him!" But I don't understand why Venables, or some of the men who think as I do, and wield trenchant pens in high places, why they don't come out, and set all this right. I only wish I could do it: but I can only see the right thing, but not prove it to others. "I do not like you, Dr. Fell," etc.

I found a Memorandum the other day (I can't now light on it) of a Lincolnshire story about

"Haxey Wood" or "Haxey Hood"—which—if I had not told it to you, but left it as by chance in your way some thirty years ago, you would have turned into a shape to outlast all R. B.'s poems put together. There is no use in my finding and sending it now, because it doesn't do (with Paltry Poets) to try and drag them to the water. The two longest and worst tales (I think) in Crabbe's Tales of the Hall, were suggested to him by Sir S. Romilly, and "a lady in Wiltshire." I wish Murray would let me make a volume of "Selections from Crabbe"—which I know I could, so that *common* readers would wish to read the whole original; which now scarce any one does; nor can one wonder they do not. But Crabbe will flourish when R. B. is dead and buried. Lots of lines which he cut out of his MS. would be the beginning of a little fortune to others. I happened on this couplet the other day:

> The shapeless purpose of a soul that feels,
> And half suppresses wrath and half reveals.

Not that Crabbe is to live by single couplets or epigrams, but by something far better, as you know better than I. There is a long passage in the Tales of the Hall (Old Bachelor) which always reminds me of you, A. T., where the Old Bachelor recounts how he pleaded with his Whig father to be allowed to marry the Tory Squire's daughter; when,

> Coolly my father looked, and much enjoy'd
> The broken eloquence his eye destroy'd, etc.

and then pleads to the Tory mother of the girl.

> Methinks I have the tigress in my eye, etc.

Do look at this, A. T., when you get the Book, and don't let my praise set you against it.

I have written you a very long letter, you see, with one very bad eye too. I thought it had mended, by help of cold water and goggles; but these last three days it has turned rusty again. I believe it misses the sea air.

> δεινῶν τ' ἄημα πνευμάτων ἐκοίμισε[21]
> στένοντα πόντον

Do you quite understand this ἐκοίμισε? But what lines, understood or not! The two last words go alongside of my little ship with me many a time. Well, Alfred, neither you, nor the Mistress, are to answer this letter, which I still hope may please you, as it is (all the main part) written very loyally, and is all true. Now, good-bye, and remember me as your old

E. F. G.

> *Ne cherchez point, Iris, à percer les*

ténèbres[22]
Dont les Dieux sagement ont voilé l'Avenir;
Et ne consultez point tant de Devins célèbres
Pour chercher le moment qui doit nous désunir.
Livrez-vous au plaisir; tout le reste est frivole;
Et songez que, trop court pour de plus longs projets,
Tandis que nous parlons le Temps jaloux s'envole,
Et que ce Temps, hélas! est perdu pour jamais.

But wait—before I finish I must ask why you assure Clark of Trinity that it is the *rooks* who call "Maud, Maud, etc." Indeed it is the *Thrush*, as I have heard a hundred times in a summer's evening, when scared in the evergreens of a garden. Therefore:

Rooks in a classroom quarrel up in the tall trees caw'd;
But 'twas the thrush in the laurel, that kept crying, Maud, Maud, Maud.

Keats he put very high indeed. "I have been again reading Lord Houghton's *Life of Keats*" he wrote, "whose hastiest doggrel should show Browning, Morris & Co., that they are not what the newspapers tell them they are." "What a fuss the cockneys make about Shelley just now, surely not worth Keats' little finger," he wrote on another occasion. And again, "Is Mr. Rossetti a Great Poet like Browning and Morris? So the *Athenæum* tells me. Dear me, how thick Great

Poets *do* grow nowadays." And yet again, "I can't read G. Eliot as I presume you can; I really conclude that the fault lies in me, not in her; so with Goethe (except in his letters, Table-Talk,[23] etc.), whom I try in vain to admire."

His real love was for Crabbe, the poet, not of "realism" but of reality.

Life's sternest painter and its best—

the poet of disillusionment. This love, which has been felt in different generations by Byron, Cardinal Newman, and Bishop Gore, he could get few of his friends to share with him. Tennyson himself was one of the few. "I keep reading Crabbe from time to time," he writes to Tennyson; "nobody else does unless it be another 'paltry Poet' whom I know. The edition only sells at a shilling a volume—second-hand. I don't wonder at young people and women (I mean no disparagement at all) not relishing even the good parts: and certainly there is plenty of bad for all readers."

What he loved before all was "touches of nature," the humour, the pathos, of ordinary life. He liked home-thrusts at human foibles and frailty, and again the outwelling of native nobility, generosity, or love. Newman's early Sermons, "Plain and Parochial" as they were, perhaps for this very reason he much affected. "The best that were ever written in my judgment," he said. He remained an admirer of Newman, and speaks enthusiastically of the *Apologia* and its "sincerity." But he did not like the ritualism of the Oxford movement. His traditions were Evangelical,—one reason perhaps why he liked Newman. John Wesley was "one of his heroes," and he had much sympathy with, and was at one period

personally drawn by, evangelical and revivalist Mission preaching.

He would have sympathized with Keble's lines teaching that his fellow-creatures should not

> Strive to wind themselves too high
> For sinful man beneath the sky.

This was probably one of the reasons why he did not like "In Memoriam." He said indeed that he thought it too artistic, too machine-made. He said that he thought Tennyson became gradually altogether too artistic and lost in spontaneity, vigour, and freshness. Yet he himself was a most laborious artist, both in his verse and in his prose. *Omar* is most carefully elaborated, with correction on correction, and so are the best parts of *Euphranor*. His reasons were really deeper, and went more against the matter than the form. He did not like the early "Idylls of the King." "The Holy Grail" he liked as he had liked the "Vision of Sin." But what moved him to tears was the old-style "Northern Farmer," the "substantial, rough-spun Nature he knew," and "the old brute, invested by the poet with the solemn humour of Humanity like Shakespeare's *Shallow*." Yet even here a "crotchet" cropped up, as appears from the following note:

WOODBRIDGE, *May 20th, 1877*.

The enclosed scrap from Notes and Queries reminded me (as probably the writer has been reminded) of your Old Farmer, the only part of which that goes against me is the "canter and canter away" of the last line. I can scarce tell you (as usual with me) why I don't like Doctor Fell; but you know I must be right.

By the by, my old Crabbe in the Parish Register (Burials), says

> Bless me! I die—and not a warning giv'n—
> With much to do on earth, and *all* for Heaven:
> No preparation for my soul's affairs,
> No leave petitioned for the Barn's repairs, etc.

not very good; and (N.B.) I don't mean it suggested anything in Shakespeare's Northern Farmer—for that may pair off with Shallow.

Again, when it appeared in 1865, he was greatly taken with the "Captain." It was a return to the old personal mood and simple direct depiction of character:

MARKETHILL, WOODBRIDGE,
October 22nd, 1865.

DEAR MRS. TENNYSON—Talking of ships again, I liked much *The Captain* in the

> People's Alfred. Was the last stanza (which I like also) an afterthought?—I think a really *sublime* thing is the end of Kingsley's "Westward Ho!"—(which I never could read through)—The Chase of the Ships: the Hero's being struck blind at the moment of revenge: then his being taken to *see* his rival and crew at the bottom of the sea. Kingsley is a distressing writer to me: but I must think this (the inspiration of it) of a piece with Homer and the Gods—which you won't at all.

He liked, too, "Gareth and Lynette," which again he thought more natural and direct than some of the earlier Idylls. He liked, as might have been expected, the "Ballads and other Poems." But what is most significant, perhaps, among his likes and dislikes, is his love for "Audley Court," "one of my old favourites," he calls it. Why did FitzGerald like "Audley Court"? It is not one of the poems which are generally best known and most admired. Indeed, while it is in many ways beautiful and contains some splendid things, such as the sonorous line

> The pillar'd dusk of sounding sycamores,

it is just one of those poems which the severe critic of Tennyson picks out for fault-finding and even for ridicule. It has what such critics call the over-elaborate, the "drawing-room" manner. Like Milton's picture of Eve's *déjeuner*, though with more humour and appropriateness, it employs the grand and sumptuous style to describe trifles, such as the venison pasty:

> Where quail and pigeon, lark and leveret lay,
> Like fossils of the rock, with golden yolks
> Imbedded and injellied.

But on a closer consideration it will be seen that it has just what "Old Fitz" himself loved—the easy realism, the contentment with the things of this world; above all, that flavour of

> After-dinner talk
> Across the walnuts and the wine

which he also found and loved in that other favourite, "The Miller's Daughter," the harmless gossip about old friends

> who was dead,
> Who married, who was like to be, and how
> The races went, and who would rent the hall.

This suited "Old Fitz's" temper absolutely. The humorous *pococurantism*, for cynicism it hardly is, of the quatrains put into the mouth of the Poet's friend, each ending "but let me live my life," breathes the very spirit of his own indolent, kindly Epicureanism, and indeed the poem might almost be taken as a record of a dialogue between the two friends in their early days.

He loved, too, the "Lord of Burleigh," "The Vision of Sin," and "The Lady of Shalott." The delicious idealism of these youthful pieces did not displease him. They had for him a "champagne flavour." They were part of his own youth. For a brief hour of that fast-fleeting day, the wine of life had sparkled in his own glass, but then too soon turned flat and flavourless.

For two or three things every lover of Tennyson must thank FitzGerald. He it was who, about 1838, soon after their friendship began, got his friend, Samuel Laurence, to paint the earliest portrait of the Poet,

"the only one of the old days and still the best of all to my thinking," as he wrote in 1871. He, too, preserved and gave to Tennyson the drawing by Thackeray of the "Lord of Burleigh." When the Poet was rather dilatory in calling at Spedding's house to claim this portrait, FitzGerald wrote: "Tell him I don't think Browning would have served me so, and I mean to prefer his poems for the future." He also rescued from the flames some of the pages of the famous "Butcher's Book," the tall, ledger-like MS. volume, in which many of the early poems he so much loved were written, and gave them to the Library of Trinity College. About this he wrote:

MARKETHILL, WOODBRIDGE,
December 4th, 1864.

DEAR ALFRED—Now I should be almost ready to be "yours ever, etc." if I didn't remember to ask you if you have any objection to my giving two or three of the leaves of your old "Butcher's Book" (do you remember?) to the Library at Trinity College? An admirer of your's there told me they would be glad of some such thing—It was in 1842, when you were printing the two good old volumes:—in Spedding's rooms —and the "Butcher's Book," after its margins serving for pipe-lights, went leaf by leaf into the fire: and I told you I would keep two or three leaves of it as a remembrance. So I took a bit of my old favourite "Audley Court": and a bit of another, I forget which: for I can't lay my hands on them just now. But when I do, I shall give them to Trinity College unless you are strongly opposed. I dare say, however, you would give them the

whole MS. of one of your later poems: which probably they would value more.

Tennyson appreciated "Old Fitz's" fine qualities as a critic, but he recognized their limitations, and in particular his "crotchets" and prejudices. He was himself, as is now generally recognized, a consummate critic, and withal a most kindly and catholic one. In my first conversation with him he said that he used to think Goethe a good critic. "He always discovered all the good he could in a man." To his own contemporaries, especially towards Browning, for example, his attitude was very different, as FitzGerald acknowledged, from FitzGerald's own. I did not like, I remember, to ask him what he thought of Browning, but his son encouraged me to do so. "You ask him," he said. "He'll tell you at once." At last I did so. "A true genius, but wanting in art," he said. And on another occasion he spoke rather more in detail to the same purpose.

A special friend of both Tennyson and FitzGerald was Thackeray. With him FitzGerald had been intimate even earlier than with Tennyson. They were friends at college, and had gone as young men together to Paris, Thackeray ostensibly to study art. FitzGerald knew Paris of old. His father had a home there when he was a child, and went there for a few months every year for some years.

When he was nearing seventy FitzGerald wrote the following delightful account of some of his recollections to Thackeray's daughter:

WOODBRIDGE, *May 18th, 1875*.

DEAR ANNIE THACKERAY—I suppose you

love Paris as your Father did—as I used to do till it was made so other than it was, in the days of Louis XVIII. when I first lived in it. *Then* it was all irregular and picturesque; with shops, hotels, *cafés*, theatres, etc. intermixed all along the Boulevards, all of different sorts and sizes.

Think of my remembering the *then* Royal Family going in several carriages to hunt in the Forest of St. Germain's—Louis XVIII. first, with his *Gardes du Corps*, in blue and silver: then Monsieur (afterwards Charles X.) with *his* Guard in green and gold—French horns blowing—"tra, tra, tra" (as Madame de Sévigné says), through the lines of chestnut and limes—in flower. And then *Madame* (of Angoulême) standing up in her carriage, blear-eyed, dressed in white with her waist at her neck—standing up in the carriage at a corner of the wood to curtsey to the English assembled there—my mother among them. This was in 1817. Now *you* would have made a delightful description of all this; you will say *I* have done so, but that is not so. And yet I saw, and see, it all.

Whenever you write again—(I don't wish you to write now) tell me what you think of Irving and Salvini; of the former of whom I have very different reports, Macready's Memoirs seem to me very *conscientious* and *rather dull*; *toujours Megready* (as one W. M. T. irreverently called him). He seems to me to have had no humour—which I also observed in his acting. He would have made a better scholar or divine, I think: a very

honourable, good man anywhere and anyhow.

With Thackeray himself he always maintained the same cordial relations as he did with Tennyson. But his literary attitude shifted and varied in the same way. Here, again, he preferred the early work which he had seen in process of creation. In later years, when they met him at Woodbridge, he said to "Alfred" and his son, "I hardly dare take down Thackeray's early books, because they are so great. It's like waking the Thunder." He wrote of Thackeray in 1849: "He is just the same. All the world 'admires *Vanity Fair*,' and the author is courted by Dukes and Duchesses and wits of both sexes. I like *Pendennis much*, and Alfred said he thought it was quite delicious: it seemed to him so *mature* he said." But a little later he took alarm at the Dukes and Duchesses, and wrote to Frederick Tennyson: "I am come to London, but I do not go to Operas or Plays, and have scarce time (and it must be said, scarce inclination) to hunt up many friends—I get shyer and shyer even of those I knew. Thackeray is in such a great world that I am afraid of him; he gets tired of me and we are content to regard each other at a distance. You, Alfred, Spedding, and Allen, are the only men I ever care to see again.... As you know, I admire your poems, the only poems by a living writer I do admire, except Alfred's."

He told Hallam Tennyson that he greatly admired the charming scene in "Philip" where the young lady unexpectedly discovered her lover (Philip) on the box of the diligence, and quieted the screaming children inside by saying, "Hush! *he's* there."

In particular, he was very severe on anything he

called “cockney,” speaking, that is, the language of the town, not of the country; in other words, dealing with nature and human nature at second-hand. To this his letters again and again return. Of “fine writing,” as he called it, even when it occurred in his own early work, he was unsparingly critical. Thus of *Euphranor* he wrote to Mrs. Kemble: “The Dialogue is a pretty thing in some respects but disfigured by some confounded *smart* writing in parts.” He thought this fault in particular, so he says in a letter to Frederick Tennyson, “the loose screw in American literature,” and deplored its presence in Lowell, a writer whom otherwise he liked. “I honestly admire his work in the main,” he says, “and I think he is altogether the best critic we have, something of what Ste. Beuve is in French.” He thought that Tennyson came to suffer from these defects in his later days, and that the artist overpowered the man.

The latest of Tennyson’s poems, of course, he did not live to see. He did not see, for instance, “Crossing the Bar.” What would he have thought of it? Another old friend of Tennyson, also a fastidious critic, the Duke of Argyll, in an unpublished letter of February 1, 1892, writing of this and of the lines on the “Death of the Duke of Clarence,” says: “Magnificent, is all I can say of your lines in the *Nineteenth*. The two last things of yours that I have seen, this and the ‘Bar,’ are both perfect in their several ways, and such as no other man could have written. The ‘Bar’ is the type of what I define Poetry to be, great thought in true imagery and unusual expression. All the three are needed for the type thing. Much fine poetry is to me only eloquence, which is quite another thing.” With the last sentence FitzGerald would certainly have agreed, for it is what in other words he was himself constantly saying. But he seemed to require

something more than great thoughts and true images and choice diction. Poignant and revealing touches, what he called in Crabbe “shrewd hits”; feeling, as well as, if not more than, thought—this was what he asked for. All Browning’s genius seemed to him *emphase*, cleverness, curiosity, “cockneyism.”

“The Dramatic Idylls,” he writes to Frederick Tennyson, “seemed to me ‘Ingoldsby.’ It seems to me as if the Beautiful being already appropriated by former men of genius, those who are not inspired, can only try for a Place among them by recourse to the Quaint, Grotesque, and Ugly in all the Arts,—what I call the Gargoyle style.” And again: “I always said he must be a cockney, and now I find he is Camberwell-born—

> It once was the Pastoral cockney,
> It now is the cockney Profound.”

The establishment of the Browning Society tried him specially. “Imagine a man abetting all this,” he writes. Tennyson had, through life, a high opinion of FitzGerald’s powers of criticism. They had often in their youth discussed the classics of all time and all times together, and also, with the poetic freedom of young men, their seniors, Shelley, and Byron, and Wordsworth. It was FitzGerald who invented for the last the name by which he went in their circle, of the “Daddy.” They had fought for the ownership of the Wordsworthian line, the “weakest blank verse in the language”:

> A Mr. Wilkinson, a clergyman.

It really was FitzGerald’s description, given in conversation, of the gentleman who was going to marry his sister. When he died in 1862 FitzGerald,

writing to Tennyson, reminded him of the line.

> "This letter," he writes, "ought to be on a black-edged paper in a black-edged cover: for I have just lost a brother-in-law—one of the best of Men. If you ask, 'Who?' I reply, in what you once called the weakest line ever enunciated:
>
> A Mister Wilkinson, a Clergyman.
>
> You can't remember this: in Old Charlotte Street, ages ago!"

In the valedictory verses Tennyson makes allusion to this critical habit:

> And when I fancied that my friend
> For this brief idyll would require
> A less diffuse and opulent end,
> And would defend his judgment well,
> If I should deem it over nice,——

He himself was more catholic and generous. It was his generosity as well as their admiration for him which gave him the place he held among his brother poets and especially after he himself had won recognition among the younger men.

His relation to Browning, Patmore, and P. J. Bailey, to Matthew Arnold and Swinburne, to Watson and Kipling as to Dickens, Thackeray, and George Eliot, are well known. There is one writer who ought to be added to the list, who received some of his earliest encouragement from Tennyson—George Meredith. A letter, hitherto unpublished, written in January 1851, may illustrate this. He had just, in some trepidation, sent Tennyson his first volume of poems, containing the now well-known "Love in the Valley."

As Meredith told me himself, Tennyson replied with an exceedingly kind and “pretty” letter, saying that there was one poem in the book he could have wished he had written, and inviting Meredith to come to see him. The following is Meredith’s answer:

> SIR—When I tell you that it would have been my chief ambition in publishing the little volume of poems you have received, to obtain your praise, you may imagine what pride and pleasure your letter gave me; though, indeed, I do not deserve so much as your generous appreciation would bestow, and of this I am very conscious. I had but counted twenty-three years when the book was published, which may account for, and excuse perhaps many of the immaturities. When you say you would like to know me, I can scarcely trust myself to express with how much delight I would wait upon you—a privilege I have long desired. As I suppose the number of poetic visits you receive are fully as troublesome as the books, I will not venture to call on you until you are able to make an appointment. My residence and address is Weybridge, but I shall not return to Town from Southend before Friday week. If in the meantime you will fix any day following that date, I shall gladly avail myself of the honour of your invitation. My address here is care of Mrs. Peacock, Southend, Essex. I have the honour to be, most faithfully yours,
>
> GEORGE MEREDITH.
>
> Alfred Tennyson, Esq.

The complement to “Old Fitz” was Carlyle. He was the friend of both FitzGerald and Tennyson. Gruff, grumbling, self-centred, satirical, at times even rude and rough, as he was, both of them seemed to have got not so much on his blind, as on his kind side from the first, and always to have remained there. Carlyle’s descriptions of Tennyson as a young man in the early “forties” and of the pleasure he had in his company are well known. “He seemed to take a fancy to me,” Tennyson said himself one day while we talked about him at Farringford. They foregathered a good deal at this period, sat and smoked silently, walked and talked together, both by day and night. FitzGerald told Hallam Tennyson, years after, during the visit to Woodbridge, that Carlyle was much concerned at this period about his father’s poverty, and said to him, “Alfred must have a pension.” The story of the way in which he spurred on “Dicky” Milnes to secure the pension is now classical. What his special effect, if he had any, on Tennyson was, it might be difficult to estimate or analyse.

The younger generation to-day does not remember the period of Carlyle’s immense influence. It lasted just into the youth of my contemporaries and myself, or perhaps a little longer, and then began to wane and die away. He certainly was a “radio-active” force in the days and with the men of Tennyson’s youth,—Maurice, and Sterling, and “Dicky” Milnes, as he was a little later with Ruskin and Kingsley. FitzGerald, with his detachment and his fearless sincerity, estimated him as fairly as any one. “Do you see Carlyle’s *Latter-Day Pamphlets*?” he wrote. “They make the world laugh, and his friends rather sorry for him. But that is because people will still look for practical measures from him. One must be content

with him as a great satirist who can make us feel when we are wrong, though he cannot set us right. There is a bottom of truth in Carlyle's wildest rhapsodies."

He wrote to Frederick Tennyson in 1850: "When I spoke of the 'Latter-Day Prophet' I conclude you have read or heard of Carlyle's Pamphlets. People are tired of them and of him; he only foams, snaps, and howls and no progress people say. This is about true, and yet there is vital good in all he has written." Again, in 1854, he says, "Carlyle I did not go to see, for I have really nothing to tell him, and I am tired of hearing him growl, tho' I admire him as much as ever." "I wonder if he ever thinks how much sound and fury he has vented," he writes on another occasion.

But the posthumous publication of Carlyle's Letters, as he wrote about a fortnight before his own death, "raised him in FitzGerald's esteem"; and his last effort was to go to Chelsea to see his statue, and the old house hard by which he had not seen for five-and-twenty years, to find it, alas, "deserted, neglected, and 'To let!'"

Carlyle was indeed much what "Old Fitz" describes. He was a powerful solvent of his age. He destroyed many shams, "Hebrew rags," "old clothes," as he called them. Both by his own example and his fiery energy he inculcated the "Gospel of Work." He was not a modern realist, but a man who dealt in realities, who perceived that virtue and beauty and faith are as real as vice and ugliness and unfaith, nay, perhaps more real; but that certainly neither are shams, neither God nor the Devil, though of shams, of false gods and false devils, there are many. His

appreciation of poetry was, as is well known, but scant and intermittent. He used to banter Tennyson and call him “a Life-Guardsman spoiled by making poetry,” but he became converted even to his poems, though, as he said, this was surprising to himself. He “felt the pulse of a real man’s heart” in the 1842 volumes. “Ulysses” was a special favourite. He quoted again and again the lines:

> 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.

“These lines do not make me weep,” he said, “but there is in me what would fill whole Lachrymatories as I read.” He, fortunately, also “took a fancy” to Mrs. Tennyson when he met her as a bride at Tent Lodge, Coniston, partly because, in answer to one of his wild grumbles, she said, “That is not sane, Mr. Carlyle.” An unpublished letter from Carlyle of the date October 1850, describes an admirer of Tennyson’s poems, an ill-starred but brave man, a skilful physician, a friend of Dr. John Carlyle at Leamington, who, after losing the greater part of his face by *caries* of the bone, had at last been cured, though awfully disfigured. “He fled to Keswick,” writes Carlyle, “and there he now resides, not idle still, nor forsaken of friends, or hope, or domestic joy —a monument of human courtesy, and really a worthy and rather interesting man. Such is your admirer and mine. Heaven be good to him and us.”

FitzGerald, in a letter to Frederick Tennyson, quotes with approval a criticism of Lowell’s that Carlyle “was a poet in all but rhythm”; and it would not be difficult to find “parallel passages” between Tennyson and Carlyle, between *Sartor Resartus* and

"In Memoriam." The *Life of Sterling*, too, should be read by any student anxious to "reconstitute the atmosphere" in which that poem grew up, and which, to a certain extent, it still breathes. But "parallel passages" are misleading. Suffice it to say that both went through the storm and stress of a doubting age, both took their stand on the solid rock of God and of real, healthy human nature,—both emerged in the "Eternal Yea."

Froude, in his history of Carlyle's Life in London, has a most interesting autobiographic passage about Carlyle's position and influence in 1843, the time of the publication of *Past and Present*, which brings this out with special force. He says:

> In this condition the best and bravest of my own contemporaries determined to have done with insincerity, to find ground under their feet, to let the uncertain remain uncertain, but to learn how much and what we could honestly regard as true and believe that and live by it. Tennyson became the voice of this feeling in poetry, Carlyle in what was called prose, though prose it was not, but something by itself with a form and melody of its own.
>
> Tennyson's Poems, the group of Poems which closed with "In Memoriam," became to many of us what the "Christian Year" was to orthodox Churchmen. We read them, and they became part of our minds, the expression in exquisite language of the feelings which were working in ourselves. Carlyle stood beside him as a prophet and teacher; and to the young, the generous, to

> every one who took life seriously, who wished to make an honourable use of it and could not be content with sitting down and making money, his words were like the morning *reveille*.
>
> Others may come at last to the sad conclusion that nothing can be known about the world, that the external powers, whatever they may be, are indifferent to human action or human welfare. To such an opinion some men, and those not the worst, may be driven after weary observation of life. But the young will never believe it; or if they do they have been young only in name.

If the first paragraphs aptly "place" Tennyson and Carlyle, the last, though not intentionally, exactly suits their friend, the translator of the *Rubáiyát*. FitzGerald remained, as his friend the Master of Trinity College (W. H. Thompson) said, in "Doubting Castle." Tennyson was the most hopeful, as well as the most balanced and sane, and therefore the most helpful of the three.

Toward the end of his life, Carlyle, in the Inaugural Address given by him as Rector of Edinburgh University, in which he summed up so many of the convictions of a lifetime, put forward the following description of the completely healthy human spirit. "A man all lucid and in equilibrium. His intellect a clear mirror, geometrically plane, brilliantly sensitive to all objects and impressions made on it, and imaging all things in their correct proportions, not twisted up into convex or concave and distorting everything so that he cannot see the truth of the matter without endless groping and manipulation—

healthy, clear and free, and discerning all round about him." He put this picture before young men as the ideal to be aimed at by the intellectual student, and in particular by the man of letters. "But," he said, "we can never never attain that at all." Perhaps not altogether. Perhaps even he who invented the phrase for the poet's duty of "holding the mirror up to Nature," did not wholly attain to it. But, according to his measure, it is no bad description of Alfred Tennyson, with the "universality of his mind," the simplicity of his good sense, the childlike sincerity of his spirit. This quality it was that both Carlyle and FitzGerald found and liked in him.

It has been said that Tennyson and FitzGerald read the same books. One of the best instances of this is to be found in a long letter of FitzGerald's about posthumous fame and literary immortality. It was written to Cowell in 1847, and is given by Dr. Aldis Wright in his first collection. After speaking of Homer and the *Iliad*, FitzGerald writes:

> Yet as I often think it is not the poetical imagination, but bare Science that every day more and more unrolls a greater Epic than the Iliad; the history of the world, the great infinitudes of Space and Time! I never take up a book of Geology or Astronomy but this strikes me. And when we think that Man must go on in the same plodding way, one fancies that the Poet of to-day may as well fold his hands, or turn them to dig and delve, considering how soon the march of discovery will distance all his imaginations and dissolve the language in which they are uttered. Martial, as you say, lives now after two thousand years: a space that seems long

> to us whose lives are so brief; but a moment, the twinkling of an eye, if compared (not to Eternity alone), but to the ages which it is now known the world must have existed, and (unless for some external violence) must continue to exist.
>
> Lyell in his book about America, says that the Falls of Niagara, if (as seems certain) they have worked their way back southwards for seven miles, must have taken over 35,000 years to do so at the rate of something over a foot a year! Sometimes they fall back on a stratum that crumbles away from behind them more easily: but then again they have to roll over rock that yields to them scarce more perceptibly than the anvil to the serpent. And these very soft strata, which the Cataract now erodes, contain evidences of a race of animals, and of the action of seas washing over them, long before Niagara came to have a distinct current; and the rocks were compounded ages and ages before those strata! So that, as Lyell says, the geologist, looking at Niagara forgets even the roar of its waters in the contemplation of the awful processes of time that it suggests. It is not only that the vision of Time must wither the Poet's hope of immortality, but it is in itself more wonderful than all the conceptions of Dante and Milton.

This train of thought was evidently often present to FitzGerald's mind. It oppressed him. It makes itself felt in the *Rubáiyát*. It was one of the many great ideas he imported into, or educed from, the old Persian Astronomer.

> And fear not lest existence closing your
> Account, and mine, should know the like no more;
> The Eternal Saki from that Bowl has poured
> Millions of Bubbles like us and will pour
>
> When you and I behind the Veil are past:
> Oh but the long long while the world shall last,
> Which of our coming and departure heeds
> As the Sev'n Seas should heed a pebble-cast.

It was even more constantly present to the mind of Tennyson. Astronomy and Geology had been among his favourite studies from his early youth, and remained so all his life. When I was walking with him toward the Needles and looking at the magnificent chalk cliff below the downs, and spoke about his felicitous epithet for it—"the milky steep," he said, "The most wonderful thing about that cliff is to think it was all once alive." The allusions to it in his poems are innumerable:

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

He was always "hearing the roll of the ages." He, too, had read his Lyell, and the contemplation of geological time suggested to him exactly the same reflections which FitzGerald draws out. Indeed, it seems not unlikely that he himself may have imparted them to FitzGerald. For he has embodied just these thoughts in that noble late poem "Parnassus," with a resemblance which is startling. But while the parallel between "Parnassus" and

FitzGerald's letter is extraordinarily close up to a certain point, the contrast, when it is reached, is even more striking, and is the fundamental contrast between the two men and their creeds:

> What be those two shapes high over the sacred fountain,
> Taller than all the Muses, and huger than all the mountain?
> On those two known peaks they stand, ever spreading and heightening;
> Poet, that evergreen laurel is blasted by more than lightning!
> Look, in their deep double shadow the crown'd ones all disappearing!
> Sing like a bird and be happy, nor hope for a deathless hearing!
> Sounding for ever and ever? pass on! the sight confuses—
> These are Astronomy and Geology, terrible Muses!

So far Tennyson agrees with *Omar*:

> Ah make the most of what we yet may spend
> Before we too into the dust descend;
> Dust into dust and under dust to lie,
> Sans wine, sans song, sans singer and sans end!

But then comes the divergence, conveyed with the exquisitely sympathetic change of rhythm:

> If the lips were touch'd with fire from off a pure Pierian altar,
> Tho' their music here be mortal, need the singer greatly care?
> Other songs for other worlds! the fire within

him would not falter;
Let the golden Iliad vanish, Homer here is Homer there.

The beautiful lines which form the Envoy to "Tiresias," already alluded to, never reached their address. I remember well, when we spoke of FitzGerald, the sadness with which Tennyson said to me, "He never saw them. He died before they were sent him." After his death Tennyson added the Epilogue on the same note. It is touching to see that in his closing lines to his old friend he had hinted with tender delicacy at the same creed to which he always clung:

Gone into darkness, that full light
Of friendship! past, in sleep, away
By night, into the deeper night!
The deeper night? A clearer day
Than our poor twilight dawn on earth—
If night, what barren toil to be!
What life, so maim'd by night, were worth
Our living out? Not mine to me
Remembering all the golden hours
Now silent, and so many dead
And him the last; and laying flowers,
This wreath, above his honour'd head,
And praying that, when I from hence
Shall fade with him into the unknown,
My close of earth's experience
May prove as peaceful as his own.

Like many rough and overbearing men Carlyle liked those who stood up to him and gave him back, in his own phrase, "shake for shake." FitzGerald was one of these. He made his better acquaintance by contradicting and correcting him about the

battlefield and the buried warriors of Naseby Fight. Carlyle took it all in excellent part, and they became close friends. Carlyle went to visit him and invited the many letters which FitzGerald wrote. In his later years he sent one of these letters to C. E. Norton as a "slight emblem and memorial of the peaceable, affectionate, ultra-modest man and his innocent *far niente* life"; "and," he adds, "the connection (were there nothing more) of Omar, the Mahometan Blackguard, and Oliver Cromwell, the English Puritan."

But "Old Fitz" could criticize and sum up Carlyle equally effectively. He most happily pointed out his inconsistency in praising the "Hebrew rags" of the old Evangelical beliefs when seen in Cromwell and his generals, and not being willing to let them still serve for humble folk in his own day. His tone here is singularly like that of Tennyson's well-known lines, beginning:

Leave thou thy sister when she prays.

"We may be well content," FitzGerald writes, "even to suffer some absurdities in the Form if the Spirit does well on the whole." He would probably have agreed with much of Tennyson's "Akbar's Dream," which he did not live to read. For the tenets of "Omar," "The Mahometan Blackguard," must not be taken as representing the whole of FitzGerald's philosophy, any more than his eccentricities and negligent habits must be taken as a complete expression of his life.

Too exclusive attention has been paid to both. Dr. Aldis Wright, one of the few surviving friends who knew him really well, speaks justly of "the exaggerated stories of his slovenliness and his

idleness," and "of the way in which he has been made responsible for all the oddities of his family." "Every tale," he says, "that may be true of some of his kin, is fathered upon him."

And FitzGerald's own Preface to his translation of *Omar* shows what his real moral and religious attitude toward the *Rubáiyát* was. He felt bound, so far as the spirit, if not the letter, went, to present it faithfully, if not literally; but he speaks very gravely of it. "The quatrains here selected," he writes in the Preface, "are strung into something of an Eclogue, with perhaps a less than equal proportion of the 'Drink and make merry' which (genuine or not), recurs over frequently in the original. Either way, the result is sad enough, saddest perhaps when most ostentatiously merry, more apt to move sorrow than Anger toward the old Tentmaker, who, after vainly endeavouring to unshackle his steps from Destiny and to catch some authentic Glimpse of TO-MORROW, fell back upon TO-DAY (which has outlived so many To-morrows!) as the only ground he got to stand upon, however momentarily slipping from under his Feet."

The truth is, Old Fitz's foibles, and indeed his faults, were only too patent to others and to himself. But if *noscitur a sociis* holds good, Carlyle and Tennyson and Thackeray, Spedding, Thompson, the Cowells, and Mrs. Kemble, the friends of his whole lifetime, Lowell and C. E. Norton, those of his later years, may be permitted to outweigh his at times too tolerant cultivation and indulgence of his burly Vikings. Tennyson's relation to him was summed up in his letter to Sir Frederick Pollock which Dr. Aldis Wright quotes, but which may fitly here be quoted again: "I had no truer friend; he was one of the kindliest of

men, and I have never known one of so fine and delicate a wit."

These words, with Tennyson's poetic picture already quoted, with Carlyle's epithets, "innocent, *far niente*, ultra-modest," with his own writings taken as a whole and not *Omar* alone, especially his Letters, may be left to speak for him in life and in death,—these and the epitaph which he asked to have placed upon his gravestone:

> "It is He that hath made us and not we ourselves."

SOME RECOLLECTIONS OF TENNYSON'S TALK FROM 1835 TO 1853

[Many more were in a Notebook, which I have now lost.—E. F. G.]

By EDWARD FITZGERALD

(Given to Hallam Lord Tennyson[24])

1835

(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, he 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 days she wrought it, sitting all alone
> Upon the hidden bases of the Hills.

"Not bad that, Fitz, is it?"

(One summer day looking from Richmond Star and Garter.)

"I love those woods that go triumphing down to the river."

"Somehow water is the element which I love best of all the four." (He was passionately fond of the sea and of babbling brooks.—ED.)

"Some one says that nothing strikes one more on returning from the Continent than the look of our English country towns. Houses not so big, nor such rows of them as abroad; but each house, little or big, distinct from one another, each man's castle, built according to his own means and fancy, and so indicating the Englishman's individual humour.

"I have been two days abroad—no further than Boulogne this time, but I am struck as always on returning from France with the look of good sense in the London people."

(Standing before a Madonna, by Murillo, at the Dulwich Gallery—her eyes fixed on you.)

"Yes—but they seem to look at something beyond—

beyond the Actual into Abstraction. I have seen that in a human face." (I, E. F. G., have seen it in *his*. Some American spoke of the same in Wordsworth. I suppose it may be so with all *Poets*.)

1850

"When I was sitting by the banks of Doon—I don't know why—I wasn't in the least spoony—not thinking of Burns (but of the lapsing of the Ages)—when all of a sudden I gave way to a passion of tears."

"I one day hurled a great iron bar over a haystack. Two bumpkins who stood by said there was no one in the two parishes who could do it. I was then about twenty-five." (He could carry his mother's pony round the dinner-table.—E. F. G.)

"The Sea at Mablethorpe is the grandest I know, except perhaps at Land's End." (That is as he afterwards explained to me in a letter.)

"Thackeray is the better artist, Dickens the [more affluent] Genius. He, like Hogarth, has the moral sublime sometimes: but not the ideal sublime. Perhaps I seem talking nonsense; I mean Hogarth could not conceive an Apollo or a Jupiter." (Or Sigismunda.—E. F. G.)—"I think Hogarth greater than Dickens."

(Looking at an engraving of the Sistine Madonna in which only She and the Child, I think, were represented.)

"Perhaps finer than the whole composition in so far as one's eyes are more concentrated on the subject.

The Child seems to me the furthest result of human art. His attitude is that of a man—his countenance a Jupiter's—perhaps rather too much so."

(He afterwards said (1852) that his own little boy, Hallam, explained the expression of Raffaelle's. He said he thought he had known Raffaelle before he went to Italy—but not Michael Angelo—not only Statues and Frescoes, but some picture (I think) of a Madonna "dragging a ton of a Child over her Shoulder.")

Seaford: December 27th-28th, 1852

"Babies delight in being moved to and from anything: that is amusement to them. What a Life of Wonder—every object new. This morning he (his own little boy) worshipp'd the Bed-post when a gleam of sunshine lighted on it."

"I am afraid of him. It is a Man. Babes have an expression of grandeur that children lose. I used to think that the old Painters overdid the Expression and Dignity of their infant Christs: but I see they did not."

"I was struck at the Duke's (Wellington's) Funeral with the look of sober Manhood and Humanity in the British Soldiers."

(Of Laurence's chalk drawing of ——'s head—"rather diplomatic than inhuman"—he said in fun.—E. F. G.)

Brighton, 1852-1853

"The finest Sea I have seen is at Valentia (Ireland),

without any wind and seemingly without a Wave, but with the momentum of the Atlantic behind it, it dashes up into foam—blue diamond it looked like—all along the rocks—like ghosts playing at Hide and Seek."

(At some other time on the same subject.)

"When I was in Cornwall it had blown a storm of wind and rain for days—all of a sudden fell into perfect calm; I was a little inland of the cliffs, when, after a space of perfect silence, a long roll of Thunder—from some wave rushing into a cavern, I suppose—came up from the Distance and died away. I never *felt* Silence like that."

"*This*" (looking from Brighton Pier) "is not a grand sea: only an angry curt sea. It seems to *shriek* as it recoils with its pebbles along the beach."

"The Earth has light of her own—so has Venus—perhaps all the other Planets—electrical light, or what we call Aurora. The light edge of the dark hemisphere of the moon—the 'old Moon in the new Moon's arms.'"

"Nay, they say she has no atmosphere at all."

(I do not remember when this was said, nor whether I have exactly set it down; therefore must not make A. T. answerable for what he did not say, or for what after-discovery may have caused him to unsay. He had a powerful brain for Physics as for the Ideal. I remember his noticing that the forward-bending horns of some built-up mammal in the British Museum would never force its way through jungle, etc., and I observed on an after-visit that they had been altered accordingly.)

"Sometimes I think Shakespeare's Sonnets finer than his Plays—which is of course absurd. For it is the knowledge of the Plays that makes the Sonnets so fine."

"Do you think the Artist ever feels satisfied with his Song? Not with the Whole, I think; but perhaps the expression of parts."

(Standing one day with him looking at two busts—one of Dante, the other of Goethe, in a London shop, I asked, "What is wanting to make Goethe's as fine as the other's?")

"The Divine." ("Edel sei der Mensch" was a poem in which he thought he found "The Divine."—ED.)

(Taking up and reading some number of *Pendennis* at my lodging.) "It's delicious—it's so mature."

(Of Richardson's *Clarissa*, etc.) "I love those great, still Books."

"What is it in Dryden? I always feel that he is greater than his works." (Though he thought much of "Theodore and Honoria," and quoted emphatically:

More than a mile *immerst* within the wood.)

"Two of the finest similes in poetry are Milton's—that of the Fleet hanging in the air (*Paradise Lost*), and the gunpowder-like 'So started up in his foul shape the Fiend.' (Which latter A. T. used to enact with grim humour, from the crouching of the Toad to the Explosion.) Say what you please, I feel certain that Milton after Death shot up into some grim Archangel." *N.B.*—He used in earlier days to do the sun coming out from a cloud, and returning into one again, with a gradual opening and shutting of eyes

and lips, etc. And, with a great fluffing up of his hair into full wig, and elevation of cravat and collar, George the Fourth in as comical and wonderful a way.

"I could not read through *Palmerin of England*, nor *Amadis of Gaul*, or any of those old romances—not even 'Morte d'Arthur,' though with so many fine things in it—But all strung together without Art."

Old Hallam had been speaking of Shakespeare as the greatest of men, etc. A. T. "Well, he was the Man one would have wished to introduce to another Planet as a sample of our kind."

Àpropos of physical stature, A. T. had been noticing how small Guizot looked beside old Hallam (when he went with Guizot, Hallam, and Macaulay over the Houses of Parliament.—ED.).

"I was skating one day at full swing and came clash against a man of my own stature who was going at the same. We both fell asunder—got up—and *laughed*. Had we been short men we might have resented."

(I blamed some one for swearing at the servant girl in a lodging.) "I don't know if women don't like it from men: they think it shows Vigour." (Not that he ever did so himself.)

"There is a want of central dignity about him—he excuses himself, etc."

"Most great men write terse hands."

"I like those old Variorum Classics—all the Notes make the Text look precious."

(Of some dogmatic summary.) "That is the quick

decision of a mind that sees half the truth."

TENNYSON AND THACKERAY

By LADY RITCHIE

... You ask me what I can remember of your Father and of mine in early days. I seem to *know* more than I actually remember....

In looking over old letters and papers, I have found very few mentions of the many actual meetings between them, though again and again the Poet's name is quoted and recorded, nor can I recall the time when I did not hear it spoken of with trust and admiring regard. To this day we possess "The Day Dream," copied out from beginning to end in my Father's writing.

He was about twenty years of age when one day, in May 1832, he wrote down in his diary:

> Kemble and Hallam sat here for an hour. Read an article in *Blackwood* about A. Tennyson, abusing Hallam for his essay in *The Englishman*.

Then again ...

> Kemble read me some very beautiful verses

of Tennyson's.

And again:

> Found that B. and I did not at all agree about Tennyson. B. is a clever fellow nevertheless, and makes money by magazine writing, in which I should much desire to follow his example.

After my Father's marriage, when he was living in Coram Street, Tennyson and FitzGerald both came to see him there. In an old letter of my mother's she describes Mr. Tennyson coming and my sitting at the table beside her in a tall chair and with a new pinafore for the occasion. FitzGerald, I think, also spoke of one of these meetings, and of my Father exclaiming suddenly, "My dear Alfred, you do talk d —— well."

As we grew up, the Tennyson books were a part of our household life. I can especially remember one volume, which came out when I was a little girl and which my Father lent to a friend, and I also remember his laughing vexation and annoyance when she returned the book all scored and defaced with absurd notes and marks of exclamation everywhere.

I once published an article in an American magazine from which I venture to quote a passage which tells of one of the early meetings:

> I can remember vaguely, on one occasion through a cloud of smoke, looking across a darkening room at the noble, grave head of the Poet Laureate. He was sitting with my Father in the twilight after some family meal

> in the old house in Kensington; it was Tennyson himself who afterwards reminded me how upon this occasion, while my Father was speaking, my little sister looked up suddenly from the book over which she had been absorbed, saying, in her sweet childish voice, "Papa, why do you not write books like *Nicholas Nickleby*?" Then again, I seem to hear across that same familiar table, voices, without shape or name, talking and telling each other that Mr. Tennyson was married, that he and his wife had been met walking on the terrace at Clevedon Court, and then the clouds descend again, except, indeed, that I can still see my Father riding off on his brown cob to Mr. and Mrs. Tennyson's house at Twickenham to attend the christening of Hallam their eldest son.

Being *themselves*, when men, such as these two men, appreciate each other's work, they know, with their great instinct for truth and directness, what to admire—smaller people are apt to admire the men rather than the work. When Tennyson and my Father met, it was as when knights meet in the field.

How my Father appreciated the *Idylls* will be seen from the following letter, which came as an answer to his own:[25]

FARRINGFORD, I.W.

> MY DEAR THACKERAY—Should I not have answered you ere this 6th of November! surely; what excuse—none that I know of;

except indeed that perhaps your very generosity—boundlessness of approval—made me in a measure shamefaced. I could scarcely accept it, being, I fancy, a modest man and always more or less doubtful of my own efforts in any line; but I may tell you that your little note gave me more pleasure than all the journals and monthlies and quarterlies which have come across me, not so much from being the Great Novelist, I hope, as from your being my good old friend—or perhaps of your being both of these in one. Well—let it be. I have been ransacking all sorts of old albums and scrap-books, but cannot find anything worthy sending you. Unfortunately, before your letter arrived, I had agreed to give Macmillan the only available poem I had by me. I don't think he would have got it (for I dislike publishing in magazines), except that he had come to visit me in my island, and was sitting and blowing his weed *vis-à-vis*....

Whenever you feel your brains as "the remainder biscuit," or indeed whenever you will, come over to me and take a blow on these downs where the air, as Keats said, "is worth sixpence a pint," and bring your girls too.—Yours always,

A. TENNYSON.

I can remember all my Father's pleasure when Alfred Tennyson gave him "Tithonus" for one of the early numbers of the *Cornhill Magazine*.

He was once at Farringford, but this was before the time of the *Cornhill*.

From America, where people store their kindly records and from whence so many echoes of the past are apt to reach us again,—some in worthy, and some, I fear, in less worthy voices,—I have received from time to time, the gift of an hour from the past, vivid and unalloyed. One day in the *Century* magazine, I came upon a page which retold for me the whole story of a happy hour and of my Father's affectionate regard for that chivalrous American, Bayard Taylor, who came to see him, and for whom he had wished to do his best, by sending him to Farringford. All this came back to me when Alfred Tennyson's letter was reproduced in the *Century*, his charming answer to my Father, and my Father's own note in the margin.... Bayard Taylor himself has put the date to it all—June 1857.

My Father writes to Bayard Taylor:

> MY DEAR B. T.—I was so busy yesterday that I could not keep my agreeable appointment with Thompson, and am glad I didn't fetch you to Greenwich. Here's a note which concerns you and I am ever yours,
>
> W. M. T.

The letter from Lord Tennyson runs as follows:

FARRINGFORD, I.W.

> MY DEAR THACKERAY—Your American friend and poet-traveller has never arrived;

he has, I suppose, changed his mind. I am sure I should have been very glad to see him, for my castle was never yet barricaded and entrenched against good fellows. I write now, this time to say that after the 30th I shall not be here.

My best remembrances to your daughters, whom I have twice seen, once as little girls, and again a year or so back.—Yours ever,

A. TENNYSON.

Afterwards Bayard Taylor found his way to Farringford, and he has written a happy account of the visit.[26]

I hardly know whether or not to give the record of a meeting which I myself remember. Once after a long visit to Freshwater I returned home to Palace Green, and hearing that Alfred Tennyson had come up soon after to stay for a few days at Little Holland House close by, I told my Father, and together we planned a visit, to which I eagerly looked forward, with much pride and youthful excitement. It was not far to walk, the high road leads straight to Holland House, in the grounds of which Little Holland House then stood among the trees. Mr. and Mrs. Prinsep were living there and Mr. Watts. When we reached the House and were let in, we saw Mr. Watts in his studio; he seemed to hesitate to admit us; then came the ladies. Mr. Tennyson was upstairs, we were told, not well.

He had hurt his shin. “He did not wish for visitors, nevertheless certainly we were to go up,” they said, and we mounted into a side wing by some narrow staircase and came to a door, by which cans of water were standing in a row. As we entered, a man-servant came out of the little room.

Tennyson was sitting in a chair with his leg up, evidently ill and out of spirits.

“I am sorry to find you laid up,” said my Father.

“They insisted upon my seeing the doctor for my leg,” said Alfred, “and he prescribed cold water dressing.”

“Yes,” said my Father, “there’s nothing like it, I have tried it myself.”

And then no more! No high conversation—no quotations—no recollections. After a minute or two of silence we came away. My tall Father tramped down the little wooden staircase followed by a bitterly disappointed audience.

When I was writing that same magazine article from which I have already given an extract, I asked Edward FitzGerald if he could help me, and if I might quote anything from his letters and from *Euphranor*:

> “MY DEAR ANNE RITCHIE”—Mr. FitzGerald wrote—“Your letter found me at Aldburgh on our coast where I come to hear my old sea talk to me, as more than sixty years ago, and to get a blow out on his back. Pray quote anything you please, provided with Alfred’s

permission and no compliments to the author.

"I do not think my *fanfaron* about him would be of any such service as you suppose; strangers usually take all that as the flourish of a friendly adviser, and would rather have some facts, such as that perhaps of his words about the Raphael and the little Hallam's worship of the bed-post.[27] I suppose it was in 1852 at Seaford near Brighton. I can swear absolutely and can now hear and see him as he said it; so don't let him pretend to gainsay or modify that, whether he may choose to have it quoted or not.

"Ah, I have often thought that I might have done some good service if I had kept to him and followed him and noted the fine true things which fell from his lips on every subject, practical or aesthetic, as they call it.

"Bayard Taylor, in some essays lately published, quotes your Father saying that Tennyson was the wisest man he knew—which, by the way, would tell more in America than all I could write or say.

"Your finding it hard to make an article about A. T. will excuse my inability to help you, as you asked. I did not know (as in the case of your Father also) where to begin or how to go on without a beginning.—Ever yours,

E. F. G."

In 1863, just after our Father's death, my sister and I

came to Freshwater. It seemed to us that perhaps there more than anywhere else we might find some gleam of the light of our home, with the friend who had known him and belonged to his life and whom he trusted.

We arrived late in the afternoon. It was bitter weather, the snow lying upon the ground. Mrs. Cameron had lent us a cottage, and the fires were already burning, and as we rested aimlessly in the twilight, we seemed aware of a tall figure standing in the window, wrapped in a heavy cloak, with a broad-brimmed hat. This was Tennyson, who had walked down to see us in silent sympathy.

TENNYSON ON HIS FRIENDS OF LATER LIFE

TO W. C. MACREADY

1851

Farewell, Macready, since to-night we part;
Full-handed thunders often have confessed
Thy power, well-used to move the public breast.
We thank thee with our voice, and from the heart.
Farewell, Macready, since this night we part,
Go, take thine honours home; rank with the best,
Garrick and statelier Kemble, and the rest
Who made a nation purer through their art.
Thine is it that our drama did not die,
Nor flicker down to brainless pantomime,
And those gilt gauds men-children swarm to see.
Farewell, Macready; moral, grave, sublime;
Our Shakespeare's bland and universal eye
Dwells pleased, through twice a hundred years, on thee.

TO THE REV. F. D. MAURICE

Come, when no graver cares employ,
Godfather, come and see your boy:
Your presence will be sun in winter,
Making the little one leap for joy.

For, being of that honest few,
Who give the Fiend himself his due,
Should eighty-thousand college-councils
Thunder “Anathema,” friend, at you;

Should all our churchmen foam in spite
At you, so careful of the right,
Yet one lay-hearth would give you welcome
(Take it and come) to the Isle of Wight;

Where, far from noise and smoke of town,
I watch the twilight falling brown
All round a careless-order’d garden
Close to the ridge of a noble down.

You’ll have no scandal while you dine,
But honest talk and wholesome wine,
And only hear the magpie gossip
Garrulous under a roof of pine:

For groves of pine on either hand,
To break the blast of winter, stand;
And further on, the hoary Channel
Tumbles a billow on chalk and sand;

Where, if below the milky steep
Some ship of battle slowly creep,
And on thro’ zones of light and shadow
Glimmer away to the lonely deep,

We might discuss the Northern sin

Which made a selfish war begin;
Dispute the claims, arrange the chances;
Emperor, Ottoman, which shall win:

Or whether war's avenging rod
Shall lash all Europe into blood;
Till you should turn to dearer matters,
Dear to the man that is dear to God;

How best to help the slender store,
How mend the dwellings, of the poor;
How gain in life, as life advances,
Valour and charity more and more.

Come, Maurice, come: the lawn as yet
Is hoar with rime, or spongy-wet;
But when the wreath of March has blossom'd,
Crocus, anemone, violet,

Or later, pay one visit here,
For those are few we hold as dear;
Nor pay but one, but come for many,
Many and many a happy year.

January, 1854.

TO SIR JOHN SIMEON

IN THE GARDEN AT SWAINSTON

Nightingales warbled without,
Within was weeping for thee:
Shadows of three dead men
Walk'd in the walks with me,
Shadows of three dead men[28] and thou wast one of the three.

Nightingales sang in his woods:
The Master was far away:
Nightingales warbled and sang
Of a passion that lasts but a day;
Still in the house in his coffin the Prince of courtesy lay.

Two dead men have I known
In courtesy like to thee:
Two dead men have I loved
With a love that ever will be:
Three dead men have I loved and thou art last of the three.

TO EDWARD LEAR, ON HIS TRAVELS IN GREECE

Illyrian woodlands, echoing falls
Of water, sheets of summer glass,
The long divine Peneïan pass,
The vast Akrokeraunian walls,

Tomohrit, Athos, all things fair,
With such a pencil, such a pen,
You shadow forth to distant men,
I read and felt that I was there:

And trust me while I turn'd the page,
And track'd you still on classic ground,
I grew in gladness till I found
My spirits in the golden age.

For me the torrent ever pour'd
And glisten'd—here and there alone
The broad-limb'd Gods at random thrown
By fountain-urns;—and Naiads oar'd

A glimmering shoulder under gloom
Of cavern pillars; on the swell
The silver lily heaved and fell;
And many a slope was rich in bloom

From him that on the mountain lea
By dancing rivulets fed his flocks
To him who sat upon the rocks,
And fluted to the morning sea.

TO THE MASTER OF BALLIOL

(PROFESSOR JOWETT)

I

Dear Master in our classic town,
You, loved by all the younger gown
There at Balliol,
Lay your Plato for one minute down,

II

And read a Grecian tale re-told,[29]
Which, cast in later Grecian mould,
Quintus Calaber
Somewhat lazily handled of old;

III

And on this white midwinter day—
For have the far-off hymns of May,
All her melodies,
All her harmonies echo'd away?—

IV

To-day, before you turn again
To thoughts that lift the soul of men,
Hear my cataract's
Downward thunder in hollow and glen,

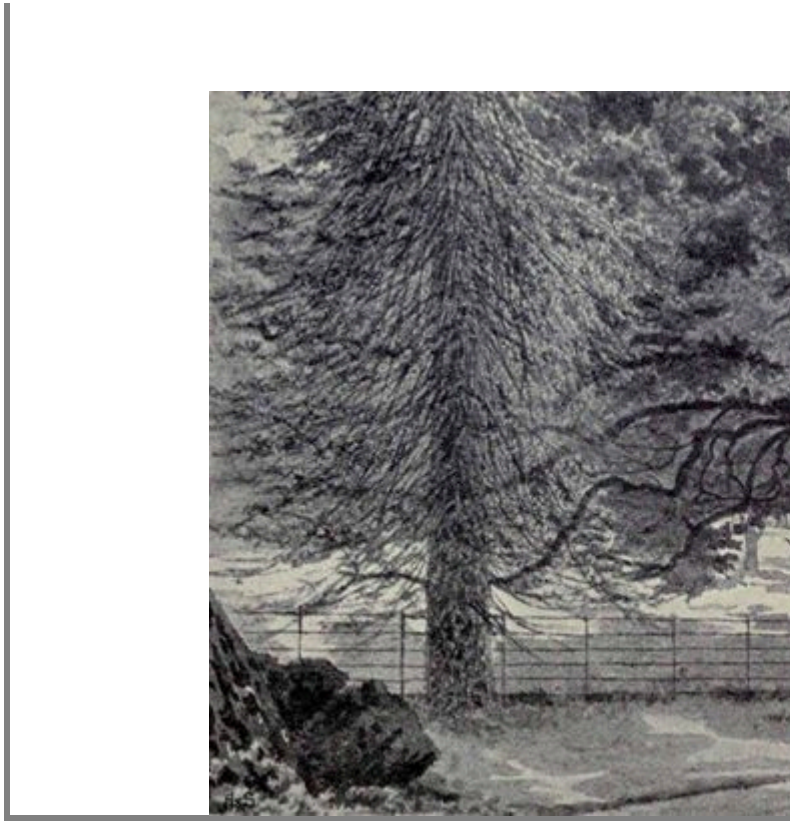
V

Till, led by dream and vague desire,
The woman, gliding toward the pyre,
Find her warrior
Stark and dark in his funeral fire.

TO THE DUKE OF ARGYLL

O Patriot Statesman, be thou wise to know
The limits of resistance, and the bounds
Determining concession; still be bold
Not only to slight praise but suffer scorn;
And be thy heart a fortress to maintain
The day against the moment, and the year
Against the day; thy voice, a music heard
Thro' all the yells and counter-yells of feud
And faction, and thy will, a power to make
This ever-changing world of circumstance,
In changing, chime with never-changing Law.





THE DRIVE AT FARRINGFORD, SHOWING ON THE LEFT THE "WELLINGTONIA" PLANTED BY GARIBALDI.
From a drawing by W. Biscombe Gardner.

TO GIFFORD PALGRAVE[30]

I

Ulysses, much-experienced man,
Whose eyes have known this globe of ours,
Her tribes of men, and trees, and flowers,
From Corrientes to Japan,

II

To you that bask below the Line,
I soaking here in winter wet—
The century's three strong eights[31] have met
To drag me down to seventy-nine

III

In summer if I reach my day—
To you, yet young, who breathe the balm
Of summer-winters by the palm
And orange grove of Paraguay,

IV

I tolerant of the colder time,
Who love the winter woods, to trace
On paler heavens the branching grace
Of leafless elm, or naked lime,

V

And see my cedar green, and there
My giant ilex keeping leaf
When frost is keen and days are brief—
Or marvel how in English air

VI

My yucca, which no winter quells,
Altho' the months have scarce begun,
Has push'd toward our faintest sun
A spike of half-accomplish'd bells—

VII

Or watch the waving pine which here
The warrior of Caprera set,[32]
A name that earth will not forget
Till earth has roll'd her latest year—

VIII

I, once half-crazed for larger light
On broader zones beyond the foam,
But chaining fancy now at home
Among the quarried downs of Wight,

IX

Not less would yield full thanks to you
For your rich gift, your tale of lands
I know not,[33] your Arabian sands;
Your cane, your palm, tree-fern, bamboo,

X

The wealth of tropic bower and brake;
Your Oriental Eden-isles,[34]
Where man, nor only Nature smiles;
Your wonder of the boiling lake;[35]

XI

Phra-Chai, the Shadow of the Best,[36]
Phra-bat[37] the step; your Pontic coast;
Crag-cloister;[38] Anatolian Ghost;[39]
Hong-Kong,[40] Karnac,[41] and all the rest.

XII

Thro' which I follow'd line by line
Your leading hand, and came, my friend,
To prize your various book, and send
A gift of slenderer value, mine.

TO THE MARQUIS OF DUFFERIN AND AVA

I

At times our Britain cannot rest,
At times her steps are swift and rash;
She moving, at her girdle clash
The golden keys of East and West.

II

Not swift or rash, when late she lent
The sceptres of her West, her East,
To one, that ruling has increased
Her greatness and her self-content.

III

Your rule has made the people love
Their ruler. Your viceregal days
Have added fulness to the phrase
Of “Gauntlet in the velvet glove.”

IV

But since your name will grow with Time,
Not all, as honouring your fair fame
Of Statesman, have I made the name
A golden portal to my rhyme:

V

But more, that you and yours may know
From me and mine, how dear a debt
We owed you, and are owing yet
To you and yours, and still would owe.

VI

For he[42]—your India was his Fate,
And drew him over sea to you—
He fain had ranged her thro’ and thro’,
To serve her myriads and the State,—

VII

A soul that, watch’d from earliest youth,
And on thro’ many a brightening year,
Had never swerved for craft or fear,
By one side-path, from simple truth;

VIII

Who might have chased and claspt Renown
And caught her chaplet here—and there
In haunts of jungle-poison'd air
The flame of life went wavering down;

IX

But ere he left your fatal shore,
And lay on that funereal boat,
Dying, "Unspeakable" he wrote
"Their kindness," and he wrote no more;

X

And sacred is the latest word;
And now the Was, the Might-have-been,
And those lone rites I have not seen,
And one drear sound I have not heard,

XI

Are dreams that scarce will let me be,
Not there to bid my boy farewell,
When That within the coffin fell,
Fell—and flash'd into the Red Sea,

XII

Beneath a hard Arabian moon
And alien stars. To question, why
The sons before the fathers die,
Not mine! and I may meet him soon;

XIII

But while my life's late eve endures,
Nor settles into hueless gray,
My memories of his briefer day
Will mix with love for you and yours.

TO W. E. GLADSTONE

We move, the wheel must always move,
Nor always on the plain,
And if we move to such a goal
As Wisdom hopes to gain,
Then you that drive, and know your Craft,
Will firmly hold the rein,
Nor lend an ear to random cries,
Or you may drive in vain,
For some cry "Quick" and some cry "Slow,"
But, while the hills remain,
Up hill "Too-slow" will need the whip,
Down hill "Too-quick," the chain.

TO MARY BOYLE

(Dedicating "The Progress of Spring.")

I

"Spring-flowers"! While you still delay to take
Your leave of Town,
Our elmtree's ruddy-hearted blossom-flake
Is fluttering down.

II

Be truer to your promise. There! I heard
Our cuckoo call.
Be needle to the magnet of your word,
Nor wait, till all

III

Our vernal bloom from every vale and plain
And garden pass,
And all the gold from each laburnum chain
Drop to the grass.

IV

Is memory with your Marian gone to rest,
Dead with the dead?
For ere she left us, when we met, you prest
My hand, and said

V

"I come with your spring-flowers." You came not, friend;
My birds would sing,
You heard not. Take then this spring-flower I send,
This song of spring,

VI

Found yesterday—forgotten mine own rhyme
By mine old self,
As I shall be forgotten by old Time,
Laid on the shelf—

VII

A rhyme that flower'd betwixt the whitening sloe
And kingcup blaze,
And more than half a hundred years ago,
In rick-fire days,

VIII

When Dives loathed the times, and paced his land
In fear of worse,
And sanguine Lazarus felt a vacant hand
Fill with *his* purse.

IX

For lowly minds were madden'd to the height
By tonguester tricks,
And once—I well remember that red night
When thirty ricks,

X

All flaming, made an English homestead Hell—
These hands of mine
Have helpt to pass a bucket from the well
Along the line,

XI

When this bare dome had not begun to gleam
Thro' youthful curls,
And you were then a lover's fairy dream,
His girl of girls;

XII

And you, that now are lonely, and with Grief
Sit face to face,
Might find a flickering glimmer of relief
In change of place.

XIII

What use to brood? this life of mingled pains
And joys to me,
Despite of every Faith and Creed, remains
The Mystery.

XIV

Let golden youth bewail the friend, the wife,
For ever gone.
He dreams of that long walk thro' desert life
Without the one.

XV

The silver year should cease to mourn and sigh—
Not long to wait—
So close are we, dear Mary, you and I
To that dim gate.

XVI

Take, read! and be the faults your Poet makes
Or many or few,
He rests content, if his young music wakes
A wish in you

XVII

To change our dark Queen-city, all her realm
Of sound and smoke,
For his clear heaven, and these few lanes of elm
And whispering oak.

TO W. G. WARD

IN MEMORIAM

Farewell, whose living like I shall not find,
Whose Faith and Work were bells of full accord,
My friend, the most unworldly of mankind,
Most generous of all Ultramontanes, Ward,
How subtle at tierce and quart of mind with mind,
How loyal in the following of thy Lord!

TO SIR RICHARD JEBB

Fair things are slow to fade away,
Bear witness you, that yesterday[43]
From out the Ghost of Pindar in you
Roll'd an Olympian; and they say[44]

That here the torpid mummy wheat
Of Egypt bore a grain as sweet
As that which gilds the glebe of England,
Sunn'd with a summer of milder heat.

So may this legend[45] for awhile,
If greeted by your classic smile,
Tho' dead in its Trinacrian Enna,
Blossom again on a colder isle.

TO GENERAL HAMLEY

(Prologue of "The Charge of the Heavy Brigade.")

Our birches yellowing and from each
The light leaf falling fast,
While squirrels from our fiery beech
Were bearing off the mast,
You came, and look'd and loved the view
Long-known and loved by me,
Green Sussex fading into blue
With one gray glimpse of sea;
And, gazing from this height alone,
We spoke of what had been
Most marvellous in the wars your own
Crimean eyes had seen;
And now—like old-world inns that take
Some warrior for a sign
That therewithin a guest may make
True cheer with honest wine—
Because you heard the lines I read
Nor utter'd word of blame,
I dare without your leave to head
These rhymings with your name,
Who know you but as one of those
I fain would meet again,
Yet know you, as your England knows
That you and all your men
Were soldiers to her heart's desire,
When, in the vanish'd year,
You saw the league-long rampart-fire
Flare from Tel-el-Kebir
Thro' darkness, and the foe was driven,
And Wolseley overthrew
Arâbi, and the stars in heaven
Paled, and the glory grew.

EPITAPH ON LORD STRATFORD

DE REDCLIFFE

IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY

Thou third great Canning, stand among our best
And noblest, now thy long day's work hath ceased,
Here silent in our Minster of the West
Who wert the voice of England in the East.

EPITAPH ON GENERAL GORDON

IN THE GORDON BOYS' NATIONAL MEMORIAL HOME NEAR WOKING[46]

Warrior of God, man's friend, and tyrant's foe,
Now somewhere dead far in the waste Soudan,
Thou livest in all hearts, for all men know
This earth has never borne a nobler man.

G. F. WATTS, R.A.

Divinely, thro' all hindrance, finds the man
Behind it, and so paints him that his face,
The shape and colour of a mind and life,
Lives for his children, ever at its best.

TENNYSON AND BRADLEY (DEAN OF WESTMINSTER)

By Margaret L. Woods

Alum Bay, near Farringford, is now greatly changed. A big hotel stands up dwarfing its cliffs, from which the famous layers of various-coloured sand are being continually scooped into bottles, and on many a cottage mantelpiece in the island there is a glass bottle showing a picture of a lighthouse, or something else curiously wrought in Alum Bay sand. The jagged white Needles still tip the westward point of its crescent, still seeming to salute with greeting or farewell the majestic procession of great ocean-going ships, and to smile on the frolic wings of yachts, that all the summer long flirt and dance over the blue waters of the Solent, like a flight of white butterflies. Formerly the rough track to the Bay led over a lonely bit of common called the Warren, where furze grew, and short brown-tasselled rushes marked the course of a hardly visible stream. The Warren Farm lies on the landward edge of the Warren, and there on a sunny 6th of August 1855, a third birthday was being solemnized with tea and a tent. It was a blue tent on the top of a haystack, and under it between her baby boy and girl, sat a blue-eyed mother, with the bloom of youth and the freshness of the sea on her beauty. The mother and the two children, lovely, too, with more than the usual loveliness of childhood, were keeping their tiny festival with a gay simplicity, and I do not doubt that on that as on

other birthdays, Edith, the birthday queen, was wearing on her golden curls a garland of rosebuds and mignonette. The wheels of a carriage were heard driving up to the farm gate, and in a minute a tall dark man, like a Spanish señor in his long cloak and sombrero, appeared under the haystack. The young woman noted the tall figure, the hat and cloak, the long, dark, clear-cut face, with the beardless and finely modelled mouth and chin, the splendid eyes under the high forehead, and the deep furrows running from nose to chin. She perceived at once it was Alfred Tennyson, whose poems she knew and loved so well. Meantime the Poet, sensitive as all artists must be to human loveliness, looked surely with delight on the pretty picture, the haystack and the blue tent, the young mother and her babes: a picture which was to form as it were a gracious frontispiece to a whole volume of friendship. He bade her "throw the little maid into his arms," caught the child and asked her how old she was. "Three to-day," answered little Edith proudly. "Then you and I," said he, "have the same birthday."

The friendship thus preluded was to last until death closed it. The record of it lies here in old diaries and in sheaves of letters, faithfully treasured; a chronicle of some forty years with all the little troubles, the joys and sorrows of the two households, intimately shared. It was a four-cornered friendship, one of husband and wife with husband and wife, but the correspondence passed almost entirely between the wives. Men had already for the most part abandoned the practice of letter-writing outside their business and families, but at the little rosewood drawing-room escritoires at which we of the many documents are tempted to smile, Victorian women fed the flame of friendship with—here the metaphor becomes a little

mixed—a constant flow of ink. Not that the two women who kept up this correspondence were idle. All that Emily Tennyson on her invalid sofa did for her Poet, is it not written in the book of his Biography? Her friend, Marian Bradley, was yet busier than she, having the cares and duties of a mother of a large family, besides those incident to the wife of a man who was successively Head Master of a great school, Head of an Oxford College, and Dean of Westminster.

Granville Bradley was twelve years younger than Alfred Tennyson; an interval in age which permits at once of veneration and of intimacy. It was at the Lushingtons' house that my father, as an undergraduate of one-and-twenty, first met the young Poet, and became his admirer; but it was not until twelve years later that the admirer became also the friend.

My mother tells in her diary how in that summer of the birthday meeting, the two men roamed the country together, poetizing, botanizing, geologizing. The enthusiasm of science had begun to seize on all thinking humanity, and if botany was considered the only suitable science for ladies, geology had something like a boom among the privileged males. I can see my father now, a slight, active little figure, armed with a hammer and girt with a capacious knapsack, setting forth joyous as a chamois-hunter, for a day's sport among the fossils of the Isle of Wight cliffs. But above all it was the communion of spirit, the play of ideas which interested the two and drew them together. "They talked from 12 noon to 10 P.M., almost incessantly, this day," writes my mother, "Tennyson walking back with him (some three miles) to the Warren farm, still talking."

One pictures the tall, long-cloaked Bard and the vivacious little scholar pacing side by side, inconscient of time and distance, down the shingly drive of Farringford, through the warm and dusky night of the deep-hedged lanes, overhung with the heavy darkness of August trees, until they came out on the clear pale spaces of the open seaward land, and the whisper and scent of the sea. And one would guess this to be a picture of two very young men, absorbed in the first joy of one of the romantic friendships of youth, did one not know that the Poet was a man of middle age and the scholar in the maturing thirties. But the artists know their way to the Fountain of youth and meet there. Tennyson, the great creative artist, retained all his life the simplicity of a child. My father was no creator, but he, too, was in his way an artist; he was the artist as scholar and teacher. Language and Style were to him things almost as splendid and sacred as they were wont to be to a Renaissance scholar, and sins against them roused the only bad passions of an otherwise sweet nature. History to him was not history, it was real life; the rhythm and harmony of poetry were what music is to the ardent music-lover. From childhood to old age he was for ever crooning some favourite fragment of verse. With what delight, then, he found himself crossing the threshold of a great poet's mind; the mind of one who did not, so to speak, keep his friends waiting in the vestibule, but opened to them freely the palace chambers, rich with the treasures of his knowledge, thought, and imagination.

Those passages in my mother's diary in which she speaks of the happiness it gave my father and herself to make acquaintance with the Poet, and to find him just what they would have wished him to be, have

already appeared in the Biography. Also her description of those evenings in the Farringford drawing-room, so often recurring and through so many years, when he would “talk of what was in his heart,” or read aloud some poem, often yet unpublished, while they listened, looking out on the lovely landscape and the glimpse of sea which, “framed in the dark-arched bow-window,” seemed, like some beautiful picture, almost to form part of the room.

My father now bought a small estate between Yarmouth and Freshwater, and built a house—Heathfield—upon it, in which to spend his holidays. The Freshwater side of the Isle of Wight was not at that time a fashionable neighbourhood. The lovely, lonely bays on the blue Solent, innocent of lodging-house or bathing-machine, succeeded each other from Yarmouth to the Needles. They were approached over open land, or by little stony chines, deep in gorse and bracken, down which tiny streams trickled, to spread themselves out shiningly on the sands and melt into the sea. I remember my young mother killing a red adder in our chine with a well-aimed stone, as we came up from our morning dip in the waves. There was room for wild creatures and open country and for poetry then on the little island. The islanders, smugglers from generation to generation, had in them more of the wild creature than of poetry. Droll stories used to be told of their inability to appreciate the honour done to Freshwater by the Poet’s residence there. But perhaps the days when his “greatness” was measured by the man-servant test[47] were more comfortable days for the Bard than those when his movements were marked and followed through telescopes.

There was a constant coming and going between Heathfield and Farringford, the children of each house being equally at home in the other. I see now the long Farringford drawing-room, full of the green shade of a cedar tree which grew near the great window, and the slight figure of Lady Tennyson rising from the red sofa—it was a red room—and gliding towards my mother with a smile upon her lips. She always wore a soft gray cashmere gown, and it was always made in the same simple fashion; much as dresses were worn in the days of Cruikshank, only that the gathered skirt was longer and less full than the skirts of Cruikshank's ladies. Her silky auburn-brown hair, partly hidden by lace lappets, was untouched with gray, and her complexion kept its rose-leaf delicacy, just as her strong and cultivated intellect kept its alertness, to the last days of her life. No sooner were the greetings over than ten to one the door would open, and the Poet would come slowly, softly, silently, into the room, dressed in an old-fashioned black tail-coat, and fixing my mother with his distant short-sighted gaze. One day, she being seated with her back to the cedar-green window, he approached her with such extreme deference, and so solemn a courtesy, as made her all amazed; until in a minute, with a flash of amusement, both discovered that he had mistaken her for—the Queen. Still more surely one or both of the long-haired, gray-tunicked boys would appear, less silently; and away the children scampered to their endless play about the rambling house and grounds. But even the children's play was informed with the vital interest of the two houses: the story of King Arthur and his knights. The first "Idylls of the King" had appeared, and others were appearing. It was a red-letter evening indeed when Poet and new

poem were ready for a reading, either in the little upstairs study, or in the drawing-room, where dessert was always laid after dinner, and he sat at the head of the round table in a high carved chair. Country life was in those days very simple and dinners early, so that even young children appeared with the dessert, and my mother's description of those evenings recalls very clearly some of the earliest of the pictures in memory's picture-book, as well as some later ones. I remember now a story of Tennyson's which tickled my childish sense of humour exceedingly, the point of it lying in a bit of bad French, the badness of which I could appreciate. My father had a vein of dry humour, which being akin to that of the Poet, doubtless assisted to knit the bonds of friendship, since to find the same thing humorous is almost essential to real intimacy. There was between the two the natural give-and-take of friendship, and to the warm appreciation given as well as received, Emily Tennyson's letters bear constant witness. "Mr. Bradley's intellectual activity, so warmed by the heart, is very good for my Ally," she writes; and again: "I know you would be pleased if you could hear Ally recur to his talks with Mr. Bradley, and one particular talk about the Resurrection and [illegible]. It is difficult to express admiration, so I won't say any more, except God bless you both."

My father was now in the full stress of his great work at Marlborough, and spent his summer holidays for the most part in Switzerland, but Christmas and Easter still often found us at Freshwater. In 1866 Tennyson's eldest son, Hallam, was sent to school at Marlborough. "I am not sending my son to Marlborough—I am sending him to Bradley," he said in reply to the Queen's question. On another

occasion he said: “I am sending him to Marlborough because Bradley is a friend of mine, and Stanley tells me that Marlborough is the best school in England.” There followed three visits to Marlborough during the four years longer that my father remained there. The second one, when Lady Tennyson came with her husband, was brought about by the severe illness of the cherished son, and lasted seven weeks. At first the anxiety about the boy was too great to admit of pleasure either to them or to my parents, to whom—especially to my mother—Hallam was almost as a son of their own. But later, and during the Poet’s other visits, there were walks and drives in Savernake forest, beautiful at all seasons of the year, and over the windy spaces of the gray silent downland, where “the chronicles of wasted Time” are written in worn and mysterious hieroglyphs of stone, and fosse, and hillock. During the first visit “The Victim” was written by him in the room called the green dressing-room, looking out on the clipped yews and tall lime-circle of Lady Hertford’s old garden. In summer-time he had great pleasure in the peaceful beauty of Marlborough and its landscape, and also in the wealth of flowers with which my mother surrounded herself in her house and garden; for she was a great gardener before it became fashionable to be so. In the drawing-room at the Lodge, masters and their wives—then all young—and Sixth Form boys gathered around the Poet. At that time he had for years been living a life apart from the crowd, and it must have been an effort to him to project himself into this young and wholly strange school society. But he did it gallantly and seemed happy among the young people. There were science evenings and poetry evenings. That is, there were evenings when masters interested in science

exhibited the wonders of the microscope, and evenings when Tennyson read aloud his own poetry or Hood's comic verses. I remember well being allowed to stay up to hear him read "Guinevere" to the Upper Sixth Form. He had a great deep voice like the booming of waves in a sea-cave, and although the situation in the poem was not one to appeal to a child, yet his reading of the farewell of Arthur to Guinevere affected me so much that I crawled into a corner and wept two pocket-handkerchiefs full of tears.

During this visit Tennyson, who suffered sometimes from nervous depression, said more than once that he envied my father's life of active and incessant goodness. In the man who at the height of his fame could experience and express such a feeling, there was still something of the heart of a good child—its simplicity, its humility, its "wanting to be good."

In June 1867, Aldworth—called at first Greenhill—appears in the letters. Emily Tennyson writes to my mother: "We have agreed to buy thirty-five[48] acres of beautifully situated land. It is a ledge on a hill nearly 1000 feet high, all copse and foxgloves almost, and a steep descent of wood and field below; the ledge looking over an immense plain, and backed by a hill slightly higher than itself." I quote what follows because it shows how simple had been the Freshwater life. "The order is gone for a small sociable landau. This seems so luxurious that I am afraid I am perversely more ready to cry than to laugh over it."

Aldworth was meant to be a small house, but somehow it grew to be a large one. The Tennysons' own design for it was followed in the main by Mr.

(afterwards Sir James) Knowles. The winds and rains of the great height have weathered stone and slate until the house and the balustrade of its wide terrace seem to have stood there two centuries, rather than not yet half of one. The planting of the Italian cypresses along the edge of the terrace was the Poet's own particular fancy. It is strange that they should have grown so grandly on this exposed English hill-side. The darkness of their foliage, the severity of their lines, put an accent on the visionary beauty of the immense view which lies spread below and beyond them. There is the Sussex Weald, so far down that its hills and dales appear one plain, the range of the South Downs, rising yonder to Chanctonbury Ring, dropping nearer to a chalky gap which lets in the distant glitter of the sea. Hindhead, the Surrey ranges, Windsor Forest—the list grows too long of all that may be seen from Aldworth terrace, and from the heathy height above, whence seven counties are said to be visible. For my part, when looking from such heights, over the great everlasting marriage festivals of Earth and Sky, it is with difficulty, almost with reluctance, that I bring myself to connect them with the map.

All things grow with a peculiar luxuriance on Black Down, and the immediate surroundings of the house were beautiful from the first, though the garden with its flowers and trees has added a beauty to those natural ones. The Sussex country was lonely forty years ago, and the Poet could pace his heathery ridge, brooding upon his verse, untroubled by any risk of human intrusion.

My parents and their family came to know and love this new home as well as the old one at Freshwater, and although it represents a later stage of Tennyson's

life, the interest of the house is almost as great. The fine Laurence portrait is there, besides the admirable Watts portrait of the Poet's wife, and that of his sons as boys. And many other pictures and things of interest and value have accumulated within its walls.

In his old age a change, easily understood, came over the old Bard. He lost his shyness of "the crowd," and seemed thoroughly to enjoy his glimpses of London society. He never visited us at Oxford, but when my father succeeded Dean Stanley at Westminster, my parents once more enjoyed some delightful visits from him. He was there in company with his eldest son and his daughter-in-law, on the occasion of his taking his seat in the House of Peers. Then and at other times there were memorable meetings of great men—Gladstone and others—with the Poet, in the fitting frame of the ancient Deanery.

My mother writes of Tennyson in 1888, after thirty-three years of friendship, "he grows more and more unselfish and thoughtful for others." She noted how the self-absorption and melancholy of his earlier years passed away in the calm sunshine of his old age.

The passing years had brought changes to others. The brilliant little scholar with the tongue which had once held in check the boldest offender against the laws of God or the Latin Grammar—although it never smote to defend or advance himself—had ripened into the constant peacemaker; one of the gentlest and humblest of that little band, who really walk in the footsteps of their Master Christ, and make those footsteps clearer for ever to all whose privilege it has been to live in their intimacy.

At length the day came when, full of years and

honours, the famous singer, the Great Voice of Victorian England, lay silenced in the solemn shade of Westminster Abbey, with the clamour of London about him instead of the roar of his sea. It was his old friend, he who had walked and talked with him those long hours of the summer day and night thirty-seven years before, who pronounced the last blessing above his grave. And now that friend also sleeps, as it were, in the next room.

NOTES ON CHARACTERISTICS OF TENNYSON

By the late MASTER OF BALLIOL (PROFESSOR JOWETT)

Absolute truthfulness, absolutely himself, never played tricks.

Never got himself puffed in the newspapers.

A friend of liberty and truth.

Extraordinary vitality.

Great common sense and a strong will.

The instinct of common sense at the bottom of all he did.

Not a man of the world (in the ordinary sense) but a man who had the greatest insight into the world, and often in a word or a sentence would flash a light.

Intensely needed sympathy.

A great and deep strength.

He mastered circumstances, but he was also partly mastered by them, *e.g.* the old calamity of the disinheritance of his father and his treatment by rogues in the days of his youth.

Very fair towards other poets, including those who were not popular, such as Crabbe.

He had the high-bred manners not only of a gentleman but of a great man.

He would have wished that, like Shakespeare, his life might be unknown to posterity.

Conversation.

In the commonest conversation he showed himself a man of genius. He had abundance of fire, never talked poorly, never for effect. As Socrates described Plato, “Like no one whom I ever knew before.”

The three subjects of which he most often spoke were “God,” “Free-Will,” and “Immortality,” yet always seeming to find an (apparent) contradiction between the “imperfect world,” and “the perfect attributes of God.”

Great charm of his ordinary conversation, sitting by a very ordinary person and telling stories with the most high-bred courtesy, endless stories, not too high

or too low for ordinary conversation.

The persons and incidents of his childhood very vivid to him, and the Lincolnshire dialect and the ways of life.

Loved telling a good story, which he did admirably, and also hearing one.

He told very accurately, almost in the same words, his old stories, though, having a powerful memory, he was impatient of a friend who told him a twice-repeated tale.

His jests were very amusing.

At good things he would sit laughing away—laughter often interrupted by fits of sadness.

His absolute sincerity, or habit of saying all things to all kinds of persons.

He ought always to have lived among gentlemen only.

Of his early friends (after Arthur Hallam) FitzGerald, Spedding, Sir John Simeon, Lushington—A. T. was enthusiastic about them.

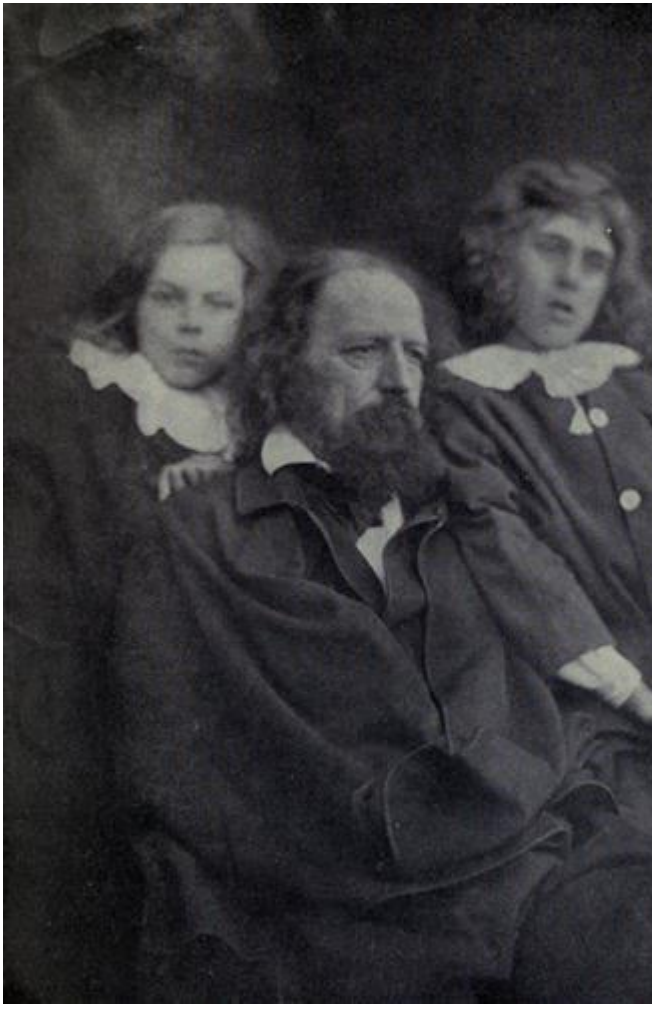
Spedding very gifted and single-minded. He spent his life in defending the character of Bacon.

TENNYSON, CLOUGH, AND THE CLASSICS

By Henry Graham Dakyns

You ask me to write a little paper for you on my reminiscences of Farringford, the Pyrenees, and, later, Aldworth; and, although I am still beset by something of the old horror of biography which so obsessed me when I had the chance that I religiously abstained from taking notes at the time, I cannot refuse the opportunity you offer me of having my say also about your father and mother, and certain others whose friendship was and is so precious to me in its affection, and their image ineffaceable. To your cairn of memories I wish to add my pebble. I might seem lacking in affection otherwise, and that would be to do myself an injustice, and yourselves, your father and mother, an injury, that of seeming insensible to their true worth. *Semper ego auditor tantum? Nunquamne reponam?*

This then is, if somewhat meagre, a faithful record of what I recollect. To avoid repetition and for reverence' sake, I shall speak of Lord and Lady Tennyson as Him and Her, and of yourselves, my two pupils, by your names. If I have occasion to mention myself (your old tutor), I will use the symbol Δ, the first letter of Δακυνίδιον, which, being interpreted, is "Little Dakyns," by which name your father spoke of me, at least on one occasion.



TENNYSON AND HIS TWO SONS. By Julia Margaret

Cameron.

My first Introduction to her and the two Boys, and presently to him, at Farringford, March (?) 1861

I shall never forget the beauty of the scene—I wish I could actualize it—and it was accompanied by what appealed not only to the eye, but to the heart, a mysterious sense of at-homeness. Your mother, as I think I have often told you, was seated half-reclining on the sofa which stood with its back to the window, with that wonderful view of capes and sea beyond. And you two stood leaning against her, one on either side. She was, and always remained, supremely beautiful, not only in feature and the bodily frame, but still more from the look in her eyes, the motion of her lips, and the deep clear music of her voice. Such a combination of grace and dignity with simplicity and frankness and friendliness of accost as never was. Such gentle trustfulness and sincerity of welcome as must have won a less susceptible heart than that of the diffidently intrusive παιδαγωγὸς Δ. I thought she must be a queen who had stept down from mediæval days into these more prosaic times which she ennobled. And the two Boys. If I cannot speak about them to you, you will guess the reason. But for the benefit of a younger generation, I appeal to the portraits of her by Watts (now at Aldworth), and of Hallam and Lionel—surely among the best he ever painted—which are given in your father's *Memoir* (vol. i. facing p. 330 and p. 370).

And then he came in, a truly awful[49] moment, but in an instant of time he too had not only banished the nervousness of Δ, but won his heart. His welcome

resembled hers in its sincerity. And even if I had been ten times more nervous than I was, and awe-stricken I was, no doubt, something set me at my ease at once. Of his look and manner I find it not only hard, but absurd to attempt to speak. He must have been at that date somewhat over fifty. I was twenty-three, not quite thirty years younger.[50] His figure, so well known in the photographs of the time, was imposing, and it was awe-inspiring to be in the presence of the great Poet we had hero-worshipped in our youth (though he, I think, was not the only divinity in our Pantheon, there was Clough also—Browning at that date had not appeared). But even so formidable as he was on these grounds, the humanity of the man, and what I came to regard as the most abiding, perhaps the deepest-seated, characteristic, his eternal youthfulness, acted as a spell, and timidity melted into affection. I can still feel his hand-grip, soft at once and large and strong, as he stood there peering down on the relatively small mortal before him—so sane, and warm, and trustful.

As to his so-called gruffness of manner, I will speak about that later on, but I want at once to make clear a certain quality of mind which I believe helped things, so that he was not troubled by the presence of a stranger, either then or when Δ was no longer a stranger, ever afterwards. I suppose if there had been any occasion for comparing notes he might have discovered much to object to in my attitude to the universe, especially during my turbulent youth, but we had much in common, he in his great grand way illimitably, and I in my tentative fashion diminutively. The quality I refer to as a bond was a heartfelt detestation on Δ's part of what I venture to call the pseudo-biographic mania. The notion of

collecting tiny pinhead facts, or words actually spoken but separated from their context: the idea of collecting these and calling the result biography I loathed. So when I found, as I did at once, that the great man, the poet, and the equally great woman his wife, held similar views, I applauded myself and became more and more rigidly unbiographic. Of course, I see now that Δ was possibly over-scrupulous. Instead of depending on mere recollection, how much more sensible, and not a whit the less reverential, it would have been to have taken down at many a conversation some catchword of what he said, and his remarks were apt to be as incisive as they were laconic. And the Poet's fore-ordained biographer would have blessed the inspiration. Would Tennyson himself have been equally pleased? I am not so sure. But what he really deprecated was after all only the vulgar tales of the spurious biographer. "In life the owls—at death the ghouls."

With this apology I come to some among the dicta current in my time. I think it was the first night I happened to use the word "knowledge," pronouncing it as I had been brought up to do with the ō long, whereupon he complimented me.[51] "You say 'knōwledge,'" and explained that "knŏwledge" to rhyme with "college" was the only permissible exception. I felt pleased with my domestic training. Then he went on to denounce a solecism, the use of "like" with a verb, "like he did," instead of "as he did," and humorously he begged me to correct any one guilty of such barbarism, a pledge I undertook, and acted up to, correcting speakers right and left till it came to the superior clergy, bishops, and so forth, in the pulpit; then I desisted....

But to proceed. Apropos of Voltaire saying that to listen to English people talking was to overhear the hissing of serpents, he commented, “and to listen to German was to overhear *k’s* like the scrunching of egg-shells.” He had two or three pithy sayings, which came straight home to me and became part of my mental furniture, so much so that I have at times given myself the credit of innovating them. One of these was that the defect of most people—not critics only, but others, *la foule* in general—is “to impute themselves.” I felt this to be at the root of the matter, a profound if humorous extension of the wise man’s saw, πάντων μέτρον ἄνθρωπος. He said it often and most seriously. The other I might call the “*elogium vatis*” *par excellence*. It took the form of a caution against “mixing up things that differ,” and to this also among his *sententiae* I assented *quod latius patet*. I think I once used it incidentally to him, and he at once pulled me up. “That’s mine.” He certainly did so when I asked him his own riddle: “My first’s a kind of butter, my second’s a kind of liquor, and my whole’s a kind of charger.” Answer: “Ramrod.” And he exclaimed, “That’s my riddle.”[52] Then there is the old story how the Englishman, wishing to direct the *garçon* not to let the fire go out, gently growled, “Ne permettez pas sortir le fou,” whereupon the *garçon* locks up the other Englishman. I think it was brought up by Frank Lushington as now told against the Poet, and Tennyson gave us the correct version; originally he had invented it himself of Edmund Lushington when they were in Paris, chaffing his friend’s French. But it was a case of biter bit. In the vulgar version I find the Poet with his long hair is made to play the part of the *fou*. Thus far these trifles. I come to *memorabilia* more precious to me and of larger import. I will head the section

Tennyson and the Classics, English and Other,

and it is what you asked for. And let me make two preliminary remarks. In reference to the defect of self-imputation above mentioned, I wish to point out to any, consciously or unconsciously, critically minded person, that the striking thing to me was the wide sympathy, the catholicity of the Poet's mind, his width of view. Thus he—I will not use the word "displayed," as if it were an external habit of any sort—but simply and naturally he had ingrained in him the greatest generosity in his feeling for, in his criticism of, contemporary authors. And this applies to his appreciation of the great classical authors of the past. I do not say, of course, that he had not his favourites, as we all have, especially, perhaps, the smaller we are. For instance—and here other of his contemporaries, Clough, Jowett, etc., would have borne him out—his appreciation of Δ's favourite poet Shelley was not so spontaneous nor, I venture to think, so profound as, let us say, his appreciation of Wordsworth (whom he also "criticized"[53]) or Victor Hugo, or, to take an opposite instance, his ready appreciation of Walt Whitman, or of Browning, or possibly of Clough. But all this is admirably discussed in your *Memoir*.[54] I only wish to add my testimony, and I take as my text a saying of his about Goethe, which I seem to recollect if I recollect rightly: "In his smaller poems, *e.g.* those in *Wilhelm Meister*, Goethe shows himself to be one of the great artists of the world. He is also a great critic, yet he always said the best he could of an author. Good critics are rarer than good authors" (cp. his own "And the critic's rarer still").[55]

And I must further premise that the samples given of quotations from the Classics are from the particular ones he chanced upon—the artist in him, perhaps, instinctively selecting—for the particular youth, and what he needed, or because they fitted on to things on which his mind was working at that date. Here, at all events, they are, or some of them. I omit continual references to Shakespeare, to Dante, to Virgil, to Homer. He was perpetually quoting Homer and Virgil, and to my mind there was nothing for grandeur of sound like his pronunciation of Latin and Greek as he recited whole passages or single lines in illustration of some point, of metre, perhaps, or thought, or feeling; for instance, the line from Homer:

> βῆ δ᾽ ἀκέων παρὰ θῖνα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης,

commenting on the possibility of pronouncing οι not in our English fashion like *oy* in *boy*, but like the German *ö*—*o* of "wood"—*phlösböo*—imitating the lisping whisper of the tideless Mediterranean on a soft summer day. Then how he rolled out his Virgil, giving first the thunder, then the wash of the sea in these lines:

> Fluctus ut in medio coepit quum albescere ponto
> Longius, ex altoque sinum trahit; utque volutus
> Ad terras immane sonat per saxa, neque ipso
> Monte minor procumbit; at ima exaestuat unda
> Verticibus, nigramque alte subiectat arenam.

He used to say, "The Horatian alcaic is, perhaps, the stateliest metre except the Virgilian hexameter at its

best."

I take my samples in chance order. I suppose I knew my Catullus fairly well before, but I am sure that, in a deeper sense, I learnt to know "the tenderest of Roman poets" for the first time that day when he read to me in that voice of his, with half-sad *Heiterkeit*, and with that refinement of pronunciation which seemed—I am sure was—the right thing absolutely, those well-known poems about his lady-love's pet sparrow (translated roughly here in case a reader should chance not to know Latin):

Passer, deliciae meae puellae,
Quicum ludere, quem in sinu tenere,
Cui primum digitum dare appetenti
Et acris solet incitare morsus,
Cum desiderio meo nitenti
Carum nescio quid libet iocari.
Credo ut, cum gravis acquiescet ardor,
Tecum ludere sicut ipsa possem
Et tristis animi levare curas!

Sparrow, pet of my lady-love, with you she will play; she will hold you in her bosom and give you her finger-tips to peck at, and tease to quicken your sharp bite, when my shining heart's desire is in the humour for some darling jest. Doubtless, when the fever of passion dies away she seeks to find some little solace[56] for her pain. Oh, if I could only play with you as she does, and so relieve the gloomy sorrow of my soul!

And then the tear-moving sequel in the minor:

Lugete, o Veneres Cupidinesque,
Et quantum est hominum venustiorum.
Passer mortuus est meae puellae,
Passer, deliciae meae puellae,
Quem plus illa oculis suis amabat;
Nam mellitus erat suamque norat
Ipsam tam bene quam puella matrem,
Nec sese a gremio illius movebat,
Sed circumsiliens modo huc modo illuc
Ad solam dominam usque pipillabat.
Qui nunc it per iter tenebricosum
Illuc, unde negant redire quemquam.

At vobis male sit, malae tenebrae
Orci, quae omnia bella devoratis:
Tam bellum mihi passerem abstulistis.
Vae factum male! Vae miselle passer!
Tua nunc opera meae puellae
Flendo turgiduli rubent ocelli.

Mourn, all ye Goddesses of Love, and all ye Cupids mourn: mourn, all ye sons of men that know what love is. My lady's sparrow is dead, dead; her sparrow, my lady's pet, whom she loved more than her own eyes, for he was honey-sweet, and knew his own mistress as well as any girl her mother; nor would he stir from his lady's bosom, but hopping about, now here, now there, he piped his little treble to her and her alone. But now he goes along the darksome road, to that place whence they say no one returns. Ah, my curse upon you! Cursed shades of Orcus, that devour all things beautiful! So beautiful a sparrow have ye taken from me! Alas for the ill deed done! Alas, poor little[57] sparrow! Now, because of you my lady's dear eyes are swollen, they are red with weeping.

The tenderness of his voice when he came to the eleventh and twelfth lines, and the measured outburst of passionate imprecation, come back almost audibly. I wish I could reproduce the pathos. But in the poem he next read to me, the tenderness of Catullus and his perfection of form reach, I think, a climax. So I think he felt, he who so revived his manner in "Frater Ave atque Vale," and his reading gave me that impression. I refer to the passionate poem:

Vivamus, mea Lesbia, atque amemus,
Rumoresque senium severiorum
Omnes unius aestimemus assis.
Soles occidere et redire possunt:
Nobis cum semel occidit brevis lux,
Nox est perpetua una dormienda.[58]
Da mi basia mille, deinde centum,
Dein mille altera, dein secunda centum,
Deinde usque altera mille, deinde centum.
Dein, quum millia multa fecerimus,
Conturbabimus illa, ne sciamus,
Aut nequis malus invidere possit,
Cum tantum sciat esse basiorum.

Let us live, my Lesbia, live and love; and, as for the slanderous tongues of greybeards, value them all at a farthing's worth. Suns may set and suns may rise again, but for us, when our short day has ended, one long night comes, a night of sleep that knows no ending. Give me a thousand kisses, then a hundred, and then another thousand and a second hundred, and then once more a thousand and again a hundred, on and on. And then, when we have made up many thousands, we will overturn the reckoning that we may not know the number, nor any villain cast an evil eye on us, though he discover all that huge amount of kisses.

Can't you overhear his voice? *Conturbabimus illa, ne sciamus*, deep-toned and fast, like a pent-up stream in spate, bursting its barriers, till the tale is told.

Two other poems of Catullus I must mention. The

first of these he had much on his mind, for he was just then in the mood for experiments on metre, and the famous poem “Boädicea” was, I think, the first of these,[59] echoing the galliambics of Catullus in the “Attis”:

> Super alta vectus Attis celeri rate maria.

How far his own metre corresponds to Catullus’ is a question for experts like Bridges, Mayor, R. C. Trevelyan, etc., to determine, but I heard him more than once read first the Attis poem and then his “Boädicea,” and I thought at the time there was an extraordinary resemblance in rhythm. He wished that the “Boädicea” were musically annotated, so that it might be read with proper quantity and pace.

The last of the Catullus poems I want to refer to he never read to me as a whole. It is the lovely Epithalamium in honour of Junia and Manlius, calling on Hymenaeus to attend and bless the marriage:

> Collis o Heliconii
> Cultor, Uraniae genus,
> Qui rapis teneram ad virum
> Virginem, o Hymenaee Hymen,
> O Hymen Hymenaee!
>
> Dweller on the mount of Helicon,
> Seed of the Heavenly One,
> Thou that bearest off the tender maiden to her bridegroom,
> O Hymenaean Hymen,
> O Hymen Hymenaean!

I do not know if he ever read it as a whole to any one. It would have been splendid to hear, but

towards the end of the long poem, where the poet, like Spenser, prays, “Send us the timely fruit of this same marriage night,” comes a verse he was very fond of quoting, and in particular the third line:

> Torquatus volo parvulus
> Matris a gremio suae
> Porrigens teneras manus
> Dulce rideat ad patrem
> Semhiante labello.

> I want a baby-boy Torquatus to stretch out his little hands from his mother’s lap, and sweetly to smile upon his father with half-opened lips.

These, I think, were the most remarkable of the Catullus poems he showed me, though of course there were others. I come now to the kindred Greek genius, who had a special fascination for him, the poetess Sappho. He loved her Sapphics, and greatly disliked the Sapphics of Horace, “with their little tightly curled pigtails.” I believe I owe it to him that I am a worshipper of that most marvellous muse of Sappho....

> [EDITORIAL NOTE.—Unhappily Mr. Dakyns never completed his paper. For, while still engaged on it, he died suddenly, June 21, 1911. A friend, Miss F. M. Stawell, has added the following notes from recollections of what Mr. Dakyns said or wrote to her on the subject.]

Mr. Dakyns’s manuscript breaks off abruptly, but he left some headings for what he intended to write:

Sappho, Goethe, Béranger, Walt Whitman, Victor Hugo, Life at Farringford, The French Tour and Clough, Clough and the Pyrenees. I think he would have quoted first from Sappho the lines beginning:

> οἷον τὸ γλυκυμᾶλον ἐρεύθεται ἀκρῷ ἐπ᾽ ὐσδῷ
>
> Like the sweet apple that reddens upon the topmost bough,

for he loved the passage, and the book was left open at this page.

No doubt he would have gone on to quote others that were favourites both with the Poet and with himself. Such as the heart-sick cry of love:

> δέδυκε μὲν ἀ σελάννα
> καὶ Πληιάδες, μέσαι δὲ
> νύκτες, παρὰ δ᾽ ἔρχετ᾽ ὥρα,
> ἐγὼ δὲ μόνα καθεύδω.
>
> The moon has set, the Pleiades have gone;
> Midnight! The hour has past, and I
> Sleep here alone.

Or again:

> γλυκεῖα μᾶτερ, οὔτοι δύναμαι κρέκην τὸν ἱστόν,
> πόθῳ δαμεῖσα παιδὸς βραδινὰν δι᾽ ᾽Αφροδίταν
>
> Dear mother mine, I cannot weave my web—
> My heart is sick with longing for my dear,
> Through Aphrodite fair.

And he would probably have included that longer

poem of passion which has been the wonder of the world, that invocation to

> Starry-throned, immortal Aphrodite.
>
> ποικιλόθρον᾽, ἀθάνατ᾽ ᾽Αφροδίτα.

Mr. Dakyns did not tell me himself what he had learnt of Simonides from Tennyson, but Tennyson quoted the following poems to his eldest son, Hallam. The sad, comforting, beautiful chant of Danaë to her baby, afloat on the waters, was quoted in one of Mr. Dakyns's last letters to me, when his mind was full of his unfinished article. He wrote: "Isn't that lovely and tear-drawing? true and tender and sempiternal?" And then he copied out the whole song, in case I should chance not to have the text at hand, with J. A. Symonds's translation beside it:

> ὅτε λάρνακι ἐν δαιδαλέᾳ
> ἄνεμός τέ μιν πνέων κινηθεῖσά τε λίμνα
> δείματι ἤριπεν, οὔτ᾽ ἀδιάντοισι παρειαῖς,
> ἀμφί τε Περσέϊ βάλλε φίλην χεῖρα,
> εἶπέ τ᾽· ὦ τέκος, οἷον ἔχω πόνον.
> σὺ δ᾽ ἀωτεῖς, γαλαθηνῷ τ᾽ ἤτορι κνώσσεις
> ἐν ἀτερπεῖ
> δούρατι χαλκεογόμθῳ,
> νυκτὶ ἀλαμπεῖ κυανέῳ τε δνόφῳ σταλείς·
> ἅλμαν δ᾽ ὕπερθε τεᾶν κομᾶν βαθειᾶν
> παριόντος κύματος οὐκ ἀλέγεις,
> οὐδ᾽ ἀνέμου φθόγγον,
> πορφυρέᾳ κείμενος ἐν χλανίδι, καλὸν
> πρόσωπον.
>
> εἰ δέ τοι δεινὸν τό γε δεινὸν ἦν,
> καί κεν ἐμῶν ῥημάτων λεπτὸν ὑπεῖχες
> οὖας.

κέλομαι δ᾽, εῦδε βρέφος, εὐδέτω δὲ πόντος,
εὐδέτω δ᾽ ἄμετρον κακόν·
μεταιβολία δέ τις φανείη, Ζεῦ πάτερ, ἐκ σέο·
ὅτι δὲ θαρσάλεον ἔπος
εὔχομαι νόσφιν δίκας, συγγνῶθί μοι.

When in the carven chest
The winds that blew and waves in wild unrest
Smote her with fear, she not with cheeks unwet
Her arms of love round Perseus set,
And said: “O child, what grief is mine!
But thou dost slumber, and thy baby breast
Is sunk in rest.
Here in the cheerless, brass-bound bark,
Tossed amid starless night and pitchy dark,
Nor dost thou heed the scudding brine
Of waves that wash above thy curls so deep,
Nor the shrill winds that sweep—
Lapped in thy purple robe’s embrace
Fair little face!

But if this dread were dreadful, too, to thee,
Then would’st thou lend thy listening ear to me;
Therefore I cry, Sleep, babe, and sea be still,
And slumber our unmeasured ill!
Oh, may some change of fate, sire Zeus, from Thee
Descend our woes to end!
But if this prayer, too overbold, offends
Thy justice,—yet be merciful to me.

It was natural also that the heroic poems of

Simonides should have appealed to both men, and of special interest to know the delight that Tennyson took in one of these, and perhaps because of the similarity shown by his own splendid lines in the "Duke of Wellington" Ode:

> 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,
> Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled
> Are close upon the shining table-lands
> To which our God Himself is moon and sun.

> ἔστι τις λόγος
> τὰν ἀρέταν ναίειν δυσανβάτοις ἐπὶ πέτραις·
> ἁγνὰν δέ μιν θεὰν χῶρον ἁγνὸν ἀμφέπειν.
> οὐδὲ πάντων βλεφάροις θνατῶν ἔσοπτος,
> ᾧ μὴ δακέθυμος ἱδρῶς
> ἔνδοθεν μόλῃ, ἵκῃ τ' ἐς ἄκρον
> ἀνδρείας.

> There is a tale
> That Valour dwells above the craggy peaks
> Hard, hard to scale,
> A goddess pure in a pure land, and none
> May see her face,
> Save those who by keen Toil and sweat have won
> That highest place,
> That goal of manhood.

And with these heroic lines go the others on the men who fell at Thermopylae:

> τῶν ἐν Θερμοπύλαις θανόντων

εὐκλεὴς μὲν ἁ τύχα, καλὸς δ᾽ ὁ πότμος,
βωμὸς δ᾽ ὁ τάφος, πρὸ γόων δὲ μνᾶστις, ὁ δ᾽ οἶκτος ἔπαινος·
ἐντάφιον δὲ τοιοῦτον οὔτ᾽ εὐρὼς
οὔθ᾽ ὁ πανδαμάτωρ ἀμαυρώσει χρόνος.
ἀνδρῶν ἀγαθῶν ὅδε σακὸς οἰκέταν εὐδοξίαν
Ἑλλάδος εἵλετο· μαρτυρεῖ δὲ Λεωνίδας,
ὁ Σπάρτας βασιλεύς, ἀρετᾶς μέγαν λελοιπὼς
κόσμον ἀέναόν τε κλέος.

Of those who fell at far Thermopylae,
Fair is the fate and high the destiny:
Their tomb an altar, memory for tears
And praise for lamentation through the years.
On such a monument comes no decay,
And Time that conquers all takes not away
Their greatness: for this holy Sepulchre
Of valiant men has called to dwell with her
The glory of all Greece. Bear witness, Sparta's king,
Leonidas! thy ever-flowing spring
Of fame and the high beauty of thy deed!

There is a kindred note echoing through the popular catch in praise of the tyrannicides, Harmodius and Aristogeiton, one of the first bits of Greek that Tennyson made his sons learn:

ἐν μύρτου κλαδὶ τὸ ξίφος φορήσω,
ὥσπερ Ἁρμόδιος καὶ ᾽Αριστογείτων,
ὅτε τὸν τύραννον κτανέτην
ἰσονόμους τ᾽ ᾽Αθήνας ἐποιησάτην.

In myrtle I wreathe my sword

> As they wreathed it, the brave,
> Brave Harmodius, Aristogeiton,
> When they slew the oppressor, the lord,
> And to Athens her freedom gave.

Mr. Dakyns must have rejoiced in a spirit that could feed boys on such gallant stuff as this.

From Goethe he would have selected the noble proem to Faust:

> Ihr naht Euch wieder, schwankende Gestalten,

for there was a note among his papers to that effect.

And there is one note about Béranger (written in a letter):

> It was he too who introduced me to Béranger, *e.g.* "Le Roi d'Yvetot," and the refrain:
>
> Toute l'aristocratie à la lanterne![60]
>
> And how *he* read it! Like the *Conturbabimus illa, ne sciamus* of Catullus quoted above—with fire and fury, *tauriformis Aufidus*-like—a refrain which, like the "Marseillaise," stirred my republican spirit νόσφιν δίκας, inordinately, I mean, and in a monstrous cruel sort of way: but what *he* liked was the form and force of the language, the pure art and horror of it, I imagine.

Mr. Dakyns, in the short time I knew him, often spoke to me about Tennyson, and always with stress on "the width of his humanity," and how he could appreciate works at which a smaller man might have been shocked; how, for example, he sympathized

with the inmost spirit of Hugo's cry to the awful vastness of God:

> Je sais que vous avez bien autre chose à faire
> Que de nous plaindre tous;

saw nothing irreverent in it, as lesser critics have done; found in it rather a fortifying quality against "the grief that saps the mind." "I wish you could have heard him read it," he wrote afterwards, "in his organ-voice." Once he said to me how much he had wanted Tennyson to write the Ode on the Stars which was always floating before his mind: "He could have done it, for he had the sense of vastness. And it would have been a far finer work than the 'Idylls of the King.'"

Tennyson also, he told me, was the first man to tell him about Walt Whitman, and the first passage he showed him was one of the most daring Whitman ever wrote. On his side Whitman had a deep feeling for Tennyson and used to write of him affectionately as "the Boss," a touch that pleased Mr. Dakyns greatly, for he admired and loved Walt. He gave me a vivid impression of Tennyson's large-heartedness in all kinds of ways: for instance, his own opinions were always intensely democratic, and the Tennysons sympathized rather with the old Whig and Unionist policy, but he said it never made any difference or any jar between them. "I remember his coming into my little study at the top of the house and finding me absorbed in Shelley, and asking me what I was reading, and I was struck at the time by the quiet satisfied way in which he took my answer, no cavil or criticism, though I knew he did not feel about Shelley as I did.... I don't know how to give in writing the true impression of his dear genial nature.

It often came out in what might seem like roughnesses when they were written down. He was very fond of Clough: and Clough at that time was very taciturn—he was ill really, near his death—and I remember once at a discussion on metre Clough would not say one word, and at last Tennyson turned to him with affectionate impatience, quoting Shakespeare in his deep, kindly voice, 'Well, goodman Dull, what do *you* say?' How can I put that down? I can't give the sweet humorous tone that made the charm of it. And then people called him 'gruff.' His 'gruffness' only gripped one closer."

Another time he told me with keen enjoyment of Tennyson's discovering a likeness to him in some drawing on the cover of the old *Cornhill*—I think it was the figure of a lad ploughing—pointing to it like a child and saying, "Little Dakyns." He would speak with delight of Tennyson's humour, far deeper and wilder, he said, than most people would have guessed, Rabelaisian even in the noble sense of the word, and always fresh and pure.

"I remember an instance of my own audacity," he said, "at which I almost shudder now. We were riding into a French town, it was the evening of a fête, and the whole population seemed to be capering about with the most preposterous antics. It struck a jarring note, and the Poet said to me, 'I can't understand them, it's enough to make one weep.' Somehow I couldn't help answering—but can you imagine the audacity? I assure you I trembled myself as I did so—'Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean.' And he took it, he took it! He did indeed!"

The memories of Clough also were very dear to Mr. Dakyns, and he said he could never help regretting

that he had not heard him read his last long work, “In Mari Magno,” to the Poet. “Tennyson said to me afterwards, ‘Clough’s Muse has lost none of her power,’ and I couldn’t help feeling a little hurt that I had not been asked to hear the reading: perhaps it was vanity on my part.”

Clough always came down to see them bathe. He was very fond of bathing himself, but could not take part in it then on account of his health. “I never feel the water go down my back now,” Mr. Dakyns said, “without thinking of Clough.”

But the sweetest of all the memories was, I think, the memory of the valley at Cauteretz, sacred to Tennyson because of Arthur Hallam. I heard Mr. Dakyns speak of that the first time he was at our house. My mother chanced to ask him what he did after taking his degree, and he said, “I was with the Tennysons as tutor to their boys, and we went to the Pyrenees.” The name and something in his tone made me start. “Oh,” I said, “were you with them at Cauteretz?” He turned to me with his smile, “Yes, I was, and if I had not already a family motto of which I am very proud, I should take for my legend ‘Dakyns isn’t a fool’” (the last phrase in a gruffly tender voice). And then he told us: “There was a fairly large party of us, the Tennysons, Clough, and myself, some walking and some driving. Tennyson walked, and I being the young man of the company, was the great man’s walking-stick. When we came to the valley—I knew it was a sacred place—I dropped behind to let him go through it alone. Clough told me afterwards I had done well. He had noticed it, and the Poet said—and it was quite enough—‘Dakyns isn’t a fool!’”

It was that evening that Tennyson wrote “All along

the Valley."

RECOLLECTIONS OF TENNYSON

By the Rev. H. MONTAGU BUTLER, D.D., Master of Trinity College, Cambridge.

You have asked me to put on paper some recollections of the many happy visits which it was my good fortune to pay to Farringford and Aldworth between 1860 and 1890. I wish that I could respond to this kind request more worthily; but the truth is, that, though I have always counted those visits among the happiest events of my life, and though my memory of the general impression left upon me on each occasion is perfectly clear, it is not clear, but on the contrary most confused and hazy, as to any particular incidents.

Speaking first generally in the way of preface, I may say that it would be difficult to exaggerate the hero-worship with which I regarded the great Poet, ever since I was a boy. Before I went up to Trinity in 1851, he had been the delight of my friends and myself at Harrow. And further, through members of the Rawnsley family, I had heard much of his early days when the Tennysons lived at Somersby.

During my life at Trinity, from 1851 to 1855, and

then, with long intervals of absence, till the end of 1859, Coleridge and Wordsworth and Tennyson, but especially Tennyson, were the three poets of the nineteenth century who mainly commanded the reverence and stirred the enthusiasm of the College friends with whom I lived. Robert Browning became a power among them almost immediately after, but by that time I had gone back to Harrow. Matthew Arnold and Clough and Kingsley also attracted us greatly in their several ways, and of course Shelley and Keats, but Tennyson was beyond a doubt our chief luminary. “In Memoriam” in particular, followed by “Maud” and the first four “Idylls of the King,” was constantly on our lips, and, I may truly say, in our hearts, in those happy hours.

It was with these feelings, then, and these prepossessions that I was prepared to make the acquaintance of the great Poet, should such an honour ever be granted me. It came first, to the best of my recollection, when my late brother-in-law, Francis Galton, and I were taking one of our delightful walking trips or tramps in the Easter holidays. Galton used to plan everything—district, hours, stopping-places, length of each day’s march. One Easter—I forget which, but it must have been about 1859—was devoted to the New Forest. From there we crossed over to the Isle of Wight; and after visiting Shanklin and Bonchurch, we walked round to Freshwater. To leave Freshwater without paying our homage to the Poet at Farringford was impossible. Whether we had any definite introduction to him, I cannot now remember, but we had reason to think that we should be kindly received. My brother Arthur had lately been paying more than one visit to that part of the Island, and had keenly enjoyed several long walks with him. His

report of these was not lost upon me.

Galton had known intimately some of Tennyson's friends, such as Sumner Maine, W. G. Clark, Franklin Lushington, and specially "Harry" Hallam, younger brother of Arthur. He was, I think, as full of hero-worship for the Poet as I was myself. The fame which he has since won in connexion with Science may make it difficult, even for his later friends, to understand the passion—I can use no weaker word—which he then cherished for some branches of imaginative literature, in particular for Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Keats, and for at least three of Kingsley's novels, *Alton Locke*, *Yeast*, and *Westward Ho!* These we used in the course of our Easter rambles to read out in the open air after an *al-fresco* lunch.

Tennyson's works were all very familiar to Galton. He had known them at Cambridge as each came out, and had discussed them eagerly with admiring friends, some of them first-rate critics. He delighted not only in the subtlety and elevation and freedom of the thoughts, but also in the beauty and perfection and melody of the expression.

We went, as I have said, to call on the Poet. We went together with rather beating hearts. He received us cordially as Trinity men, but unfortunately I can remember no detail of any kind. I am not sure whether we were even introduced to Mrs. Tennyson. All I remember is that we left the house happy and exhilarated.

But my real acquaintance with the Tennyson family dates from the end of 1861 and the early days of 1862. My first marriage had been on December 19, 1861, and a few days afterwards we came to

Freshwater, and stayed at the hotel close to the sea, where Dr. and Mrs. Vaughan had sometimes stayed during his Harrow Mastership. It was then that we first met the Granville Bradleys, destined to be our dear friends for life, and it was in their company that we soon found ourselves most kindly welcomed guests at Farringford.

The two first incidents that I remember were the Poet showing us the proof of his “Dedication of the Idylls,” and, at our request, reading out to us “Enoch Arden.” The “Dedication” must have been composed almost immediately after the death of the Prince Consort on December 14. He seemed himself pleased with it. I thought at the time, and I have felt ever since, that these lines rank high, not only among his other tributes of the same kind, but in the literature of epitaphs generally. We felt it a proud privilege to be allowed to stand at his side as he looked over the proof just arrived by the post, and it led us of course to talk sympathetically of the late Prince and the poor widowed Queen.

Very soon after, the Bradleys and we dined at Farringford. The dinner hour was, I think, as early as six, and then, after he had retreated to his *sanctum* for a smoke, he would come down to the drawing-room, and read aloud to his guests. On this occasion he read to us “Enoch Arden,” then only in manuscript. I had before heard much of his peculiar manner of reading, with its deep and often monotonous tones, varied with a sudden lift of the voice as if into the air, at the end of a sentence or a clause. It was, as always, a reading open to criticism on the score of lack of variety, but my dear bride and I were in no mood to criticize. The spell was upon us. Every note of his magnificent voice spoke of majesty

or tenderness or awe. It was, in plain words, a prodigious treat to have heard him. We walked back through the winter darkness to our hotel, conscious of having enjoyed a unique privilege.

During this vacation I had, as often in after years, not a few walks with him on the downs, leaving the Beacon on the left and going on to the Needles. It was a walk of about two hours. It is here that my memory so sadly fails me as to his talk. In tone it was friendly, manly, and perfectly simple, without a touch of condescension. He seemed quite unconscious that he was a great man, one of the first Englishmen of his time, talking to one young and utterly obscure. Almost any subject interested him, grave or gay. He would often talk of metres, Greek and Latin; of attempts to translate Homer; of the weak points in the English hexameter; or again of more serious topics, on which he had thought much and felt strongly, such as the life after death, the so-called "Eternity of Future Punishment," the unreality of the world as known to the senses, the grander Human Race, the "crowning race," still to be born.

Occasionally, not very often in these days, he would speak of his own poems. Once, I remember, a few days after an examination of the sixth form at Harrow, I told him that we had set for Greek Iambics the fine passage in "Elaine," where Lancelot says to Lavaine:

> ... in me there dwells
> No greatness, save it be some far-off touch
> Of greatness to know well I am not great.
> *There* is the man,

pointing to King Arthur. "Yes," he said in substance, "when I wrote that, I was thinking of Wordsworth

and myself."

I noticed that he never spoke of Wordsworth without marked reverence. Obviously, with his exquisite ear for choice words and rhythm, he must have been more sensitive than most men to the prosaic, bathetic side of Wordsworth; but I never heard him say a word implying that he felt this, whereas I *have* heard him qualify his admiration for Robert Browning's genius and his affection for his person by some allusion to the roughness of his style. This, he thought, must lead to his being less read than he deserved in years to come, and he evidently regretted it.

It was in the period, roughly speaking, between 1862 and 1880 that I saw most of him, for it was then our habit to make frequent visits to Freshwater or Alum Bay, generally at Christmas, and we were always received with the same cordial kindness. It was then that the long walks and the readings of his poetry after dinner continued as a kind of institution, and never palled. Among the poems that he read out to us were "Aylmer's Field," the "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington," parts of "Maud," "Guinevere," "The Holy Grail," "The Charge of the Light Brigade," "The Revenge," "The Defence of Lucknow," "In the Valley of Cauteretz." With regard to this beautiful poem I cannot help recalling an amusing and most unexpected laugh. He had read the third and fourth lines in his most sonorous tones:

> All along the valley, where thy waters flow,
> I walked with one I loved two and thirty years ago;

and then suddenly, changing his voice, he said gruffly, "A brute of a —— has discovered that it was

thirty-one years and not thirty-two. Two-and-thirty is better than one-and-thirty years ago, isn't it? But perhaps I ought to alter it."

It was at this time that we used often to meet Mr. Jowett and also the Poet's great friend and admirer, the gifted Mrs. Cameron and her dignified and gray-bearded husband, who looked like a grand Oriental Chief.

One trifling incident occurs to me as I write, the Poet's remarkable skill at battledore. One duel with him in particular comes back to my mind, in which I found it hard to hold my own. He was a very hard hitter. He did not care merely to "keep up" long scores. He liked each bout to be a trial of strength, and to aim the shuttlecock where it would be difficult for his opponent to deal with it. In spite of his being short-sighted he played a first-rate game. With the exception of my brother Arthur, I never came upon so formidable an antagonist.

But I must leave these earlier years, of which I cannot find any written record, and pass on to the end of 1886, when, nearly four years after the death of my dear wife and a year and a half after my leaving Harrow, I was, to my great surprise, appointed Master of Trinity.

On December 3 I was installed, and on December 13 I was invited to Farringford, with the prospect of returning on the 16th to Davos Platz, where I had left my invalid daughter. Of this short visit I find I have made a few notes. The Poet was as cordial as ever. After dinner he took me to his *sanctum*, and read me his new Jubilee Ode in Catullian metre, and then "Locksley Hall Sixty Years After." Next morning there came a letter from Dr. W. H. Thompson's

executor containing an early poem of Tennyson's of 1826, and a Sonnet, once famous, complaining of defects in the College system of his day:

> Therefore your Halls, your ancient Colleges,
> Your portals statued with old kings and queens,
> Your gardens, myriad-volumed libraries,
> Wax-lighted chapels, and rich carven screens,
> Your doctors, and your proctors, and your deans,
> Shall not avail you, when the Day-beam sports
> New-risen o'er awaken'd Albion. No!
> Nor yet your solemn organ-pipes that blow
> Melodious thunders thro' your vacant courts
> At noon and eve, because your manner sorts
> Not with this age wherefrom ye stand apart,
> Because the lips of little children preach
> Against you, you that do profess to teach
> And teach us nothing, feeding not the heart.

About eleven o'clock the Poet took me out alone. We went first to Freshwater Gate, where he said the "maddened scream of the sea" in "Maud" had been first suggested to him. He talked of our late friend, Philip Stanhope Worsley, the translator of the *Odyssey* and half of the *Iliad*, who was living there a good many years ago, and whom I had met at his table. He admired him much. He talked also, but I forget to what effect, of "The Holy Grail" and the old Arthur myth, but before this we talked of the Cambridge Sonnet just mentioned. "There was no *love*," he said, "in the system." I understood him to mean that the dons, as a rule, were out of sympathy with the young men. He spoke also of the bullying he had undergone at his first school; how, when he was

a new boy of only seven and a half, he was sitting on the school steps crying and homesick. Up came a big fellow, between seventeen and eighteen, and asked him roughly who he was and what he was crying for, and then gave him a kick in the wind! This experience had evidently rankled in his mind for more than seventy years. Again, in April 1890, he told me the same story.

But to return to our morning walk of December 14, 1886. Something led me to speak of my favourite lines:

> The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
> And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
> Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.

Spedding, it seems, and others had wanted him to alter the "one *good* custom." "I was thinking" he said, "of knighthood." He went on to speak of his "Experiments in Quantity," and in particular of the Alcaic Ode to Milton, beginning:

> O mighty-mouth'd inventor of harmonies.

"I thought *that*," he said, "a bit of a *tour de force*," and surely he was right there. He tilted a little at C. S. Calverley for demurring to

> God-gifted organ-voice of England.

"I didn't mean it to be like your

> 'September, October, November';

I was imitating, not Horace, but the original Greek Alcaic, though Horace's is perhaps the finest metre." The two Latin metres which I have more than once

heard him admire were the Hexameter and the Alcaic.

I find that in my Journal I wrote as regards this walk: "I wish I could remember more. He was wholly *facilis*, and I never felt less afraid of him or more reverent." Perhaps I should add that during the walk he told me an extraordinary number of ghost stories —a man appearing to several people, and then vanishing before their eyes.

After dinner that evening we went to his *sanctum* to hear him read the last Act of the "Promise of May." "Well, isn't that tragic?" he naïvely asked at one point, I think where Eva falls down dead.

Next morning, I had to leave quite early for London. He just appeared at the top of the stairs, and offered to come down to say good-bye, but I would not let him. "I can remember little more of this delightful visit," so I wrote at the time. "He was full, as usual, of the public lies, and the necessity of England being strong at sea."

I did not see him again till after my second marriage, which took place on August 9, 1888. We paid a flying visit to Lambert's Hotel, Freshwater, in April 1889. Of this I have made only the scantiest record. Something led us to speak of the famous line in the chorus of the *Agamemnon*:

ὀμμάτων ἐν ἀχηνίαις.

"So modern," he remarked. He also spoke of the pathos of Euripides, and of the grandeur of the "Passing of Oedipus" in the *Oedipus Coloneus*, and *Theseus*

χεῖρ᾽ ἀντέχοντα κρατός.

He referred again to lack of sympathy in his time between dons and undergraduates. This seemed to be a memory often present to his mind.

Our next visit was in March 1890, when, with my wife's sister, we stayed at Lambert's Hotel. On Friday, March 28, we went to tea at Farringford, and found him in his little sun-trap of a summer-house, the evening sun playing full upon us, and bringing into perfect beauty the green lawn, the spreading trees, and the clumps of daffodils. He began by speaking of himself as depressed, but soon smiled away all such symptoms, and made us laugh with a story of the Duke of Wellington, when some prosy personage addressed him with a flattering compliment. He always seemed to enjoy anecdotes of the Great Duke. He was wearing a red cap which, in the sunlight, became him well; but he said playfully that Lady Tennyson disliked it as too suggestive of a "bonnet rouge." Something, I forget what, led to a reference to the well-known verse:

> Birds in the high Hall-garden
> When twilight was falling,
> Maud, Maud, Maud, Maud,
> They were crying and calling.

He once asked a rather gushing lady what sort of birds she supposed these to be. "Nightingales," was the rather sentimental answer. "Who ever heard a nightingale say 'Maud'?" was the somewhat stern reply. "They were rooks of course."

My wife mentioned that she and her sister had been reading the "Idylls" of late. "Do you mean *my* Īdylls," he said; "I am glad you don't call them Ĭdylls." We soon got talking of his recently published "Crossing the Bar." When asked what was the precise

grammatical reference in the third line of the verse:

> But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
> Too full for sound and foam,
> *When that which drew from out the boundless deep*
> Turns again home,

he answered rather emphatically, "I meant *both* human life[61] *and* the water." He went on, "They say I write so slowly. Well, that poem came to me in five minutes. Anyhow, under ten minutes." Afterwards, when I had some quiet talk with Lady Tennyson, she confirmed what he had implied as to the rapidity with which he usually composed.

At this point I shall do well to insert extracts from my dear wife's journal, describing a few incidents in what proved our last visit to Farringford. It was at the end of January 1892, when the Poet, born on August 6,[62] 1809, was well on in his eighty-third year. She writes as follows:

VISIT TO FARRINGFORD, JANUARY 1892

By Mrs. MONTAGU BUTLER

> On January 26 Montagu and I left our two small boys at Eton Villa, Shanklin, to spend the night at Lambert's Hotel, Freshwater. After leaving our traps at the hotel we walked up to Farringford in time for two o'clock lunch. I sat next the Poet at table, and had some talk with him. He spoke of the metres of Horace, and said that he always thought his Sapphics uninteresting and monotonous. "What a relief it is," he said, "when he *does* allow himself some

irregularity, for instance:

Laurea donandus Apollinari."

On the other hand, he admired his Alcaics immensely. The discovery for which he always hoped the most was of some further writings of Sappho herself. He considered the metre beautiful under her treatment.

Then we spoke of Schliemann, of whom I had just been reading in Schuchardt's book, and he said he had no faith in him. "How could a great city have been built on a little ridge like that (meaning Hissarlik)? Where would have been the room for Priam's fifty sons and fifty daughters?"

He also thought the supposed identifications of topography absurd, and preferred to believe that Homer's descriptions were entirely imaginary. When I said that I thought that a disappointing view, he called me "a wretched localizer." "They try to localize me too," he said. "There is one man wants to make out that I describe nothing I have not seen." Also, with some irritation, of other accounts of himself: "Full of lies, and —— made me tell a big one at the end."

Next day we walked up at about 12.20 to accompany him in his morning walk. Montagu and he were in front, Hallam Tennyson and I behind. Montagu tells me how he was indignant with Z. for charging him with general plagiarism, in particular about Lactantius and other classics, "of whom," he said, "I haven't read a word."

Also, of taking from Sophocles, “whom I never read since I was a young man”; and of owing his “moanings of the sea” to Horace’s *gementis litora Bospori*. Some one charged him with having stolen the “In Memoriam” metre from some very old poet of whom he had never heard. He said, in answer to Montagu’s question, that the metres of both “Maurice” and “The Daisy” were original. He had never written in the metre of Gray’s *Elegy*, except epitaphs in Westminster Abbey. He admired the metre much, and thought the poem immortal[63].

Hartley Coleridge, he said, spoke of Pindar as the “Newmarket Poet.” He thought the loss of his Dithyrambs most serious, judging from the remaining fragment. He had from early boyhood been familiar with the fact that Wolsey and Cromwell in *Henry VIII.* were by Fletcher, but he felt absolutely certain that the description of the Field of the Cloth of Gold was by Shakespeare’s own hand. He quoted it, as well as several lines from Wolsey. When I said how glad I was he had written about the Duke of Clarence, he said, “Yes, but I wouldn’t write an Installation Ode for the Chancellor.”

So far Montagu reported. After this we others came up, and the old Poet and I walked home together.

We spoke a little of our projected tour to Greece. He had never been there, but would have greatly liked to go—in a private yacht —“but they tell me an old man is safest at

home, and I dare say it is true; and I couldn't stand the vermin!" I told him I was hoping to study classical architecture a little before going out, and he said that he thought, after all, Gothic architecture was finer than classic. "It is like blank verse," he said; "it will suit the humblest cottage and the grandest cathedral. It has more mystery than the classic." He thought many of our cathedrals spoiled by their vile glass. He had been disappointed, in his late visit to Cambridge, to notice that the windows in King's seemed to be losing their brilliancy and to look dark.

After we had been walking a few minutes in silence, he said to me, "Do you see what the beauty is in the line,

> That all the Thrones are clouded by your loss?"—

quoting from his still unpublished poem on the young Prince. I said I thought it very beautiful; but he asked if I saw why he had used the word *clouded* instead of *darkened* or another. "It makes you think of a great mountain," he explained. Then he spoke of the great richness of the English language due to its double origin, the Norman and Saxon words. How hard it would be for a foreigner to feel the difference in the line

> An *infant* crying for the light,

had the word *baby* been substituted, which would at once have made it ridiculous. He told me that his lines "came to" him; he did

not make them up, but that, when they had come, he wrote them down, and looked into them to see what they were like. This was very interesting, especially as he had told Montagu, at Easter, 1890, that he had composed “Crossing the Bar” in less than ten minutes.

Then he said again, what I have heard him say before, that though a poet is *born*, he will not be much of a poet if he is not *made* too. Then he asked me if I was fond of Pindar. I am very glad that he admires him greatly. He could not believe Paley’s theory that Pindar is earlier than Homer. I vented my dislike of Paley’s horribly prosaic translations in his notes on Aeschylus, and he said *he* had always used Blomfield, he found his Glossary such a help.

We were now indoors, and in a few minutes went in to luncheon. I was again seated next him, and we had some more talk. He got upon the subject of College life, and told me anecdotes of himself and his friends, one very amusing one about Tom Taylor. During some vacation Tom Taylor’s rooms were lent by the College authorities to a farmer, a member of an Agricultural Society which they were entertaining. Taylor knew this perfectly well; but in the middle of the night suddenly entered the room, in a long traveller’s cloak and with a lantern in his hand, “Pray, what are you doing in my room, sir, and in my bed?” feigning great surprise and indignation. The poor old farmer tried to explain that he was honoured by being the

guest of the College, but Taylor refused to be pacified; when suddenly, in the midst of their altercation, enter Charles Spring Rice, brother of Stephen, personating the Senior Dean, who forthwith laid forcible hands on Tom Taylor. Thereupon ensued a regular scuffle, in which they both tumbled on to the bed, and Tom Taylor got so much the worst of it that the kindly agriculturist began to intercede, "Oh, please, Mr. Dean, don't be too hard on the young man!"

Tennyson himself had been proctorized once or twice. Once, during the first few days of his College life, he came out to receive a parcel by a midnight mail. "Pray, sir, what are you doing at this time of night?" said the Proctor. "And pray, sir, what business of yours is it to ask me?" replied the Freshman, who in his innocence knew nothing about the Proctor. He was told to call upon him next day, but then explained his ignorance, and was let off.

On one occasion a throng of University men outside the Senate House had been yelling against Whewell. Tennyson was standing by the door of Macmillan's shop, and raised a counter-cry *for* Whewell. He was, however, seen standing, and was sent for to Whewell. "I was surprised, sir, to see *you* among that shouting mob the other day." "I was shouting *for* you," was the reply. Whewell was greatly pleased, and grunted his approbation.

Another funny story. A wine-party was going on in Arthur Hallam's rooms in the New

> Court, when enter angrily the Senior Dean, "Tommy Thorp." "What is the meaning, Mr. Hallam, of all this noise?" "I am very sorry, sir," said Hallam, "we had no idea we were making a noise." "Well, gentlemen, if you'll all come down into the Court, you'll *hear* what a noise you're making." "Perhaps," admits Tennyson, "I may have put in the *all*."

So ends my wife's short journal, and it only remains for me to sum up very briefly the impressions left upon me, after a lapse of fifty, forty, thirty, twenty years, by these visits to Farringford which once made so large a part of my interest and my happiness.

Little as I am able to put these impressions into words, I can say with truth that no personality with which I have ever come in close touch, either seemed to me at the time, or has seemed in later recollection, to cover so large, so rich, and so diverse a field for veneration, wonder, and regard.

Tennyson was, and is, to me the most remarkable man that I have ever met. Often when I was with him, whether in long walks or in his study, and when I came to think of him silently afterwards, I used to recall his own lines on Wellington:

> Our greatest yet with least pretence...,
> Rich in saving common-sense,
> *And, as the greatest only are,*
> *In his simplicity sublime*.

Simple, natural, shrewd, humorous; feeling strongly on a vast variety of subjects, and saying freely just what he felt; passing rapidly and easily from the gravest matters of speculation or conduct to some trifling or amusing incident of the moment, or some

recollection of the years of his youth; he seemed to me unconscious of being a great man, though he must have known himself to be one of the foremost thinkers, and quite the foremost poet of his day. He was wholly free from affectation. He was never an actor of a part. There was about him always an atmosphere of truth.

Truth-teller was our Alfred named,

was a line that again and again recurred to the memory as one heard him speak out his mind either on men, or on politics, or on the deepest mysteries of philosophy or religion. He was pre-eminently one of the Children of Light. Of light, whether from science, or from literary criticism, or from the progress of the human conscience, he hailed thankfully and expectantly every fresh disclosure. There was a deep reverence in him for the Unseen, the Undiscovered, the as yet Unrevealed. This on the intellectual side; and on the moral side there was a manly, a devout, and a tender veneration for purity and innocence and trustfulness, and, to borrow his own stately words, written early in his life:

Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control.

I regret that I cannot convey more worthily what I have felt in the presence of this great and truly noble man. To go to either of his beautiful homes, to see him as the husband of his wife and the father of his sons, was to me and mine for many years a true pilgrimage, both of the mind and of the heart. That I was once able to feel this, and that I am able to feel it gratefully even now, I count among the richer blessings of a long and happy life.

TENNYSON AND W. G. WARD AND OTHER FARRINGFORD FRIENDS

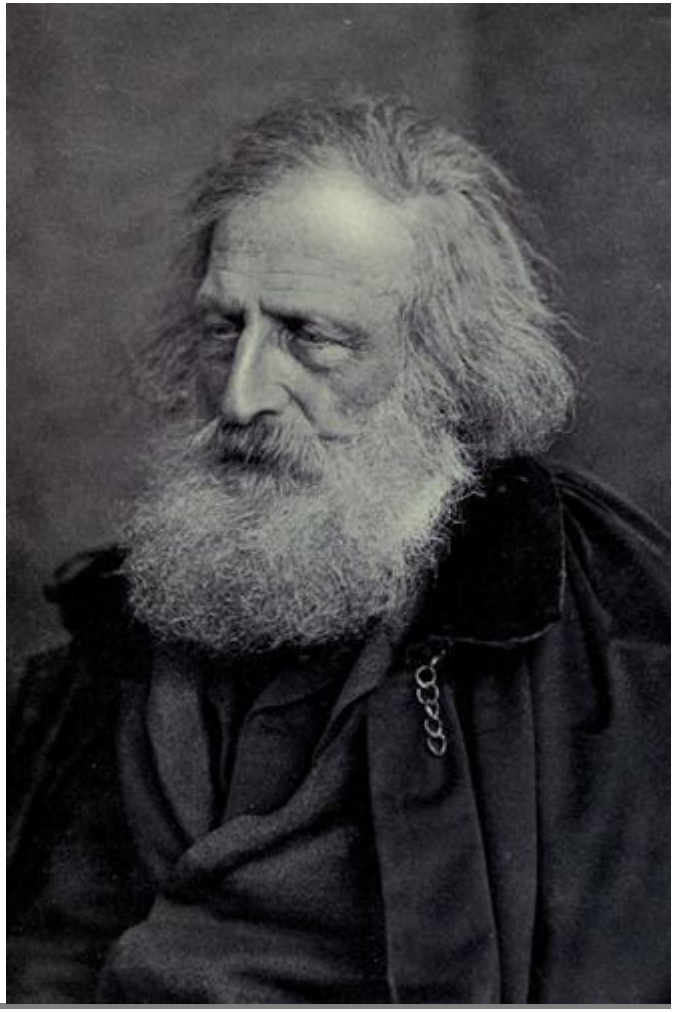
By WILFRID WARD

Among Tennyson's friends in his later years was my father—William George Ward—who was his neighbour at Freshwater from 1870 to 1882. I have been asked to contribute to the picture of "Tennyson and his Friends" some account of their intercourse, and at the same time to set down some of the extremely interesting comments on his own poems which I myself was privileged yet later to hear from the Poet. I need not say that such an act of piety in regard of two men for whom I have so deep a reverence is a work of love, and I only regret that my recollections of what so well deserves recording should be so imperfect and fragmentary.

Tennyson's friendship with my father began at a date considerably subsequent to their first acquaintance. My father came rather unexpectedly into the family property in the Isle of Wight in 1849 when his uncle died without a son; but he did not desire to leave the house Pugin had built for him in Hertfordshire, where he had settled immediately after he joined the Catholic Church in 1845. He and the late Cardinal Vaughan were, in the 'fifties, doing a work for

ecclesiastical education at St. Edmund's College, Ware—a work which came to my father naturally as the sequel to his share in the Oxford Movement. Therefore, when Tennyson in 1853 came to live in the Isle of Wight my father was an absentee. He tried in 1858 for two years to live at his grandfather's old home near Cowes, Northwood Park, but his health broke down, and he returned to Hertfordshire. In the 'sixties, however, he used to pay long visits to Freshwater, in the scenery of which he delighted; and, on one of these occasions, Tennyson was introduced to him by their common friend, Dean Bradley. The meeting was not, I think, a great success on either side. Later on, however, in 1870, when my father, despairing of the Cowes climate, built a house at Freshwater, he was Tennyson's near neighbour, and they soon became great friends.





ARTHUR TENNYSON.

Tennyson's friendship with my father grew up from close neighbourhood, and from the fact that they had so much more in common with each other than with most of their other Isle of Wight neighbours. It was

cemented by my father's devotion to Mrs. (afterwards Lady) Tennyson, who, in her conversation, he always said, reminded him of the John Henry Newman of Oxford days. Also they had many friends in common—such as Dean Stanley, Lord Selborne, and Jowett—who often visited Freshwater. They were both members of the Metaphysical Society, and loved to discuss in private problems of religious faith which formed the subject of the Society's debates. They were also both great Shakespearians. But most of all they were drawn together by a simplicity and directness of mind, in which, I think, they had few rivals—if I may say of my own father what every one else said. Nevertheless, their intimacy was almost as remarkable for diversity of interests as for similarity. It might seem at first sight to be a point of similarity between them that each revelled in his way in the scenery of the beautiful island which was their home. Yet the love of external nature was very different in the two men. It had that marked contrast which Ruskin has described in his *Modern Painters*. Ruskin contrasts three typical ways of being affected by what is beautiful. There is first "the man who perceives rightly because he does not feel, and to whom the primrose is very accurately the primrose because he does not love it. Then, secondly, the man who perceives wrongly because he feels, and to whom the primrose is anything else than a primrose —a star, or a sun, or a fairy's shield, or a forsaken maiden. And then lastly, there is the man who perceives rightly in spite of his feelings, and to whom the primrose is for ever nothing else than itself—a little flower apprehended in the very plain and leafy fact of it, whatever and how many soever the associations and passions may be that crowd around

it."

My father's imagination was of the second order, Tennyson's of the third. My father often perceived wrongly, or not at all, because he felt so strongly. Consequently, while the bold outlines of mountain scenery and the large vistas of sea and down in the Isle of Wight moved him greatly, he did not look at them with the accurate eye of an artist; and the minute beauty of flowers and trees was non-existent for him. Tennyson, on the contrary, had the most delicate and true perception of the minute as well as the great. Each man chose for his home a site which suited his taste. Weston was on a high hill with a wide view. Farringford was lower down and buried in trees. The two men used sometimes to walk together on the great Down which stretches from the Needles rocks to Freshwater Bay, on which the boundary between Tennyson's property and my father's is marked by the dyke beyond the Tennyson memorial cross. At other times they walked in the Freshwater lanes. And there was a suggestion in these different surroundings of their sympathy and of their difference. The immense expanse of scenery visible from the Beacon Down was equally inspiring to both, but the lanes and fields which were full of inspiration to Tennyson had nothing in them which appealed to W. G. Ward. If he heard a bird singing, the only suggestion it conveyed to him was of a tiresome being who kept him awake at night. Trees were only the unpleasant screens which stood in the way of the view of the Solent from his house, and which he cut down as fast as they grew up. To Tennyson, on the contrary—as we see constantly in his poetry—there was a whole world of interest in Nature created by his knowledge of botany and natural history, as well as by his exceptionally

accurate and observant eye.

Let me quote the words of a great critic—the late Mr. Hutton—on this characteristic of the Poet:

> No poet has so many and such accurate references to the vegetable world, and yet at the same time references so thoroughly poetic. He calls dark hair
>
> > More black than ash-buds in the front of March;
>
> auburn hair,
>
> > In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the shell
> > Divides three-fold to show the fruit within.
>
> He is never tired of reflecting in his poetry the physiology of flowers and trees and buds. The "living smoke" of the yew is twice commemorated in his poems. He tells us how the sunflower, "shining fair,"
>
> > Rays round with flames her disk of seed;
>
> observes on the blasts "that blow the poplars white"; and, to make a long story short—for the list of instances might be multiplied to hundreds—in his latest published "Idylls of the King," he thus dates an early hour in the night:
>
> > Nigh upon that hour
> > When the lone hern forgets his melancholy,
> > *Lets down his other leg*, and, stretching,

dreams
Of goodly supper in the distant pool.

When Tennyson and W. G. Ward walked together there was then a most curious contrast in their attitude towards the Nature that surrounded them,—Tennyson noting every bird, every flower, every tree, as he passed it, Ward buried in the conversation, and alive only to the great, broad effects in the surrounding country.

W. G. Ward was himself not only no poet, but almost barbarously indifferent to poetry, with some few exceptions. He was exceedingly frank with Tennyson, and plainly intimated to him that there was very little in his poetry that he understood or cared for. But this fact never impaired their friendship. Indeed, I think Tennyson enjoyed his almost eccentric candour in this and in other matters, and he used, in later years, to tell me stories which illustrated it. Once when the question of persecution had been debated at the Metaphysical Society he remarked to my father, “You know you would try to get me put into prison if the Pope told you to.” “Your father would not say ‘No,’” Tennyson said to me. “He only replied, ‘The Pope would never tell me to do anything so foolish.’”

I think his intercourse with my father did a good deal to diminish a certain prejudice against Roman Catholicism; and his intimacy with my father’s chaplain—Father Haythornthwaite, a man as opposed to the popular conception of a Jesuit as could well be imagined—told in the same direction. “When Haythornthwaite dies,” Tennyson once said, “I shall write as his epitaph: ‘Here lies Peter Haythornthwaite, Human by nature, Roman by

fate!'"

W. G. Ward's own extreme frankness led Tennyson to remark to a friend: "The popular idea of Roman Catholics as Jesuitical and untruthful is contrary to my own experience. The most truthful man I ever met was an Ultramontane. He was grotesquely truthful."

Tennyson would sometimes retort in kind to my father's frank criticisms, and once, after vainly trying to decipher one of his letters, observed that the handwriting was "like walking-sticks gone mad," a curiously true description of my father's very peculiar characters.[64]

As with scenery, so with poetry; my father only took in broad effects and simple pathos, and would single out for special admiration such a poem as the "Children's Hospital," over which he shed many tears.

Tennyson soon accustomed himself to my father's indifference to his poetry in general. But he hoped that, at all events, his metaphysical poems would interest his neighbour, and sent him the MS. of "De Profundis" when he wrote it; but the reply was only an entreaty that he would put explanatory notes to it when it should be published. One exception, however, must be made in favour of "Becket," which Tennyson read aloud to Ward, who, greatly to his own surprise, admired it enthusiastically. "How do you like it?" Tennyson asked, and the reply was, "Very much, though I did not expect to like it at all. It is quite splendid. The development of character in Chancellor and Archbishop is wonderfully drawn. Where did you learn it all?"

I used to think there was a good deal that was alike between the intercourse of Tennyson with my father and his intercourse with my father's old friend, Dr. Jowett of Balliol. In both cases there was the same complete frankness—an unanswerable reply to those who gave it out that Tennyson best enjoyed the society of flatterers. Jowett, however, understood Tennyson's poetry far better than my father did. It was sometimes strange to see that impassive figure, so little given to emotion, so ready to snub in others any display of feeling, under the spell of the Poet's lines. I recollect once at Farringford listening with Jowett after dinner to Tennyson's reading of his "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington." It was a poem which his peculiar chant made most moving, and he read the concluding lines with special pathos:

> Speak no more of his renown,
> Lay your earthly fancies down,
> And in the vast cathedral leave him;
> God accept him, Christ receive him.

Tennyson then turned to address some observation to Jowett, but no reply came, and we soon saw that the Master was unable to speak. The tears were streaming down his cheeks. I ventured to allude to this some time later in talking to Jowett, and he said, "What would you have? The two Englishmen for whom I have the deepest feeling of reverence are Tennyson and the great Duke of Wellington. And one of them was reading what he had himself written in admiration of the other!"

When my father died Tennyson visited his grave in company with Father Haythornthwaite, who spoke to me of the visit directly afterwards. A cross of fresh flowers had been placed on the grave until the

monument should be erected. Tennyson quoted Shirley's couplet:

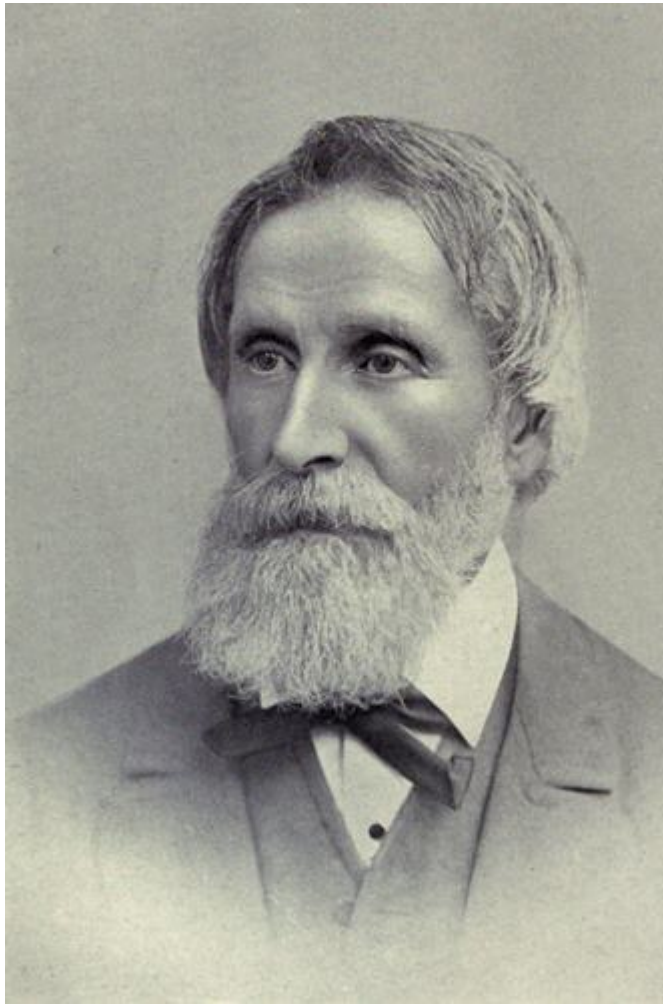
> Only the actions of the just
> Smell sweet, and blossom in the dust.

And then, standing over the grave, he recited the whole of the beautiful poem from which these lines are taken. Tennyson's eldest son wrote to me at the same time:

> His wonderful simplicity in faith and nature, together with his subtle and far-reaching grasp of intellect, make up a man never to be forgotten. My father and mother and myself will miss him more than I can say; I loved him somehow like an intimate college friend.

A few years later Tennyson published the memorial lines in the volume called *Demeter and other Poems*, which show how closely his observant mind had taken in the character of his friend:

> Farewell, whose living like I shall not find,
> Whose Faith and Work were bells of full accord,
> My friend, the most unworldly of mankind,
> Most generous of all Ultramontanes, Ward,
> How subtle at tierce and quart of mind with mind,
> How loyal in the following of thy Lord!



HORATIO TENNYSON.

Freshwater was in those days seething with intellectual life. The Poet was, of course, its centre, and that remarkable woman, Mrs. Cameron, was stage-manager of what was for us young people a great drama. For Tennyson was still writing the "Idylls of the King," which had so greatly moved the whole country, and we felt that we were in the making of history. There were many in Freshwater who were keenly alive to their privilege. Even among the permanent residents in the neighbourhood there were not a few who were worthy of remark, and Farringford was very hospitable and often added to their number some of the most interesting people in England. Mrs. Cameron herself was one of the well-known Miss Pattles, a sister of the late Lady Somers and Lady Dalrymple. She was a great wit and a most original and unconventional woman, with an enthusiasm for genius and for art. Her large artistic photographs are a permanent record of the remarkable people who congregated from time to time round the Poet's home in the island. They include Carlyle, Ruskin, Tyndall, Darwin, Lord Dufferin, Palgrave, D. G. Rossetti, Holman Hunt, Lecky, Aubrey de Vere, Sir Henry Taylor, Herschell, Longfellow, Auberon, Herbert, Pollock, Allingham, and many another. Among other residents I would name the Rev. Christopher Bowen, a man of very unusual ability, though he never had enough ambition to become famous. His sons—Lord Justice Bowen and Mr. Edward Bowen of Harrow—are better known. Then there were the Poet's two remarkable brothers, Horatio and Arthur Tennyson, and two fine old admirals, Sir Graham Hamond and Admiral Crozier. Then again from 1874 onwards we had at the Briary G. F. Watts, and Mrs. Cameron's sister, Mrs. Prinsep and her husband, with Mr. Val

Prinsep as an occasional guest. A little earlier Sir John Simeon was still living at Swainston, and was one of Tennyson's most intimate friends. Again, Mrs. Grosvenor Hood and Mrs. Brotherton were both people for whom literature and art counted for much.

The large group of people who came to Freshwater in the summer for the sole reason that Tennyson's writings and himself were among the greatest things in their lives, sometimes formed an almost unique society. Several figures are especially prominent in my memory. One great friend of the Tennysons' was Sir Richard Jebb—intensely shy and intensely refined—with whom, I may add, by the way, my first meeting at Haslemere was unpromising. I got into the Tennysons' large old-fashioned brougham to drive to Aldworth on a dark night, and laid rough hands on what I took to be a heap of rugs in the corner. I received in return a mild remonstrance from the fellow-guest, of whose coat-collar I found myself possessed! Jowett and Sir Alfred Lyall I often met at the Tennysons' and elsewhere. Each was in his way memorable, and congenial to the Poet's taste, which was fastidious owing to his very simplicity, to his love of reality and dislike of affectation. The singular charm—both in person and in conversation—of Samuel Henry Butcher, another great friend, stands out vividly from the past. In addition to his brilliant gifts and acquirements he was endowed in a remarkable degree with that justice of mind which Tennyson so greatly prized. One used to feel for how much this counted in the Poet's mind when he talked of the "wisdom" of his old friend, James Spedding. Henry Irving I once saw at Aldworth, though never at Farringford, and it was curious to meet at close quarters one with whom I had had for years the

stranger's intimacy which one has with a favourite actor. But Irving was never an intimate friend of Tennyson's, nor among the typical figures of his circle. To my mind the friend of Tennyson's whose saintliness most completely had his sympathy was Aubrey de Vere, of whom Sarah Coleridge said that he had more entirely a poet's nature even than her own father, or any other of the great poets she had known. Aubrey de Vere's simplicity and deep piety were as remarkable as his keen perception and close knowledge on the subject which most interested Tennyson himself. I wish I had seen more of the intercourse of two men whose friendship was almost lifelong, and showed Tennyson at his very best in conversation.

Speaking generally, it was a society in which good breeding, literary taste, general information, and personal distinction counted for much more than worldly or official *status*. I think that we young people looked upon a government official of average endowment as rather an outsider. Genius was all in all for us—officialdom and conventionality in general were unpopular in Freshwater.

Indeed, how could conventionality obtain a footing in a society in which Mrs. Cameron and Tennyson were the central figures? I recall Mrs. Cameron pressing my father's hand to her heart, and addressing him as "Squire Ward." I recall her, during her celebrated private theatricals at Dimbola, when a distinguished audience tittered at some stage misadventure which occurred during a tragic scene, mounting a chair and insisting loudly and with angry gesticulation, "You must not laugh; you must cry." I recall her bringing Tennyson to my father's house while she was photographing representatives for the

characters in the “Idylls of the King,” and calling out directly she saw Cardinal Vaughan (to whom she was a perfect stranger), “Alfred, I have found Sir Lancelot.” Tennyson’s reply was, “I want a face well worn with evil passion.”

My own intercourse with the Poet was chiefly after my father’s death in 1882. Tennyson was then an old man who had passed his threescore years and ten. His deeply serious mind brooded constantly on the prospect for the future, and the meaning of human life, which was, for him, nearly over.

There is much of autobiography in some of the poems of those years which he discussed with me. I have elsewhere[65] described his impressive analysis of the “De Profundis.” I will here set down the substance of his comments on two other poems dealing with his deep problems of human life, the “Ancient Sage” and “Vastness.” “The Ancient Sage” is in form dramatic, and the personality of the two interlocutors is a very important element in it viewed as a work of art. An aged seer of high, ascetic life, a thousand years before the birth of Christ, holds intercourse with a younger man:

> that loved and honour’d him, and yet
> Was no disciple, richly garb’d, but worn
> From wasteful living...

The younger man has set down his reflections on the philosophy of life in a set of verses which the Ancient Sage reads, making his comments as the reading proceeds. There seems to be a deep connection between the personal characteristics of the two men—their habits and modes of living—and their respective views. The younger man is wearied with satiety, impatient for immediate pleasure:

> Yet wine and laughter, friends! and set
> The lamps alight, and call
> For golden music, and forget
> The darkness of the pall.

He is dismayed by the first appearance of difficulty and pain in the world, as he had been satisfied for a time with the immediate pleasures within his reach. He is unable to steady the nerve of his brain (so to speak), and trace the riddle of pain and trouble in the universe to its ultimate solution. In thought, as in conduct, he is filled and swayed by the immediate inclination and the first impression, without self-restraint and without the habits of concentrated reflection which go hand in hand with self-restraint. Failing, in consequence, to have any steady view of his own soul or of the spiritual life within, he is impressed, probably by experience, with this one truth, that uncontrolled self-indulgence leads to regret and pain; and he is consequently pessimistic in his ultimate view of things. The absence of spiritual light makes him see only the immediate pain and failure in the universe. He has no patience to look beyond or to reflect if there be not an underlying and greater purpose which temporary failure in small things may further, as the death of one cell in the human organism is but the preparation for its replacement by another, and a part of the body's natural development. It is a dissipated character and a dissipated mind. The intangible beauty of moral virtue finds nothing in the character capable of assimilating it; the spiritual truth of Gods existence and the spiritual purpose of the universe elude the mind.

In marked contrast stands forth the "Ancient Sage." He has no taste for the dissipations of the town:

> I am wearied of our city, son, and go
> To spend my one last year among the hills.

His gospel is a gospel of *self-restraint* and long-suffering, of action for high ends.

> Let be thy wail and help thy fellow-men,
> And make thy gold thy vassal, not thy king,
> And fling free alms into the beggar's bowl,
> And send the day into the darken'd heart;
> Nor list for guerdon in the voice of men,
> A dying echo from a falling wall:
> .....
> Nor roll thy viands on a luscious tongue,
> Nor drown thyself with flies in honied wine.
> .....
> And more—think well! Do-well will follow thought.

And the patience and self-control which enable him to work for great purposes and spiritual aims, characterize also his thought. "Things are not what they seem," he holds. The first view is ever incomplete, though he who has not patience of thought will not get beyond the first view. That concentration and that purity of manners which keep the spiritual soul and self undimmed, and preserve the moral voice within articulate, are indispensable if we are to understand anything beyond the most superficial phenomena about us. The keynote is struck in the very first words which the Seer speaks:

> This wealth of waters might but seem to draw
> From yon dark cave, but, son, the source is higher,
> Yon summit half-a-league in air—and higher,
> The cloud that hides it—higher still, the

heavens
Whereby the cloud was moulded, and whereout
The cloud descended. Force is from the heights.

"*Force is from the heights*" is the thought which underlies the Sage's interpretation of all that perplexes the younger man. We cannot fully understand what is beyond and above us, but if we are wise we shall steadily look upwards, and enough light will eventually be gained for our guidance. "Lucerna pedibus meis verbum tuum." As God's law is enough to guide our footsteps, though we cannot hope to understand His full counsel, so the light by which the spiritual world is disclosed is sufficient for those who look for it, though its disclosure is only gradual and partial. If we are said not to know what we cannot submit in its entirety to scientific tests, we can never know anything worth knowing. If, again, we are to disbelieve in the spiritual world because it is filled with mystery, what are we to say of the mysteries which face us in this earth—inexplicable yet undeniable? The conception of God is not more mysterious than the thought that a grain of sand may be divided a million times, and yet be no nearer its ultimate division than it is now. Time and space are full of mystery. A man under chloroform has been known to pass many hours of sensation in a few minutes. Time is made an objective measure of things, and yet its phenomena are so subjective that Kant conceived it to have no real existence. When the younger man complains that "the Nameless Power or Powers that rule were never heard nor seen," the Sage thus replies:

If thou would'st hear the Nameless, and wilt

dive
Into the Temple-cave of thine own self,
There, brooding by the central altar, thou
May'st haply learn the Nameless hath a voice,
By which thou wilt abide, if thou be wise,
As if thou knewest, tho' thou canst not know;
For Knowledge is the swallow on the lake
That sees and stirs the surface-shadow there
But never yet hath dipt into the abysm,
The Abysm of all Abysms, beneath, within
The blue of sky and sea, the green of earth,
And in the million-millionth of a grain,
Which cleft and cleft again for evermore,
And ever vanishing, never vanishes,
To me, my son, more mystic than myself,
Or even than the Nameless is to me.

And so, too, when the youth calls for further proof of the "Nameless," the Sage reminds him that there are universally acknowledged truths incapable of formal proof. The thought which the poet here dwells upon is similar to Cardinal Newman's teaching in the *Grammar of Assent*, though Tennyson's use of words does not here, as elsewhere, harmonize with Catholic doctrine. There are truths, the knowledge of which is so intimately connected with our own personality, that the material for complete formal proof eludes verbal statement. We reject, for example, with a clear and unerring instinct, the notion that when we converse with our friends, the words and thoughts which come to us proceed possibly from some principle within us and not from an external cause, and yet it is not a matter on which we can offer logical proof. The same sensations could conceivably be produced from within, as they are in a dream. Logical proof, then, has (so the Ancient Sage

maintains) to be dispensed with in much that is of highest moment:

> Thou canst not prove that thou art body alone,
> Nor canst thou prove that thou art spirit alone,
> Nor canst thou prove that thou art both in one:
> Thou canst not prove thou art immortal, no
> Nor yet that thou art mortal—nay, my son,
> Thou canst not prove that I, who speak with thee,
> Am not thyself in converse with thyself,
> For nothing worthy proving can be proven,
> Nor yet disproven.

And close upon this follows the beautiful passage in which the hopeful and wistful upward gaze of faith is described. While melancholy and perplexity constantly attend on the exercises of the speculative intellect, we are to "cling to faith":

> She reels not in the storm of warring words,
> She brightens at the clash of "Yes" and "No,"
> She sees the Best that glimmers thro' the Worst,
> She feels the Sun is hid but for a night.
> She spies the summer thro' the winter bud,
> She tastes the fruit before the blossom falls,
> She hears the lark within the songless egg,
> She finds the fountain where they wailed "Mirage"!

These lines present to the reader the hopefulness of the spiritual mind, hopefulness not akin to the merely sanguine temperament, but based on a deep conviction of the reality of the spiritual world, and

on unfailing certainty that there is in it a key to the perplexities of this universe of which we men understand so little. We know from experience that material Nature is working out her ends, however little we understand the process, and however unpromising portions of her work might appear without this knowledge. That an acorn should have within it forces which compel earth, air, and water to come to its assistance and become the oak tree, would seem incredible were it not so habitually known as a fact; and the certainty which such experiences give in the material order, the eye of faith gives in the spiritual order. However perplexing the universe now seems to us we have this deep trust that there *is* an explanation, and that when we are in a position to judge the *whole*, instead of looking on from this corner of time and space, the truth of the spiritual interpretation of its phenomena will be clear—"ut iustificeris in sermonibus tuis et vincas cum iudicaris." This view runs not only through the passages I have just quoted, but through all the poem. The poet pleads for steadfast trust and hope in the face of difficulty, as we would trust a known and intimate friend in the face of ominous suspicions.

It is, of course, just that keen realization of the plausibleness of the sceptical view of life, to which some of our modern critics object as a sign of weakness, which gives this poem its strength. Such assistance as Tennyson gives us in seeing and realizing the spiritual view is needed only or mainly by those to whom agnosticism in its various forms is a plausible, and, at first sight, a reasonable attitude. The old-fashioned "irrefragable arguments" are of little use by themselves to persons in such a condition. However evident spiritual truths may be to an absolutely purified reason, they are not evident

to intellects which are impregnated with a view of things opposed to the religious view. Moreover, we do not consult a doctor with much confidence if he does not believe in the reality of our illness; and one who finds the sceptical view persuasive will have little trust in those who tell him that it has no plausibility at all. With Tennyson, as with Cardinal Newman, half the secret of his influence in this respect is that the sceptically minded reader finds those very disturbing thoughts which had troubled his own mind anticipated and stated. And yet a truer and deeper view is likewise depicted, which sees beyond these thoughts, which detects through the clouds the light in the heavens beyond.

In the "Ancient Sage" there is a striking instance of this characteristic. The young philosopher, filled with the failure of fair promise and the collapse of apparent purpose in Nature and in man, pours forth his sceptical lament. Here is a selection from it, typical of the rest:

> The years that made the stripling wise
> Undo their work again,
> And leave him, blind of heart and eyes,
> The last and least of men;
> .....
> His winter chills him to the root,
> He withers marrow and mind;
> The kernel of the shrivell'd fruit
> Is jutting thro' the rind;
> The tiger spasms tear his chest,
> The palsy wags his head;
> The wife, the sons, who love him best
> Would fain that he were dead;
> .....
> The statesman's brain that sway'd the past

Is feebler than his knees;
The passive sailor wrecks at last
In ever-silent seas;
The warrior hath forgot his arms,
The Learned all his lore;
The changing market frets or charms
The merchant's hope no more;
The prophet's beacon burn'd in vain,
And now is lost in cloud;
The plowman passes, bent with pain,
To mix with what he plow'd;

The poet whom his Age would quote
As heir of endless fame—
He knows not ev'n the book he wrote,
Not even his own name.
For man has overlived his day,
And, darkening in the light,
Scarce feels the senses break away
To mix with ancient Night.

The Sage—far from denying the force of what he says—contends for a deeper and wider view. The "*darkness is in man.*" It is the result of the incompleteness of his knowledge. That is to say, what is black to his imperfect view, and taken by itself, may be a necessary part of a great scheme. Not that the things are not really sad, but that the whole is not sad. As there may be pain in tears of joy, and yet it is lost in exquisite pleasure, so the dark elements of life, when our ultimate destiny is attained and we can view age and suffering as part of the whole, may be so entirely eclipsed, that we may say with truth that the "world is wholly fair":

My son, the world is dark with griefs and graves,

So dark that men cry out against the Heavens.
Who knows but that the darkness is in man?
The doors of Night may be the gates of Light;
For wert thou born or blind or deaf, and then
Suddenly heal'd, how would'st thou glory in all
The splendours and the voices of the world!
And we, the poor earth's dying race, and yet
No phantoms, watching from a phantom shore
Await the last and largest sense to make
The phantom walls of this illusion fade,
And show us that the world is wholly fair.

"The doors of night may be the gates of light," says the Sage; and in unison with this note are his replies to some of the details of the younger man's wail, while his very argument presupposes that *all* cannot now be answered until we have the "last and largest sense." Thus, when the dreary, hopeless vision of bodily decay, which seems to point to total dissolution of a noble nature, is referred to, he says:

The shell must break before the bird can fly.

The breaking of the shell might seem, at first sight, total destruction, but the forthcoming of the bird transforms the conception of decay into a conception of new birth. And so, too, in answer to the complaint that "the shaft of scorn that once had stung, but wakes the dotard smile," he suggests that a more complete view may show it to be "the placid gleam of sunset after storm." The transition may be not from intense life to apathy, but from blinding passion to a calmer, a serener vision.

Another of the later poems—"Vastness"—brings into

especial relief a parallel I have often noted between Lord Tennyson and Cardinal Newman in their keen sense of the mysteries of the universe, which religion helps us to bear with but does not solve. So far as this planet goes, and our own human race, Cardinal Newman has expressed this sense in the *Apologia*, and the parallel between his view and Tennyson's is sufficiently instructive to make it worth while to quote the passage in full:

> To consider the world in its length and breadth, its various history, the many races of man, their starts, their fortunes, their mutual alienation, their conflicts; and then their ways, habits, governments, forms of worship; their enterprises, their aimless courses, their random achievements and acquirements, the impotent conclusion of long-standing facts, the tokens so faint and broken of a superintending design, the blind evolution of what turn out to be great powers and truths, the progress of things as if from unreasoning elements, not towards final causes, the greatness and littleness of man, his far-reaching aims, his short duration, the curtain hung over his futurity, the disappointments of life, the defeat of good, the success of evil, physical pain, mental anguish, the prevalence and intensity of sin, the pervading idolatries, the corruptions, the dreary hopeless irreligion, that condition of the whole race so fearfully yet exactly described by the Apostle, "having no hope and without God in the world," all this is a vision to dizzy and appal; and inflicts upon the mind the sense of a profound mystery which is absolutely

beyond human solution.

Lord Tennyson takes in a wider range of considerations than the Cardinal. He paints graphically, not only the mystery of the lot of mankind, but the further sense of bewilderment which arises when we contemplate the aimlessness of this vast universe of which our earth is such an inappreciable fragment. Logically the poem asks only the question: “Great or small, grand or ignoble, what does anything matter if we are but creatures of the day with no eternal destiny?” But its grandeur consists in the manner in which it sweeps from end to end of human experience and knowledge, from thoughts overwhelming in their vastness, from ideas carrying the mind over the length and breadth of space and over visions of all eternity, to pictures of this planet, with its microscopic details, the hopes, anxieties, plans, pleasures, griefs which make up the immediate life of man. The imagination vacillates between a keen sense of the importance of all, even the smallest, and the worthlessness of all, even the greatest. At one moment comes the thought that one life out of the myriads of lives passed on this tiny planet, if it be lived and given up for righteousness, is of infinite and eternal value, and the next moment comes the sense that the whole universe is worthless and meaningless, if, indeed, the only percipient beings who are affected by it are but creatures who feel for a day and then pass to nothingness. Each picture of the various aspects of human life rouses an instinctive sympathy, and a feeling in the background, “it can’t be worthless and meaningless,” and yet the poet relentlessly forces us to confess that it is only some far wider view of human nature and destiny than this world alone can justify, which can make the scenes he depicts of any value. What Mill

called “the disastrous feeling of ‘not worth while’” threatens the reader at every turn; though the pictures of life in its innumerable aspects of happiness, misery, sensuality, purity, selfishness, self-devotion, ambition, aspiration, craft, cruelty, are so intensely real and rivet the imagination so strongly, that he refuses to yield to the feeling. I subjoin some of the couplets where good and bad, great and small, alternate:

> Many a hearth upon our dark globe sighs after many a vanish’d face,
> Many a planet by many a sun may roll with the dust of a vanish’d race.
>
> Raving politics, never at rest—as this poor earth’s pale history runs,—
> What is it all but a trouble of ants in the gleam of a million million of suns?
> .....
> Faith at her zenith, or all but lost in the gloom of doubts that darken the schools;
> Craft with a bunch of all-heal in her hand, follow’d up by her vassal legion of fools.
> .....
> Wealth with his wines and his wedded harlots; honest Poverty, bare to the bone;
> Opulent Avarice, lean as Poverty: Flattery gilding the rift in a throne.
> .....
> Love for the maiden, crown’d with marriage, no regrets for aught that has been,
> Household happiness, gracious children, debtless competence, golden mean;
>
> National hatreds of whole generations, and pigmy spites of the village spire;

Vows that will last to the last death-ruckle,
and vows that are snapt in a moment of fire;

He that has lived for the lust of the minute,
and died in the doing it, flesh without mind;
He that has nail'd all flesh to the Cross, till
Self died out in the love of his kind;

Spring and Summer and Autumn and Winter,
and all these old revolutions of earth;
All new-old revolutions of Empire—change
of the tide—what is all of it worth?

What the philosophies, all the sciences,
poesy, varying voices of prayer?
All that is noblest, all that is basest, all that
is filthy with all that is fair?

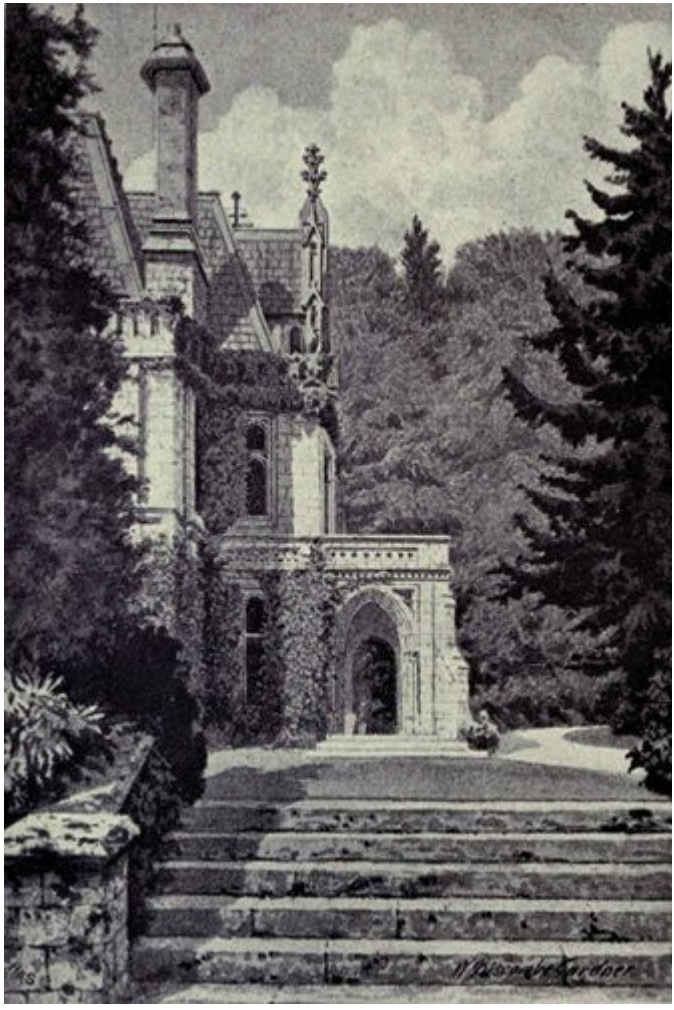
What is it all, if we all of us end but in being
our own corpse-coffins at last,
Swallowed in Vastness, lost in Silence,
drown'd in the deeps of a meaningless Past?

What but a murmur of gnats in the gloom, or
a moment's anger of bees in their hive?

The thought which seems to oppress the seer is the insignificance of everything when compared to a standard—ever conceivable and ever actual—above it. The ruts of a ploughed field may seem to the diminutive insect as vast and overcoming as the Alps seem to us. Then contrast the thought of Mont Blanc with that of the whole globe; proceed from the globe to the solar system, and from that to the myriads of systems lost in space. All that is great to us is relatively great, and becomes small at once when the mind rises higher. So, too, in the moral order, all

those aspects of human life which sway our deepest emotions are but “a murmur of gnats in the gloom,” if regard be had to our comparative insignificance. The ground yields at every step, and the mind looks for some *terra firma*, some absolute basis of trust, and this is only to be found in the conception of man as possessing an eternal destiny. The infinite value of all that concerns an immortal being stands proof against the thoughts that bewildered our vision. “He that has nailed all flesh to the cross till self died out in the love of his kind” may be but a speck in the universe, but faith measures him by a standard other than that of spacial vastness. The idea of the *eternal worth of morality* steps in to calm the imagination, and this idea in its measure justifies the conception of the value and importance of all the phases of human existence which make up the drama of life. Human Love is the side of man’s nature which the poet looks to as conveying the sense of his immortal destiny. The undying union of spirit with spirit is a union which the grave cannot end. The bewildering nightmare of the nothingness and vanity of all things is abruptly cut short, as the sense of what is deepest in the human heart promptly gives the lie to what it cannot solve in detail:

> Peace, let it be! for I loved him and love him for ever.
> The dead are not dead but alive.



THE SOUTH SIDE OF ENTRANCE FROM BELOW THE TERRACE, ALDWORTH.
Drawn by W. Biscombe Gardner.

TENNYSON AND ALDWORTH

By SIR JAMES KNOWLES, K.C.V.O.

Farringford he never forsook, though he added another home to it; and assuredly no poet has ever before called two such residences his own. Both of them were sweetened by the presence there, so graciously prolonged, of her to whom the lovers of song owe so deep a debt of gratitude. The second home was as well chosen as the first. It lifted England's great poet to a height from which he could gaze on a large portion of that English land which he loved so well, see it basking in its most affluent summer beauty, and only bounded by "the inviolate sea." Year after year he trod its two stately terraces with men the most noted of their time; statesmen, warriors, men of letters, science, and art, some of royal race, some famous in far lands, but none more welcome to him than the friends of his youth. Nearly all of those were taken from him by degrees; but many of them stand successively recorded in his verse. The days which I passed there yearly with him and his

> were the happiest days of each year. They will retain a happy place in my memory during whatever short period my life may last; and the sea-murmurs of Freshwater will blend with the sighing of the woods around Aldworth, for me, as for many more worthy, a music, if mournful, yet full of consolation.
>
> *MS. Note, Aubrey de Vere.*

When I was “little more than a boy” I made, accidentally, my first acquaintance with Tennyson as a poet, long before I knew him as a man. I came by chance upon a copy of “In Memoriam,” then just published anonymously. I was quite entirely ignorant and indifferent in those days about all poetry, and did not in the least know or guess who had written it, but, opening it haphazard at the Geological Stanzas, was so impressed and riveted by them,—for I was a student of Geology at the time,—that I could not put the book down until I had read it all through and from end to end. I was caught up and enthralled by its spirit, and my eyes seemed suddenly opened on a whole new world. It made an epoch in my life and an ineffaceable impression. I soon came to know my Tennyson almost by heart, and was taunted by my friends for my worship of the “divine Alfred,” as I reverently called him. In this frame of mind it was that I made the bold venture of asking his leave to dedicate to him my little book on King Arthur and his Knights, his kind acceptance of which homage I have already mentioned in my former article.[66]

My first personal acquaintance with him was in the autumn of 1866, when I was staying at Freshwater. I felt that I must call upon him and offer him my respects and thanks before I left, but put it off

through shyness until the day before my holiday was to end. Then I took my courage in both hands and went to Farringford. “Mr. Tennyson was out walking, but Mrs. Tennyson was at home and would be happy to see me.” It was a disappointment, but Mrs. Tennyson received me most kindly and graciously, and begged me to return later in the evening if I could, and see her husband who would like to meet me. When I did return I was shown upstairs to the top of the house and into an attic which was the Poet’s own study, and presently, with my heart in my mouth, I heard his great steps as he climbed up the little wooden stairs. His bodily presence seemed as kingly as I felt it ought to be, though a little grim and awful at first; but he made me very welcome, and then groped about for and lighted a pipe, and sat down and began to speak of King Arthur as being a subject of common interest and sympathy.

This soon thawed the chill of my spirits and I began to feel more at home, until I felt I could make the request I was longing to do—would he read to me one of his Poems, as I desired earnestly to hear from his own lips what I already knew and loved? Then came a great surprise and delight, for it was not reading as usually understood, but intoning on a note, almost chanting, which I heard, and which brought the instant conviction that this was the proper vehicle for poetry as distinguished from prose. I was so enchanted that I begged for more and more; and then I suppose may have begun a personal sympathy which grew and lasted always afterwards till his death. For when I made to go he took me all about the house, showing me the pictures and drawings with which his walls were lined, peering into them so closely with a lighted candle that I thought he would set them or himself on fire. This

was, perhaps, another common ground,—I having been all my life interested in art and in a small way a collector of drawings and pictures.

Before I left he told me to come and claim acquaintance if ever we met before I came to Farringford again, for if not his short sight would prevent his knowing me. On this friendly request I acted in the spring of the following year, 1867, when my wife and I were going to pay a visit at Haslemere. At Haslemere station, to my surprise, I saw him standing on the platform, and went up and spoke to him, reminding him of his desire that I should do so. I then introduced my wife to him, and he explained how he came to be there—namely, because he was in search of a site where he might build a cottage to take refuge in from the tourists who made his life a burden to him in the Isle of Wight. He added, "You are an architect, why should you not make the plans of it for me?" I said, "With the greatest possible pleasure, upon one condition that I may act professionally without making any professional charge; for I cannot be paid twice over, and you, Mr. Tennyson, have over-paid me already long ago—in the pleasure and delight your works have given me—for any little work I could do for you." He protested, but in the end accepted my terms.

The cottage, as he first proposed it, was to be a small square, four-roomed house, with a door in the middle, like one in which he was then staying near Haslemere. I went there to see him and to describe plans and the question of a site. After inspecting several with him, he took me secretly to one which a friend had found out as being possibly procurable, and on which Aldworth was finally built. It was a natural terrace, formed just below the summit of

Black Down, and was known as Green Hill. There was a potato-patch where the house now stands,—a little flat clearance in the midst of sloping coppices that covered all the southern side of the hill; and it was a spot of ideal seclusion, just wide enough and no more for a moderately sized house, quite perfect for his objects,—almost too perfect in the way of inaccessibility, for it took years of negotiation and trouble to obtain a practicable road to it. The view from it was simply perfect, extending over the whole of woody Sussex to the South Downs and the sea. “It wants nothing,” he said as he gazed at it, “but a great river looping along through the midst of it.” “Gloriously crimson flowers set along the edge of the terrace would burn like lamps against the purple distance”—as presently was realized.

The plans for a four-roomed cottage gave way somewhat as I talked the matter over with Mr. and Mrs. Tennyson, the latter giving me certain rough ideas which she could not quite express by drawing, but which I understood enough to put into shape; and presently I went to Farringford with designs for a less unimportant dwelling. It grew and grew as it was talked over and considered, the details being all discussed with Mrs. Tennyson, while he contented himself by pretending to protest against any addition and improvement.

At last, one day, when I brought sketches for an arcaded porch to complete the design, he put his foot down and said he would have nothing to do with it—that he would have no more additions—that it would ruin him and could not be entertained for a moment. He walked to and fro, coming back from time to time to the table where the drawing lay and looking at it. He admitted that he liked it more and more the more

he looked at it, but presently cried out with simulated fury, “Get thee behind me, Satan,” and ran out of the room. Then I knew that the porch was won. When it was built he got to be very fond of it, and used to call attention to the way in which the landscape was framed by the arches of it. He even had a picture of it made by a friend to show this effect.

He laid the foundation-stone of it on Shakespeare’s birthday, April 23, 1868, few being there besides his great friend, Sir John Simeon, myself, and my wife, whom he dragged up the steep hillside in the blazing sunshine. He interfered very little about the progress of the work, except as to various little accidental things which moved his fancy. For instance, a stone shield in the gable of one of the dormer windows had remained blank when all the rest were carved—simply because of a hesitation how best to fill it up. But when the time came at which it must be finished, if done at all, he stood spying up at it through his eyeglass for a long while, and then decided to leave it blank,—so that the last touch to the work might be decided hereafter by Fate, accident having kept it open so long.

He was reminded by it of the blank shield in his own Idylls, of which Merlin asks, “Who shall blazon it?—when and how?” and adds, “Perchance when all our wars are done the brand Excalibur will be cast away.” In a similar way he would not let the figure of a stone Falcon be removed which had been set up as a model for approval at one corner of the parapet, but was never intended to stay there. He looked at it long and curiously, and laughed and said it seemed to grow queerer, that it was a pity to take it down; and there it remained ever after in its original

solitariness, to his great content and amusement, which had a touch of seriousness in it.

He made a great point of his favourite motto, *Gwyr yn erbyn y byd* ("Truth against the world"), being prominently emblazoned in tile mosaic at the threshold of the front door and in the pavement of the Hall. The text, "Gloria Deo in Excelsis," in the carved band which surrounds the house was the selection of Mrs. Tennyson. The formation of the terrace lawn in front of the house, with its boundary balustrade, interested him extremely; and when the vases were filled with splendid blossoms, standing out against the blue landscape, the vision he had foreseen from the potato-patch was realized to his full satisfaction. The invariable and tormenting delays in finishing the house, however, annoyed him greatly; for he longed to get into it away from the tourists, and used to say he should never live to enjoy it long enough. When he did move in, he said he wanted to have each room for his own, and at first adopted for sleeping in, the central top attic on the south front, which opened on to the lead flat of the large bay window on the first floor. He called it his balcony-room, and loved to stand out on the flat and watch the changes in the great prospect spread out before him. He ultimately gave this up for a guest's room, and took to the finer room below, which was always flooded with light, and was filled with bright moonshine when he died in it. On one occasion, when I was sleeping in the balcony-room, I was suddenly waked up by a thundering at the door and his great voice calling out, "Get up and look out of the window." I jumped out of bed accordingly, and saw the whole wide aspect turned into a flat white billowy ocean, with no trace of land at all, but with waves beginning to move and roll in it. The sun

was just rising, and I stood to watch the gradual creation of a world as it were. From moment to moment the vast ocean broke up and rose away into clouds, uncovering the landscape bit by bit—the hills first and the valleys last, until the whole great prospect came together again into its normal picture. It was delightful to see his enjoyment of everything in the new house, from the hot-water bathroom downwards, for at first the hot bath seemed to attract him out of measure. He would take it four or five times a day, and told me he thought it the height of luxury "to sit in a hot bath and read about little birds."

The following notes of a visit paid to him at Aldworth show the usual manner of his daily life there.

He usually dined rather early, at 7 or 7.30 o'clock, and Mrs. Tennyson would generally carve (or in later times Hallam), according to the old-fashioned custom. He talked freely, with an abundance of anecdote and story, and full of humour, and "chaff" (no touch of pedantry or priggism could live in his presence); and always when at home made a move for dessert to another room—the morning room at Aldworth—where he would begin his bottle (pint) of port, and with the exception of a glass or so, would finish it, talking all the time with entire geniality and abandon, and full of reminiscences of men and things. Sometimes he would recur to his grievances at the hands of his publishers, and pour out his complaints about them, until finally landed, to his entire satisfaction, with Macmillan.

After dessert he would retire to his study and his after-dinner pipe, which he took quite by himself;

and would then come into the drawing-room, whither the others had repaired some time, and join in general talk again and perhaps read, at some one's request, some of his own poems, till the ladies left for bed.[67] Then he would invite some favoured guest or guests to his study, and begin the confidential discussions and soliloquies which it was a priceless privilege—the most valued and treasured of privileges—to share and to listen to. At such times all his inmost thoughts and feelings, recollections and speculations of his life came out with the open simplicity of a child and the keen insight and far sight of a prophet; and one had glimpses into the mystery of things beyond one's own power of seeing, and as if seen through a telescope.

I have before stated how he more than once summed up his personal religion in the words: "There's a Something That watches over us, and our Individuality endures." On one occasion he added, "I do not say endures for ever, but I say endures after this life at any rate.[68]" When in answer to the question, What was his deepest desire of all? he said, "A clearer vision of God," it exactly expressed the continued strivings of his spirit for more light upon every possible question, which so constantly appear in his poems, which led him to join in founding the Metaphysical Society, and induced him to write the introductory sonnet in the *Nineteenth Century*. Out of all such talks, at many times and places repeated, I came to know his actual personal position, in those years at any rate of the growth of old age, concerning the most vital problems of this world and this life. Many scores of such times have fallen to my

happy lot, and my life has been all the richer for them.

THE FUNERAL OF DICKENS

I remember, when he went with me to Westminster Abbey to hear Dean Stanley preach Dickens's funeral sermon, we sat within the rails of the Sacrarium so as to be near the pulpit, and when we came away he told me the story of the Oriental traveller who mistook the organ for the Church's God. He was very fond of the story, and often repeated it. As he told it, the traveller was made to say: "We went into one of their temples to see their worship. The temple is only opened sometimes, and they keep their God shut up in a great gold box at one end of it. When we passed inside the doors we heard him grumbling and growling as if out of humour at being disturbed in his solitude; and as the worshippers came in they knelt down and seemed to supplicate him and try to propitiate him. He became quieter for a while, only now and then grumbling for a few moments, but then he got louder again and the whole body of the people stood up and cried to him together, and after a while persuaded him to be still. Presently he began once more and then, after praying all together several times, they deputed one of their number to stand up alone and address him earnestly on their

behalf, deprecating his anger. He spoke so long without an interruption that it seemed the God had either fallen asleep or been finally persuaded into a better temper; but suddenly at last he broke out into a greater passion than ever, and with such tremendous noise and roarings that all the worshippers rose from their seats in fright and ran out of the temple."

There was an immense congregation that day in the Abbey—and when the service was over—we stood up waiting a long time to pass out through the rails. But instead of dispersing by the outer door the people all turned eastward and flocked towards the altar, pressing closer and closer up to the Sacrarium. The chances of getting out became less and less, and I turned to Tennyson and said, "I don't know what all this means, but we seem so hemmed in that it is useless to move as yet." Then a man, standing close by me whispered, "I don't think they will go, sir, so long as your friend stands there." Of course I saw at once what was happening—it had got to be known that Tennyson was present, and the solid throng was bent on seeing him. Such a popularity had never occurred to me or to him, and justified his nervous unwillingness to be seen in crowded places. I was obliged to tell him what was going on, upon which he urgently insisted on being let out some quiet way and putting an end to the dilemma.

FRAGMENTARY NOTES OF TENNYSON'S TALK

By Arthur Coleridge

But for the suggestion of the present Lord Tennyson, I should shrink from the presumption of posing as a friend of his illustrious father, who for three Easters made of me a companion, sometimes for two, more often three hours daily, for three weeks at a time together. I should be safe in saying that the most gifted men I have ever known, Tennyson, Browning, and Cory, were in the realms of thought, philosophy, and imagination foremost in an age which in two instances acknowledged their supremacy whilst they lived, and in the third has ungrudgingly admitted him as one taking high rank amongst the English poets of the second order. I link his name with that of the two great men, for I have abundant materials for forming my opinion of him in the shape of three volumes of correspondence, begun in my boyhood and continued for years during my friend's lifetime.

Mr. Fitzherbert was a welcome friend of Dr. Johnson's. "Ursa Major" warmed to him, though perfectly conscious that Fitz was anything but a star of the first magnitude. He says: "There was no sparkle, no brilliancy in Fitzherbert, but I never knew a man who was so generally acceptable. He made everybody quite easy, overpowered nobody by the superiority of his talents, made no man think worse of himself by being his rival, seemed always to listen, did not oblige you to hear much from him, and did not oppose what you said." "Such characters," says Mr. Raleigh, "are the oil of society, yet a society made wholly of such characters would

have no taste."

Tennyson's fidelity and patience with me were very much of a mystery; possibly I may have fitted his hand as a pet walking-stick; anyhow, I was "Man Friday to his Crusoe" as the play-actors say, and "constitutionals" with the Poet Laureate and his dogs, a wolf-hound or a deer-hound, Karénina or Lufra, were matters of daily occurrence in my Freshwater days. After 5 o'clock tea I left the Poet to "his sacred half-hour," and his pipe of tobacco. By the way, he smoked straight-stemmed Dublin clay-pipes, and hated new pipes, which he would soak in coffee.

I believe that in the early days of our acquaintance the Poet, seeing me with what appeared to be a notebook under my arm, suspected me of Boswellizing, but I was duly warned and reassured him of my innocence. I simply recorded very briefly in my diary a few of his "dicta" which I wished to have for the benefit of my children, one of whom was a frequent and delighted listener to the Laureate's reading of his own poems. Mary Coleridge, at that time a shy, timid girl, was more than once asked to dictate the particular poems she wanted him to recite. I can hear him saying, "Give me my seven-and-sixpenny" (meaning the single volume edition), and then we listened to the "high Orphic chant," rather than the conventional reading of many of our favourite poems. I often asked for the "Ode on the Duke of Wellington," and on one occasion, in the presence of Sir Charles Stanford—then organist of Trinity College, Cambridge—the Poet, lowering his voice at the words, "God accept him, Christ receive him," added: "It's a mighty anthem, that's what it is." Stanford's music to "The

Voyage of Mældune" was written at Freshwater, and four of us visitors sang a lovely quartet in that work for the first time in the Poet's presence. It was rather nervous work, for the composer and ourselves were anxious to satisfy the Poet in a work intended as a novelty for the Leeds Festival. The verdict was rather enigmatical: "I like the ripple of your music." It met with a good reception at Leeds, and Madame Albani expressed a confident hope in my hearing that the work would become popular. I wish the prophecy had been adequately fulfilled, but English audiences, though, like the Athenians of old, clamouring for a new thing, are very cautious in giving more than one or two trials to musical novelties. It is lamentable to see works which have cost long years, perhaps a lifetime, of skilled experience, shelved in musical libraries or relegated to foreign audiences for adjudication of their real value.

It was my daily habit during the Easter holidays for three years to call at Farringford at 10.30, and present myself in the Poet's sanctum, where I found him at his desk in the very act of hatching a poem or amending an old one. He would greet me with "Here comes my daily bread." Then I read the newspaper or a book until we started for our morning walk. The dialogue would begin abruptly, starting from some impressions left by our musical rehearsals on the previous day. "Why is Stanford unable to set to music the word 'cosmopolite'?" (See Appendix B.) The reasons seemed to me quite intelligible, but not so to a poet as fastidious as Wordsworth when discussing the Installation Ode with Professor Walmisley. I expect Purcell had more than one bad half-hour with Dryden, for the laws and regulations of musical accent may often conflict with the cadences and scansion adopted by the poet. Sir

Charles Stanford and Sir Hubert Parry (*lucida sidera*) are rare instances of musical composers with an instinctive appreciation of the fitness and adaptability of poetry offered for musical treatment.

Tennyson was loyal to the core on the subject of his old university, and amongst his constant visitors were some of my old contemporaries, Bradshaw, Lightfoot, and Montagu Butler. These, the *fleurs fines* of my day, were constant topics, and I eagerly listened to his recollections of the Cambridge men of his own generation. "Thompson" (afterwards Master of Trinity), he said, "was the last man I saw at Cambridge. I saw him standing at the door of the Bull Inn—his handsome face under a street lamp. We have been friends ever since." He enjoyed the master's witticisms, and especially "even the youngest among us is not infallible."

The Professorship of Greek carried with it a Canonry of Ely, and Thompson's times of residence were rather dreaded by the new holders of the office. His health, never of the best, was tried by the atmosphere, and finding the loneliness of his bachelor life insupportable, he begged an old College contemporary to pay him a visit. The friend came and was duly installed, but the sleeping accommodation was found wanting, and in answer to his petition for another bedroom with a good fire in it his host observed, "So sorry, my dear fellow, but I put five of my sermons into that bedroom, and if they have failed to dry it, nothing else will."

T. "My tailor at Cambridge was a man of the name of Law. When he made his way into our rooms, and

worried us about paying our bills, we used to say, 'This is Law's Serious Call.' I capped this story with a similar Oxford tradition. The name of the Oxford tailor was Joy, and the undergraduates, soaked with port wine, used to say, 'Heaviness may endure for a night, but Joy cometh in the morning.'"

T. "You cannot wonder at my horror of all the libels and slanders; people began to slander me in early days. For example, after my marriage we spent the honeymoon on Coniston Lake in a cottage lent to me by James Marshall. Shortly after this, a paragraph appeared in an American newspaper to the following effect: 'We hope, now that Mr. Tennyson is married and has returned to his native lakes, that he will give up opium.' The penny-a-liners evidently confounded your uncle, S. T. Coleridge, with myself—anyhow, if he wasn't quite certain, he gave your relative the benefit of the doubt."

"Again, I was once persuaded by an adventuress (who wrought upon me by her tale of hopeless poverty) to hear her read in my own drawing-room. She was in my house for exactly half an hour, and profited by her experience in telling her audiences that she had seen me thrashing my wife, and carried away drunk by two men-servants to my bedroom."

One day we visited the grave of Lord Tennyson's shepherd; he died at the age of ninety-one. On his death-bed Hallam asked him if he would remember in his will his two sons in Australia who had entirely ignored and neglected him. "No," he said firmly; and he left his 17s. 6d. a year to the poorest man in the parish of Freshwater. On his tombstone are engraved

the Laureate's own words from "In Memoriam":

God's finger touched him and he slept.

I showed Lord Tennyson some manuscript verses by my friend Bernard Drake, who died at Madeira in 1853. He read them twice through, slowly and aloud. I had told him of Drake's history, and then showed him the verses; their sadness impressed him greatly:

ON ILLNESS

I

Thou roaring, roaming Sea!
When first I came into this happy isle,
I loved to listen evermore to thee,
And meditate the while.

II

But now that I have grown
Homesick, and weary of my loneliness,
It makes me sad to hear thy plaintive moan
And fills me with distress.

III

It speaks of many a friend,
Whom I shall meet no more on Life's dark road,
It warns that *here* I must await the end
And cast no look abroad.

IV

Thou ever roaring Sea!
I love thee, for that o'er thy waters come
The stately ships, breasting them gloriously,
That bring me news of home.

V

I cannot pray for grace—
My soul is heavy, and my sickness sore—
Wilt Thou, O God, for ever hide Thy face?
O! turn to me once more.

MADEIRA, *November 30, 1853*.

Drake's career at Eton and Cambridge really interested him, for my old friend was an ardent worshipper of the Poet in days before Tennyson's fame had become a national asset. I showed with some pride "Of old sat Freedom on the heights," translated into Latin Alcaics, a version very popular with Etonians and King's men. Scholarship has made gigantic strides since it appeared; "those who know" can read and see if we overvalued it.

OF OLD SAT FREEDOM *Idem—Latine redditum*

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

There in her place she did rejoice,
Self-gather'd in her prophet-mind,
And fragments of her mighty voice
Came rolling on the wind.

Then stept she down thro' town and field
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,
Who, God-like, grasps the triple forks,
And, King-like, wears the crown:

Olim insedebat montibus arduis
Disiecta cernens sub pede fulmina
Divina Libertas; superque
Astra faces agitare vidit;

Et confluentes audiit undique
Amnes, opertis in penetralibus
Exultat, et ritu Sibyllae
Mente sua latet involuta,

Sed vocis altae fragmina praepetes
Venti ferebant.—Inde novalia
Per culta discendens, per urbes
Diva homines aditura venit,

Ut vultus aegros ante oculos virûm
Sensim pateret—mox parit integram
Virtutem et altari marino
Suppositum speculatur orbem—

Quae seu deorum

Her open eyes desire
the truth.
The wisdom of a
thousand years
Is in them. May
perpetual youth
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!

more acies gerit
Dextra trifurcas, seu
caput induit
Regina regali corona.
Expetit, insequiturque
verum.

Quae mille victrix
experientiam
Collegit annos: o Dea,
sic tibi
Aeterna si duret
iuventus
Neu lacrymis oculi
madescant;

Sic enitebis, sic dabis
aureos
Dies alumnis, aurea
somnia;
Sic ore divino refelles
Quae properat
malesuadus error.

When distinguished visitors came to the Island, who were on terms of friendship with the Poet, I gave him warning that I should not appear on the scene and spoil their pleasure; but to this condition he would not assent, and I can recall frequent occasions when I must have been a fly in the ointment, and the Jowetts, Bradleys, and distinguished Americans would have wished me at Jericho. Once I felt entirely at my ease, for I determined to start the subject of

Dr. Johnson, worshipped by me from my boyhood. I knew my Birkbeck Hill pretty well by heart, having quite recently read the six volumes of his edition of Boswell, notes and all, to a blind friend who rejoiced in hearing them. Further than that, I had made a pilgrimage to Lichfield, and by the kindness of a Mr. Lomax, who owned the relics, had examined and handled a varied assortment of goods and chattels, once undoubtedly the property of the great Samuel. The pedigree was thus accounted for by my courteous showman. After Dr. Johnson's death, Barber, his black servant, migrated from London to Lichfield, "bringing his sheaves with him"; amongst the *spolia opima* were a huge teapot and a manuscript copy of Devotions. Fortified with the recollections of this pilgrimage, and some out-of-the-way facts told to me by the residentiary Canon, my dear old friend Bishop Abraham, I started on a two hours' walk with the Poet and Professor Jowett. It was easy to lead up to the theme of conversation—there was no difficulty whatever. I thought of Johnson's own plan of extinguishing subjects which he intended at all costs to avoid. When Mrs. Neale asked his opinion of the conversational powers of Charles James Fox, "he talked to me one day at the Club," said he, "concerning Catiline's conspiracy, so I withdrew my attention and thought about Tom Thumb." Every moment of that afternoon walk, Dr. Johnson was our theme, and we capped one another with long quotations from Boswell. Jowett chirped, the Poet gave wonderful emphasis and point to the oracles, often pausing suddenly in his walk, and cross-examining me on my remembered version of the actual words. I noted the upshot of our talk. Lord Tennyson agreed with the Master of Balliol "that Boswell was a man of real genius, and resembled

Goldsmith in many points of character."

Miss L——, Doctor Johnson's godchild, used to tell a disagreeable story about him. Tennyson said about this:

T. "One should not lay stress on these oddities and angularities of great men. They should never be hawked about."

T. "'Break, break' was made one early summer morning, in a Lincolnshire lane. 'Crossing the Bar' cost me five minutes one day last November."

T. "At ten years of age I wrote an epic poem of great length—it was in the 'Marmion' style. I used to rush about the fields, with a stick for a sword, and fancied myself a conqueror advancing upon an enemy's country."

T. "My prize poem 'Timbuctoo' was an altered version of a work I had written at home and called 'The Battle of Armageddon.' I fell out with my father, for I had no wish to compete for the prize and he insisted on my writing. To my amazement, the prize was awarded to me. I couldn't face the public recitation in the Senate House, feeling very much as Cowper felt; Merivale declaimed my poem for me in the Senate House."

T. “Arthur Hallam said to me in 1832: ‘To-day I have seen the last English King going in State to the last English Parliament.’”

I believe that one of Tennyson’s first idylls was addressed to Miss K. Bradshaw, sister of my beloved friend Henry Bradshaw (fellow and librarian of King’s College, Cambridge), whose relationship to the Judge who condemned Charles I. was rather a tender point with H. B., both at Eton and King’s.

> Because she bore the iron name
> Of him who doomed his king to die,
> I deemed her one of stately frame
> And looks to awe her stander by.
> But find a maiden, tender, shy,
> With fair blue eyes and winning sweet,
> And longed to kiss her hand, and lie
> A thousand summers at her feet.

I pressed the Poet more than once to put on record his own interpretation of passages in “In Memoriam” and others which needed the authority of his own explanation. “Surely you took ‘four square to all the winds that blow’ from Dante’s

> Ben tetragono ai colpi della Ventura?”

“No, it was not in my mind.” Again, I quoted his expression, “hollow shapes enclosing hearts of flame,” thinking it had arisen from Beckford’s

Vathek. The answer was "No, merely spectral visions."

T. "Some of my poems depend on single sayings, single lines which have served me for a theme. My poem of 'The Brigand' is founded on a story told in the Autobiography of that great and gallant gentleman, Walter Scott."

T. "Edward FitzGerald and I used to weary of the hopelessly prosaic lines in some books of 'The Excursion,' and we had a contest, the prize for which was to be for the weakest line by mutual consent that we could either of us invent. FitzGerald declared the line was his—it really was mine—'A Mr. Wilkinson, a clergyman.'" I wish I could have told him of Jem Stephen's commentary on "Heaven lies about us in our infancy," "That is no reason why we should lie about Heaven in our old age." Among other passages he quotes with admiration Wordsworth's lines on the "Simplon Pass."

T. "I am sorry that I am turned into a school-book at Harrow; the boys will say of me, 'That horrible Tennyson.' The cheapness of English classics makes the plan acceptable to schoolmasters and parents."

He quoted with approval Byron's line—

Then farewell, Horace, whom I hated so.

"He was quite right. I, too, was so overdosed with Horace as a boy, that I don't do him justice now I am

old. I suppose Horace was the most popular poet that ever lived?"

Rough dissonant words in great poets were a trial to him; he declared that those horrid words, *Eingeweide* and *Beschützer*, are the ruin of Goethe's otherwise perfect lyrics.

T. "At Weimar the Grand Duchess sent an apology for not receiving me in person. After visiting Goethe's study, bedroom and sitting-room, I was shocked by the meanness of the streets, and the horrid smells in the town itself. I felt as tetchy and vexed as Macbeth with his 'out, out, brief candle,' a passage so utterly misunderstood by Macready, who dropped his voice and gave the words a pathos that I *am quite sure* was never intended."

T. "*The Tempest* has been dreadfully damaged by scenes intercalated by some common stage-adapter. At one time of my life I thought the Sonnets greater than the Plays. Some of the noblest things are in *Troilus and Cressida*."

> Perseverance, dear my Lord, keeps honour bright, etc.

T. "Have you observed a solecism in Milton's *Penseroso*?

But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloisters pale,
And *love* the high embowed roof
With antique pillars massy proof, etc."

T. "I do not remember getting from your cousin Hartley Coleridge the Sonnet you speak of, still less can I account for its being in the Library in the South Kensington Museum."

This Sonnet is headed

SONNET TO ALFRED TENNYSON
After meeting him for the first time

Long have I known thee as thou art in song,
And long enjoyed the perfume that exhales
From thy pure soul, and odour sweet entails,
And permanence on thoughts that float along
The stream of life to join the passive throng
Of shades and echoes that are memory's being,
Hearing we hear not, and we see not seeing
If Passion, Fancy, Faith, move not among
The never frequent moments of reflection.
Long have I view'd thee in the chrystal sphere
Of verse, that like the Beryl makes appear
Visions of hope, begot of recollection.
Knowing thee now, a real earth-treading man
Not less I love thee, and no more I can.
HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

T. "I liked Hartley Coleridge, 'Massa' Hartley' as the rustics called him. He was a lovable little fellow. Once he said to me, 'Had I been Colonel Burns (the Poet's eldest son) I would have kicked Wordsworth for delivering that preachment.' On one occasion

Hartley, who was very eccentric, was asked to dine with the family of a stiff Presbyterian clergyman residing in the Lake district. The guests, Trappist fashion, sat a long time in the drawing-room waiting for the announcement of dinner. Not a word was uttered, and Hartley was bored to extinction. At last he suddenly jumped up from the sofa, kissed the clergyman's wife, and rushed out of the house. He was wonderfully eloquent, and, I fancy, resembled his father in that respect."

T. "I doubt that fine poem 'Kubla Khan' having been written in sleep; I have often imagined new poems in my sleep, but I couldn't remember them in the morning. Your uncle's words: 'Tennyson has no sense of rhythm and scansion,' have been constantly quoted against me. The truth is that in my youth I used no hyphens in writing composite words, and a reader might fancy that from this omission I had no knowledge of the length and measure of words and expressions."

T. "Burns was a great genius, but dreadfully coarse sometimes. When he attempts to write in pure English, he breaks down utterly." He quoted many things of Burns's: "O my Luv's like a red, red rose," and "Gae fetch to me a pint o' wine," etc., with the greatest admiration, and "Mary Morison" and "Ye Banks and Braes o' Bonnie Doon," etc. "They have utterly ruined the lilt of the last," he said, "when they added words for the musical setting."

He was fond of talking about great pictures and fine sculpture. Birket Foster joined us one day, and Tennyson asked him to define the word "picturesque," and to say why tumble-down cottages in the Isle of Wight were such favourite subjects with painters. B. F. answered that it was the breaking of the straight line. We talked of Frederick Walker, and B. F. told us many stories of his wit and conscientiousness. "I mean to paint a picture," said he, "the key-note of which is to be onion-seed."

Primrose Day.—*T.* "All the floral displays for which we Isle of Wighters suffer are based on a mistaken version of the Queen's meaning, when she sent a wreath of primroses for Lord Beaconsfield's grave, inscribed with 'His favourite flower.' She meant Prince Albert's, not Lord Beaconsfield's partiality for the flower in question."

T. "I could imitate the hoot of an owl, and once practised successfully enough to attract one which flew in through my window. The bird soon made friends with me, would sit on my shoulder and kiss my face. My pet monkey became jealous, and one day pushed the owl off a board that I had had raised some feet from the ground. The owl was not hurt, but he died afterwards a Narcissus death from vanity. He fell into a tub of water contemplating his own beauty, and was drowned."

The Poet admired Carlyle's *French Revolution*, but he seemed surprised at my having read Carlyle's *Frederick the Great*; the length of it had been too much for him. I was vexed by the author's omission of an account of Sebastian Bach's famous interview with the king at Potsdam, and pressed on my old friend Sir George Grove to inquire the reasons of so strange an omission. He ascertained that Carlyle not only knew the fact, but the actual day and date of the occurrence. The omission, therefore, was really of malice aforethought. Quantz, the flute-player, has his appropriate niche in the monumental work, but the great Sebastian is out of it altogether; the tootler takes the cake and be hanged to him.

Great sailors and soldiers were very favourite subjects. The Poet had personally known well one naval officer who had served with Nelson.

T. "Among many odd letters I have received,[69] an American curate wrote to me that he made a sudden resolution one Sunday that he would read 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' instead of his ordinary sermon. An old Dorsetshire soldier who had fought at Balaclava, happened to be in the congregation, though the preacher was unaware of the fact. The verses had the happy result of the soldier giving up a bad, reckless life, and completely reforming. My poem was never meant to convey any spiritual lesson, but the very curious fact of the chance soldier and the parson's sudden resolution has often set me thinking."

T. "Twice, I am glad to say, I have been taken into battle; once by Sir Fenwick Williams of Kars; another officer wrote after a fight: 'I escaped with my life and my Tennyson.' I admire General Hamley, a good writer and accomplished soldier."

T. "When the Prince Regent explored the field of Waterloo with the Duke himself as guide, the Duke's horse plunged and threw his rider. The Prince remarked, 'I can now say what nobody else in the world can, that I saw the Duke of Wellington overthrown on the Field of Waterloo.' His Grace was not over pleased with the observation."

T. "Keats would have become one of the very greatest of all poets, had he lived. At the time of his death there was apparently no sign of exhaustion or having written himself out; his keen poetical instinct was in full process of development at the time. Each new effort was a steady advance on that which had gone before. With all Shelley's splendid imagery and colour, I find a sort of *tenuity* in his poetry."

T. "'Locksley Hall' is thought by many to be an autobiographical sketch; it's nothing of the sort—not a word of my history in it. Read FitzGerald's *Euphranor* and let me know what you think of it."

One day we talked of Winchester and the rather meagre list of great men educated there. I rejoiced in the college boasting of an *alumnus* in Lord Seaton, the famous leader of the 52nd Regiment at Waterloo. "I remember," *T.* said, "addressing a coachman by whose side I was sitting as we drove in a coach through that place, and I asked him, 'What sort of a place is Winchester?' Answer: 'Debauched, sir, debauched, like all other Cathedral cities.'"

T. "I am inclined to agree with Swinburne's view of Mary Queen of Scots; she was brought up in a Court that studied the works of Brantôme."

We often talked of Farrar's book and Maurice's opinions on Eternal Punishment. The Poet was fond of quoting Dante's line:

Fecemi somma Sapienza ed il sommo Amore,

insisting on Dante's intense belief in a God of Love. He more than once repeated the famous lines of Moschus,[70] adding, "I think those the finest lines in all Greek antiquity."

T. "My friend, Sir Henry Taylor, on being called a Christian Jupiter, remarked, 'I wish I was much more of a jovial Christian.'"

T. "I once asked Rogers, 'Did you ever write a

sonnet?' He answered, 'No, I never dance in fetters.'"

T. "I am told that the best prose version of the *Odyssey* is by Professor Palmer of Cambridge University, America. Since Matthew Arnold's lectures on Homer, a new translation has appeared annually in that country. It would take me ten years to translate the *Iliad* into Bible English." He liked Worsley's translation of the *Odyssey*.

"The purest English is talked in South Lincolnshire. The dialect begins at Spilsby in Mid-Lincolnshire, and that is the dialect of my Lincolnshire poems."

He was fond of telling Lincolnshire stories. *T.* "An old farmer, at the time when railways were beginning, receiving a visit from the parson, moved uneasily in his bed, crying out, 'What with faäth, and what with real bad harvests, and what with them graät, horrid steäm-kettles, and what with the soön goin' raound the earth, and the earth goin' raound the soön, as soom saäy she do, I am cleän maäzed an' the sooner I gits out of this 'ere world, the better;' and he turned his face to the wall and died."

I close my chapter of fragments and echoes still abiding with me; men privileged as I was can hear the voice and hate a gramophone. My aim has been to show the everyday life, the plain unvarnished

words which were the daily change with the first man of his age and a rank-and-file acquaintance just able, and no more, to appreciate such kindness.

Haec olim meminisse iuvabit.

MUSIC, TENNYSON, AND JOACHIM

By Sir Charles Stanford

My acquaintance, or rather my friendship, with Alfred Tennyson (for he had an all-compelling power of making real friends of, and being a true friend to, those far junior to himself) dated only from 1879, when he was in years seventy, but in mental vigour the contemporary of the youngest man he happened to be with. Previously, however, in 1875, I had had experience of his thoughtful kindness. He had chosen me, an unknown and untried composer, to write the incidental music to his tragedy of "Queen Mary" for its production at the Lyceum Theatre, then under the management of Mrs. Bateman. Many difficulties were put in the way of the performance of the music, into the causes of which I had neither the wish nor the means to penetrate. Finally, however, the management gave as an explanation that the music could not be performed, as the number of orchestral

players required for its proper presentment would necessitate the sacrifice of two rows of stalls. To my young and disappointed soul came the news of a generous action which would have been a source of pride to many a composer of assured position and fame. The Poet had offered, unknown to me, to bear the expense of the sacrificed seats for many nights, in order to allow my small share of the work to be heard. The offer was refused, but the generous action remains—one amongst the thousands of such quiet and stealthy kindnesses which came as second nature to him, and were probably as speedily forgotten by himself as they were lastingly remembered by their recipients.[71]

He little knew that, when I was in my early 'teens and had the most absurdly exaggerated notions of my song-writing powers, I had had the presumption to ask my cousin, Mr. Stephen Spring Rice, if he would induce his old friend to send me a MS. poem to set. Happily, I only got a kindly but necessary rap over the knuckles for my impertinence; the request was consigned to the waste-paper basket and mercifully never reached Farringford. I tremble now to recall the incident, although I verily believe that if Mr. Spring Rice had been cruel enough to send my letter on, the smile which it must have provoked would in no wise have been a contemptuous one. I can imagine his saying then, what I have often heard him say in later days, "Maxima debetur pueris reverentia." I had seen so much of Aubrey de Vere all through my boyhood that I almost felt as if I knew Tennyson too, so vivid were his accounts of him, and his descriptions of his ways and surroundings.

Joachim also, who all through the British part of his international career was in close touch with the

Tennyson circle, used often to speak of him with the deep reverence and whole-hearted enthusiasm which he reserved for a very few. On the staircase at Farringford hangs Mrs. Cameron's early (and still unsurpassed) photograph of the great violinist. My host pointed at it one day as he passed upstairs: "That's Joachim. He's a fine fellow. Why did he cover up that fine jowl with a beard?"—quite forgetful of the possible retort that he had committed the same wickedness himself. On the comparatively rare occasions when he came up to London, and was surrounded by all the stars in the literary and political firmament, Joachim and his Stradivarius were as brilliant a centre of attraction as any of his guests. Joachim's setting of Merlin's song in "The Coming of Arthur" was an especial favourite of his, as both in atmosphere and in declamation it exactly fulfilled the intention of his verse. Joachim once told me that he always had great hankerings after setting "The Revenge," but that he repressed them because he felt that it could only be tackled in the true English spirit by a Britisher.

The clue to Tennyson's great critical power in declamation was obvious to any one who heard him recite his own work. His manner of reading poetry has often been described. It was a chant rather than a declamation. A voice of deep and penetrating power, varied only by alteration of note and by intensity of quality. The notes were few, and he rarely read on more than two, except at the cadence of a passage, when the voice would slightly fall. He often accompanied his reading by gentle rippling gestures with his fingers. As a rule he adhered more to the quantity of a line than the ordinary reciter, for he had the rare gift of making the accent felt, without perceptibly altering the prosody. Without

being a musician, he had a great appreciation of the fitness of music to its subjects, and was an unfailing judge of musical declamation. As he expressed it himself, he disliked music which went up when it ought to go down, and went down when it ought to go up. I never knew him wrong in his suggestions on this point. The most vivid instance I can recall was about a line in “The Revenge”:

> Was he devil or man? He was devil for aught they knew.

When I played him my setting, the word “devil” was set to a higher note in the question than it was in the answer, and the penultimate word “they” was unaccented. He at once corrected me, saying that the second word “devil” must be higher and stronger than the first, and the “they” must be marked. He was perfectly right, and I altered it accordingly. It was apparently a small point, but it was this insisting on perfection of detail which made him the most valuable teacher of accurate declamation that it was possible for a composer to learn from. Of all his poems which I heard him read, those he made most impressive were “The Revenge” and the “Ode on the Duke of Wellington.” It may be interesting to record a point in the latter which, he said, was often misread. The line

> Let the bell be toll’d,

he read with strong emphasis upon the first as well as the third and fifth words:

— ◡ — ◡ —

not

◡ ◡ — ◡ —

He said it wanted three strokes of the bell, not two. “Maud” he also read with a most extraordinary warmth and charm, particularly the climax of “Come into the garden,” and still more the stanza about the shell (Part II.), which he gave in a peculiarly thin and ghostly tone of voice, a quality he also used with great mastery in the Choric Song of the “Lotus Eaters.” Nor was he less impressive when reciting Greek or German. Greek he vastly preferred as pronounced in the English fashion. He said it lost all its sonority and grandeur if modernized; and, indeed, to hear his illustration was in itself sufficient to convince. German he pronounced with a strong English accent, and yet I feel sure that Goethe himself would have acknowledged his reading of “Kennst du das Land” to be a masterpiece. He was a great admirer of Goethe, and especially of this poem. He only disliked one line—

O mein Beschützer, ziehn,

of which he said, “How could Goethe break one’s teeth with those z’s, while the rest is so musical?” Curiously enough, it is now known that Goethe erased “Beschützer” and substituted “Geliebter.” He once read to me from his works for nearly half an hour.

He was extremely particular about clear diction in singing, the lack of which in the majority of singers of his day was far more marked than it is nowadays. He intuitively grasped the true basis of that most difficult of tasks, the composing of a good song which is at once practical and grateful to sing. He knew that the poem should be the key to the work, and should be so clearly enunciated that every word can reach the listener; and that the composer must

never over-balance the voice with the illustrative detail of the accompaniment. When I was setting "The Voyage of the Mældune" I happened to be at Freshwater; and after finishing the solo quartet, "The Under-sea Isle," four amateurs sang it through for him. His only (and I fear very just) comment on the performance was, "I did not hear a word you said from beginning to end." But he thought afterwards that we might feel somewhat crushed, and as I was going away some little time later, and was passing his door, he put his head out and said with a humorous smile, "I'm afraid I was rather rude just now, but I liked the way your music rippled away when they fall into the water." This was a most curious instance of his faculty for recognizing a subtle piece of musical characterization as rapidly as, and often more rapidly than, a listener who was fully equipped with musical technique.

His ear was capable of such fine distinctions of vowel quality, that it has always been a mystery to me why this gift, so highly developed in him, did not bring a mastery of music in its train. By one of the odd dispensations of nature, Robert Browning, who had none of this fineness of ear, knew enough of music to be able even to read it from a score with his eyes. Such words as "true" and "too," which in most people's mouths have an identical vowel sound, were differentiated by him, the "oo" full and round, the "ue" inclining imperceptibly to "u." His "a" also had far more varied colours than is usual even with singers. One modification in especial, the quality of which can best be described as approaching that of "*Eh*, mon," in broad Scotch, gave a breadth and a dignity to such words as "Nation," "Lamentation," "Pāgeant" (he never used the horrible pronunciation "Padgent"), which added vastly to the musical values

of his verse. It is this perfection of vowel balance which makes his poetry so difficult to set to music satisfactorily. So musical is it in itself that very little is left for actual music to supply. It is often the very incompleteness of some poetry which makes it suggestive to a composer, the qualities lacking in the one calling out for the assistance of the other to supply them, a condition of combination which Wagner deliberately carried to a fine art in his double capacity of poet and composer. With Tennyson there is no gap to fill, and all that music can do is to illustrate the surrounding atmosphere, and to leave the poetry to tell its own story with its declamation and inflections accurately preserved.

The best reproduction of the peculiar quality of Tennyson's reading which I have heard was Irving's rendering of the lines about the bird in the last act of "Becket":

> We came upon
> A wild-fowl sitting on her nest, so still,
> I reach'd my hand and touch'd; she did not stir;
> The snow had frozen round her, and she sat
> Stone-dead upon a heap of ice-cold eggs.

The mastery of sound-painting in this line, the chilly "o's" and "e's" which the Poet knew so well how to place, Irving declaimed with a quiet reverence which made the sentence so pathetic that it will always live in the memory of those who heard it. It is interesting to record that all the actors I have met who witnessed the play invariably hit on those lines as the high-water mark of Irving's powers.

The rehearsals of "Becket," many of which I was privileged to witness, soon made it clear that Irving's

Becket was going to be, as it eventually proved to be, the finest both in conception and in accomplishment of all his creations. The part fitted him like a glove. So completely did he live in it, that a friend of his (who related his experience to me), who went round to see him after a performance, was dismissed by him on leaving with a fervent benediction delivered with up-raised hand, so sincerely and impressively delivered that he positively seemed to be an actual Prince of the Church.

With Irving's arrangement of the play I never wholly agreed. He made of it as a whole a workable piece, but in doing so he sacrificed one scene which, beyond all question, is one of the most vivid and most characteristic in the play, the scene of the beggars' feast. He lost sight of the fact that its omission spoilt the balance of the middle section. There was no foil to the brilliancy of the Council at Northampton. Tennyson (like Shakespeare) knew better the value of contrast, and put in at this point that touch of divine humour which only heightens pathos. The drama needed it. He balanced the traitorous splendour of the nobles with the homely loyalty of the halt, maimed, and blind. Irving also omitted the poem which gave the true lyrical touch to the first Bower scene; a little dialogue which, if it had been sung as was intended after the curtain rose on an empty stage, would have given the same atmosphere to the act, which the Rainbow song at its close drives home. These were, however, almost the only blots upon an otherwise admirably reverent adaptation. Irving told me that he always came down to listen behind the curtain to the last *entr'acte* (the Martyrdom), in order to get into the right mood for the final scene. Coming from an actor, who knew nothing of musical technique beyond an

extraordinarily acute sense of what was fitting or not fitting for stage purposes, this was a great gratification and a still greater encouragement to one of the many composers whom he so loyally befriended. The production of “Becket” was a memorable red-letter day for the modern English stage; the more so as the tragedy came and conquered a public which was little prepared for the finest specimen of its type which had been seen since the days of Shakespeare. It was fitting that the reign of the greatest Queen since Elizabeth should have such a play inscribed in its annals, an appropriate and worthy counterpart to those of her great predecessor’s days.

THE ATTITUDE OF TENNYSON TOWARDS SCIENCE

By Sir Oliver Lodge, F.R.S.

Henry Sidgwick wrote in 1860 concerning Tennyson that he “regarded him as pre-eminently the Poet of Science”; and to explain his meaning he contrasts the attitude of Wordsworth to Nature with that of Tennyson:

> The Nature for which Wordsworth stirred our feelings was Nature as known by simple observation and interpreted by religious and sympathetic intuition.

—an attitude which left Science unregarded. But, for Tennyson,

> the physical world is always the world as known to us through physical science; the scientific view of it dominates his thought about it, and his general acceptance of this view is real and sincere, even when he utters the intensest feeling of its inadequacy to satisfy our deepest needs.

It is probable that what was then written is now a commonplace of letters, and requires no emphasizing, but as a professed Student of Science, whose life has extended over the greater part of the time which has elapsed since “In Memoriam” was published, I welcome the opportunity of adding my testimony in continued support of the estimate made by Professor Sidgwick half a century ago.

It is generally admitted, and has been recently emphasized, that wherever reference is made to facts of nature in the poems or the fringe of Science touched on,—as it so often is,—the reference is satisfying and the touch precise. Observers of Nature have often called attention to the beautiful accuracy with which natural phenomena are described, with every mark of first-hand personal experience, as distinct from merely remembered conventional modes of expression; and the same sort of feeling is aroused in the mind of a Student of Science as he comes across one after another of the subjects which

have kindled discussion during the Victorian epoch,—he is inevitably struck with the clear comprehension of the fundamental aspects of the themes treated which the poems display, he sees that the Poet is never led into misrepresentation or sacrifice of precision in the quest for beauty of form. The two are wedded together "like noble music unto perfect words."

To quote examples might only be tedious, and would assuredly be misleading. It is not that the bare facts of Science are recorded,—such record could not constitute poetry—certainly not high poetry,—it is not merely his acquaintance with contemporary scientific discovery, natural to a man who numbered leading men of Science among his friends;—it is not any of this that arouses our feeling of admiring fellowship, but it is that with all his lordship of language and power of expression so immensely superior to our own, he yet moves in the atmosphere of Science not as an alien, but as an understanding and sympathetic friend.

Look back upon the epoch in which he lived—what a materialistic welter it seems! The mind of man was going through a period of storm; antiquated beliefs were being jettisoned and everything spiritual seemed to be going by the board; the point of view of man was rapidly changing and the whole of existence appeared capable of reducing itself to refined and intricate mechanism.

Poets generally must have felt it as a terrible time. What refuge existed for a poet save to isolate himself from the turmoil, shut himself into his cabin, and think of other times and other surroundings, away from the uproar and the gale. Those who did not

thus shelter themselves were liable to bewail the time because the days were evil; as Arnold did, and Clough. But thus did not Tennyson. Out through the tempest he strode, open-eyed and bare-headed, with figure erect, glorying in the conflict of the elements, and summoning the men of his generation to reverence and worship.

Doubt, yes doubt he justified—doubt, so it were straightforward and honest. Forms and accessories—these he was willing to let go—though always with respect and care for the weaker brothers and sisters to whom they stood for things of value; but Faith beyond those forms he clung to, faith fearless and triumphant, uprising out of temporary moods of despondency into ever securer conviction of righteous guidance throughout creation and far-seeing divine Purpose at the heart of things.

Other men retained their faith too, but many only attained security by resolutely closing their eyes and bolting the doors of their water-tight compartments. But the glory of Tennyson's faith was that it never led him to be unfaithful to the kinds of truth that were being revealed to his age. That, too, was an age of revelation, and he knew it; the science of his epoch was true knowledge, as far as it went; it was over-emphatic and explosive, and to weaker or less inspired minds was full of danger, but it was genuine cargo, nevertheless, which must be taken on board; there was a real overload of superstition which had to be discarded; and it was his mission, and that of a few other noble souls, to help us to accomplish with calmness and something like wisdom the task of that revolutionary age.

In the conflict between Science and Faith our

business was to accept the one without rejecting the other: and that he achieved. Never did his acceptance of the animal ancestry of man, for instance, upset his belief in the essential divinity of the human soul, its immortality, its supremacy, its eternal destiny. Never did his recognition of the materialistic aspect of nature cloud his perception of its spiritual aspect as supplementing and completing and dominating the mechanism. His was a voice from other centuries, as it were, sounding through the nineteenth; and by his strong majestic attitude he saved the faith of thousands who else would have been overwhelmed; and his writings convey to our own age a magnificent expression of that which we too have still not fully accepted, but which we are on the way to believe.

If asked to quote in support of this statement I will not quote more than the titles of some of the chief poems to which I appeal. Not always the greatest poems perhaps do I here refer to, but those which most clearly uphold the contention of the Poet's special service to humanity during the period of revolution in thought through which mankind has been passing.

Let me instance, therefore, first and most obviously, "In Memoriam"; and thereafter poems such as "De Profundis," "The Two Voices," "The Ancient Sage," "Ulysses," "Vastness," "By an Evolutionist," "Demeter and Persephone," "Akbar's Dream," "God and the Universe," "Flower in the Crannied Wall," "The Higher Pantheism," "The Voice and the Peak," "Wages," and "Morte d'Arthur."

If I do not add to this list the great poem "To Virgil," who in his day likewise assimilated knowledge of

diverse kinds and in the light of spiritual vision glorified all he touched, it is only because the atmosphere of the Ancient poet is so like that of the Modern one that it is not by any single poem that their sympathy and kinship has to be displayed, but rather by the similarity of their whole attitude to the Universe.

By the term “Poet of Science” I understand one who assimilates the known truths of Science and Philosophy, through the pores, so to speak, without effort and with intuitive accuracy, one who bears them lightly and raises them above the region of bare fact into the realm of poetry. Such a poet is one who transfuses fact with beauty, he is ready to accept the discoveries of his age, no matter how prosaic and lamentable they seem, and is able to perceive and display the essential beauty and divinity which runs through them all and threads them all together. That is the service which a great poet can perform for Science in his day and generation. The qualities beyond this—exhibited for the most part perhaps in other poems—which enable him to live for all time, are qualities above any that I have the right or the power to estimate.

To be overwhelmed and mastered by the material and the mechanical, even to the extent of being blind to the existence of every other aspect, is common and human enough. But to recognize to the full the reign of law in Nature, the sequence of cause and effect, the strength of the chain-armour of necessity which men of science weave, and yet to discern in it the living garment of God—that is poetic and divine.

TENNYSON AS A STUDENT AND POET OF NATURE[72]

By Sir Norman Lockyer, F.R.S.

When Tennyson passed from life, not only did England lose one of her noblest sons, but the world a poet who, beyond all others who have ever lived, combined the gift of expression with an unceasing interest in the causes of things and in the working out of Nature's laws.

When from this point of view we compare him with his forerunners, Dante is the only one it is needful to name; but although Dante's knowledge was well abreast of his time, he lacked the fullness of Tennyson, for the reason that in his day science was restricted within narrow limits. In Dante's time, indeed—he was born some 300 years before Galileo and Tycho Brahe—science apart from cosmogony had chiefly to do with the various constellations and measurements of the passing of time and the daily and yearly motions of the sun, for the observation of which long before his epoch our ancient monuments were erected; the physical and biological sciences were still unborn. Dante's great work is full of references to the science of his day; his science and song went hand in hand as Tennyson's did in later, fuller times. This in strong contrast with such writers as Goethe who, although both poet and student of science, rarely commingled the two strands of thought.

It is right and fitting that the highest poetry should be associated with the highest knowledge. Tennyson's great achievement has been to show us that in the study of science we have one of the bases of the fullest poetry, a poetry which appeals at the same time to the deepest emotions and the highest and broadest intellects of mankind. Tennyson, in short, has shown that science and poetry, so far from being antagonistic, must for ever advance side by side.

So far as my memory serves me I was introduced to the late Lord Tennyson by Woolner about the year 1864. I was then living in Fairfax Road, West Hampstead, and I had erected my 6-inch Cooke Equatorial in the garden. I soon found that he was an enthusiastic astronomer, and that few points in the descriptive part of the subject had escaped him. He was therefore often in the observatory. Some of his remarks still linger fresh in my memory. One night when the moon's terminator swept across the broken ground round Tycho he said, "What a splendid Hell that would make." Again, after showing him the clusters in Hercules and Perseus he remarked musingly, "I cannot think much of the county families after that." In 1866 my wife was translating Guillemin's *Le Ciel* and I was editing and considerably expanding it; he read many of the proof sheets and indeed suggested the title of the English edition, *The Heavens*.

In the 'seventies, less so in the 'eighties, he rarely came to London without discussing some points with me, and in these discussions he showed himself to be full of knowledge of the discoveries then being made.

Once I met him accidentally in Paris; he was most

anxious to see Leverrier and the Observatory. Leverrier had the reputation of being *difficile*; I never found him so, but I certainly never saw him so happy as when we three were together, and he told me afterwards how delighted he had been that Tennyson should have wished to pay him a visit. I visited Tennyson at Aldworth in 1890 when he was in his 82nd year. I was then writing the *Meteoritic Hypothesis*, and he had asked for proof sheets. When I arrived there I was touched to find that he had had them bound together for convenience in reading, and from the conversation we had I formed the impression that he had read every line. It was a subject after his own heart, as will be shown farther on. One of the nights during my stay was very fine, and he said to me, "Now, Lockyer, let us look at the double stars again," and we did. There was a 2-inch telescope at Aldworth. His interest in Astronomy was persistent until his death.

The last time I met him (July 1892), he would talk of nothing but the possible ages of the sun and earth, and was eager to know to which estimates scientific opinion was then veering.

So far I have referred, and in very condensed fashion, to Tennyson's knowledge of and interest in Astronomy as they came out in our conversations. I have done this because I was naturally most struck with it, but only a short acquaintance was necessary to show me that this interest in my own special subject was only a part of a general interest in and knowledge of scientific questions.

This was borne home to me very forcibly in about the year 1866 or 1867. The evenings of Mondays were then given up to friends who came in, *sans*

cérémonie, to talk and smoke. Clays from Broseley, including "churchwardens" and some of larger size (Frank Buckland's held an ounce of tobacco), were provided, and the confirmed smokers (Tennyson, an occasional visitor, being one of them) kept their pipes, on which the name was written, in a rack for future symposia. One night it chanced that many travellers—Bates, Baines, and Winwoode Reade among them—were present, and the question of a certain kind of dust-storms came on the *tapis*. Tennyson, who had not started the subject, listened for some time and then remarked how difficult it was for a student to gain certain knowledge on such subjects, and he then astonished the company by giving the names of eight authors, four of whom had declared they had seen such dust-storms as had been described, the other four insisting that they could not be produced under any known meteorological conditions and that with the best opportunities they had never seen them.

In many of our talks I came across similar evidences of minute knowledge in various fields; nothing in the natural world was trivial to him or to be neglected. This great grasp was associated with a minute accuracy, and it was this double habit of mind which made Tennyson such a splendid observer, and *therefore* such a poet, for the whole field of nature from which to cull the most appropriate epithets was always present in his mind.

Hence those exquisite presentations of facts, in which true poetry differs from prose, and which in Tennyson's poetry appeal at once both to the brain and heart.

But even this is not all that must be said on this

point. Much of Tennyson's finest is so fine that it wants a knowledge on a level with his own to appreciate its truth and beauty; many of the most exquisite and profound touches I am convinced are missed by thousands of his readers on this account. The deep thought and knowledge are very frequently condensed into a simple adjective instead of being expanded into something of a longer breath to make them apparent enough to compel admiration. This it strikes me he consistently avoided.

> All the charm of all the Muses often flowering in a lonely word.

Although many of the poems seem to me to be clothed with references to natural phenomena as with a garment, it can on the whole, I think, be gathered from them, as I gathered from our conversations, that the subject deepest in his thoughts was the origin of things in its widest sense, a *Systema Mundi*, which should explain the becoming of the visible universe and *define its different parts* at different periods in its history. In this respect we have:

> Three poets in three ages born.

Dante, Milton, and Tennyson, with their minds saturated with the same theme, and I can fancy nothing in the history of human thought more interesting or encouraging than the studies of this theme as presented to us in their works published we may say, speaking very roughly, three centuries apart.

This of course is another story, but a brief reference to it is essential for my present purpose.

All the old religions of the world were based upon Astronomy, that and Medicine being the only sciences in existence. Sun, Moon, and Stars were all worshipped as Gods, and thus it was that even down to Dante's time Astronomy and religion were inseparably intertwined in the prevalent Cosmogonies. The Cosmogony we find in Dante, the peg on which he hangs his *Divina Commedia*, with the seven heavens surrounding the earth and seven hells inside it, had come down certainly from Arab and possibly prior sources; the Empyrean, the *primum mobile*, the seven Purgatories, and the Earthly Paradise (the antipodes of Jerusalem) were later additions, the latter being added so soon as it was generally recognized that the earth was round, though the time of the navigator was not yet.

Dante constructed none of this machinery, he used it merely; it represented the knowledge, that is, the belief, of his time.

Between Dante and Milton there was a gap; but what a gap! It was filled by Copernicus, Tycho Brahe, Galileo, Columbus, Magellan, and Vasco da Gama, to mention no more, and the astronomers and geographers between them smashed the earth-centred heavens, the interior hells, and the earthly paradise into fragments.

It was while this smashing was working its way into men's minds that Milton wrote his poem, and he, like Dante, centred it on a cosmogony. Well might Huxley call it "the Miltonic Hypothesis"! but how different from the former one, from which it was practically a retreat, carefully concealed in an important particular, but still a retreat from the old position.

Milton in his poem uses, so far as heaven is concerned, the cosmogony of Dante, but he carefully puts words into Raphael's mouth to indicate that after all the earth-centred scheme of the seven heavens must give way. But the most remarkable part of "Paradise Lost" is the treatment of hell.

Milton's greatness as a poet, as a *maker*, to my mind is justly based upon the new and vast conceptions which he there gave to the world and to which the world still clings.

To provide a new hell which had been "dismissed with costs" from the earth's centre, he boldly halves heaven and creates chaos and an external hell out of the space he filches from it. "Hellgate" is now the orifice in the *primum mobile* towards the empyrean.

In Tennyson we find the complete separation of Science from Dogmatic Theology, thus foreshadowed by Milton, finally achieved. In him we find, as in Dante and Milton, one fully abreast with the science and thought of the time, and after another gap, this one filled up by Newton, Kant, Herschel, Laplace, and Darwin, we are brought face to face with the modern Cosmogony based upon science and Evolution. The ideas of heaven and hell in the mediaeval sense no longer form a necessary part of it, in Tennyson they have absolutely disappeared. In those parts of his poems in which he introduces cosmogonic ideas we have to deal with the facts presented by the heavens and the earth which can throw light upon the ancient history of our planet and its inhabitants.

The modern *Systema Mundi* which Tennyson dwells on over and over again is dominated by

Astronomy and Geology, terrible Muses.

To come back from this parenthesis I must finally point out that although some of the most pregnant and beautiful passages in Tennyson's poems have reference to the modern views of the origin of things, almost all natural phenomena are referred to, in one place or another, in language in which both the truest poetry and most accurate science are blended.

The breadth of the outlook upon Nature shown by the references in the Poet's works is only equalled by the minute accuracy of observation displayed. Astronomy, geology, meteorology, biology, and, indeed, all branches of science except chemistry, are thus made to bring their tribute, so that finally we have a perfect poetic garland, which displays for us the truths of Nature and Human Nature intertwined.

MEMORIES

By E. V. B.

How kind to ask for some of my few small memories of your father—treasured memories which no length of years can ever rub out. And how much I like to recall them, though, alas! there is so little; it was so seldom that we met in those unforgotten times. Once, I remember, I sent him a rose from my garden,

a black beauty, rather rare in those old days —"L'Empereur de Maroque," now quite cut out by "Prince Camille de Rohan." I keep the little word of thanks that came afterwards in return:

> MY DEAR E. V. B.—Many thanks for your more amiable than beautiful Black Rose. I don't mean to be personal, but am, yours always,
>
> TENNYSON.

Another of his notes is the one wherein he gave me leave to illustrate "The May Queen." His words in the note were: "I would rather you than any one else should do it." His poems were a joy to me, even in childhood—from the days when, dull lesson hours, etc., being done, I could steal away and no one know, and, sitting on the carpet by the home book-shelves, read over and over on the sly from a bound volume (one of *Blackwood's Magazines*), where were long extracts from Tennyson's poems, especially the earlier ones, and amongst them one called "Adeline." There was certainly a magic in the poetry, scarce found elsewhere—magic even for a child of ten.



SUMMER-HOUSE AT FARRINGFORD, WHERE "ENOCH ARDEN" WAS WRITTEN.
Carved and painted by Alfred Lord Tennyson.

Do you remember how you used to tell me that your father had a great love for the red rose? He sent me, for my *Ros Rosarum*, lines on a Rosebud by himself:

THE ROSEBUD
The night with sudden odour reel'd,
The southern stars a music peal'd,
Warm beams across the meadow stole,
For Love flew over grove and field,
Said, "Open, Rosebud, open, yield
Thy fragrant soul."

I know he loved the poet's colour—lilac. A long-past scene in the garden at Farringford still remains in the mind's eye fresh and vivid—painted in with memory's fast colours among the pictures of remembrance.

The sunshine of a morning at Farringford in early

summer when we came up the long middle walk, bordered on either side with lilac-flowered aubretia, led up to the open summer-house where Tennyson, with two or three friends, sat in the sun, enjoying the warmth and the lovely lines of lilac. We turned towards the house after a time, going under the budding trees of the grove. There he pointed out some young bushes of Alexandrian laurel—the same, he told us, whose small narrow leaves were used to make the crown for victors in the Olympian games....

Then—can I ever forget?—that delightful evening at Aldworth, when, after dinner, he invited me to his room upstairs. There he smoked his pipe in his high-backed, cane arm-chair, while I sat near. On a little table by the fire were arranged several more of these well-smoked Dublin pipes. Such a large, comfortable "smoke-room"!—with books about everywhere, on tables and chairs. Then he read to me aloud from "Locksley Hall." I think he read all the poem from the beginning to the end; and as Tennyson read on—one seemed almost to feel the pungent, salt sea-breeze blowing from over desolate seas—almost saw visions of the dreary sands lengthening far away. I remember I ventured to ask why the stanza which follows after that line, "And all the wonder that should be," was afterwards omitted:

> In the hall there hangs a picture—Amy's arms about my neck,
> Happy children in a sunbeam, sitting on the ribs of wreck.
> In my life there was a picture—she that clasp'd my neck is flown,
> I was left within the shadow, sitting on the wreck alone.

I began saying the lines, but he knew them quite well and repeated them. I can't think how it is, the answer he returned about this is now, alas! forgot.... Such troublous years have come and gone since that happy Long-Ago. (The omitted stanza would have gone, too, had it not been written down for me by a long-lost friend, Sir Robert Morier.)

So the reading aloud went on, with talk between (and clouds of smoke!), until, I think, past eleven o'clock, when you opened the door, and that—for me —rare dream of poetry and charm abruptly broke.

I saw Tennyson, for the last time, as I followed down the wooded path at Aldworth, on his way to the garden door opening on the heath, his fine, big, Russian hound pacing closely after.

No—once more I saw him, his likeness with all the distinctness sometimes known in the slow-moving white clouds of some glorious autumn day. It was after the end had come, and not long before the grave in Westminster Abbey had received him. I was travelling home on the Great-Western from Somerset. Gazing up idly at the assembled multitude of sun-steeped silver clouds above, suddenly, clear and distinct, my eyes beheld the image of his noble profile as if lying back asleep; the eyes were closed, the head at rest upon the pillow—a sculptured cloud in a snowy cloudland, outlined upon an azure sky.... Not until after several minutes did the vision pass, slowly fading into the infinite blue.

TENNYSON AND HIS TALK ON SOME RELIGIOUS QUESTIONS

By the Right Rev. the BISHOP OF RIPON

Among the happy memories of my life, and they are many, the memory of the kindly welcome accorded to me at Aldworth and at Farringford must always possess a special charm. This will readily be understood by those of my own age; for Tennyson was a name to conjure with in the days of my youth. Slowly but surely his influence crept into our lives: we read in text-books at school that the

> Poet in a golden age was born, with golden stars above,
> Dowered with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn, the love of love.

The thought and the words appealed to me from the first. Then, how I know not, we became familiar with part, at least, of "In Memoriam." Its phrases caught our fancy, and some of our early attempts at versification were cast in the same metre. Then came the "Idylls of the King," and I remember how, when the rest of the party went out one holiday afternoon, I stayed indoors and read the "Idylls" at one sitting. Thus in our youth Tennyson became poet and hero to us. Any one who had seen him or known him became for us invested with a kind of sacred and awful interest; my uncle who lived at Cheltenham grew greater in our eyes when we learned that he had corresponded with him.

Thus our hero-worship grew. We knew indeed that there were those who did not welcome the coming Poet with ardour; we lived, in fact, through the age

of his disparagement to the time of his unchallenged supremacy. It will be interesting, I think, to many to read the following letter written by Rev. Frederick W. Robertson when he was experiencing the freer and fresher intellectual atmosphere of Oxford after the stifling oppressiveness of Cheltenham:

> I had nearly forgotten to tell you that Tennyson is deeply admired here by all the brilliant men. Stanley, our first genius, rates him highly; Hannah, who has guided nearly all the first and double-first class men for the last three years to honours, told me he considers his poetical and psychological powers more varied than any poet he knows. And the "Dread," a choice selection of the most brilliant among the rising men, have pronounced him to be the first poet of the day. So you see I have some to keep me company in my judgment. And at all events he is above ridicule.
>
> Pray inform Miss D—— of all this. One of our first professors raves about him.

When I went up to Cambridge in 1860, Tennyson was the oracle poet among the younger men; but the feeling of doubt still remained among the older men. I recall a friendly dispute between the Senior and a Junior Fellow of my own College. The elder man charged Tennyson with being "misty"; the younger man defended: the elder man cited a passage from "In Memoriam," and challenged the younger to say what it meant. The elder man was so far successful that he drove the younger man to declare that though he could not explain it then, he hoped to enter into its meaning later on. It was a typical

conflict; the older generation could not understand; the younger was under the spell of the Poet, and though unable to interpret everything, believed in Tennyson's message to his own age.

There were charges levelled against Tennyson more serious and more absurd than that of obscurity. The words Scepticism, Pantheism, and even Atheism were heard. One newspaper in a review of "In Memoriam" exclaimed: "Here the poet barely escapes Atheism and plunges into the abyss of Pantheism." Another foolish writer, commenting on the lines:

> But what am I?
> An infant crying in the night,
> An infant crying for the light,
> And with no language but a cry,

remarked, with superb *naïveté*, "May we remind Mr. Tennyson that the darkness is past and that the true light now shineth?" I remember, as late as 1867 or 1868, an evening party at Blackheath when the question was started—"Who is the greatest living poet?" To my amazement and amusement a self-satisfied, but very good man, instantly and oracularly replied, "Bonar—without doubt—Bonar." He meant that excellent and devout-minded man, the Rev. Horatius Bonar, the hymn-writer. These were, no doubt, extreme cases, but stupidity is always extreme. I recall these incidents because they are parts of the story which tells of the difficulties through which Tennyson fought the way to his throne. They serve to recall the prejudices which provoked the resentment and stimulated the attachment of those who, like myself, were brought early under the spell of his enchantment. His story repeated familiar features; he had at first a select

circle of studious admirers; by degrees the general public became aware of the existence in their midst of a true poet. Then timid partisans awoke and demanded credentials of orthodoxy. Persons of this type did not like to be told that—

> There lives more faith in honest doubt,
> Believe me, than in half the creeds.

But meanwhile he had drawn the younger generation to his side: they believed in him, and they were right. In spite of misunderstanding and misinterpretation, Tennyson followed the gleam: he would not stoop to make his judgment blind or prevaricate for popularity's sake. He beat his music out, and those who knew him, as I was privileged to do, during the later years of his life, could realize how truly he had made a larger faith his own.

It fell out naturally when I met him that conversation turned on religion or theological subjects. His mind, courageous, inquiring, honest, sought truth beyond the forms of truth. On the occasion of my first visit to Aldworth, in the smoking-room we talked of the problem of pain, of determinism, of apparent contradictions of faith. That night, indeed, we seemed to talk—

> Of faith, free will, foreknowledge absolute.

But the impression left upon my mind was that we were engaged in no mere scholastic discussion; it was no mere intellectually satisfactory creed which was sought: it was something deeper and more abiding than anything which may be modified in form from age to age; the soul needs an anchorage, and to find it there must be no ignoring of facts and no juggling with them once they are found. In

illustration of this I may relate how once, when walking with him among the heather-clad heights round Aldworth, he spoke of the apparent dualism in Nature: the forces of darkness and light seemed to meet in conflict. “If I were not a Christian,” he said, “I should be perhaps a Parsee.”[73] He felt, however, that if once we accepted the view that this life was a time of education, then the dark things might be found to have a meaning and a value. In the retrospect hereafter the pain and suffering would seem trivial. I think that this idea must have taken hold of his thought as we were conversing; for he suddenly stopped in his walk, and, standing amid the purple landscape, he declaimed the lines, then unpublished:

> The Lord spake out of the skies
> To a man good and a wise:
> “The world and all within it
> Will be nothing in a minute.”
> Then a beggar began to cry:
> “Give me food or else I die.”
> Is it worth his while to eat,
> Or mine to give him meat,
> If the world and all within it
> Were nothing the next minute?

He once quoted to me Hinton’s view that we were not in a position to judge the full meaning of life; that we were in fact looking at the wrong side of things. We saw the work from the underside, and we could not judge of the pattern which was perhaps clear enough on the upper side.

Next day I was able to remind him that he had approved this view of life. He was not well, and I think that the darker aspects loomed larger in his

mind; at any rate, he was speaking more gloomily than usual. When I remarked that God did not take away men till their work was done, he said, “He does; look at the promising young fellows cut off.” Then I brought up Hinton’s theory and illustration, and asked whether we could judge when a man had finished his appointed work. Immediately he acquiesced; the view evidently satisfied him.

He took a deep interest in those borderland questions which sometimes seem so near an answer and yet never are answered. At the hour of death what are the sights which rush upon the vision? Of these he would sometimes speak; he told me how William Allingham, when dying, said to his wife, “I see things beyond your imagination to conceive.” Some vision seemed to come to such at death. One lady in the Isle of Wight exclaimed, as though she saw “Cherubim and Seraphim.” But these incidents did not disturb the steady thought and trust which found its strength far deeper down than in any surface phenomena. He never shirked the hard and dismaying facts of life. Once he made me take to my room Winwoode Reade’s *Martyrdom of Man*. There never was such a passionate philippic against Nature as this book contained. The universe was one vast scene of murder; the deep aspirations and noble visions of men were the follies of flies buzzing for a brief moment in the presence of inexorable destruction. Life was bottled sunshine; death the silent-footed butler who withdrew the cork. The book, with its fierce invective, had a strange rhapsodical charm. It put with irate and verbose extravagance the fact that sometimes

> Nature, red in tooth and claw,
> With ravin shrieked against his creed;

but it failed to see any but one side of the question. The writer saw clearly enough what Tennyson saw, but Tennyson saw much more. He could not make his judgment blind against faith any more than he would make it blind against facts. He saw more clearly because he saw more largely. He distrusted narrow views from whatever side they were advanced. The same spirit which led him to see the danger of the dogmatic temper in so-called orthodox circles led him to distrust it when it came from other quarters. There was a wholesome balance about his mind. Nothing is farther from the truth than to suppose that men of great genius lack mental balance. Among the lesser lights there may be a brilliant but unbalanced energy, but among the greater men it is not so; there is a large and wholesome sanity among these. There is sufficient breadth of grasp to avoid extremes in Dante, Milton, and Shakespeare; it was the same with Tennyson. We may be right, for instance, in classing Tennyson among those

> Whose faith has centre everywhere
> Nor cares to fix itself to form;

but we should be wholly wrong if we supposed that he did not realize the value of form. He knew that faith did not lie in the form, but he knew also the protective value of form to faith; the shell was not the kernel, but the kernel ripened all the better in the shelter of the shell. He realized how sacred was the flesh and blood to which truth divine might be linked, and he uttered the wise caution:

> Hold thou the good: defend it well
> For fear divine philosophy
> Should push beyond her mark and be

Procuress to the lords of Hell.

In his view, as it seemed to me, there were two attitudes of mind towards dogmatic forms—the one impatient of form because form was never adequate to express the whole truth, the other impatient of form[74] because impatient of the truth itself. These two attitudes of mind were poles asunder; they must never be confused together.

I may be allowed to illustrate this discriminating spirit by one or two reminiscences. I once asked him whether they were right who interpreted the three ladies who accompanied King Arthur on his last voyage as Faith, Hope, and Charity. He replied with a touch of (shall I call it?) intellectual impatience: "They do and they do not. They are those graces, but they are much more than those. I hate to be tied down to say, 'This means that,' because the thought in the image is much more than the definition suggested or any specific interpretation advanced." The truth was wider than the form, yet the form was a shelter for the truth. It meant this, but not this only; truth must be able to transcend any form in which it may be presented.

Hence he could see piety under varying forms: for example, he described those who were "pious variers from the Church." This phrase, it may here be related, had a remarkable influence on one man's life, as the following letter, written by a clergyman who had formerly been a Nonconformist, will show. The writer died some few years ago; two of his sons are now good and promising clergymen of the Church of England:

OXFORD VILLAS, GUISELEY, LEEDS,
January 16, 1901.

> MY LORD BISHOP—In reference to your volume on the Poets, may I intrude upon your attention one moment to say that it was Tennyson's phrase in reference to dissenters:
>
> variers from the Church,
>
> in his "Sea Dreams" that first kindled me to earnest thought (some twenty years since) as to my own position in relationship to the Church of the land. The force that moved me lay in the word "pious." Were dissenters more pious than Church people? I regret to say I thought them much less so; and as this conviction deepened I was compelled to make the change for which I am every day more thankful.—I am, my Lord Bishop, your Lordship's devoted servant,
>
> W. HAYWARD ELLIOTT.

I have already spoken of his recognition of the apparent dualism in Nature. His outlook on the universe could not ignore the dark and dismaying facts of existence, and his faith, which rose above the shriek of Nature, was not based upon arguments derived from any survey of external, physical Nature. When he confined his outlook to this, he could see power and mechanism, but he could not from these derive faith. His vision must go beyond the mere physical universe; he must see life and see it whole; he must include that which is highest in Nature, even man, and only then could he find the resting-place of faith. He thus summed up the matter once when we had been walking up and down the "Ball-room" at Farringford: "It is hard," he said, "it is hard to believe in God; but it is harder not to believe. I believe in God, not from what I see in Nature, but

from what I find in man." I took him to mean that the witness of Nature was only complete when it included all that was in Nature, and that the effort to draw conclusions from Nature when man, the highest-known factor in Nature, was excluded, could only lead to mistake. I do not think he meant, however, that external Nature gave no hints of a superintending wisdom or even love, for his own writings show, I think, that such hints had been whispered to him by flower and star; I think he meant that faith did not find her platform finally secure beneath her feet till she had taken count of man. In short, he seemed to me to be near to the position of Thomas Erskine of Linlathen, who said that truth as soon as learned was felt to be held on a much deeper and more unshakable ground than any authority which appealed to mere intellect, namely, on its own discerned truthfulness. The response to all that is highest in Nature is found in the heart of man, and man cannot deny this highest, because it is latent in himself already. But I must continue Tennyson's own words: "It is hard to believe in God, but it is harder not to believe in Him. I don't believe in His goodness from what I see in Nature. In Nature I see the mechanician; I believe in His goodness from what I find in my own breast." I said, "Then you believe that Man is the highest witness of God?" "Certainly," he replied. I said, "Is not that what Christ said and was? He was in man the highest witness of God to Man," and I quoted the recorded words, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." He assented, but said that there were, of course, difficulties in the idea of a Trinity—the Three. "But mind," he said, "Son of God is quite right—that He was."[75] He said that, of course, we must have doctrine, and then he added, "After all, the greatest

thing is Faith." Having said this, he paused, and then recited with earnest emphasis the lines which sang of faith in the reality of the Unseen and Spiritual, of a faith, therefore, which can wait the great disclosure:

> Doubt no longer, that the Highest is the wisest and the best,
> Let not all that saddens Nature blight thy hope, or break thy rest,
> Quail not at the fiery mountain, at the shipwreck, or the rolling
> Thunder, or the rending earthquake, or the famine, or the pest.
>
> Neither mourn if human creeds be lower than the heart's desire;
> Thro' the gates that bar the distance comes a gleam of what is higher.
> Wait till death has flung them open, when the man will make the Maker
> Dark no more with human hatred in the glare of deathless fire.

He was alive to the movements of modern thought. He saw in evolution, if not a fully proved law, yet a magnificent working hypothesis; he could not regard it as a theory hostile to ultimate faith; but far beyond the natural wish to reconcile faith and thought, which he shared with all right-thinking men, was the conviction of the changeless personal relationship between God and man. He might find difficulties about faith and about certain dogmas of faith, such as the Trinity. No doubt, however, the Poet's conception brought the divine into all human life; it showed God in touch with us at all epochs of our existence—in our origin, in our history, in our final self-realization, for He is

Our Father and our Brother and our God.[76]

Religion largely lies in the consciousness of our true relation to Him who made us; and the yearning for the realization of this consciousness found constant expression in Tennyson's works and conversation.[77] Perhaps its clearest expression is to be found in his instructions to his son: "Remember, I want 'Crossing the Bar' to be always at the end of all my works."

I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the Bar.

TENNYSON AND SIR JOHN SIMEON, AND TENNYSON'S LAST YEARS

By LOUISA E. WARD[78]

From the misty dawn of early childhood rises the first image of one who was to fill so large a place in my life and that of those dear to me. As I, not yet four years old, lay in my father's arms and he said to me the "Morte d'Arthur," there blended with the picture of the wild winter mere and the mighty King carried, dying, to its shore, a vision of the man who, my father told me, lived somewhere amongst us and who could write words which seemed to me more

beautiful than anything I had ever heard.

It was several years before I again came upon the "Morte d'Arthur," when I was a girl of ten or eleven, and I remember how eagerly I seized upon it, and how the fairy glamour of my infancy came back to me as I read it.

It was in the autumn of 1852 that Lord and Lady (then Mr. and Mrs.) Tennyson came to Farringford. They had been looking for a house, and they found themselves one summer evening on the terrace walk, with the rosy sunset lighting up the long line of coast to St. Catherine's Point, and the gold-blue sea with its faint surf line mingling with the rosiness: and they said, "We will go no further, this must be our home." An ideal home it was, ideal in its loveliness, its repose, in its wild but beautiful gardens, and more than all ideal in its calm serenity, the hospitable simplicity, the high thought and utter nobleness of aim and life which that pair brought with them, and which through the long years of change, of sickness, and of sorrow, of which every home must be the scene, made the atmosphere of Farringford impossible to be forgotten by those who had the happiness of breathing it.





THE CORNER OF THE STUDY AT FARRINGFORD
WHERE TENNYSON WROTE,
WITH HIS DEERHOUND "LUFRA" AND THE TERRIER
"WINKS" IN THE FOREGROUND.
From a drawing by W. Biscombe Gardner.

Hallam was at that time a baby, and very soon after their arrival at Farringford beautiful Lionel came to gladden the hearts of his parents. It was on the day of Lionel's christening that my father paid his first visit to Farringford, and found the family party just returning from church. My father had already been

introduced to Tennyson at Lady Ashburton's house in London, on which occasion he had walked away with Carlyle and had expressed to him his pleasure at meeting so great a man as Tennyson. "Great man," said Carlyle, "yes, he is nearly a great man, but not quite; he stands on a dunghill with yelping dogs about him, and if he were quite a great man, he would call down fire from Heaven, and burn them up"—"but," he went on, speaking of his poetry, "he has the grip on it."

My father had entertained the greatest admiration for Tennyson's poetry since the day when, both being undergraduates at Christchurch, his friend Charles Wynne brought him the first published volume, saying to him, "There is something new for you who love poetry." And his delight may be imagined in now having the Poet for a neighbour. The intimacy between Farringford and Swainston grew apace. My mother and Lady Tennyson, though poor health and numerous occupations interfered with their frequent meetings, conceived a very real affection for each other, which was only cut short by my mother's early death, which left Lady Tennyson with a deep feeling and pity for her children.

During the early years of Farringford, it was one of my father's great and frequent pleasures to ride or drive over in the summer afternoons; he, in turn with her husband, would draw Lady Tennyson in her garden chair, and with the two boys skipping on before them, they would go long expeditions through the lanes, and even up the downs; then back through the soft evening air to dinner, and the long evening of talk and reading which knitted that "fair companionship" and made of it "such a friendship as had mastered time," and which we may well believe

has re-formed itself still more perfectly now that both those beloved souls have “crossed the bar.” The Tennysons sometimes came over to Swainston for a few days, and I remember his being there on the wonderful July night in 1858 when the tail of the great comet passed over Arcturus. His admiration and excitement knew no bounds; he could not sit at the dinner-table, but rushed out perpetually to look at the glorious sight, repeating: “It is a besom of destruction sweeping the sky.”

Little Lionel was that same night taken from his bed to the window, and, opening his sleepy eyes on the unaccustomed splendour, he said, “Am I in Heaven?”

The writing and publication of “Maud” in 1855 was largely due to my father.

Looking through some papers one day at Farringford with his friend, he came upon the exquisite lyric “O that ’twere possible,” and said, “Why do you keep these beautiful lines unpublished?” Tennyson told him that the poem had appeared years before in the *Tribute*, an ephemeral publication, but that it was really intended to belong to a dramatic poem which he had never been able to carry out. My father gave him no peace till he had persuaded him to set about the poem, and not very long after, he put “Maud” into his hand.

It was about this time, but I do not remember what year, that Tennyson gave my father the manuscript of “In Memoriam.”[79] He had often asked him to give him a manuscript poem, and he had put him off, but one day at Swainston he asked my father to reach him a particular book from a shelf in the library, and as he did so, down fell the MS. which Tennyson had put there as a surprise. Never was gift

more valued and appreciated by its recipient. I have always felt grateful to him for the continual pleasure which it gave my father during the whole of his life.

Tennyson's visits were eagerly looked forward to by us children. He would talk to us a good deal, and was fond of puzzling and mystifying us in a way that was very fascinating. He would take the younger ones on his knee, and give them sips of his port after dinner, and I remember my father saying to one of my sisters: "Never forget that the greatest of poets has kissed you and made you drink from his glass."

As I got older I was sometimes allowed to drive over to Farringford with my father, and, need I say, I looked forward to these as the red-letter days of my life. Not only were the talk and intellectual atmosphere intoxicating to me, but I became passionately attached to Lady Tennyson. Praise of her would be unseemly; but I may quote what my father was fond of saying of her, that she was "a piece of the finest china, the mould of which had been broken as soon as she was made." It was not, however, till after my mother's death in 1860 that my real grown-up intimacy with them began, and that Farringford became the almost second home which for some years it was to me. During my father's absences in London or elsewhere, I was free to go and stay there as often and for as long as I liked, and was almost on the footing of a daughter of the house. I used to go for long walks, sometimes alone with Tennyson, sometimes in the company of other guests, of whom Mr. Jowett was one of the most frequent. I wish I had written down the talks with which he made the hours pass like minutes during our walks. Forgetful of the youth and ignorance of his companion, he would rise to the

highest themes, thread his way through the deepest speculations, till I caught the infection of his mind, and the questions of matter and spirit, of space and the infinite, of time and of eternity, and such kindred subjects, became to me the burning questions, the supreme interests of life! But however absorbed he might be in earnest talk, his eye and ear were always alive to the natural objects around him: I have known him stop short in a sentence to listen to a blackbird's song, to watch the sunlight glint on a butterfly's wing, or to examine a field flower at his feet. The lines on "The Flower" were the result of an investigation of the "love-in-idleness" growing on a wall in the Farringford garden. He made them nearly on the spot, and said them to me next day. Trees and plants had a special attraction for him, and he longed to see the vegetation of the Tropics. Years ago he scolded my husband more than half in earnest for not having told him in time that he was going to winter in Madeira, that he might have gone with him.

But to return to my girlish days at Farringford! The afternoon walks were followed by the long talks in the firelight by the side of Lady Tennyson's sofa, talks less eager, less thrilling than those I have recalled; but so helpful, so tender, full of the wisdom of one who had learnt to look upon life and all it embraces from one standpoint only, and that the very highest! Then dinner with the two boys (their long fair hair hanging over their shoulders and their picturesque dresses as they are seen in Mr. Watts's picture in the drawing-room at Aldworth) waiting as little pages on the guests at table, followed by the delightful dessert, for which, according to the old College fashion, we adjourned to the drawing-room. The meal was seasoned with merry genial talk,

unexpected guests arriving, and always finding the same warm welcome, for none came who were not tried and trusted friends. After dessert Tennyson went up to his study[80] (the little room at the top of the house, from the leads outside which such sky pageants have been seen, shooting stars, eclipses, and Northern Lights) with any men friends who were in the house. They smoked there for an hour or two, and then came down to tea, unless, as sometimes happened, we all joined them upstairs; and then there was more talk or reading aloud of published or, still better, unpublished poems. He would sometimes read from other poets; Shakespeare, Milton, Pope, and some lyrics of Campbell being what he often chose; and he taught me to know and appreciate Crabbe, whom he placed very high in the rank of English poets.

One day Tennyson came behind me as I sat at breakfast, and dropped on my plate the MS. of the "Higher Pantheism" which he had composed, or at any rate perfected, during the night. Another day he took me into the garden to see a smoking yew, and said the lines on it which he had just made and afterwards interpolated in "In Memoriam." My father was with him when they came upon a bed of forget-me-not in the garden and he exclaimed "the heavens upbreaking through the earth," the lines which he afterwards applied to the bluebells in the description of the spring ride of Guinevere and Lancelot to Arthur's court. Once he pleased and touched me inexpressibly: he was talking of the different way in which friends speak before your face and behind your back, and he said, "Now I should not mind being behind the curtain while L. S. was talking of me, and there are very few of whom I could say that."

Years went on, and changes came; my father's re-election to Parliament in 1865 made our seasons in London longer and more regular than they had been, and though there was still constant and delightful intercourse with Farringford during the autumn and winter, there was necessarily less during the Session. Some glorious days there were, however, when at Easter or at Whitsuntide my father went down to Swainston, and I sometimes accompanied him. We always went over to Farringford either to spend a night or two, or to drive back through the spring night with its scented breath and its mad revelry of cuckoos and nightingales vying with each other as to which could outshout the other, and my father, fresh from communion with his friend, would open himself out as he rarely did at any other time or place.

It was about this time that Tennyson and his wife, worried beyond bearing by the rudeness and vulgarity of the tourists, who considered that they could best show admiration for the Poet by entirely refusing to respect his privacy, determined to find another house for themselves during the summer months, and turned their thoughts to Blackdown and its neighbourhood. One summer they rented a farm on Blackdown called, I think, Greyshott, and on a fine morning, April 23, 1868, we stood, a party of some fifteen friends, to see the foundation-stone laid of Aldworth, the new home which, to more recent, though not to the older friends, has become almost as much associated with its owner as Farringford, and received the sorrowful consecration of having been the scene of his passing away.

About this time Tennyson took to coming oftener to London. On one occasion he took me with him to the British Museum, and we did not get beyond the Elgin

Marbles, such was their fascination for him. Another day he came to our house at luncheon time; most of the family happened to be out, and he proposed that we should go to the Zoological Gardens. London was at its fullest, and I feared, though I did not say it, that he would not escape recognition, which was of all things what he most hated. However, all went well for some time until we went into the Aquarium, and he became greatly absorbed in the sea monsters, when I heard a whisper in the crowd, "That's Tennyson," and knew that in another minute he would be surrounded; so I suddenly discovered that the heat of the Aquarium was unbearable and carried him off unwillingly to a quieter part of the gardens—he never found out my ruse.

My mind lingers willingly on the last years of the sixties. As I look back the two-and-twenty years seem, as did another "two and thirty years," a "mist that rolls away." Of the circle of dear friends who were so much to one another some still remain to gladden us with their presence, but how many have gone where "beyond these voices there is peace"—Mr. George Venables, Mr. John Ball, Mr. Browning, Sir F. Pollock, Mr. Brookfield, Mr. Henry Cowper, Mr. Laurence Oliphant. The circle was complete as the Table of Arthur before the fatal quest had made its gaps; here death was the quest, and each one who sought, alas, has found it!

The first to pass away was my father, and as his best friend walked in the garden at Swainston on the day, May 31, 1870, on which he came to see him laid to rest, he made those verses,[81] than which few lovelier tributes were ever paid from friend to friend, and which will keep the name of the "Prince of Courtesy" green even in the long years to come.

The autumn and winter ’71-’72 my eldest brother and I spent together at Freshwater. We rented Mrs. Cameron’s little house which opens by a door of communication into the large hall of Dimbola, the house in which she lived. The evening we arrived, she suddenly appeared in our drawing-room saying, “When strangers take this house I keep the door between us locked, with friends never”; and locked it never was. We lived almost as part of the family, and it was a real enjoyment to be in such close intimacy with one of the most original, and at the same time most tender-hearted and generous women I have ever known. She was on very intimate terms at Farringford, and would speak her mind to the Poet in a very amusing way. On one occasion a party of Americans came to Freshwater, and Mrs. Cameron sent them up to Farringford with a note of introduction. Tennyson was tired or busy, and they were not admitted. They returned to Mrs. Cameron full of their disappointment, and she put on her bonnet (I can see her now as she walked through the lanes, her red or blue Chuddah shawl always trailing behind her, and apparently not much the worse for the dust that fringed it), and insisted upon their going back with her to Farringford. Having made her way to Tennyson, she said to him solemnly, “Alfred, these good people have come 3000 miles to see a lion and they have found a bear.” He laughed, relented, and received the strangers most courteously.

Mrs. Cameron’s beautiful white-haired old husband in his royal purple dressing-gown was a most interesting personality. In addition to the large experience of men and things which his many years of official life in India had given him, and which made his society delightful, he was a very fine

classical scholar of the old school, and in his old age, when blindness and infirmity debarred him in great measure from his books, it was his solace to repeat by heart odes of Horace, pages of Virgil, and long passages from the Greek poets.

Easter 1872 brought a bright and merry gathering to Freshwater. One of Mrs. Cameron's charming relations (they had lived with her for years as adopted daughters) was about to marry, and go out with her husband to India, and the "Primrose wedding" brought a large influx of young people, friends and relations of Mrs. Cameron and the bride, in addition to the visitors who always made Easter a pleasant time. The weather was perfect, the "April airs that fan the Isle of Wight" especially soft and balmy. Parties of twenty or thirty met every evening in Mrs. Cameron's hall or in the Farringford drawing-room. Nearly every one there knew or got to know Lord and Lady Tennyson. He was in particularly genial health and spirits; he joined the young people in their midnight walks to the sea, in their flower-seeking expeditions, in one of which some one was fortunate enough to find a grape hyacinth in one of the Farringford fields. He read aloud nearly as much as he was asked to, and danced as vigorously as the youngest present at two dances that were given. It was during the first of these dances that a young neighbour became engaged to the lady whom he shortly afterwards married. Very soon after the decisive moment had passed, and when the event was naturally supposed to be a profound secret, Tennyson put the girl's mother, with whom he happened to be sitting, completely out of countenance by saying, without a suspicion of malice, and without for the moment recognizing the young couple who passed him, "I wot they be two

lovyers dear." When he was shortly afterwards told of the engagement, he twinkled very much over his rather premature but very apposite announcement.

My marriage took place in the autumn of 1872, and my husband, who already knew the Tennysons, was at once received into their intimacy, and their friendship was henceforth one of the greatest privileges of our joint life. Tennyson and Hallam were present at our wedding, and the former held our eldest boy in his arms when he was but a day or two old.

The Easter of 1873 saw us again at Freshwater with another pleasant meeting of friends. On that occasion Tennyson said to me, "Why do you not ask me to dinner?" It need not be said that we at once gave the invitation, though not a little nervous at the thought of the lodging-house fare and arrangements to which we were bidding him; but our dear old landlady did her very best. We asked a small party (Lady Florence Herbert and Leslie Stephen were our guests) to meet him and Hallam; he was himself in the best of spirits, and our little dinner-party proved a great success.

A few years later the Tennysons took a house in London three or four years running (one spring they had my stepmother's house in Eaton Place). Tennyson appeared to have in great measure lost his dislike to mixing in general society, and they collected about them a very interesting and varied circle of friends. I cannot help recalling an incident which occurred one evening at their house, which, though painful at the moment, is pleasant to look back upon on account of the affectionate and generous apology it elicited. A large party was at their house one evening, and Tennyson was

persuaded to read aloud, and chose the “Revenge.” Something or other, I suppose the “Inquisition Dogs” and the “Devildoms of Spain,” excited him as he read, and by the time he had finished he had worked himself into a state, which I have occasionally, but seldom, seen at other times, of fury against the Catholic Church, as exemplified by the Inquisition, persecution of heretics, etc.; in fact, all the artillery of prejudice at which Catholics can afford to laugh. It happened, however, that my husband, one of my sisters, and myself were the only Catholics there, and were sitting together in the same part of the room. As he talked he turned towards us and addressed us personally in a violent tirade which loyalty to our convictions made it impossible for us not to answer, though our attempts at explanation and contradiction were drowned in his fierce and eloquent denunciations. Every one in the room looked very uncomfortable. I myself hardly knew whether to laugh or cry, and was never more relieved than, when his flow of words had exhausted itself, he began to read another poem. Before the end of the evening, however, he felt that his outbreak had not been kind or courteous, and before we left he took us all three into his study, and made so sweet and gracious an *amende* that we loved him, if possible, more than ever.

Any one who has read carefully the “Idylls of the King,” “Sir Galahad,” “St. Agnes,” among many of his poems, still more any one who has spoken with him intimately, cannot fail to realize the strong attraction which many Catholic doctrines and practices had for Tennyson, and the reverence with which he regarded the Catholic Church as standing alone among jarring sects and creeds, majestic, venerable, and invulnerable. His mind was also an essentially and

intensely religious one, and I know that one of my father's attractions for him lay in the religious tone of *his* mind. On these points, however, I will say no more. In jotting down these few remembrances of a friendship which is amongst my most precious possessions, I settled with myself to refrain entirely from any presentation of what I believed to be Tennyson's views on theology, metaphysics, or politics, no less than from any discussion of his poetic greatness. I want nothing but to sketch the *man* as he always seemed to me, one of the noblest, truest, and most lovable of God's creatures, and one who, even without the genius that has crowned his brow with never-fading laurel, must, by weight of character and beauty of soul alone, stand a giant amid his fellow-men!

We spent the Christmas holidays of 1890-91 at Freshwater with our five children; not one of them will forget the delightful intercourse with Farringford during those weeks, and the Christmas Tree arranged by Mrs. Hallam Tennyson for her little Lionel in the large room known as the ball-room.[82] Kind words and presents were showered on every one, and I think the beloved grandparents enjoyed it as much as their fourteen-months-old grandson, as they sat in the midst of their servants and cottagers (some of whom were amongst the oldest of their friends), and the guests, little and great, whom they had asked to share their Christmas festival. Our two eldest children have a more precious remembrance of that time and the following Easter, which we also spent at Freshwater, for Tennyson read aloud to them for the first and only time. To our girl he read "Old Roä" and the "Bugle Song," and to our boy the "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington." He read this in April 1891; it was the last time I heard him read, and

I look upon it as a special act of kindness; he said he did not like to read to children—they did not understand, were bored—and he only yielded to my strong entreaties. If, however, he saw, as I think he did, the flushed cheeks and big tearful eyes of our fourteen-year-old schoolboy, he must have felt that he had a listener who *did* understand and appreciate!

Through the early part of the winter of 1890 Tennyson was remarkably well, walking in the morning with my husband and other friends, and taking long walks in the afternoon up and down the ball-room, when he liked to have one or two companions who would amuse him, and whom he would amuse with witty stories and *bons mots*. He had always a great pleasure in racy anecdotes, and the humorous side of life, and during the last years this increased, so that his friends treasured up every good story they heard to repeat to him at their next meeting.

Towards the end of the Christmas holidays Tennyson caught cold, and fears of a return of gout and bronchitis confined him to his room. My husband had already returned to London, and I was remaining only a few days longer and thinking sadly enough that I should not be able to see Tennyson again before I left, when on one of the last evenings I was spending at Farringford, he sent for me to his room and then, to my delighted surprise, proposed to read to me. I demurred, fearing it might be bad for him, but he insisted, and for half an hour read me one unpublished poem after another,[83] his voice nearly as strong as I had ever known it, and it seemed to me even more pathetic and beautiful.

That Easter of 1891, among many pleasant

recollections of Farringford and of the group of friends who paid their daily visit there, has one which I like to set against the stories of Tennyson's unapproachableness and gruffness to those who went to see him, which are so often circulated, and which, in nine cases out of ten, meant that those who presented themselves to him had chosen an unfortunate time, or were in some respect deficient in tact or politeness. An American friend, professor of literature at Harvard, was staying with us. His admiration and veneration for the great master of verse were unbounded, and he would, I feel sure, have crossed the Atlantic merely to see and speak with him. The morning after his arrival, my husband took him to Farringford, where they found Tennyson somewhat annoyed by a communication from an unknown American admirer, enclosing a photograph of the Poet, upon which he requested him to sign his name; the coolness of the request being heightened by the fact that the sender had posted his letter unstamped. My husband said to his friend, "Now, M., here's your opportunity; put down sixpence and pay the national debt, and Tennyson will sign you the receipt on this photograph." He immediately took the joke, laughed, bade the professor take back his sixpence, and signed the photograph for him.

On one of the last days we were at Freshwater that Easter, Tennyson met our youngest child of five in the road, and addressed her, to her great amusement: "Madam! you've a damask rose on either cheek, and another on your forehead; rosy lips, golden hair, and a straw bonnet."

I never again saw the household at Farringford after April 1891. Once more we were at Aldworth in October of that year, when Tennyson signed for us a

photograph from Mr. Watts's last picture. He was tired before we left and had gone to rest in his room, but I begged Hallam to let me go in to wish him good-bye. Had I known that it *was* good-bye, and that for the last time I looked on his face and kissed his dear hands, what could I have said? Never could I express the sorrowing love, the immense gratitude, which overflow my heart as I think of my father's friend and mine!

The following letter was written by Tennyson to Catherine Lady Simeon after the death of his friend:

ALDWORTH, *June 27th, 1870*.

MY DEAR LADY SIMEON—Of course nothing could be more grateful to me than some memorial of my much-loved and ever-honoured friend, the only man on earth, I verily believe, to whom I could, and have more than once opened my whole heart; and he also has given me in many a conversation at Farringford in my little attic his utter confidence. I knew none like him for tenderness and generosity, not to mention his other noble qualities, and he was the very Prince of Courtesy; but I need not tell you this; anything, little book, or whatever you will choose, send me or bring when you come; and do pray come on the 4th July, and we will be all alone; and Louie can come, when she will, and you can spare her.—Believe me, always affectionately yours,

A. TENNYSON.

SIR JOHN SIMEON

By Aubrey de Vere

The world external knew thee but in part:
It saw and honoured what was least in thee;
The loyal trust, the inborn courtesy;
The ways so winning, yet so pure from art;
The cordial reverence, keen to all desert,
All save thine own; the accost so frank and free;
The public zeal that toiled, but not for fee,
And shunned alike base praise, and hireling's mart.
These things men saw; but deeper far than these
The under-current of thy soul worked on
Unvexed by surface-ripple, beam, or breeze,
And unbeheld its way to ocean won:
Life of thy life was still that Christian Faith
The sophist scorns. It failed thee not in death.

TENNYSON

By ARTHUR SIDGWICK, Fellow of Corpus Christi, Oxford, and sometime Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge.

(Read in the Chapel of Trinity College, Cambridge, October 30, 1909.[84])

We are met here to-day to do honour to the memory and the life's work of one of the greatest of Trinity's sons, who has also won for himself—few lovers of poetry here or anywhere can feel a doubt—a high and secure place in the glorious roll of English Poets, that roll which records the poetic achievements of over 500 years.

In accepting (with whatever misgivings) the request of the College authorities to speak some preliminary words in appreciation of the Poet, I do not propose to deal in any detail with the history of his life and work, on which the biography has thrown such interesting and welcome light. The most that can here be attempted is to select a few aspects and illustrations of Tennyson's life-long devotion to his art, such as may serve to bring out something of those gifts and qualities which, wherever English poetry is read, are felt to give to his work its special charm and value.

Though I must pass the early years almost in silence, I cannot refrain from quoting the delightful tale, first made known (I believe) by Miss Thackeray,[85] how at the age of five the Poet was seen with outspread arms in a high wind, sailing gaily along and shouting his first line of poetry

I hear a voice that's speaking in the wind

—he did indeed all his life hear that voice and all other Nature-voices; and also the other tale of ten years later, how on the news of Byron's death (in 1824) the boy went out, desolate, and carved the sad tidings on the sandstone, and (to use his own words) "thought everything over and finished for every one, and that nothing else mattered."

Such despairing grief has seemed to some readers extravagant, to be excused on the plea of youth—he was only fifteen: but it must not be forgotten that Byron's death was the final blow of a triple fatality such as finds no parallel in the history of literature. Three men of striking genius and rich poetic gifts—Byron, Shelley, and Keats—were all prematurely lost to the world within four years (1821-4). The fervid sorrow of the impulsive and gifted boy of fifteen, so far from being extravagant, must have been shared by countless readers of all ages who cared for poetry, not in England only.

It is true that as the years went on the youthful sympathy of Tennyson with what has been called the Revolutionary poetry was materially modified—perhaps especially in the case of Shelley. Yet there is a striking letter of the date 1834—when Shelley had been dead twelve years, and Tennyson was twenty-five—which should not be forgotten. Henry Taylor had attacked the Byron-Shelley school of poetry; and Tennyson, while not disputing much of his general judgment, adds this penetrating comment: "It may be that he (Taylor) does not sufficiently take into consideration the peculiar strength evolved by such writers as Byron and Shelley, who, however mistaken they may be, did yet give the world *another heart and new pulses*, and so we are kept going."

Matthew Arnold was a fine critic and a poet of high distinction, but I have always felt, if we compare his somewhat severe attitude towards the earlier school with that of Tennyson, that it was the latter who showed the truer insight, the wider sympathy, and the juster appreciation.

Of his Cambridge life, 1828-30, two main points stand out: the grievous want he felt of any real stimulus or inspiration in the instruction provided by the authorities; and, secondly, the remarkable group of distinguished men of his own age with whom his college life was passed. As to the first, the scathing lines written at the time, and published with his express consent in the biography, are more eloquent than any description could be. After naming all the glories of the Colleges—their portals, gardens, libraries, chapels, "doctors, proctors and deans"—"all these," he cries, "shall not avail you when the Daybeam sports, new-risen over Albion ..." and the poem ends with the reason:

> Because your manner sorts
> Not with this age wherefrom ye stand apart,
> Because the lips of little children preach
> Against you,—*you that do profess to teach*
> *And teach us nothing, feeding not the heart*.

On the other hand, this lack (of official wisdom) was more than supplied by the friends with whom he lived—James Spedding, Monckton Milnes (afterwards Lord Houghton), Trench, Alford, Brookfield, Blakesley, Thompson (afterwards Master), Merivale, Stephen Spring-Rice, J. Kemble, Heath, C. Buller, Monteith, Tennant, and above all Arthur Hallam. Thirty-five years later Lord Houghton justly said of this group of friends that "for the

wealth of their promise they were a body of men such as this University has seldom contained." To this should be added the special influence of the "Apostles," to which Society most of these friends belonged, who had organized from the first regular weekly meetings for essays and discussions, where no topic was barred, and speech was absolutely free. The immense stimulus of such discussion to thought, to study, to readiness and power of argument, to widening the range of intellectual interests and literary judgment and appreciation, must be obvious to all. And we must not forget that the years covered by young Tennyson's residence at Cambridge were precisely the period of the keenest intellectual stir and the stormiest political warfare that preceded the great Reform Bill.

To return to the poetry. Passing over the purely juvenile *Poems by two Brothers* printed in his eighteenth year, we have, in 1830, the first book of poems which have partially survived the mature and fastidious taste which suppressed so much of the early work. Even here, half the pieces have been withdrawn, and much of the rest re-written: what remains is rather slight—the Isabels and Claribels and Adelines and Lilians and Eleanores, poems which in some critics' views border on the trivial. Really they should be regarded as experiments in lyric measures: and the careful student will note the signs of the poet's fine ear and keen eye for nature: but the depths were not sounded.

Two years later came the second volume (1832). Again much has been withdrawn, much re-written: but when in this collection we find "Œnone," "The Palace of Art," "A Dream of Fair Women," and "The Lotos-eaters," we see that we have the real poet at

last.

"The Palace of Art" is an attempt to trace the Nemesis of selfish culture, secluding itself from social human life and duty. After three years of these exclusive delights, the man's outraged nature—or conscience if you will—reasserts itself in a kind of incipient madness: the soul of him sees visions. Then a weird passage:

> But in dark corners of her palace stood
> Uncertain shapes; and unawares
> On white-eyed phantasms weeping tears of blood,
> And horrible nightmares,
>
> And hollow shades enclosing hearts of flame,
> And, with dim fretted foreheads all,
> On corpses three-months-old at noon she came,
> That stood against the wall.

The horrors, like Gorgons and Furies of ancient poets, are perhaps a trifle too material; but in the description of the Nemesis there are touches of real power, which at least are impressive and arresting.

"Œnone" is perhaps the most absolutely beautiful of these early poems, and for the triumph of melodious sound, and finished picturesqueness of description, the opening lines are unsurpassed. We should also note that it took more than one edition to bring it to its present perfection of form. It is very well known, but no one will object to hear it again:

> 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,
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.
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.

Before I pass on from "Œnone," I may perhaps add a word or two on Tennyson's classical poetry generally, and his debt to the great ancient masterpieces.

He was, perhaps, not exactly a scholar in what I may call the narrow professional sense; but in the broadest and deepest and truest sense he was a *great* scholar. Direct imitations of classical form, even when they show such power and poetry as Swinburne's "Atalanta" and "Erechtheus," have always something artificial about them. But in all Tennyson's classic pieces—"Œnone," "Ulysses," "Demeter," "Tithonus," the legendary subjects—and in the two historic subjects, "Lucretius" and "Boädicea," the classical tradition is there with full detail, but by the poet's art it is transmuted. "Œnone" is epic in form, the rest are brief monodramas; the material is all ancient, and in many subtle ways the spirit; the handling is modern and original. In translations—too few—Tennyson can only be called consummate: his version of one

passage of the *Iliad* (viii. 552) makes all other translations seem second-rate. Let me quote a few lines:

> And these all night upon the bridge of war
> Sat glorying; many a fire before them blazed:
> As when in heaven the stars about the moon
> Look beautiful, when all the winds are laid,
> And every height comes out, and jutting peak
> And valley, and *the immeasurable heavens*
> *Break open to their highest*,[86] and all the stars
> Shine, and the Shepherd gladdens in his heart:
> So many a fire between the ships and stream
> Of Xanthus blazed before the towers of Troy,
> A thousand on the plain; and close by each
> Sat fifty in the blaze of burning fire;
> And eating hoary grain and pulse the steeds,
> Fixt by their cars, waited the golden dawn.

The passage, let me add, is a crucial test of the power of a translator, for this reason: it is a plain, simple description of the Trojan camp-fires in the darkness, with a simile or comparison of the sight to a clearance of the sky at night and the sudden shining of the multitude of stars. With the infallible instinct of Greek Poetry there is a rapid lift in the style, a sudden glorious phrase ὑπερράγη ἄσπετος αἰθήρ, to suggest adequately the magnificent sight of the sudden clearance. It is this effect that is difficult to give in the translation; and it is exactly this splendid climax that Tennyson's incomparable rendering, "And the immeasurable heavens break open to their highest," so perfectly conveys.

Again, in the metrical imitations—which are deliberately somewhat in the vein of sport and artifice—Tennyson alone, it seems to me, has exactly done what he intended, and shown what English effects can be produced by a master's hand, even in these unfamiliar measures.

Of the serious classic pieces one of the most beautiful and moving is "Tithonus." The tale is familiar: the beautiful youth Tithonus was beloved by the goddess of the Dawn, and her love bestowed immortality on him; *but they both forgot to ask for immortal youth*. So he grew old: and the pathos of the boon, granted by love at love's request, thus turning out a curse, is the motive of the tale. He speaks:

> Yet hold me not for ever in thine East:
> How can my nature longer mix with thine?
> Coldly thy rosy shadows bathe me, cold
> Are all thy lights, and cold my wrinkled feet
> Upon thy glimmering thresholds, when the steam
> Floats up from those dim fields about the homes
> Of happy men that have the power to die,
> And grassy barrows of the happier dead.
> Release me, and restore me to the ground;
> Thou seëst all things, thou wilt see my grave:
> Thou wilt renew thy beauty morn by morn;
> I earth in earth forget these empty courts,
> And thee returning on thy silver wheels.

A great scholar has said that it is one of the most incomparable powers of poetry *to make sad things beautiful*, and so to go some way towards healing the sorrow in the reader's heart. He was speaking of Greek Tragedy; but there is, I think, a deep truth in

the saying, and it is not confined to that particular form of poetry. And I know no better instance of the truth than the singularly beautiful poem quoted above.

But the classic influences are, of course, not limited to the avowed borrowings from ancient legend. There are constantly lines in Tennyson where the student of ancient poetry recognizes a phrase—a turn—an echo—beautiful in themselves, and giving a special pleasure to the instructed reader; such a line as "When the first matin-song hath wakened loud," which occurs in the "Address to Memory"—the striking early poem containing the description of his Somersby home—and is itself an exquisitely turned translation from Sophocles' *Electra*. So again we have an echo from Homer through Virgil, in the half-playful line, "This way and that dividing the swift mind"; or, again, the vivid simile from Theocritus in the bold description:

> And arms on which the standing muscles sloped,
> As slopes a wild brook o'er a little stone,
> Running too vehemently to break upon it. [87]

—where the reader with an ear will note the bold metrical variation adding so much to the effect. So again the Poet himself has told us how the famous phrase for the kingfisher, "The sea-blue bird of March," arose one day when he was haunted by the lovely stanza of Alcman (Greek lyric poet) about the "halcyon" whom he calls "the sea-blue bird of spring." The fact is that Tennyson had an inborn instinct for the subtle power of language, and for musical sound—in a word, for that insight, finish, feeling for beauty in phrase and thought and *thing*,

and that perfection of form, which, taken all together, we call poetry, and he is, like Virgil and Milton, a true son of the Greeks: and if his open imitations are few, the influence of the springs from which he drank is none the less powerful and pervading.

In 1842 came a carefully revised selection of the earlier books—he was always revising and improving—along with a large number of new poems.

I will pass over the English Idylls, which, in spite of beautiful touches, have never as a whole appealed to me. But, setting these aside, there are a few pieces which I cannot pass by without a word. They are "Love and Duty," the political poems, and songs. "Morte d'Arthur" I leave over till we reach the Idylls.

"Love and Duty" is a passionate tragedy, the parting of two lovers at the call of duty. Perhaps the high-wrought pathos is a sign of youth; but youth may be a strength as well as a weakness; and the lines are surely of extraordinary beauty and force. I will quote the last passage, for a reason which will appear:

> Should my Shadow cross thy thoughts
> Too sadly for their peace, remand it thou
> For calmer hours to Memory's darkest hold,
> If not to be forgotten—not at once—
> Not all forgotten. Should it cross thy dreams,
> O might it come like one that looks content,
> With quiet eyes unfaithful to the truth,
> And point thee forward to a distant light,
> Or seem to lift a burthen from thy heart
> And leave thee freër, till thou wake refresh'd
> Then when the first low matin-chirp hath grown
> Full quire, and morning driv'n her plow of

pearl
Far furrowing into light the mounded rack,
Beyond the fair green field and eastern sea.

Certain critics have found fault with the splendid description of Dawn, as being untrue to nature; a lover in such a crisis, they think, would not be concerned with such images. I regard this suggestion as wholly at fault. The tragedy, the parting, has come to pass: the vision of dawn is a *hope* for *her*, now that the new life, apart from each other, has to begin for both of them. If the broken love was all, if they could not look beyond, the parting would have been different—like Lancelot and Guinevere —"Stammering and staring; a madness of farewells." But here the note is higher. The passion barred from its issue rushes into new channels, and the exalted mood finds its only adequate vent in the rapturous vision of a future dawn, the symbol of his hopes for her, those hopes into which his sacrificed love is translated.

In the political poems we have a new departure. It is easy to idealize freedom, revolution, or war: and the ancients found it easy to compose lyrics on kings, athletes, warriors, or other powerful persons. From the days of Tyrtaeus and Pindar, to Byron, Shelley, and Swinburne, one or other of these themes has been the seed of song. But the praise of ordered liberty, of settled government, of political moderation, is far harder to idealize in poetry. It has been the peculiar aim of Tennyson to be the constitutional, and in this sense the national, poet: and it is his peculiar merit and good fortune to have succeeded in giving eloquent and forcible expression to the ideas suggested by these aims.

I will not quote the poems about "the Falsehood of extremes," or "the land of just and old renown where freedom slowly broadens down from precedent to precedent," because these poems, terse and forcible summaries as they are, have suffered, like other epigrammatic maxims in verse, from vulgarizing quotation. It is not the Poet's fault in the least; in fact it is due to his very merits—to the memorable brevity, truth, and point of the phrasing. I will quote another—perhaps the most remarkable—of these political poems, "Love thou thy land." It is close packed with thought, and must have been especially hard to write, since the Poet's problem was to express in terse and picturesque and imaginative language what at bottom is philosophic and even prosaic detail. Nevertheless, where the material lends itself at all to imaginative handling we get effects that are impressive and even superb. Take a few lines —I cannot quote at length:

> Oh yet, if Nature's evil star
> Drive men in manhood, as in youth,
> 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,
> 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;
>
> 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.

The last couplet seems to me—where all is powerful and imaginative—to be a master-stroke of terse and pointed expression. It would be hardly an exaggeration to say that it sums up human history in regard to one point—namely, the disturbing and even desolating effect of the new Political Idea, until its triumph comes, bringing a higher and more stable adjustment, and a peace more righteous and secure.

Far more widely known than these didactic poems, rich as they are in poetry and thought, are the patriotic odes—the three greatest being the poems on the Duke of Wellington, the "Revenge," and Lucknow.

The ode on the Duke is a noble commemoration-poem, grave and stately and solemn—a worthy expression of "the mourning of a mighty nation" with a musical and dignified sorrow—a terse and vivid reference to the Duke's exploits—a fine imaginative passage where he pictures the dead Nelson asking who the newcomer is, and the stately answer—a striking tribute to the simple and noble character of the dead hero—and then this:

> 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
> His Briton in blown seas and storming showers...
> 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...
> 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.

Again, for the judgment of the poem, the *date* is important. It was written only four years after the European earthquake of 1848, and only one year after the Coup d'État. The allusions are not mere commonplaces: they deal with live issues. It is not too much to say that in the great ode Tennyson had a subject after his own heart, and that he has done it magnificent justice.

Of the "Revenge" I will quote one passage, because it contains what always strikes me as *the* most wonderful effect of *sound* in poetry to be found anywhere. The whole poem, I may observe, is full of novel and effective handling of metre: but this is the most remarkable. It occurs in the description of the rising storm in which the gallant little ship went down:

> And they mann'd the Revenge with a swarthier alien crew,
> And away she sail'd with her loss, and long'd for her own;
> When a wind from the lands they had ruin'd awoke from sleep,
> And the water began to heave, and the weather to moan,
> And or ever that evening ended a great gale

blew,
And a wave like the wave that is raised by an earthquake grew,
Till it smote on their hulls and their sails and their masts and their flags,
And the whole sea plunged and fell on the shot-shatter'd navy of Spain,
And the little Revenge herself went down by the island crags
To be lost evermore in the main.

Lastly, in the 1842 volume, there was a little song without a title, which will certainly live as long as the English language.

In 1833, nine years before the volume appeared, had died abroad suddenly the rarely-gifted youth who was bound to Tennyson by the double tie of being his best-loved friend and the betrothed of his sister. The body had been brought home for burial by the sea at a little place called Clevedon.

This is the song:

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

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
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!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

There is something in the magical expression of deep love and sorrow in these lines—with the swift and vivid touches of scenery, sympathetic and suggestive —which we can only compare to the few greatest outbursts of passionate regret in poetry.

Five years later came “The Princess” (1847). The idea—a bold design—was to treat, by poetic and half-playful narrative, the comparative intellectual and moral natures of men and women, and the right method of education. The Poet’s views may perhaps to-day seem somewhat old-fashioned, the truths that he suggests or enunciates, in very finished and beautiful language, are controversial, and suffer from the inevitable failing of such writing, viz., that the issues of the strife have changed: experience has shown the forecasts, the fears, and the prophetic satire to be misplaced: and what seemed important truths have turned out to be prejudices or irrelevant platitudes.[88]

The one thing that is consummate in “The Princess” is the handful of little songs that come as interludes between the acts. They are so well known that they need no quotation: their titles will suffice: “As through the land at eve we went,” “Sweet and low,” “The splendour falls,” “Tears, idle tears,” “Thy voice is heard thro’ rolling drums,” “Home they brought her warrior dead,” “Ask me no more.”

The extraordinary effect of these songs is not due only to their marvellous poetic force and finish and

variety, but perhaps even more to the illuminating and pointed contrast between the true and deep and permanent realities of human experience—life, death, love, joy, and sorrow—each of which is touched in turn in these exquisite little pictures, and on the other hand the fantastic unreality (in the Poet's view) of the Princess's ideals and experiment.

If I must quote one passage, let it be abridged from the shepherd's song which the Princess reads:

> Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height:
> .....
> For Love is of the valley, come thou down
> And find him; by the happy threshold, he,
> Or hand in hand with Plenty in the maize,
> Or red with *spirted purple of the vats*,[89]
> Or *foxlike*[90] *in the vine*; nor cares to walk
> With Death and Morning on the silver horns...
> But follow; let the torrent dance thee down
> To find him in the valley; let the wild
> Lean-headed Eagles yelp alone, and leave
> The monstrous ledges there to slope, and spill
> Their thousand wreaths of dangling water-smoke,
> That like a broken purpose waste in air:
> So waste not thou; but come; for all the vales
> Await thee; azure pillars of the hearth
> Arise to thee; the children call, and I
> Thy shepherd pipe, and sweet is every sound,
> Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is sweet;
> Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn,
> The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
> And murmuring of innumerable bees.

This is the real idyll, with its central note of *love*, and wonderful beauty of sound, and vivid vision of every detail of Nature's sights and life. It suggests a world where all is fresh and sweet, and beautiful and interesting, and simple and wholesome and harmonious.

The year 1850 was marked by three great events in the personal history of Tennyson: his marriage, the publication of his greatest work, "In Memoriam," and his acceptance of the laureate crown of poetry in succession to Wordsworth, who died in the spring.

When I say that "In Memoriam" is Tennyson's greatest work, I am of course aware that it is only a personal opinion on a disputable point. But I incline to think that most lovers of poetry would agree that "In Memoriam" is *the one* of all the Poet's works the loss of which would be the greatest and most irreparable to poetry.

In the grave and solemn stanzas with which the poem opens, he calls the songs that follow *wild and wandering cries, confusions of a wasted youth*. But in truth they are the expression of the deepest and most heartfelt sorrow: the most musical and imaginative outpouring of every mood, and every trouble, of a noble love and regret: the cries of a soul stricken with doubt born of anguish, and darkened with shadows of disbelief and despair: the deeper brooding over the eternal problems of life, thought, knowledge, religion: the gradual groping toward a faith rather divined than proved, and slowly passing through storm into peace.

The poem took seventeen years to write, and when it appeared the Poet was at the summit of his great powers. His instinct chose a metre at once strong,

simple, fresh, flexible, and grave, and noble—equally adapted to every mood, every form of thought or feeling—the passionate, the meditative, the solemn, the imaginative—for description, argument, aspiration, even for prayer. The tone varies: there are lighter and deeper touches: but it is hardly too much to say, there is not an insignificant stanza, nor a jarring note, from beginning to end.

In a poem where all is so familiar—which has meant and means so much to all who care for poetry—it is difficult to quote. I will take a few stanzas, so chosen, if possible, as to show somewhat of the variety, the range, the subtlety, the charm, and the power of this great work.

He goes to the house in London where the dead friend lived: the gloom without typifies and harmonizes with the darkness of his sorrowful thoughts.

> Dark house, by which once more I stand
> Here in the long unlovely street:
> Doors, where my heart was wont to beat
> So quickly, waiting for a hand,—
>
> A hand that can be clasped no more—
> Behold me—for I cannot sleep—
> And like a guilty thing I creep
> At earliest morning to the door.
>
> He is not here; but far away
> The noise of life begins again,
> And ghastly thro' the drizzling rain
> On the bald street breaks the blank day.

One of the most important motives concerns the doubts raised by the new truths which science was

beginning to teach, almost seeming to make in a sense a new heaven and a new earth. The old simple beliefs seemed to the Poet threatened—these misgivings are evil dreams: *Nature* seems to say:

> ... 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...

Then the Poet breaks out:

> And he, shall he,
> Man, her last work, who seem'd so fair,
> 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,
> Or seal'd within the iron hills?...
>
> 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.

He will not accept the suggestions which seem to empty human life of its deepest meanings. There

must be some other solution.

One more quotation of a different kind—the common sad thought, never so beautifully expressed, of the places we have loved when bereft of our daily loving care—then passing into other hands and forgetting us, and becoming at last to others what they have been to us.

It is in these common universal *human* themes that Tennyson with his exquisite musical touch, and sympathy, and unerring choice of significant detail, reaches the heart of every reader.

> Unwatch'd, the garden bough shall sway,
> The tender blossom flutter down,
> Unloved, that beech will gather brown,
> This maple burn itself away:
>
> Unloved, the sunflower, shining fair,
> Ray round with flames her disk of seed,
> And many a rose-carnation feed
> With summer spice the humming air:
>
> Unloved, by many a sandy bar,
> The brook shall babble down the plain,
> At noon or when the lesser wain
> Is twisting round the polar star.

(Omitting a stanza.)

> Till from the garden and the wild
> A fresh association blow,
> And year by year the landscape grow
> Familiar to the stranger's child.
>
> As year by year the labourer tills
> His wonted glebe, or lops the glades,

> And year by year our memory fades
> From all the circle of the hills.

I can quote no more.

The poem seems gradually to rise from the depths of sorrow and doubt to a new hope and faith—in short, to a new life. The marks of what it has passed through are seen in the deeper thought, the larger nature, and insight, and scope. The *soul* has grown and strengthened, we may almost say.

In short, the poem is the inner history of a soul: our deepest feelings, our hopes, our fears, our longings, our weaknesses, our difficulties, all find penetrating, sympathetic, enlightening expression—terse, melodious, inspiring, deeply suggestive—in a word, we feel the magic of poetry.

I have no time left to deal with the large work, which occupied many years, "The Idylls of the King." It is a series—in blank verse, always melodious and often exquisite, giving the main incidents of the old Arthurian legend, which as a boy he had read with delight in old Malory's prose epic.

I must content myself with two brief references.

The first idyll, "Gareth and Lynette," is not in itself one of the most interesting[91]—dealing chiefly as it does with the picture of the eager boy, anxious to be one of Arthur's knights, who serves a year in menial place as a test of his obedience: but there is one passage which ought never to be omitted in speaking of Tennyson, viz. the answer of the seer when the boys ask him if the castle is enchanted.

The seer answers ironically, yet with a deep meaning, that it *is* enchanted:

> For there is nothing in it as it seems
> Saving the King; tho' some there be that hold
> The King a shadow, and the city real.

Then he tells them about the *vows*: which if they fear to take, he warns them

> Pass not beneath this gateway, but abide
> Without, among the cattle of the field,
> For an ye hear a music, like enow
> They are building still, seeing the city is built
> To music, *therefore never built at all,*
> *And therefore built for ever*.

Beneath the strangely beautiful surface meaning of these lines there lies the deep allegoric meaning that often what seems visionary is in truth a spiritual and eternal reality. It brings to mind the wonderful lines of Browning (in "Abt Vogler"):

> The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,
> The passion that left the earth to lose itself in the sky,
> Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard;
> Enough that he heard it once, we shall hear it by and by.

The other point concerns the end of the poem. The last section is the Passing of Arthur; the old fragment "Morte d'Arthur" enlarged. One notable addition occurs at the very end.

In the earlier version of the fragment, after Arthur had passed away on the dark lake, with him the last hope also disappears.

We are only told:

> Long stood Sir Bedivere,
> Revolving many memories, till the hull
> Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,
> And on the mere the wailing died away.

In the fragment the end was tragic: the noble attempt failed; the hero and inspirer passed away, his aim defeated, his comrades slain or scattered, his life and efforts vain.

But in the final shape comes a new and very significant end:

> Then from the dawn it seem'd there came, but faint,
> As from beyond the limit of the world,
> Like the last echo born of a great cry,
> Sounds, as if some fair city were one voice,
> Around a king returning from his wars.
>
> Thereat once more he[92] moved about, and clomb
> Ev'n to the highest he could climb—and saw,
> Or thought he saw, the speck that bare the King
> Somewhere far off, pass on and on, and go
> From less to less, and vanish *into light*.
> And the new sun rose, bringing the new year.

We feel, as we are meant to feel, that though the death of a noble soul, after unequal war with ill, is deeply sad—fitly pictured with sorrowful sounds and darkness of night—yet the great spirit cannot wholly die: the night breaks into a new day; and the day will be brighter for those who are left, because of the efforts and memories of the leader who is no more.

Tennyson is without doubt, from first to last, one of the great poetic artists. He is not often an inspired singer like Shelley, but he has other gifts which Shelley lacked—a self-restraint, an artistic finish, a fine and mature taste, a deep reverence for the past, a pervading sympathy with the broad currents of the best thought and feeling of the time. Sometimes this is (as we have seen) a weakness, but it is also the source of his greatest strength. He has not, like Wordsworth, given us a new insight, what I may almost call a new religion: but he has a wider range than Wordsworth, and a surer poetic touch. Wordsworth may be the greater teacher; for many of us he has opened a new world: he has touched the deepest springs of our nature. But Tennyson has left us gifts hardly less rare and precious. He has refined, enriched, beautified, in some sense almost remade our poetic language; he has shown that the classic eighteenth-century finish is not incompatible with the nineteenth-century deeper and wider thought: and, in a word, he has inwoven the golden thread of poetry with the main texture of the life, knowledge, feeling, experience, and ideals of the years whereof we are all alike inheritors.

TENNYSON: HIS LIFE AND WORK[93]

By the Right Hon. SIR ALFRED LYALL, G.C.B.

The biography of a great poet has seldom been so written as to enhance his reputation with the world at large. It is almost always the highest artist whose individuality, so to speak, is least discernible in his work, and who, like some divinity, is at his best when his mind and moods, his lofty purpose and his attitude toward the problems of life, are revealed only through the medium which he has chosen for revealing them to mankind. To lay bare the human side of a poet, to retail his domestic history, and to dwell upon his private relations with friends or family, will always interest the public enormously; but for himself it is often a perilous ordeal. The man of restless erratic genius, cut off in his prime like Byron or Shelley, leaves behind him a confession of faults and follies, while one who has lived long takes the risk of intellectual decline; or else, like Coleridge, Landor, and even Scott, he may in other ways suffer loss of dignity by the posthumous record of failings or mistakes. It is a rare coincidence that in this nineteenth century two poets of the first rank—Wordsworth and Tennyson—should each have passed the natural limit of fourscore years, steadily extending their reputation without material loss of their power, and completely fulfilling the ideal of a life devoted to their beautiful art, free alike from adventures and eccentricities, tranquil, blameless, and nobly dignified.

Such is the life which has been described to us in the *Memoir* of Alfred, Lord Tennyson, by his son. In preparing it he had the singular advantage of very close and uninterrupted association for many years with his father, and of thorough acquaintance with his wishes and feelings in regard to the inevitable

biography. In a brief preface, he touches, not without emotion, upon the aims and limitations of the task which it had become his duty to undertake.

> "For my part," he says, "I feel strongly that no biographer could so truly give him as he gives himself in his own works; but this may be because, having lived my life with him, I see him in every word which he has written; and it is difficult for me so far to detach myself from the home circle as to pourtray him for others. He himself disliked the notion of a long, formal biography.... However, he wished that, if I deemed it better, the incidents of his life should be given as shortly as might be without comment; but that my notes should be final and full enough to preclude the chance of further and unauthentic biographies."

Lord Tennyson has given us a remarkable chronicle of his father's life from youth to age, illustrated by correspondence that is always interesting and occasionally of supreme value, by anecdotes and reminiscences, by characteristic thoughts and pithy observations—the outcome of the Poet's reflection, consummate literary judgment, and constant intercourse with the best contemporary intellects. He has, moreover, so arranged the narrative as to show the rapid expansion of Tennyson's strong, inborn poetic instinct, with the impressions and influences which moulded its development, maturing and perfecting his marvellous powers of artistic execution.

Alfred Tennyson was born in the pastoral village of Somersby, amid the Lincolnshire wolds; and he spent

many holidays on the coast at Mablethorpe, where he acquired that passion for the sea which has possessed so many poets. The atmosphere of a public school favours active emulation and discipline for the outer world; but to a boy of sensitive and imaginative temperament it is apt to be uncongenial, so we need not be sorry that Tennyson was spared the experience. At first, like most men of his temperament who go straight from private tuition to a University, he felt solitary and depressed—"the country is so disgustingly level, the revelry of the place so monotonous, the studies of the University so uninteresting, so matter-of-fact." But there was about him a distinction in mind and body that soon marked him out among his fellows ("a kind of Hyperion," writes FitzGerald), uniting strength with refinement, showing much insight into character, with the faculty of brief and pointed sallies: "We were looking one day at the portrait of an elderly politician in bland family aspect. A. T. (with his eyeglass): It looks rather like a retired panther. So true."[94]

He was an early member of the Society yclept the Apostles, which included many eager and brilliant spirits, whose debates were upon political reform, the bettering of the people's condition, upon morals, religion, and those wider and more liberal views of social needs that were foremost at a period when the new forces were just mustering for attack upon the old entrenchment of Church and State. Edward FitzGerald's notes and Tennyson's own later recollections are drawn upon in this book for lively illustrations of the sayings and doings of this notable group of friends, and for glimpses of their manner of life at Cambridge. Here he lived in the choice society of that day, and formed, among other friendships, an affectionate attachment to Arthur Hallam, who

afterwards became engaged to his sister, and in whose memory the famous poem was written. Hallam seems to have been one of those men whose extraordinary promise and early death invest their brief and brilliant career with a kind of romance, explaining and almost justifying the pagan notions of Fate and divine envy.

In June 1829 Tennyson scored his first triumph by the prize poem on Timbuctoo, which, as he said many years afterwards, won the medal to his utter astonishment, for it was an old poem on Armageddon, adapted to Central Africa "by a little alteration of the beginning and the end." Arthur Hallam wrote of it on September 2, 1829: "The splendid imaginative power which pervades it will be seen through all hindrances. I consider Tennyson as promising fair to be the greatest poet of our generation, perhaps of our century"—a remarkably far-reaching prophecy to have been built upon so slender a foundation. Out of his "horror of publicity," as he said, he committed it to Merivale for declamation in the Senate House. In 1830 appeared Tennyson's first volume of poems, upon which Arthur Hallam again wrote, in a review, that "the features of original genius are strongly and clearly marked"; while on the other hand, Coleridge passed upon it the well-known criticism that "he has begun to write verses without very well knowing what metre is"; and Christopher North handled it with a touch of good-natured ridicule. Then followed, in 1832, a fresh issue, including that magnificent allegory, the "Palace of Art"; with other poems whose very blemishes signified exuberant strength. James Montgomery's observation of him at this stage is in the main true as a standing test of latent potency in beginners. "He has very wealthy and

luxurious thought and great beauty of expression, and is *a poet*. But there is plenty of room for improvement, and I would have it so. Your trim, correct *young* writers rarely turn out well; a young poet should have a great deal which he can afford to throw away as he gets older." The judgment was sound, for after a silent interval of ten years, during which the Poet was sedulously husbanding and cultivating his powers, the full-orbed splendour of his genius shone out in the two volumes of 1842.

"This decade," writes his biographer, "wrought a marvellous abatement of my father's real fault," which was undoubtedly "the tendency, arising from the fulness of mind which had not yet learned to master its resources freely, to overcrowd his composition with imagery, to which may be added over-indulgence in the luxuries of the senses." By this and by other extracts from contemporary criticism given in the *Memoir* its readers may survey and measure the Poet's rapid development of mind and methods, the expansion of his range of thoughts, his increasing command over the musical instrument, and the admirable vigour and beauty which his composition was now disclosing. He had the singular advantage, rarely enjoyed so early in a poetic career, of being surrounded by enthusiastic friends who were also very competent art-critics, and whose unanimous verdict must have given him heart and confidence; so that the few spurts of cold water from professional reviewers troubled him very little. The darts thrown by such enemies might hardly reach or wound him—πρὶν γὰρ περιβῆσαν ἄριστοι—the two Hallams, James Spedding, Edward FitzGerald, the two Lushingtons, Blakesley, and Julius Hare rallied round him enthusiastically. Hartley Coleridge met Tennyson in 1835, and, "after the fourth bottom of

gin," deliberately thanked Heaven for having brought them acquainted. Wordsworth, who had at first been slow to appreciate, having afterwards listened to two poems recited by Aubrey de Vere, did "acknowledge that they were very noble in thought, with a diction singularly stately." Even Carlyle, who had implored the Poet to stick to prose, was vanquished, and wrote (1842) a letter so vividly characteristic as to justify a long quotation:

DEAR TENNYSON—Wherever this find you, may it find you well, may it come as a friendly greeting to you. I have just been reading your Poems; I have read certain of them over again, and mean to read them over and over till they become my poems; this fact, with the inferences that lie in it, is of such emphasis in me, I cannot keep it to myself, but must needs acquaint you too with it. If you knew what my relation has been to the thing call'd English "Poetry" for many years back, you would think such a fact almost surprising! Truly it is long since in any English Book, Poetry or Prose, I have felt the pulse of a real man's heart as I do in this same.

I know you cannot read German: the more interesting is it to trace in your "Summer Oak" a beautiful kindred to something that is best in Goethe; I mean his "Müllerin" (Miller's daughter) chiefly, with whom the very Mill-dam gets in love; though she proves a flirt after all, and the thing ends in satirical lines! Very strangely, too, in the "Vision of Sin" I am reminded of my friend Jean Paul. This is not babble, this is speech; true deposition of a volunteer witness. And so I say let us all rejoice somewhat. And so let us all smite rhythmically, all in concert, "the sounding furrows," and sail forward with new cheer "beyond the sunset" whither we are bound.

The *Memoir* contains some valuable reminiscences of this period, contributed after Tennyson's death by his personal friends, which incidentally throw backward a light upon the literary society of that day. Mr. Aubrey de Vere describes a meeting between Tennyson and Wordsworth; and relates also, subsequently and separately, a conversation with Tennyson, who was enthusiastic over the songs of Burns: "You forget, for their sake, those stupid things, his serious pieces." The same day Mr. de Vere met Wordsworth, who "praised Burns even more vehemently than Tennyson had done ..." but ended, "of course I refer to his serious efforts, those foolish little amatory songs of his one has to forget."

But in addition to contemporary criticism, written or spoken, and to the reminiscences, the biography gives us also several unpublished poems and fragmentary verses belonging to this period, with the original readings of other pieces that were altered before publication. It is in these materials, beyond others, that we can observe the forming and maturing of his style, the fastidious taste which dictated his rejection of work that either did not satisfy the highest standard as a whole, or else marred a poem's symmetrical proportion by superfluity, over-weight, or the undue predominance of some note in the general harmony. One may regret that some fine stanzas or exquisite lines should have been thus expunged, as, for example, those beginning:

Thou may'st remember what I said.

Yet we believe the impartial critic will confirm in every instance the decision. "Anacaona," written at Cambridge, was never published, because "the

natural history and the rhymes did not satisfy" Tennyson; it is full of tropical warmth and ardour, with a fine rhythmic beat, but it is certainly below high-water mark. And the same must be said of the "Song of the Three Sisters," published and afterwards suppressed, though the blank verse of its prelude has undoubted quality. He acted, as we can see, inexorably upon his own rule that "the artist is known by his self-limitation"; feeling certain, as he once said, that "if I meant to make any mark in the world it must be by shortness, for the men before me had been so diffuse." Only the concise and perfect work, he thought, would last; and "hundreds of lines were blown up the chimney with his pipe smoke, or were written down and thrown into the fire as not being perfect enough." Yet all his austere resolution must have been needed for condemning some of the fine verses that were struck out of the "Palace of Art," merely to give the poem even balance, and trim it like a boat. Very few poems could have spared or borne the excisions from the "Dream of Fair Women"; though here and there the didactic or scientific note is slightly prominent, as in the following stanza:

> All nature widens upward. Evermore
> The simpler essence lower lies,
> More complex is more perfect, owning more
> Discourse, more widely wise.

At any rate the preservation of these unpublished verses adds much to the value of the biography; and we may rank Tennyson among the very few poets whose reputation has rather gained than suffered by the posthumous appearance of pieces that the writer had deliberately withdrawn or withheld.

Of Tennyson's own literary opinions one or two specimens, belonging to this time, may be given.

"Byron and Shelley, however mistaken they were, did yet give the world another heart and new pulses; and so we are kept going"—a just tribute to their fiery lyrical energy, which did much to clear insular prejudice from the souls of a masculine generation. "Lycidas" he held to be the test of any reader's poetic instinct; and "Keats, with his high spiritual vision, would have been, if he had lived, the greatest of us all, though his blank verse lacked originality of movement." It is true that Keats, whose full metrical skill was never developed, may have imitated the Miltonic construction; yet after Milton he was the finest composer up to Tennyson's day. And the first hundred lines of "Hyperion" have no slight affinity, in colouring and cadence, to the Tennysonian blank verse. For indeed it was Keats who, as Tennyson's forerunner, passed on to him the gift of intense romantic susceptibility to the influences of Nature, the "dim mystic sympathies with tree and hill reaching back into childhood." But Tennyson's art inclined more toward the picturesque, toward using words, as a painter uses his brush, for producing the impression of a scene's true outline and colour; his work shows the realistic feeling of a later day, which delights in precision of details. In one of his letters he mentions that there was a time when he was in the habit of chronicling, in four or five words or more, whatever might strike him as a picture, just as an artist would take rough sketches. The subjoined fragment, written on revisiting Mablethorpe on the Lincolnshire coast, contains the quintessence of his descriptive style; the last three lines are sheer landscape painting.

MABLETHORPE
Here often when a child I lay reclined,
I took delight in this fair land and free;
Here stood the infant Ilion of the mind,
And here the Grecian ships all seemed to be.
And here again I come, and only find
The drain-cut level of the marshy lea,
Gray sand-banks, and pale sunsets, dreary winds,
Dim shores, dense rains, and heavy-clouded sea.

More frequently, however, he employed his wonderful image-making power to illustrate symbolically some mental state or emotion, availing himself of the mysterious relation between man and his environment, whereby the outer inanimate world is felt to be the resemblance and reflection of human moods. So in the "Palace of Art" the desolate soul is likened to

A still salt pool, lock'd in with bars of sand,
Left on the shore; that hears all night
The plunging seas draw backward from the land
Their moon-led waters white.

And there are passages in the extracts given from his letters written to Miss Emily Sellwood, during the long engagement that preceded their marriage, which indicate the bent of his mind toward philosophic quietism, with frequent signs of that half-veiled fellow-feeling with natural things, that sense of life in all sound and motion, whereby poetry is drawn upward, by degrees and almost unconsciously, into the region of the "Higher Pantheism." Nor has any English poet availed himself more skilfully of a language that is peculiarly rich in

metaphors, consisting of words which still so far retain their original meaning as to suggest a picture while they convey a thought.

It is partly due to these qualities of mind and style that no chapter in this book, which mingles grave with gay very attractively, contains matter of higher biographical interest than that which is headed “In Memoriam.” For it is in this noble poem, on the whole Tennyson’s masterpiece, that he is stirred by his own passionate grief to dwell on the contrast between irremediable human suffering and the calm aspect of Nature, between the short and sorrowful days of man and the long procession of ages. From the doubts and perplexities, the tendency to lose heart, engendered by a sense of forces that are unceasing and relentless, he finds his ultimate escape in the spirit of trust in the Powers invisible, and in the persuasion that God and Nature cannot be at strife. In a letter contributed to this *Memoir* Professor Henry Sidgwick has described the impression produced on him and others of his time by this poem, showing how it struck in, so to speak, upon their religious debates at a moment of conflicting tendencies and great uncertainty of direction, giving intensity of expression to the dominant feeling, and wider range to the prevailing thought:

> The most important influence of “In Memoriam” on my thought, apart from its poetic charm as an expression of personal emotion, opened in a region, if I may so say, deeper down than the difference between Theism and Christianity: it lay in the unparalleled combination of intensity of feeling with comprehensiveness of view and balance of judgment, shown in presenting

> the deepest needs and perplexities of humanity. And this influence, I find, has increased rather than diminished as years have gone on, and as the great issues between Agnostic Science and Faith have become continually more prominent. In the sixties I should say that these deeper issues were somewhat obscured by the discussions on Christian dogma and Inspiration of Scripture, etc. ... During these years we were absorbed in struggling for freedom of thought in the trammels of a historical religion; and perhaps what we sympathized with most in "In Memoriam" at this time, apart from the personal feeling, was the defence of "honest doubt," the reconciliation of knowledge and faith in the introductory poem, and the hopeful trumpet-ring of the lines on the New Year.... Well, the years pass, the struggle with what Carlyle used to call "Hebrew old clothes" is over, Freedom is won, and what does Freedom bring us to? It brings us face to face with atheistic science; the faith in God and Immortality, which we had been struggling to clear from superstition, suddenly seems to be in the air; and in seeking for a firm basis for this faith we find ourselves in the midst of the "fight with death" which "In Memoriam" so powerfully presents.

To many readers the whole letter will seem to render fitly their feeling of the pathetic intensity with which the everlasting problems of love and death, of human doubts and destinies, are set forth in "In Memoriam." It will also remind them of the limitations, the inevitable inconclusiveness, of a poem which deals

emotionally with questions that foil the deepest philosophers. The profound impression that was immediately produced by these exquisitely musical meditations may be ascribed, we think, to their sympathetic association with the peculiar spiritual needs and intellectual dilemmas of the time. It may be affirmed, as a general proposition, that up to about 1840, and for some years later, the majority among Englishmen of thought and culture were content to take morality as the chief test of religious truth, were disposed to hold that the essential principles of religion were best stated in the language of ethics. With this rational theology the pretensions of Science, which undertook to preserve and even to strengthen the moral basis, were not incompatible. But about this time came a spiritual awakening; and just then Tennyson came forward to insist, with poetic force and fervour, that the triumphant advance of Science was placing in jeopardy not merely the formal outworks but the central dogma of Christianity, which is the belief in a future life, in the soul's conscious immortality.[95] Is man subject to the general law of unending mutability? and is he after all but the highest and latest type, to be made and broken like a thousand others, mere clay under the moulding hands that are darkly visible in the processes of Nature? The Poet transfigured these obstinate questionings into the vision of an ever-breaking shore

> That tumbled in a godless sea.

He turned our ears to hear the sound of streams that, swift or slow,

> Draw down Æonian hills, and sow
> The dust of continents to be—

and he was haunted by the misgiving that man also might be a mere atom in an ever-changing universe. Yet after long striving with doubts and fears, after having "fought with death," he resolves that we cannot be "wholly brain, magnetic mockeries," not only cunning casts in clays:

> Let Science prove we are, and then
> What matters Science unto men,
> At least to me? I would not stay.

We think that such passages as these gave emphasis to the gathering alarm, and that many a startled inquirer, daunted by dim uncertainties, recoiled from the abyss that seemed to open at his feet, and made his peace, on such terms as consoled him, with Theology. Not that Tennyson himself retreated, or took refuge behind dogmatic entrenchments. On the contrary, he stood his ground and trod under foot the terrors of Acheron; relying on "the God who ever lives and loves." But since not every one can be satisfied with subjective faith or lofty intuitions, we believe that the note of distress and warning sounded by "In Memoriam" startled more minds than were soothed by its comforting conclusions. If this be so, this utterance of the poet, standing prophet-like at the parting of the ways, moved men diversely. It strengthened the impulse to go onward trustfully; but it may also be counted among the indirect influences which combined to promote that notable reaction toward the sacramental and mysterious side of religion, toward positive faith as the safeguard of morals, which has been the outcome of the great Anglican revival set on foot by the Oxford Movement seventy years ago.

In June 1850, the month which saw "In Memoriam"

published, Tennyson married Miss Sellwood. “The wedding was of the quietest, even the cake and the dresses arriving too late.” From this union came unbroken happiness during forty-two years; for his wife brought into the partnership a rich and rare treasure of aid, sympathy, and intellectual appreciation. Her son pays his tribute to her memory in an admirable passage, of which the greater part is here extracted:

> And let me say here—although, as a son, I cannot allow myself full utterance about her whom I loved as perfect mother and “very woman of very woman,” “such a wife” and true helpmate she proved herself. It was she who became my father’s adviser in literary matters. “I am proud of her intellect,” he wrote. With her he always discussed what he was working at; she transcribed his poems: to her, and to no one else, he referred for a final criticism before publishing. She, with her “tender spiritual nature” and instinctive nobility of thought, was always by his side, a ready, cheerful, courageous, wise, and sympathetic counsellor.... By her quiet sense of humour, by her selfless devotion, by “her faith as clear as the heights of the June-blue heaven,” she helped him also to the utmost in the hours of his depression and of his sorrow; and to her he wrote two of the most beautiful of his shorter lyrics—“Dear, near and true,” and the dedicatory lines which prefaced his last volume, “The Death of Œnone.”

In November 1850, after Wordsworth’s death, the Laureateship was offered to Tennyson. We have good

authority for stating, though not from this *Memoir*, that Lord John Russell submitted to the Queen the four names of Professor Wilson, Henry Taylor, Sheridan Knowles, and, last on the list, Tennyson. The Prince Consort's admiration of "In Memoriam" determined Her Majesty's choice, which might seem easy enough to those who measure the four candidates by the standard of to-day. His accession to office brought down upon Tennyson, among other honoraria, "such shoals of poems that I am almost crazed with them; the two hundred million poets of Great Britain deluge me daily. Truly the Laureateship is no sinecure." For the inevitable levee he accepted, not without disquietude over the nether garment, the loan of a Court suit from his ancient brother in song, Rogers, who had declined the laurels on the plea of age. Soon afterward he departed with his wife for Italy. Under the title of "The Daisy" he has commemorated this journey in stanzas of consummate metrical form, with their beautiful anapæstic ripple in each fourth line, to be studied by all who would understand the quantitative value (not merely accentual) and rhythmic effects of English syllables. On returning, they met the Brownings at Paris. Then, in 1852, he bought Farringford in the Isle of Wight, the Poet's favourite habitation ever afterward, within sight of the sea and within sound of its rough weather, with its lawns, spreading trees, and meadows under the lee of the chalk downs, that have been frequently sketched into his verse, and will long be identified with his presence. There he worked at "Maud," morning and evening, sitting in his hard, high-backed wooden chair in his little room at the top of the house, smoking the "sacred pipes" during certain half-hours of strict seclusion, when his best thoughts came to him.

From the final edition in 1851 of “In Memoriam” to “Maud” in 1853, which Lowell rather affectedly called the antiphonal voice of the earlier poem, the change of theme, tone, and manner was certainly great; and the public seems to have been taken by surprise. The transition was from lamentation to love-making; from stanzas swaying slow, like a dirge, within their uniform compass, to an abundant variety of metrical movement, quickened by frequent use of the anapæstic measure. The general reader was puzzled and inclined to ridicule what he failed at once to understand; the ordinary reviewer was either loftily contemptuous or indulged in puns and parodies; the higher criticism was divided; but Henry Taylor, Ruskin, Jowett, and the Brownings spoke without hesitation of the work’s great merits. Mr. Gladstone, whose judgment had been at first adverse, recanted, twenty years later, in a letter that was published in his *Gleanings*, and that now reappears in this *Memoir*:

> “Whether it is to be desired,” he wrote, “that a poem should require from common men a good deal of effort in order to comprehend it; whether all that is put in the mouth of the Soliloquist in ‘Maud’ is within the lines of poetical verisimilitude; whether this poem has the full moral equilibrium which is so marked a characteristic of the sister-works, are questions open, perhaps, to discussion. But I have neither done justice in the text to its rich and copious beauties of detail, nor to its great lyrical and metrical power. And, what is worse, I have failed to comprehend rightly the relation between particular passages in the poem and its general scope.”

Jowett wrote:

> No poem since Shakespeare seems to show equal power of the same kind, or equal knowledge of human nature. No modern poem contains more lines that ring in the ears of men. I do not know any verse of Shakespeare in which the ecstasy of love soars to such a height.

On the other hand, an anonymous letter, which Tennyson enjoyed repeating, ran thus:

> SIR—I used to worship you, but now I hate you. I loathe and detest you. You beast! So you've taken to imitating Longfellow.
>
> Yours in aversion,
> "____"

"I shall never forget," his son writes,

> Tennyson's last reading of "Maud," on August 24, 1892. He was sitting in his high-backed chair, fronting a southern window which looks over the groves and yellow cornfields of Sussex toward the long line of South Downs that stretches from Arundel to Hastings (his high-domed Rembrandt-like head outlined against the sunset-clouds seen through the western window). His voice, low and calm in everyday life, capable of delicate and manifold inflection, but with "organ tones" of great power and range, thoroughly brought out the drama of the poem.

"The peculiarity of this poem," Tennyson said, "is that different phases of passion in one person take the place of different characters"; and the effect of

his own recitation was to set this conception in clear relief by showing the connexion and significance of the linked monodies, combined with a vivid musical rendering of a pathetic love-story. The emotional intensity rises by degrees to the rapture of meeting with Maud in the garden, falls suddenly to the depth of blank despair, and revives in an atmosphere of energetic, warlike activity—the precursor of world-wide peace.

The poem, in fact, strikes all the highest lyrical chords, and we are disposed to think that all of them are by no means touched with equal skill. Possibly, the sustained and perfect execution of such a varied composition would be too arduous a task for any artist. It is difficult for the reader to adjust his mind to the changes of mood and motive which succeed each other rapidly, and often abruptly, within the compass of so short a piece; ranging from the almost melodramatic horror of the opening stanzas to the passionate and joyous melodies of the middle part; sinking into a wild wailing, and closing with the trumpet sounds of war. Yet every one will now acknowledge that some passages in “Maud” are immortal, and that the English language contains none more beautiful than the very best of them.

The letters in the *Memoir* are selected from upwards of forty thousand, and at this period we have many of singular interest. One from Mrs. Vyner, a stranger, touched the Poet deeply. Ruskin writes with reserve, as well he might, about the edition of the poems illustrated by Rossetti, Millais, and others:

> I believe, in fact, that good pictures never can be; they are always another poem, subordinate, but wholly different from the

> poet's conception, and serve chiefly to show the reader how variously the same verses may affect various minds. But these woodcuts will be of much use in making people think and puzzle a little; art was getting quite a matter of form in book illustrations, and it does not so much matter whether any given vignette is right or not, as whether it contains thought or not, still more whether it contains any kind of plain facts. If people have no sympathy with St. Agnes, or if people, as soon as they get a distinct idea of a living girl who probably got scolded for dropping her candle-wax about the convent-stairs, and caught cold by looking too long out of the window in her bedgown, feel no true sympathy with her, they can have no sympathy in them.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning sends a warm-hearted letter; and Jowett, who enjoyed giving advice, evidently sat him down readily to reply when Mrs. Tennyson asked whether he could suggest any subjects for poetry:

> I often fancy that the critical form of modern literature is like the rhetorical one which overlaid ancient literature, and will be regarded as that is, at its true worth in after times. One drop of natural feeling in poetry, or the true statement of a single new fact, is already felt to be of more value than all the critics put together.

Four "Idylls" came out in 1859, to be rapidly and largely taken up by the English public, with many congratulations from personal friends. Thackeray

sends, after reading them, a letter full of his characteristic humour and cordiality:

> "The landlord"—at Folkestone—"gave two bottles of his claret, and I think I drank the most, and here I have been lying back in the chair and thinking of those delightful 'Idylls'; my thoughts being turned to you; and what could I do but be grateful to that surprising genius which has made me so happy?"

The Duke of Argyll wrote that Macaulay had been *delighted with it*, whereupon the Poet responds to his Grace somewhat caustically:

> MY DEAR DUKE—Doubtless Macaulay's good opinion is worth having, and I am grateful to you for letting me know it, but this time I intend to be thick-skinned; nay, I scarcely believe that I should ever feel very deeply the pen-punctures of those parasitic animalcules of the press, if they kept themselves to what I write, and did not glance spitefully and personally at myself. I hate spite.

Ruskin, on the other hand, is but half pleased; could not quite make up his mind about that "increased quietness of style"; feels "the art and finish in these poems a little more than I like"; wishes that the book's nobleness and tenderness had been independent of a romantic condition of externals; and suggests that "so great power ought not to be spent on visions of things past, but on the living present."

These latter sentences touch upon, or at least indicate, a line of criticism upon the general

conception of the "Idylls," as seen in their treatment of the Arthurian legend, with which, although it may appear inadequate, some of us are not indisposed to agree. Romanticism has been defined, half seriously, as the art of presenting to a people the literary works which can give the greatest imaginative pleasure in the actual state of their habits and beliefs. The "Idylls" adapted the mythical tales of the Round Table to the very highest standard of æsthetic taste, intellectual refinement, and moral delicacy prevailing in cultivated English society. And by that society they were very cordially appreciated. Undoubtedly the figure of Arthur—representing a stainless mirror of chivalry, a warrior king endowed with the qualities of patriotic self-devotion, clemency, generosity, and noble trustfulness, yet betrayed by his wife and his familiar friend, and dying in a lost fight against treacherous rebels—did present a lofty ideal that might well affect a gravely emotional people. Moreover, the poem is a splendidly illuminated Morality, unfolding scenes and figures that illustrate heroic virtues and human frailties, gallantry, chivalric enterprise, domestic perfidy, chaste virginal loves, and subtle amorous enchantments. It abounds also in descriptive passages which attest the close attention of the Poet's eye and ear to natural sights and sounds, and his supreme art of fashioning his verse to their colours and echoes. In short, to quote from the biography,

> he has made the old legends his own, restored the idealism, and infused into them a spirit of modern thought and of ethical significance; setting his characters in a rich and varied landscape; as indeed otherwise these archaic stories would not have appealed to the world at large.

This indeed he has done well. And yet it is not possible to put away altogether the modern prejudice against unreality, the sense of having here a vision not merely of things that are past, but of things that could never have been, of a world that is neither ancient nor modern, but a fairy land peopled with knights and dames whose habits and conversation are adjusted to the decorous taste of our nineteenth century. The time has long passed when men could look back on distant ages much as they looked forward to futurity, through a haze of unbounded credulity. Not every one has been able to overcome the effect of incongruity produced by a poem which invests the legendary personages of mediæval romance with morals and manners of a fastidious delicacy, and promotes them to be the embodiment of our own ethical ideals. If, indeed, we regard the "Idylls" as beautiful allegories, we may be content, as their author was, with the suggestion that King Arthur represents Conscience, and that the poem is "a picture of the different ways in which men looked on conscience, some reverencing it as a heaven-born king, others ascribing to it an earthly origin." We may then be satisfied with learning, from the Poet himself, that "Camelot, for instance, a city of shadowy palaces, is everywhere symbolic of the gradual growth of human beliefs and institutions, and of the spiritual development of man." In the light of these interpretations the poem is a beautifully woven tissue of poetic mysticism, clothing the old legend of chivalry with esoteric meaning. We can accept and admire it freely, remarking only that the deeper thoughts of the present generation do not run in an allegorical vein, and that such a vesture, though of the finest texture and embroidery, waxes old speedily. "The 'Holy

Grail,'" said Tennyson, "is one of the most imaginative of my poems. I have expressed there my strong feeling as to the reality of the Unseen"; and truly it is a marvellous excursion into the field of mystical romance. But Tennyson also said that "there is no single fact or incident in the 'Idylls,' however seemingly mystical, which cannot be explained as without any mystery or allegory whatever"; and herein lies our difficulty. For, unless they can be read as wholly allegorical, there is an air of unreality about those enchanting pictures, as of scenes and persons that could never have existed anywhere. That Tennyson is a master of the art of veiling the lessons of real life under a fairy story, we know from the subtle symbolism with which he tells, in the "Lady of Shalott," the tale of sudden absorbing love, hopeless and unregarded, sinking into despair—a true parable, understood of all men and women in all times. But those who have no great skill at deciphering the Hyponoia, the underlying significance, of the "Idylls" may be pardoned for confessing to an occasional feeling of something abstract, shadowy, and spectacular in the company of these knights and dames.[96]

FitzGerald, after reading the "Holy Grail," writes (1870) to Tennyson:

> The whole myth of Arthur's Round Table Dynasty in Britain presents itself before me with a sort of cloudy Stonehenge grandeur. I am not sure if the old knights' adventures do not tell upon me better touched in some lyrical way (like your "Lady of Shalott") than when elaborated into epic form. I never could care for Spenser, Tasso, or even Ariosto, whose epic has a ballad ring about

> it.... Anyhow, Alfred, while I feel how pure, noble, and holy your work is—and whole phrases, lines, and sentences of it will abide with me, and, I am sure, with men after me —I read on till the "Lincolnshire Farmer" drew tears from my eyes. I was got back to the substantial rough-spun Nature I knew; and the old brute, invested by you with the solemn humour of Humanity, like Shakespeare's Shallow, became a more pathetic phenomenon than the knights who revisit the world in your other verse. There! I cannot help it, and have made a clean breast.

If the extreme realism of some modern writers has been rightly condemned as truth divorced from beauty, we may say that it has been by his skill in maintaining their indissoluble union that Tennyson's best work shows its peculiar strength and has earned its enduring vitality. He excels in the verisimilitude of his portraiture, in the authentic delineation of character, preserving the type and developing the main lines of thought and action by imaginative insight, with high artistic fidelity in details. I venture to anticipate that his short monodramatic pieces in blank verse—his studies from the antique, like "Ulysses" and "Tithonus," and his poems of English life, breathing the true idyllic spirit, like the "Gardener's Daughter" and "Aylmer's Field"—will sustain their popularity longer than the Arthurian Idylls. Nor can some of us honestly agree with the unqualified praise bestowed by high authority (as the *Memoir* testifies) on "Guinevere," where the scene between the king and the queen at Almesbury, with all its elevation of tone and purity of sentiment, is not very far from a splendid anachronism. But the epilogue "To the Queen," which closes the Arthurian

epic, brings us back to modern thought and circumstance by its ringing protest against faint-heartedness in English politics.

The "Northern Farmer," written in 1861, was at that time a novelty in form and subject. It gave a strong lead, at any rate, to that school of rough humorous versification, largely relying on quaint turns of ideas and phrases, on racy provincial dialect and local colouring generally, which has since had an immense success in the hands of minor artists. We may take it to have begun, for the last century, with the *Biglow Papers*. This form of metrical composition has latterly spread, as a species of modern ballad, to the Indian frontier and the Australian bush, but has little or no place in any language except the English. Such character sketches, taken direct from studies of rude life, have been always common in popular comic song, yet I believe that no first-class poet, after Burns and before Tennyson, had turned his hand to this kind of work; nor has anything been since produced upon the artistic level of the first "Northern Farmer." "Roden Noel," writes Tennyson, "calls the two 'Northern Farmers' photographs; but I call them imaginative"—as of course they are, being far above mere exact copies of some individual person.

There are some very readable *impressions de voyage* gathered out of journals of tours made about this time (1860) in France and England, and the letters maintain their high level of interest. Upon the death of Macaulay, Tennyson writes to the Duke of Argyll:

> I hardly knew him: met him once, I remember, when Hallam and Guizot were in his company. Hallam was showing Guizot the Houses of Parliament, then building, and

> Macaulay went on like a cataract for an hour or so to those two great men, and, when they had gone, turned to me and said, “Good morning; I am happy to have had the pleasure of making your acquaintance,” and strode away. Had I been a piquable man I should have been piqued: but I don’t think I was, for the movement after all was amicable.

Then follows an account, by Mrs. Bradley, of a visit to Farringford, with “its careless ordered garden close to the ridge of a noble down”; and at the end of the *Memoir* is an appendix containing, among other things, Arthur Hallam’s striking critical appreciation of “Mariana in the South,” a poem which must be ranked as a masterpiece by all exiled Englishmen who have dreamt of their native breezes and verdure, under the blinding glare and intolerable heat of a tropical summer. Mr. Aubrey de Vere has contributed a reminiscence describing the effect produced upon himself and others by the poems of 1832-45, with a dissertation upon their style and philosophic significance. And in this manner the course and circumstances of the Poet’s life are set out, with much taste and regard for proportionate value of the materials for those singularly untroubled years through which he rose steadily from straitened means in youth to comparative affluence in middle age, and from distinction among a group of choice spirits to enduring fame as the greatest of poets born in the nineteenth century.

When, in 1864, Tennyson returned with “Enoch Arden” to the romance of real life among his own people, the poem was heartily welcomed, and sixty thousand copies were speedily sold. Spedding

declared it to be the finest story he had ever heard, and added (in our opinion quite rightly) that it was "more especially adapted for Alfred than for any other poet." Yet the plot, so to speak, of this pathetic narrative is as ancient as the *Odyssey*, for it rests upon a situation that must have been common in all times of long and distant voyaging, when men disappeared across the seas, were not heard of for years, and their wives were counted as widows. A well-known sailor's ditty tells in rude popular rhymes the same story of the wandering mariner's return home, to find himself forsaken and forgotten; and it frequently occurs in the folklore of the crusades. The first title in the proof-sheets of the "Enoch Arden" volume was "Idylls of the Hearth," and here, says his biographer,

> he writes with as intimate a knowledge, but with greater power (than in 1842), on subjects from English life, the sailor, the farmer, the parson, the city lawyer, the squire, the country maiden, and the old woman who dreams of her past life in a restful old age.

No great poet, in fact, has travelled for his subjects so little beyond his native land; and so his best descriptive work shows the painter's eye on the object, with the impressions drawn fresh and at first hand from Nature, as in the poetry of primitive bards who saw things for themselves. His letters and notes teem with observations of wild flowers and wild creatures, of wide prospects over sea and land; and even when he followed Enoch Arden into the world that was to himself untravelled, he could surprise those who knew it by his rendering of tropical scenery.

A very good account, by the late Mr. Locker-Lampson, of his tour through France and Switzerland with Tennyson in 1869, has preserved for us the flavour of his table and travelling talk upon literature, and occasionally upon religious problems. Into the philosophical or metaphysical abyss he did not let down his plummet very far; he recognized the limits of human knowledge, and for the dim regions beyond he accepted Faith as his guide and comforter. In regard to the poets—"As a boy," he said, "I was a great admirer of Byron, so much so that I got a surfeit of him, and now I cannot read him as I should like to do." Probably this habit of premature and excessive indulgence in Byron has blunted many an eager admirer's appetite, and has had something to do with the prevailing distaste for him, wherein we think that he has fallen into unmerited neglect. Of Shelley Tennyson said that there was "a great wind of words in a good deal of him, but that as a writer of blank verse he was perhaps the most skilful of the moderns. Nobody admires Shelley more than I once did, and I still admire him." For Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" he had a profound admiration; yet even in that poem he thought "the old poet had shown a want of literary instinct," and he touched upon some defects of composition; but he ended by saying emphatically that Wordsworth's very best is the best in its way that has been sent out by moderns. He told an anecdote of Samuel Rogers. "One day we were walking arm and arm, and I spoke of what is called Immortality, and remarked how few writers could be sure of it. Upon this Rogers squeezed my arm and said, 'I am sure of it.'"

His wife's journal of this time is full of interest, recording various sayings and doings, conversations, correspondence, anecdotes, and glimpses of notable

visits and visitors, Tourguéneff, Longfellow, Jenny Lind, Huxley, and Gladstone, to the last of whom Tennyson read aloud his “Holy Grail.” At the house of G. H. Lewes he read “Guinevere,” “which made George Eliot weep.” The diary is a faithful and valuable memorial of English country life at its best in the middle of the last century. Living quietly with his family, he was in constant intercourse with the most distinguished men of his day, and was himself honoured of them all.

In 1873 Tennyson had declined, for himself, Mr. Gladstone’s offer of a baronetcy. In 1874 this offer was repeated by Mr. Disraeli, who does not seem to have known that it had been once before made, in a high-flying sententious letter, evidently attuned to the deeper harmonies of the mysterious relation between genius and government.

> A government should recognize intellect. It elevates and sustains the spirit. It elevates and sustains the spirit of a nation. But it is an office not easy to fulfil, for if it falls into favouritism and the patronage of mediocrity, instead of raising the national sentiment, it might degrade and debase it. Her Majesty, by the advice of her Ministers, has testified in the Arctic expedition, and will in other forms, her sympathy with science. But it is desirable that the claims of high letters should be equally acknowledged. That is not so easy a matter, because it is in the nature of things that the test of merit cannot be so precise in literature as in science. Nevertheless, etc. etc.

The honour, even thus offered, was again

respectfully declined, with a suggestion that it might be renewed for his son after his own death; but this was pronounced impracticable.

The Metaphysical Society was founded by Tennyson and two others in 1869, and a list of the members is given in the *Memoir*, which touches on the style and topics of the debates, and on the umbrage taken by agnostic friends at the profound deference shown by Tennyson to Cardinal Manning. A letter from Dr. James Martineau describes the Poet's general attitude toward the Society's discussions; he sent his poem on the "Higher Pantheism" to be read at the first meeting; and he was "usually a silent listener, interposing some short question or pregnant hint." The letter discourses, in expansive and perhaps faintly nebulous language, upon the influence of his poetry on the religious tendencies of the day.

> That in a certain sense our great Laureate's poetry has nevertheless had a dissolving influence upon the over-definite dogmatic creeds within hearing, or upon the modes of religious thought amid which it was born, can hardly be doubted. In laying bare, as it does, the history of his own spirit, its conflicts and aspirations, its alternate eclipse of doubt and glow of faith, it has reported more than a personal experience; he has told the story of an age which he has thus brought into Self-knowledge.... Among thousands of readers previously irresponsive to anything Divine he has created, or immeasurably intensified, the susceptibility of religious reverence.

After taking into due account the circumstances in

which Dr. Martineau's letter was written, to many readers this high-flying panegyric will seem to have in some degree overshot its mark.

It has been my duty, in reviewing this *Memoir*, to pass under some kind of critical survey the more important writings of Lord Tennyson, in particular relation to the narrative of his life, and to the formation of his views and opinions. I am, however, placed in some embarrassment by the fact that this work is for the most part done already in the volumes themselves. They contain ample quotations from letters and articles by very eminent hands, written with all the vigour of immediate impressions when the poems first appeared. And some of the reminiscences that have since been contributed to the biography by personal friends deal so thoroughly with its literary side as to fall little short of elaborate essays; so that on the whole not much is left to be said by the retrospective reviewer. We are met with this difficulty in taking up the chapters on the Historical Plays, which set before us, with an analysis of the plays by the biographer himself, a catena of judgments upon them, unanimously favourable, by the highest authorities. Robert Browning writes with generous enthusiasm of "Queen Mary." Froude, the most dramatic of historians, expresses unbounded admiration: "You have reclaimed one more section of English history from the wilderness, and given it a form in which it will be fixed for ever. No one since Shakespeare has done that." Gladstone, Mr. Aubrey de Vere, Longfellow, G. H. Lewes and his wife, the statesmen, the poets, and the men of letters, each from his own standpoint attests the merits of one or another play, in letters of indisputable strength and sincerity. Nor can it be doubted that these pieces contain splendid

passages, and fine engravings, so to speak, of historical personages, with a noble appreciation of the spacious Elizabethan period, and of the earlier romantic episodes. The dramatic art provides such a powerful instrument for striking deep into the national mind, and success in this form of high poetic execution is so lasting—while it is so rare—that almost every great English poet has written plays. On the other hand, few of them have ventured, like Tennyson, to face the capricious ordeal of the public theatre, where the *vox populi* is at least so far divine that it pronounces absolutely and often incomprehensibly.

"For Tennyson to begin publishing plays after he was sixty-five years of age was thought to be a hazardous experiment"; though I may remark that he started with the advantage of a first-class poetic reputation, which stimulated public curiosity. But he knew well the immense influence, for good or for ill, that the stage can bring to bear on the people; and for the stage all his plays were directly intended, not for literature, in the expectation that the necessary technical adaptations might be supplied by the actors or the professional playwright. Their historical truth, their vigorous conceptions of motive and circumstance, and their poetic force received ample acknowledgment. W. G. Ward, who was "grotesquely truthful," though ultramontane, broke out into unqualified praise after listening to the reading of "Becket." On the stage, where first impressions are all-important, the pieces had their share of success. Browning writes of the "tumult of acclaim" which greeted the appearance of "Queen Mary"; and of "Becket" Irving has told us that "it is one of the three most successful plays produced by him at the Lyceum."

It is a question, often debated, whether in these latter days the theatre can be made a vehicle for the artistic representation of history. Literature, a jealous rival of all her sister arts, has so vastly extended her dominion over the people, she speaks so directly to the mind, without need of plastic or vocal interpretation, she is so independent of accessories and intermediaries, that her competitive influence weighs down all other departments of imaginative and pictorial idealization, religious or romantic. Against this stream of tendency even Tennyson's genius could hardly make sufficient headway to conquer for his plays a lasting hold upon English audiences; and moreover his primal vigour had been spent upon other victories. Yet to have held the stage at all, for a brief space, is to have done more than has been achieved by any other poet of this (last) century. In 1880 his drama, "The Cup," was produced with signal success at the Lyceum; and Tennyson summed up his theatrical experience by observing that "the success of a piece does not depend on its literary merit or even on its stage effect, but on its *hitting* somehow," wherein Miss Ellen Terry agreed with him.

The annals of his daily life, throughout all this later part of it, consist of extracts from letters, journals, and memorials of intercourse, which abound with appropriate, amusing, and valuable matter, connected by the biographer's personal recollections. We have thus a many-coloured mosaic, in which many figures and characters are reproduced by a kind of literary tessellation; while, as to the Poet himself, his habits, wise or whimsical, his thoughts from year to year on the subjects of the day, his manner of working, are all preserved. The correspondence of his friends maintains its high level

of quality. Mr. W. H. Lecky gives us, in one of the best among all the reminiscences, a fine sample of his own faculty for delineation of character, bringing out the Poet's simplicity of soul, his love of seclusion, the scope of his religious meditations, the keen sensibility (acquired by long culture) of his rhythmic ear, and also his susceptibility to the hum and pricking of critics.

> Many persons spoke of your father as too much occupied with his poetry. It did, no doubt, fill a very large place in his thoughts, and it is also true that he was accustomed to express his opinions about it with a curiously childlike simplicity and frankness. But at bottom his nature seemed to be singularly modest. No poet ever corrected so many lines in deference to adverse criticism. His sensitiveness seemed to me curiously out of harmony with his large powerful frame, with his manly dark colouring, with his great massive hands and strong square-tipped fingers.

His son records how in lonely walks together Tennyson would chant a poem that he was composing, would search for strange birds or flowers, and would himself take flight on discovering that he was being stalked by a tourist. Among the letters is one from Victor Hugo, in the grand cosmopolitan style, beginning "Mon Éminent et Cher Confrère," professing love for all mankind and admiration for noble verse everywhere; another from Cardinal Newman, smooth and adroit; there is also a note by Dr. Dabbs of his colloquy with Tennyson, showing how he began with the somewhat musty question about the incompatibility of Science with

Religion, and found the Poet, as we infer, tolerably dexterous with the foils. Renan called, and put the essence of his philosophy into one phrase, “La vérité est une nuance”; there are jottings of talks with Carlyle, and a long extract from the journal of a yachting voyage with Mr. Gladstone, who said, “No man since Aeschylus could have written the *Bride of Lammermoor*.” It would be doing less than justice to the biography if I did not choose a few samples from an ample storehouse, and it would be unfair to make too many quotations, even from a book which surpasses all recent memoirs as a repertory of characteristic observations and short views of life and literature, interchanged by speech or writing, with many notable friends and visitors.

In 1883 the Queen, on the recommendation of Mr. Gladstone, offered Tennyson a peerage, which, after some rumination, he accepted, saying, “By Gladstone’s advice I have consented, but for my own part I shall regret my own simple name all my life.” We are to suppose that the Prime Minister’s only misgiving “lest my father might insist on wearing his wideawake in the House of Lords” had been duly overcome; and so next year the Poet, having taken his seat, voted, not without some questioning and doubts of the time’s ripeness, for extension of franchise. No more worthy representative of literature has ever added lustre to that august assembly than he who now took his seat on the cross benches, holding no form of party creed, but contemplating all. From a man of his traditions and tastes, his dislike of extravagance, his feeling for the stateliness of well-ordered movement, at his age, moderation in politics was to be expected; and indeed we observe that he commended to his friends Maine’s work on *Popular Government*, which carries

political caution to the verge of timidity. But Tennyson, like Burke, had great confidence in the common sense and inbred good nature of the English people. “Stagnation,” he once said, “is more dangerous than revolution.” As he was throughout consistently the poet of the *via media* in politics, the dignified constitutional Laureate, so he was spared the changes that passed over the opinions of Wordsworth, Southey, and Coleridge, who were Radicals in youth, and declined into elderly Tories. Undoubtedly the temper of his time affected his politics as well as his poetry, for his manhood began in the calm period which followed the long stormy years when all Europe was one great war-field, and when the ardent spirits of Byron and Shelley had been fired by the fierce uprising of the nations.

In 1885, being then in his seventy-sixth year, Lord Tennyson published “Tiresias,” preluding with the verses to E. FitzGerald, so vigorous in tone and so finely wrought, with their rhymes ringing true to the expectant ear like the chime of a clear bell. Some years before, he had paid a passing visit at Woodbridge to “the lonely philosopher, a man of humorous melancholy mark, with his gray floating locks, sitting among his doves.... We fell at once into the old humour, as if we had been parted twenty days instead of so many years.” It is a rarity in modern life that two such men as Tennyson and FitzGerald, whose mutual friendship was never shaken, should have met but once in some twenty-five years, although divided by no more space than could be traversed by a three hours’ railway journey. “Tiresias” was soon followed by “Locksley Hall: Sixty Years After”; then, in 1889, came “Demeter” and other poems; until, in 1892, the volume containing the “Death of Œnone” and “Akbar’s Dream” closed

the long series of poems which had held two generations under their charm. One line in the second “Locksley Hall” its author held to be the best of the kind he had ever written:

> Universal ocean softly washing all her warless isles;

though in my poor judgment the harmony seems marred by the frequent sibilants, which vex all English composers[97]; and the suggestion that the sea would become stormless when the land should be at peace may be thought overbold.

It was but seasonable that his later poetry should have been tinged with autumnal colouring. The philosophic bent of his mind had necessarily grown with increasing years; its range had been widened by constant assimilation with the scientific ideas of the day, with social and political changes; but as far horizons breed sadness and wistful uncertainty, so his later verse leans more toward the moral lessons of experience, toward reflective and retrospective views of life and character. In poetry, as in prose, the sequel to a fine original piece has very rarely, if ever, been successful; though the second part, when it follows the first after a long interval, often exhibits the special value that comes from alteration of style and the natural changes of mood. Tennyson himself thought that “the two ‘Locksley Halls’ were likely to be in the future two of the most historically interesting of his poems, as descriptive of the tone of the age at two distant periods of his life.” In my opinion, the interest is less historical than biographical, in the sense that the second poem takes its deeper shade from the darkening that seems to have overspread his later meditations. For the

interval of sixty years had, in fact, brought increased activity and enterprising eagerness to the English people; and the gray thoughts of the sequel, the heavier feeling of errors and perils encompassing the onward path toward the remote ideal, are the Poet's own. He employed them, it is true, for the dramatic presentation of old age, and disclaimed any identity with the imaginary personage.

However this may be, the poems that appeared toward the close of his long literary career show a change of manner. We miss, to some degree, the delicate handling, the self-restraint, the serene air of his best compositions; there is a certain gloominess of atmosphere,[98] breaking out occasionally into vehement expression, in the rolling dithyrambic stanzas of "Vastness," "The Dawn," or "The Dreamer." In the "Death of Œnone," the beautiful antique nymph of Tennyson's youth, deserted and passionately lamenting on many-fountained Ida, has become soured and vindictive.[99] She is now a jealous wife, to whose feet Paris, dying from the poisoned arrow, crawls "lame, crooked, reeling," to be spurned as an adulterer, who may "go back to his adulteress and die." Here the Poet abandons the style and feeling of Hellenic tradition;[100] the echo of the old-world story has died away; it is rather the voice of some tragedy queen posing as the injured wife of modern society; and one remembers that the Homeric adulteress, Helen of Troy, went back to live happily and respected with her husband in Sparta. It was not to be expected that Tennyson's later inspirations should reach the supreme level of the poems which he wrote in his prime, or that there should be no ebb from the high-water mark that he touched, in my opinion, fifty years earlier in 1842.[101] Yet hardly any poet has so long retained

consummate mastery of his instrument, or has published so little that might have been omitted with advantage or without detriment to his permanent reputation. And it will never be forgotten that he wrote “Crossing the Bar” in his eighty-first year.

It is clear from the *Memoir*, at any rate, that the burden of nigh fourscore years weakened none of his interest in literature and art, in political and philosophical speculation, or diminished his resources of humorous observation and anecdote. Among many recollections he told of Hallam (the historian) saying to him, “I have lived to read Carlyle’s *French Revolution*, but I cannot get on, the style is so abominable;” and of Carlyle groaning about Hallam’s *Constitutional History*: “Eh, it’s a miserable skeleton of a book”—bringing out into short and sharp contrast two opposite schools, the picturesque and the precise, of history-writing. Robert Browning’s death in December 1889 distressed him greatly; it was, moreover, a forewarning to the elder of two brothers, if not equals, in renown. In 1890 Oliver Wendell Holmes, who was Tennyson’s junior by only twenty-three days, wrote to him:

> I am proud of my birth-year, and humbled when I think of who were and who are my coevals. Darwin, the destroyer and creator; Lord Houghton, the pleasant and kind-hearted lover of men of letters; Gladstone, whom I leave it to you to characterise, but whose vast range of intellectual powers few will question; Mendelssohn, whose music still rings in our ears; and the Laureate, whose “jewels five words long”—many of them a good deal longer—sparkle in our

memories.

He wrote kindly to William Watson and Rudyard Kipling, whose patriotic verse pleased him; and twelve months later Watson paid a grateful tribute to his memory in one of the best among many threnodies. He spoke of Carlyle's having come to smoke a pipe with him one evening in London, "when the talk turned upon the immortality of the soul, upon which Carlyle said, 'Eh, old Jewish rags, you must clear your mind of all that. Why should we expect a hereafter?'" and likened man's sojourn on earth to a traveller's rest at an inn, whereupon Tennyson turned the simile against him. His son describes how the old man's "dignity and repose of manner, his low musical voice, and the power of his magnetic eye kept the attention riveted." In August 1892 Lord Selborne and the Master of Balliol visited him; but

> ... he did not feel strong enough for religious discussions with Jowett, and begged Jowett not to consult with him or argue with him, as was his wont, on points of philosophy and religious doubt. The Master answered him with a remarkable utterance: "Your poetry has an element of philosophy more to be considered *than any regular philosophy in England*";

which is certainly an ambiguous and possibly not an extravagant eulogy.

The final chapter of the *Memoir* gives, briefly, some sentences from his last talks, and describes a peaceful and noble ending. He found his Christianity undisturbed by jarring of sects and creeds; but he said, "I dread the losing hold of forms. I have

expressed this in my ‘Akbar.’” The welfare of the British Empire, its expansion and its destiny, had been from the beginning and were to the end of his poetic career matters of intense pride and concern to him. When, in September 1892, he fell seriously ill, and Sir Andrew Clark arrived, the physician and the patient fell to discussing Gray’s “Elegy”; and a few days later, being much worse, he sent for his Shakespeare, tried to read but had to let his son read for him. Next day he said: “‘I want the blinds up, I want to see the sky and the light.’ He repeated ‘The sky and the light.’ It was a glorious morning, and the warm sunshine was flooding the weald of Sussex and the line of South Downs, which were seen from his window.” On the second day after this he passed away very quietly. The funeral service in Westminster Abbey, with its two anthems—“Crossing the Bar” and “The Silent Voices”—filling the long-drawn aisle and, rising to the fretted vault above the heads of a great congregation, will long be remembered by those who were present. “The tributes of sympathy,” his son writes, “which we received from many countries and from all classes and creeds, were not only remarkable for their universality, but for their depth of feeling.”

To those who had so long lived with him, the loss of one whom they had tended for many years with devoted affection and reverence was indeed irreparable. Yet they had the consolation of knowing that his life had been on the whole happy and fortunate, marked by singularly few griefs or troubles; that he had proved himself a master of the high calling which he set before himself, and departed, full of honours, at the coming of the time when no man can work.

A collection of letters that passed between the Queen and Tennyson, including two from Her Majesty to his son on receiving the news of Tennyson's death, is added to the *Memoir*; and the volume closes with "Recollections of the Poet," written at some length, by Lord Selborne, Jowett, John Tyndall, F. Myers, F. T. Palgrave, and the Duke of Argyll. These papers will be read, as they deserve to be, with attentive interest for their descriptions of the personal characteristics, recorded by those who knew him best, of a very remarkable man; they show also how his poems were conceived and elaborated, they trace his thoughts on high subjects, and they contain very ample dissertations on his poetry. They inevitably anticipate the work of the public reviewer, who cannot pretend to write with equal authority, while it is not his business to criticize the carefully composed opinions of others.

One can see, looking backward, that Tennyson's genius flowered in due season; there had been a plentiful harvest of verse in the preceding generation, but it had been garnered, and the field was clear. The hour had come for a new writer to take up the succession to that brilliant and illustrious group who, in the first quarter of the last century, raised English poetry to a height far above the classic level of the age before them. Three leaders of that band—Byron, Keats, and Shelley—died young; the sum total of their years added together exceeds by no more than a decade the space of Tennyson's single life. And if the creative period of a poet's life may be reckoned as beginning at twenty-one (which is full early), it sums up to no more than thirty-one years for all the three poets whom we have named, and to sixty years for Tennyson alone. When his first volume appeared (1832), Byron, Shelley, and Keats

were dead; Scott and Coleridge had long ceased to write poetry, and were dying; Wordsworth, who had done all his best work long before, alone survived, for Southey cannot be counted in the same rank. Moreover, England may be said to have been just then passing through one of those periods of artistic depression that precede a revival; the popular taste was artificial and decadent, it was running down to the pseudo-romantic and false Gothic, to the conventional Keepsake note in sentiment, to extravagant admiration of such poems as Moore's *Lalla Rookh*. The purchase by the State of the Elgin Marbles, and the opening of the National Gallery, had prepared the way for better things in art; but I may affirm, speaking broadly, that it was a flat interval, when the new generation was just looking for some one to give form to an upward movement of ideas.

It was upon the rising wave after this calm that Tennyson was lifted forward by the quick recognition of his talent among his ardent and open-minded contemporaries; although his general popularity came gradually, since even in 1850, as may be seen from the list already given of his competitors for the Laureateship, his pre-eminence had not been indisputably established in high political society. Yet all genuine judges might perceive at once that here was the man to raise again from the lower plane the imaginative power of verse, who knew the magical charm that endows with beauty and dramatic force the incidents and impressions which the ordinary artist can only reproduce in a commonplace or unreal way, while the master-hand suddenly illumines the whole scene, foreground and background. He struck a note that touched the feelings and satisfied the spiritual needs of his

contemporaries, and herein lay the promise of his poetry; for to the departing generation the coming man can say little or nothing. We have to bear in mind, also, that during Tennyson's youth the whole complexion and "moving circumstance" of the age had undergone a great alteration. It was the uproar and martial clang, the drums and trampling of long and fierce wars, the mortal strife between revolutionary and reactionary forces, that kindled the fiery indignation of Shelley and Byron, inspiring such lines as

> Still, Freedom, still thy banner, torn yet flying,
> Streams like a meteor flag *against* the wind,

and affected Coleridge and even Southey "in their hot youth, when George the Third was king." Tennyson's opportunity came when these thunderous echoes had died away, when the Reform Bill had become law, when the era of general peace and comfortable prosperity that marks for England the middle of this century was just setting in. The change may be noticed in Tennyson's treatment of landscape, of the aspects of earth, sea, and sky. With Byron and Coleridge the prevailing effects were grand, stormy, wildly magnificent; with Tennyson the impressions are mainly peaceful, melancholy, mysterious: he is looking on the happy autumn fields, or listening in fancy to the long wash of Australasian seas. There are of course exceptions on both sides; yet in Byron the best-known descriptive passages are all of the former, and in Tennyson of the latter, character. The difference in style corresponds, manifestly, not only with the contrast in the temper of their times, warlike for the earlier poets and peaceful for the later, but also with the

disorder and unrest which vexed the private lives of Byron, Shelley, and Coleridge, as compared with the happy domestic fortunes of Tennyson.

It is almost superfluous to lay stress on the well-known metrical variety of Tennyson's poems, or upon the musical range of his language. He followed the best models, and perhaps improved upon them, in using the primitive onomatopœia as the base for a higher order of composition, in which the words have a subtle connotation, blending sound and colour into harmonies that accord with the sense and spirit of a passage, convey the thought, and create the image. His skill in wielding the long flowing line was remarkable, nor had any poet before him employed it so frequently; its flexibility lent freedom and scope to his impersonations of character, and in other pieces he could give it the rolling melody of a chant or a chorus. On the instrumental power of blank verse we know that he set the highest value; he had his own secret methods of scansion, and his long practice enabled him to extend the capabilities of this peculiarly English metre. But for an excellent critical analysis of Tennyson's blank verse, in comparison with the rhythm of other masters, I must refer my readers to Mr. J. B. Mayor's *Chapters on English Metre*, with especial reference to the final chapter, where the styles of Tennyson and Browning, as representative of modern English verse, are scientifically examined.

I make no apology for having included some criticisms of Tennyson's work in this review of his life, because not the least valuable feature of the *Memoir* is that it has been so arranged as to form a running commentary upon and interpretation of his poems, as reflecting his mind and his manner of life.

Throughout the second half of the last century Tennyson has been foremost among English men of letters, and it is his proud distinction to have maintained the apostolic succession of our national poets in a manner not unworthy of those famous men who went immediately before him.

TENNYSON: THE POET AND THE MAN

By PROFESSOR HENRY BUTCHER[102]

A hundred years have passed since Tennyson's birth, seventeen years since his death. It is too soon to attempt to fix his permanent place among English poets, but it is not too soon to feel assured that much that he has written is of imperishable worth. Will you bear with me if I offer some brief remarks, not by way of critical estimate, but in loving appreciation of the poet and the man? And let me say at once how deeply all who care for Tennyson are indebted to the illuminating *Memoir* and Annotated Edition published by his son.

Tennyson's poetic career is in some respects unique in English literature. He fell upon a time when fiction, science, and sociology were displacing poetry. He succeeded in conquering the poetic

indifference of his age. For nearly sixty years he held a listening and eager audience, including not only fastidious hearers but also the larger public. Probably no English poet except Shakespeare has exercised such a commanding sway over both learned and unlearned. He unsealed the eyes of his contemporaries and revealed to them again the significance of beauty. To the English people, and indeed the English-speaking race, he was not merely the gracious and entrancing singer, but also the seer who divined their inmost thoughts and interpreted them in melodious forms of verse.

At the outset of his poetic life, Arthur Hallam notes the "strange earnestness of his worship of beauty." Like Milton, he was studious of perfection. Like Milton, too, he had in a supreme degree the poet's double endowment of an exquisite ear for the music of verse and an unerring eye for the images of nature. Like Milton, he acquired a mastery of phrase which has enriched the capacities of our English speech; and not Milton himself drew from the purely English elements in the language more finely modulated tones. No poet since Milton has been more deeply imbued with classical literature, and the perfection of form which he sought fell at once into a classic and mainly a Hellenic mould. We find in him reminiscences or close reproductions not only of Homer and Theocritus, of Virgil and Horace, of Lucretius and Catullus, of Ovid and Persius, but also of Sappho and Alcman, of Pindar and Aeschylus, of Moschus, Callimachus, and Quintus Smyrnaeus, more doubtfully of Simonides and Sophocles. We can follow the tracks of his reading also in Herodotus, Plato, Plutarch, and Livy. His early volumes contain varied strains of classical and romantic legend. In some of the poems we are aware at once of the

pervasive atmosphere and enchantment of romance, as in “The Lady of Shalott,” “Mariana,” “Sir Galahad,” and many more. Others—such as “Œnone,” “The Lotos-Eaters,” “Ulysses,” “Tithonus”—what are we to call them, classical or romantic? The thought and the form are chiefly classical, but the poems are shot through with romantic gleams and tinged with modern sentiment. Yet so skilful is the handling that there is no sense of incongruity between the things of the past and the feelings of a later day. The harmony of tone and colour is almost faultless, more so than in the treatment of the longer themes taken from Celtic sources. But while some poems are dominantly classical, others dominantly romantic, Tennyson’s genius as a whole is the spirit of romance expressing itself in forms of classical perfection. To the romanticist he may seem classical; to the classicist he is romantic: romantic in his choice of subjects, in his attitude towards Nature, in his profusion of detail, in an ornateness sometimes running to excess; in his moods, too, of reverie or languor and in the slumberous charm that broods over many of his landscapes. Yet he is free from the disordered individualism of the extreme romantic school. Disquietude and unrest are not wanting, but there is no unruly self-assertion; the cry of social revolt is faintly heard, and, when heard, its tones are among the least Tennysonian. Those who demand subtle or curious psychology find him disappointing; his characters are in the Greek manner *broadly human*, types rather than deviations from the type. That he was capable of expressing intense and poignant feeling is shown by such impassioned utterances as those of “Fatima” and “Maud”; but passion with him is usually restrained. There are critics for whom

passion is genuine only if turbid, just as thought is profound only if obscure; and for them Tennyson's reserve—again a Greek quality—seems an almost inhuman calm. His own most deeply felt experiences find their truest expression when passed through the medium of art; they come out tranquillized and transfigured. The sorrow and love of "In Memoriam"—which poem I take to be the supreme effort of his genius—are merged in large impersonal emotions. The poem, as he himself says, "is rather the cry of the whole human race than mine." Tennyson's intense humanity gives rise to a peculiar vein of pathos, and even of melancholy. Side by side there are his "mighty hopes" for the future and the power and "passion of the past"—"the voice of days of old and days to be": on the one hand the forward straining intellect, on the other the backward glance, the lingering regret, and "some divine farewell." Those haunting and recurrent words, "the days that are no more," "for ever and for ever," and the "vague world whisper" of the "far-far-away," are charged with a sadness which recalls the pathetic but stoical refrain of "Nequiquam" in Lucretius.

Throughout Tennyson's long career we can trace the essential oneness of his mind and art, beginning with his early experiments in language and metrical form. By degrees his range of subjects was enlarged; we are amazed at the ever-growing variety of theme and treatment and his manifold modes of utterance. In some, as in his lyrics and dramatic monologues, he displays a flawless excellence, in almost all consummate art. But diverse as are the chords he has struck, the voice, the touch, the melody are all his own. In his latest poems we may miss something of the early rapture of his lyric song, but he is still himself and unmistakable; and had he written

nothing but the lines “To Virgil” and “Crossing the Bar” he would surely take rank among the highest. We think of him primarily as the artist, but the artist and the man in him were never far apart; and as years went on his human sympathies, always strong, were strengthened and broadened, and drew him closer to the common life of humble people. We overhear more of “the still sad music of humanity.” Towards the close of his life the moral and religious content of the poems becomes fuller with his deepening sense of the grandeur and the pathos of man’s existence. Some see in this a weakening of his art, the intrusion into poetry of an alien substance. Yet eliminate this element from art, and how much of the greatest poetry of the world is gone! Now and then, it must be confessed, the ethical aim in Tennyson seems to some of us unduly prominent, but *very rarely* does the artist lose himself in the teacher or the preacher. He has a message to deliver, but it is not a mere moral lesson: its true appeal is to the imagination; put it into prose and it is no longer his. It lives only in its proper form of imaginative beauty.

Aristotle noted two types of poet, the εὐφυής, the finely gifted artist, plastic to the Muse’s touch, who can assume many characters in turn; and the μανικός, the inspired poet, with a strain of frenzy, who is lifted out of himself in a divine transport. Were we asked to select three examples of the former type, one from Greece, one from Rome, and one from England, our choice from the ancient world would probably fall on Sophocles and Virgil, and might we not, as a fitting third, add Tennyson to the list? I do not attempt to determine their relative rank, but I do suggest that they all belong to the same family, and that already in this centenary year of our Poet we can recognize the poetic kinship. Each of the three

had in him the inmost heart of poetry, beating with a full humanity and instinct with human tenderness; each remained true to his calling as an artist and pursued throughout life the vision of beauty; and each achieved, in his own individual way, a noble and harmonious beauty of thought and form, of soul and sense.

JAMES SPEDDING

JAMES SPEDDING

By W. ALDIS WRIGHT, Vice-Master of Trinity College, Cambridge.

> "Spedding was the Pope among us young men—the wisest man I know."—*Tennyson: a Memoir, by his Son*, p. 32.

James Spedding, of whom FitzGerald wrote, "He was the wisest man I have known," was born June 20, 1808, at Mirehouse, Keswick, and was the third son of John Spedding. He was educated at the Grammar

School, Bury St. Edmunds, where his father, leaving his Cumberland home, went to live for the purpose of putting his sons under the care of Dr. Malkin. Among his school-fellows were W. B. Donne, J. M. Kemble (the Anglo-Saxon scholar), the three brothers FitzGerald, and his own brother Edward, who with himself was at the head of the school when they left. From Bury he went to Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1827, where he was contemporary with Frederick, Charles, and Alfred Tennyson, Arthur Hallam, Monckton Milnes (afterwards Lord Houghton), and W. H. Thompson (afterwards Master of Trinity), and was very early admitted into the fellowship of the Apostles. On Commemoration Day, 1830, he was called upon to deliver an oration in the College Chapel, the subject being "An Apology for the Moral and Literary Character of the Nineteenth Century," which was afterwards printed. Another of his early productions was a speech against Political Unions, written for a debating society in the University of Cambridge, which, although anonymous, attracted the notice of the author of *Philip van Artevelde*, afterwards his colleague in the Colonial Office, who quoted some passages from it in the notes to his poem, with the remark: "It is a singular trait of the times that a speech containing so much of sagacity and mature reflection as is to be found in this exercitation, should have been delivered in an academical debating club, and should have passed away in a pamphlet, which, as far as I am aware, attracted no notice. Time and place consenting, a brilliant Parliamentary reputation might be built upon a tithe of the merit." In 1831 he won the Members' Prize with a Latin essay on "Utrum boni plus an mali hominibus et civitatibus attulerit dicendi copia," and in 1832 he was again a

candidate, and wrote to Thompson on the 4th of May about it:

> Tennant and I both got in our Essays, both in a very imperfect state, and both the last minute but one.... I find that Alford also wrote. So the Apostles have three chances. What Alford's may be I do not know. But Tennant's and mine are neither of them worth much: Tennant's from dryness, mine from impertinence: for of all the impertinent things I ever wrote (and this is a bold word) my "Dissertatio Latina" was the most impertinent. It was in the form of a letter from Son Marcus to Father Cicero; cutting up the Offices in the most reverential way possible. The merit of it is, that if no prize is given at all I may fairly put it down to the novelty of the experiment and the nature of the Judges, whom to my horror I found out the day after to be the Heads of Colleges! Marry, God forbid! I rather calculated on Graham's[103] being one of the chief voters, who is fond of fun in general, and of my Latin in particular. However, it is no matter. I spent an amusing fortnight and improved my composition: and my mind is easy anyhow, which you will not easily believe.

On June 21 he writes again:

> You will be glad to know that scoffing and utilizing march (like humanity according to the St. Simonians), and that Cicero the son has justified his parentage by getting the first prize for Latin composition. You will be sorry to hear that not Alford nor Tennant, but

> Hildyard Pet. hath obtained the second. Whether their labour has been lost I know not, but mine has been fairly paid, being at the rate of a guinea a day, and therefore 365 guineas a year, a very tolerable income, and I shall increase my establishment accordingly.... I wish you would decide, with your character, to come to Cambridge in the vacation and not stay by that dismal sea. There will be George Farish, and Edm. Lushington, and God knows whether Tennant, and do but add yourself to myself, and ourselves to the aforesaid: and lo you a select company as ever smoked under the shadow of a horse chesnut. If you do not come, you will simply be behind the world of the wise (which you know is as much like a goad as like a nail fastened by the master of an assembly) in the understanding of things spoken. For we talk out of the "Palace of Art" and the "Legend of Fair Women." The great Alfred is here, *i.e.* in Southampton Row, smoking all the day, and we went from this house [14 Queen Square, Westminster] on a pilgrimage to see him; to wit, Two Heaths, my brother and myself, and, meeting Allen on the way, we took him along with us, and when we arrived at the place appointed we found A. T. and A. H. H. and J. M. K. So we made a goodly company, and did as we do at Cambridge, and, but that you were not among us, we should have been happy.

Again, on the 18th of July:

> A new volume by A. T. is in preparation and will, I suppose, be out in Autumn. In the

> meantime I have no copy of the "Palace of Art," but shall be happy to repeat it to you when you come,—no copy of the "Legend of Fair Women," but can repeat about a dozen stanzas which are of the finest,—no copy of the conclusion of "Œnone" but one in pencil which no one but myself can read. The two concluding stanzas of "The Miller's Daughter," I can give you in this letter.... A broad smiling letter from John Heath commissions me this morning to engage Mrs. Perry's lodgings for Dunbar, whereat I rejoice: also informs me that he himself keeps a Parroquet, and that Douglas has become a great Berkeleian, and would leave his body, like Jeremy Bentham's, to be dissected, if he thought he had one.

His brother Edward, who had been for some time in delicate health, died on the 24th of August 1832, and a few days later Spedding writes to Thompson:

> If you have seen Tennant you will be prepared to hear that my brother Edward died early on Friday morning, after above a month of severe suffering, leaving a ghastly vacancy in my prospects, not to be filled up. However, what is past—the profit and the pleasure which I have gathered out of long and pleasant years of brotherly society—this at least is safe, and is so much to be thankful for. Why should I be the sorrier because I have so long been graced with a source of comfort and of pride, which, if I had never known, I should now be as cheerful as when I last wrote to you? You knew him but little, but you knew him enough to form some

> notion of how much I have to regret—or, in other words, how much I have had to bless God for. He made a good and a Christian end, and it is ascertained by a *post-mortem* inspection that he could not possibly have had health for any length of time together. His disease was the formation of internal abscesses, in consequence of a failure of some of the membranes, and quite beyond the reach of surgery, so that, had one been at liberty to decide by a wish whether he should live or die, it would have been an act of unpardonable selfishness to wish him a moment more of captivity. This too is something to take off the bitterness of regret, which, however, in any way has no business to be bitter. But whether it is that I value high human friendship more highly than I ought to do, or whatever be the cause, a strange fatality seems to hang over the objects of my more especial esteem, and I would have you, Thompson, beware in time. But I shall lose my character with you if I do not take care. I hope you will communicate the news to Tennant and Farish, and to all our common friends, for explanations face to face are formidable things.

It was the death of this brother that gave occasion to the verses "To J. S." which Tennyson published in the volume then in course of preparation.

In October 1832, after unsuccessfully sitting for a Fellowship, he decided upon another trial. Writing from Mirehouse to Thompson, he says:

> I find it impossible to read here, the valleys

> look so independent of circumstances. There stand the mountains, there lie the valleys, and there is that brook which thou hast made to take its pastime therein, a jolly old beck that has lately taken to worshipping its maker; for it overflowed and went into the church, turning us Christians out, or rather preventing us from going in—a better thing, inasmuch as prevention is better than cure.

He was again unsuccessful, and Whiston was elected before him.

In the spring of this year (1833) he had written to Thompson: "Hallam announces himself this morning as not otherwise than unwell." He had long been delicate, and his early and sudden death at Vienna on the 15th of September came as a shock but not a surprise to his friends. There was a suggestion that his memory should be perpetuated by an inscription in the College Chapel, but it came to nothing. Spedding wrote to Thompson on November 18:

> Phillips has been consulting me and others as to the propriety and possibility of getting a tablet to Arthur Hallam's memory erected in Trinity Chapel. Everybody approves cordially to whom he has communicated the proposal, and he now wishes it to be known among Hallam's friends that such a plan is in contemplation, but privately and quietly. He will then get Christopher Wordsworth to get the Master's permission, and then it will be time to think about the rest. It is just possible that there may be some College etiquette or other in the way, and it would be a pity in that case that the intention should have been

> talked about publicly. Will you communicate this to friends in Cambridge who may communicate with friends out of Cambridge, and so there will be little difficulty in letting every one know who is interested in the matter? Kemble can tell Trench, etc.; Merivale, Alford, etc. Who will write to Monteith, or send me his address? I will write to Donne myself. I think you must know every friend of Hallam's whom I know. I have communicated with no one yet, except those in town. You will be able to do what is fitting better than I can tell you.

The scheme came to nothing, for what reason we do not know; possibly "college etiquette," as Spedding anticipated, might stand in the way, for Hallam was neither Fellow nor Scholar of the College.

In the spring of 1834 Spedding was still at Mirehouse, and gives Thompson an account of a day and night he spent with Hartley Coleridge:

> The said Hartley is indeed a spirit of no common rate—his mind is brimful of rare and precious fancies, which leap out of him as fresh as a fountain in the sunshine. His biographical engagement with Bingley is for the present suspended, by his own fault, as he says. I suppose he could not stand it any longer. But the three first numbers are completed, and bound up in a goodly fat volume of 720 closely printed pages. It contains twelve or fifteen lives, and more good things of all sorts and sizes than any other book of 720 pages. It is published by Bingley in Leeds and Whitaker in London,

called *Biographia Borealis*, costs sixteen shillings, and the notes alone are worth the money. Wherefore, I pray you not only to get it yourself, but likewise to make everybody else get it. No apostolic bookcase should be without it. It should become a *household* book; therefore, let no one think of borrowing it, but whosoever is wise and good let him buy or steal it. If any man should ask what are the *politics* of the work (a question which no Apostle, who is indeed an Apostle, ever thought of asking but in the way of mere curiosity), then say thou, the same politics which were held in common by Plato, Demosthenes, Shakespeare, Bacon, Burke, and God Almighty, and let him make what he can of the information.

Wordsworth's eyes are better, but not well, nor ever likely to be. Reading inflames them and so does composing. I believe it was a series of Highland Sonnets that brought on the last attack, so much worse than any he had had before. He read me several that I had not seen nor heard before, many of them admirably good; also a long, romantic wizard and fairy poem, in the time of Merlin and King Arthur, very pretty, but not of the first order. But I should not have expected anything so good from him, which was so much out of his beat. He has not advanced much in his knowledge of Alfred; but he is very modest in his refusal to praise attributing his want of admiration to a deficiency in himself, whether from the stiffness of old age, which cannot accommodate itself to a new style of beauty,

> or that the compass of his sympathies has been narrowed by flowing too long and strongly in one direction. (*N.B.* He is not answerable for the English that I am writing.) But he doubts not that Alfred's style has its own beauty, though he wants the faculty to enter fully into it, alleging as a parallel case the choruses in "Samson Agonistes" the measure of which he has never been able to enjoy, which comes to perhaps as high a compliment as a negative compliment can be. He spoke so wisely and graciously that I had half a mind to try him with a poem or two, but that would have been more perhaps than he meant. And indeed it is always so pleasant to hear a distinguished man unaffectedly disclaiming the office of censor, that I never think it fair to take him at his word. I have given a copy of Alfred's second volume to Hartley Coleridge, who, I trust, will make more of it. He had only seen it for a few minutes, and was greatly behind the age, though he admitted that A. T. was undoubtedly a man of genius; and was going to say something about the *Quarterly* in a Review of *The Doctor*, which he was, or is, writing for Blackwood. I also sent him yesterday a copy of Charles Tennyson, accompanied with one of my most gentlemanly letters.

Spedding was now nearly six-and-twenty, and had no settled plan of life before him. "For myself," he says, "I am unsettled in all my prospects and plans. I am, in fact, doing nothing, but I flatter myself I am pausing on the brink to take a good look at the different ways of life which are open to me before I

take the fatal plunge."

At the end of 1834 he invited Thompson, who was then at York, to visit him at Mirehouse.

> Excuses shall not be admitted, at least not such as yours. Is there not a stage-coach which fears God, and do you *for that reason* refuse to employ it? You ought rather to encourage it. What is a little bile or rheumatism, compared with the advancement of Truth, and the conservation of the Faith that is on the earth? Moreover, every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, a coach leaves Kendal at 8 o'clock in the morning, and arrives in Keswick about one, having traversed in the short space of five hours many miles of the finest scenery in the country, containing both other things and five lakes, and the dwelling-places of Wordsworth, Hartley Coleridge, and Hamilton[104] (more commonly known as Cyril Thornton). As for your time lost last term, that I know, from my experience of your character, to be a fiction of modesty: and as for your hopes of making up for it at home, that I know, from my experience of my own character, to be humbug. Besides, you write as one balancing his own desires according to a principle of enlightened self-interest. You forget that it is not for your own pleasure, but for my profit, that I ask you to come. Am I not sliding daily from bad to worse? Am I not losing the race I do not run? Am I not learning to look on all knowledge as vanity, all labour as sorrow? for not the knowledge for which men labour

is profitable, but the labour only, and yet who can labour for that which profiteth not? Have I not already parted with the hope, and am I not now parting with the wish, to advance? Am I performing any duty? Am I making any money? Am I not falling away from the Apostolic mind, notwithstanding? Am I not taking pleasure in the shooting of snipes? Am I not in danger of having a bad German pronunciation for evermore? Roll these things in your mind, and then roll yourself into the coach. I will meet you at Ambleside, if you like.

I had read the review of Wordsworth several times over: and thought the criticism (except. excipiend.) good, and the moral philosophy superb. The passage about the moon looking round her, etc., I of course felt to be a blunder, though I was less surprised than sorry to see it. It seems to me to chime in too well with what I marked as the defect of his preface to *P. v. A.*,[105] so that I fear it is not a negligent criticism, as one might have hoped: but an opinion well weighed and carefully adopted. I wonder what he would say to Ebenezer Elliott, with his flowers and mountains, for a taste?

> Welcome then again
> Love-listening Primrose! tho' not parted long
> We meet like lovers after years of pain.
> Oh thou bringst blissful childhood back to me,
> Thou still art loveliest in the lowest

place,
Still as of old Day glows with love for thee,
And reads our heavenly Father in thy face.
Surely thy thoughts are humble and devout,
Flower of the pensive gold! for why should heaven
Deny to thee his noblest boon of thought,
If to Earth's demigods 'tis vainly given?
Answer me, Sunless Sister, Thou hast speech
Though silent Fragrance is thy eloquence,
Beauty thy language, and thy smile might teach
Ungrateful man to pardon providence.

He would call it a very bold figure of speech: figure of *speech*, quotha! However, Philip is a noble fellow, and the apology for this piece of criticism is so wise and so good that one can hardly regret that an apology was needed. I have sent for the citation of Will. Shakespeare, though rather with the desire than the expectation of great delight. I read a few extracts in the *Atlas*, with which I was not at all struck, or, if at all, not favourably; but that does not go for much, as I did not know who it was by, or anything about it, and the extracts were most probably ill-chosen. But to tell you the truth I never took much to Landor. To be sure I never read much of him, but I have often had the book

> in my hand. Perhaps I might have liked him better if the speakers had been named Philander and Strephon, and Philalethes and the like, instead of Bacon, and Hooker, and Raleigh, and so following. I shall have every chance this time: for besides the prejudice derived from your praise, I am by no means easy in feeling no great respect for a writer of whom *P. v. A.* speaks so very highly. There is something in Philip's intellect which commands more than my usual reverence. More *genial* minds I have met with, but for strength, and integrity, and *discretion* of understanding, I do not know his equal. He puts me in mind of F. Malkin. We must have him change his mind, though, about the moon and the streams. I read the review of Coleridge in the *Quarterly* the other day. The parts which are not Coleridge's own might have been better, but they are well enough.

The spring of 1835 was memorable at Mirehouse for a visit of Tennyson and FitzGerald. That this made a vivid impression on FitzGerald is evident from a letter which he wrote after Spedding's death to his niece, when there was some idea of gathering together his miscellaneous essays:

> "I rejoice," he says, "to hear of a Collection, or Reprint, of his stray works.... I used to say he wrote 'Virgilian Prose.' One only of his I did not care for; but that, I doubt not, was because of the subject, not of the treatment: his own printed Report of a Speech he made in what was called the 'Quinquaginta Club' Debating Society (not the Union) at Cambridge about the year 1831. This speech

> his Father got him to recall and recompose in Print; wishing always that his Son should turn his faculties to such public Topics rather than to the Poets, of whom he had seen enough in Cumberland not to have much regard for: Shelley for one, at one time stalking about the mountains with Pistols, and other such Vagaries. I do not think he was much an admirer of Wordsworth (I don't know about Southey), and I well remember that when I was at M*e*rehouse (as Miss Bristowe would have us call it), with A. Tennyson in 1835, Mr. Spedding grudged his Son's giving up much time and thought to consultations about Morte d'Arthur's, Lords of Burleigh, etc., which were then in MS. He more than once questioned me, who was sometimes present at the meetings, 'Well, Mr. F., and what is it? Mr. Tennyson reads, and Jem criticizes:—is that it?' etc. This, while I might be playing Chess with dear Mrs. Spedding, in May, while the Daffodils were dancing outside the Hall door."
>
> "At the end of May," he writes to Mrs. Kemble, "we went to lodge for a week at Windermere—where Wordsworth's new volume of *Yarrow Revisited* reached us. W. was then at his home, but Tennyson would not go to visit him: and of course I did not: nor even saw him."

In the summer of 1835 Thompson spent the Long Vacation at the Lakes, and Spedding was engaged in securing lodgings for him and his pupils, while Tennyson was still at Mirehouse.

> "I am going," he writes, "with Alfred, I believe, to Buttermere, and so have not time to tell you how much I am rejoiced that your destiny should have dragged you hither—nor to discuss the London Review—nor to tell you about Fitz and Alfred Tennyson, and Hartley Coleridge, and W. W., etc., only that Alfred is very gruff and unmanageable, and the weather very cold. He desires to be remembered. Fitz is gone."

A few days later he says:

> Alfred left us about a week since, homeward bound, but meaning to touch at Brookfield's on his way. The weather has been much finer since he went; certainly, while he was here, our northern sun did not display himself to advantage. Nevertheless, I think he took in more pleasure and inspiration than any one would have supposed who did not know his almost personal dislike of the Present, whatever it may be. Hartley Coleridge is mightily taken with him; and, after the fourth bottom of gin, deliberately thanked Heaven (under me, I believe, or me under Heaven, I forget which) for having brought them acquainted. Said Hartley was busy with an article on "Macbeth," to appear (the vegetable spirits permitting) in the next *Blackwood*. He confessed to a creed touching Destiny which was new to me: denying Free Will (if I understood him right) *in toto*; but at the same time maintaining that man is solely and entirely answerable for whatever evil he does: not merely that he is to suffer for it, which I could understand, but that he is

answerable for it which I do not. Now this, I think, is not fair. I could not get Alfred to Rydal Mount, he would and would not—sulky one, although Wordsworth was hospitably minded towards him; and would have been more so had the state of his household permitted, which I am sorry to say is full of sickness.... By a letter from D. D. H[eath] received to-day I infer that *Subscription no Bondage* is out; which I shall accordingly send for. I am sorry it is not to be understood in the sense of "Killing no Murder," which seems to me, till I be further enlightened, the only sort of construction which will make sense of it. D. D. H. looketh on this pamphlet as the final cause of the system of subscription at Oxford, and, now that the effect hath been accomplished doth heartily wish that custom may be discontinued. Euge, D. D. H.! For myself, since Alfred went, my time has been chiefly employed (that is, all my time which was not occupied in exercising the puppies) upon three several books: to wit, *Ralph Esher*, a sort of novel by Leigh Hunt, containing a most graceful and lively portraiture of Charles II.'s times, a good deal of rot about Truth and Love, and a good deal of metaphysics, hard to understand in parts, but in parts (to me, at least) very deep and touching. Item, *Isaac Comnenus*, a Play (Murray, 1827): by Henry Taylor, as Southey who lent me the book informs me; a work much in the tone and [style of] *P. v. A.*, and though far behind in design and execution by [no means] an unworthy precursor. It has

> some passages as fine as anything in *Philip*. Item, thirdly and lastly, Basil Montagu's *Life of Bacon*, a work of much labour both on the writer's part and the reader's, but well meant, and if not itself a good one containing all the materials necessary for a good one, which is saying a great deal. I have not read all the notes. In fact I believe they are all contained in the text. I should think that on a moderate computation, half the two volumes is a reprint of the other half, for if there are a few pages which are printed twice over, there are many half and quarter pages which are repeated four or five times. I should half like to review it.

If he had acted on his own suggestion we might not have had Macaulay's *Essay*, and certainly should not have had the *Evenings with a Reviewer*. This is the first intimation of his interest in what was to be the work of his life. It was at this time that he made the acquaintance of Henry (afterwards Sir Henry) Taylor, the author of *Philip van Artevelde*, which influenced his occupation for the next six years.

> "At this time," says Sir Henry in his Autobiography, "I obtained another relief, and in obtaining it obtained a friend for life. James Spedding was the younger son of a Cumberland squire who had been a friend of my father's in former, though I think they had not met in latter days. In the notes to *Van Artevelde* I had quoted a passage from an admirable speech of his spoken in a debating club at Cambridge when he was an undergraduate. This led to my making his acquaintance; and when some very laborious

business of detail had to be executed, I obtained authority to offer him the employment with the remuneration of £150 a year. He was in a difficulty at the time as to the choice of a profession, and feeling that life without business and occupation of some kind was dangerous, was glad to accept this employment as one which might answer the purpose well enough, if he proved suited to it, and if not might be relinquished without difficulty and exchanged for some other. I wrote to Mr. Southey, 24th January 1836:

"'Spedding has been and will be invaluable, and they owe me much for him. He is regarded on all hands, not only as a man of first-rate capacity, but as having quite a genius for business. I, for my part, have never seen anything like him in business on this side Stephen.... When I contemplate the easy labours of Stephen and one or two others I am disposed to think that there are giants in *these* days.'

"For six years Spedding worked away with universal approbation, and all this time he would have been willing to accept a post of précis writer with £300 a year, or any other such recognised position, and attach himself permanently to the office. But none such was placed at his disposal ... and he took the opportunity of the Whig government going out in 1841 to give up his employment. He then applied himself to edit the works and vindicate the fame of Lord Bacon. In 1847, on Sir James Stephen's retirement, the office of Under Secretary of State with £2000 a

> year was offered to him by Lord Grey, before it was offered to me, and he could not be induced to accept it. He could not be brought to believe, what no one else doubted, that he was equal to the duties.
>
> "Be this as it may, the fact that the man being well known and close at hand for six years, who could have been had for £300 a year in 1841, should have been let slip, though he was thought worth £2000 a year in 1847, if not a rare, is a clear example of the little heed given by the Government of this country to the choice and use of instruments."

The exact date of Spedding's beginning work at the Colonial Office is not known, but it must have been between the middle of June 1835 and the end of August,[106] for by that time he found that Downing Street was "no place for the indulgence of the individual genius." In a letter to Thompson he writes:

> I did take the liberty of insinuating a scoff at a Spanish Governor in one of my Despatches, but H. T. said it was clever and would not do. Said H. T. rises day by day in my esteem. He is not the least stiff or awful, but very gentle and majestic. He has a great deal of P. v. A. in him. But we do not talk much except on matters of business, which, however, rises in his hands to the dignity of statesmanship. I have not yet ascertained the contingencies on which my stay here depends, but I should think it probable that I may in the end have the offer of a permanent appointment in the office. If I have, I mean to take it, purely

> from a sense of duty; that I may have a nominal employment to satisfy impertinent enquiries withal, and perhaps also (as I dream in my more romantic moments) that I may have a real employment to discipline my own soul withal. The prospect of its leading to wealth or dignity is so small under present circumstances as not to be worth taking into account, yet not exactly so neither, for any prospect of any thing to come, however faint and distant, dignifies an employment with a relationship to the future and the indefinite.
>
> I meant to have gone to Kitlands to-day, but the coach was full. Recollect that *you* are not a man of many cares new taken up, and therefore may find time to shower your wiser meditations upon a sheet of paper, which addressed to me under cover to "R. W. Hay, Esq., Under Secretary of State, Colonial Office, Downing Street," will not be lost upon one who sometimes did but observe and wonder, but has now to enquire and dispatch.

Thompson had been with a reading party at Keswick during the summer, but had proved a bad correspondent.

> "I have heard," Spedding writes in November, "occasionally from Mirehouse dim intimations of your supposed existence; and latterly I have seen Martineau, to whom I have carefully pointed out the weak points in your character, which he had not observed. I have reason to believe that I am

rising rapidly in public estimation, and I have only to pray that I may not become too sufficient for my place. My sense of Duty has already been appealed to in the most flattering manner, to draw me to the undertaking of nobler business, which, being capable of, I have no right (it is said) to decline. My capacity, it would seem, is beyond doubt; and, as it has been evinced without any effort or observation of mine, perhaps the best way after all will be to let it have its own way and trouble my soul no more about it. Turn it adrift in the world, leave it to find its own market and provide its own goods, and if my soul (which would be a stranger in such pilgrimage) should return in after years to enquire after it, who knows how great she may find it grown? P. v. A. is away for his holidays. If you can suggest a good subject for a dramatic romance out of English or Scotch history between the Conquest and the time of Elizabeth, you shall thereby do him a good turn, and perhaps get praised in a note. Helps has just been here asking for information about Cambridge in general, more particularly about you and Blakesley. I could only tell him what I knew of you, which you must confess is not much to your credit. Sterling has established himself and his family in Bayswater, and gives tea parties to the wiser minds. I am going thither to-night. Garden (I understand from himself, writing from Carstairs) is to curatise in Cornwall. D. D. H. thinks there is humour in an equity draft.... My own career is as far

> from being marked out as ever. There is no present prospect of a vacancy here, and I cannot get any body to advise me to accept it if there were."

In the following year Thompson was appointed to the Head Mastership of the recently founded Leicester and Leicestershire Collegiate School, and at the opening ceremony on August 9, 1836, he delivered an address, of which Spedding says:

> I have read your speech, not with the distant and respectful admiration, the wonder broken off, which I am apt to call *faith*, but with the deliberate admiration of a man who understands and strongly assents. I see your audience had sense enough to utter loud cheers, but I want to know whether they had sense enough to see that such a speech ought not to be let pass away in a newspaper, but to be provided with some permanent, portable, and self-subsisting existence. If the proceedings of the day are to be published in a pamphlet, I should like to invest money in a few copies. If not, I shall think about printing your part of them in a legible shape on my own account.... G. Farish is going to Madeira, with Sterling, I believe. James F. speaks hopefully of the latter, but is more alarmed about his brother.

In a letter to Allen we get a glimpse of Tennyson:

> Alfred Tennyson has reappeared, and is going to-day or to-morrow to Florence, or to Killarney, or to Madeira, or to some place where some ship is going—he does not know where. He has been on a visit to a madhouse

> for the last fortnight (not as a patient), and has been delighted with the mad people, whom he reports the most agreeable and the most reasonable persons he has met with. The keeper is Dr. Allen (any relation of yours?), with whom he had been greatly taken!

Again writing to Thompson in October 1840 he says:

> I have been studying Alfred Tennyson's MSS., and I send you a copy of a poem which I think he once repeated to you and me, and which we neither of us much entered into. Reading it again the other day, I was surprised with the power and beauty of it, and I now think it wants nothing but a better name, or, I should rather say, a historical foundation. I would have it put into the mouth of some noted man (among the many such that must have been) involved in a marriage which he does not like, in violation of a pre-existing attachment. The imagining of such situations for the mere purpose of entering into the feelings which belong to them has something unwholesome in it, to my fancy; but the situation being given (whether in fact or fiction), there is no harm in turning it into poetry.

In 1840 Lord Lyndhurst was a candidate for the office of High Steward of the University of Cambridge in opposition to Lord Lyttelton. Spedding voted for the latter.

> "I went down to Cambridge," he writes to Thompson, "to support Lord Lyttelton in his late distinguished defeat, of which you have,

> of course, heard all particulars with apostolic embellishments and illustrations both from other apostolic souls and from Merivale. I have been happy in being able in these trying circumstances to preserve my natural tranquillity. My view of the nature of the contest is this: The University would select Lord Lyndhurst as the sort of man whom a University should delight to honour. A dissentient minority say not content. The majority reply to the dissentients, 'Why divide? You see you cannot win.' The minority rejoins, 'Never mind; divide we will, win or not win. If Lord Lyndhurst is to be selected for such an honour as this, it shall be deliberately and not by accident. The objections shall be formally brought forward and formally overruled.' The bringing of the question to the poll I consider as an appeal to the constituency to consider what they were about; and, in spite of the result, I am glad it has been brought to this issue. For the credit of the University it was fit it should be known that there were 500 dissentients, and for the instruction of mankind it was fit it should be known that there was a majority of two masters of arts to one who thought Lord Lyndhurst the proper man to receive the honours and dignities of the University. Had I been an enemy I should have voted in the majority; but being a dutiful, though not perhaps a very respectful son, I was glad of an opportunity of making the 586 into 587."

The friends of Lord Lyndhurst made every effort to secure his election, and we learn from his Life by Sir

Theodore Martin that he was only induced to be a candidate on condition that his return would be certain. The majority was 480.

Thompson, who had returned to Cambridge, was at this time in feeble health, and, as it was not known where a letter would find him, FitzGerald wrote under cover to Spedding, who was still at the Colonial Office. The letter does not appear to have been preserved, but it suggested to Spedding some criticism of the theatres and actors of the time which is not without interest at the present day.

> "Fitz," he writes on November 25, 1840, "has forwarded this to me that I may direct it properly, and as it is not sealed I have made free with the contents. The meaning of the writing on the wall had hitherto escaped me, I confess, but the effect of my head in the Pit has often occurred to me as something unseemly, like Scriptures out of Church; inasmuch as when I am by myself I always choose a place where I can wear my hat. I have sometimes thought of getting a wig to wear in such places of vain resort. But to say the truth, a bad play will often afford more rational entertainment for two or three hours than an average dinner party, provided a man goes to it with an understanding that such a thing can be neither better nor worse than a shadow, and with an imagination to amend it. It is strange enough, for your best modern plays and your modern acting of the best plays (except in a very few instances) are so wretched that one should think they could only bore and disgust one—meagre, vapid, false and vulgar in the highest degree.

One only wonders that so many human heads and hearts can consent to sit it out, and be amused and refreshed by it. I believe it is this very problem which gives the theory an interest to me, for certainly the spectators are to me an integral part of the spectacle (do I use 'integral' right? I could never properly understand the calculus), and the most entertaining part of the action is the action of the play upon the audience. You not only see the mirror held up to Nature, but you see Nature looking at her image in it, which presents her in still another aspect. Of the nature of the multitude, their ways of thinking and feeling certainly, and partly too of their ways of acting, much may be learned in the pit of a theatre. From the effect of Bulwer's plays upon the play-going public one might have inferred the effect of his novels upon the reading public, almost as surely as you might have inferred the effect of his plays from observing the style of acting which is most popular. But besides my pleasure in contemplating the nature of the fool multitude, I am curious about the laws of art, and I observe, in that as in other things, that specimens of the want of the thing are as instructive as the specimen of the thing itself. I never understood Shakespeare's idea of Julius Caesar till I once saw George Bennett enact him; and I think I gained more light as to the meaning of many parts of Falstaff in the *Merry Wives* from the grossest and, I think, worst piece of acting I ever saw (by Bartley) than I have gained as to *Benedick* from C. Kemble, or *Hamlet* from

> Macready. Altogether, I find that the clumsy, tawdry, motley pageant, with its little good and much bad, its touches of nature here and there, and its scene after scene of vulgarity, insipidity, cant, and monstrous unnaturalness, has the effect of provoking my understanding and imagination into agreeable exercise."

The time had come when, after six years of service, Spedding resolved to shake himself free from the uncongenial business of the Colonial Office, and devote himself to what was to be the work of his life. On the 19th of August 1841 he writes from Wycliffe Rectory to Thompson who was then in Germany:

> You told me to write on speculation and not put off too long, but I suppose I am not the less qualified to perform the former part of your injunction for having neglected to perform the latter. But I suppose the worst consequence will be that my letter will not reach you, by which you will save something in postage and lose nothing in any other way. The fact is that your letter reached me during the last hours of my official life, when between the duty of clearing my table, and preparing for another and a better life (packing up, to wit), I had no time to write anything that was to go as far as Dresden. From the business of Downing St. I relapsed suddenly to the not less absorbing recreations of the 12th August and the moors; and since we left the grouse in quiet I have been on constant duty in looking at rocks and rivers and whatever there is to be looked at in a country not barren of natural

attractions and the scene of one of Walter Scott's poems. To-day I have been I do not know how many miles to see a handsome modern house and fine estate on the banks of the Tees, and to enjoy the most formidable of all mortal entertainments, a lunch of about 16 persons at a house you were never in before; all low voices and only one of the family known to you by name. However the beef was good, and silence is richer than speech. I am now returned, my skin is full of tea and bread and butter, and the room is full of young women talking about ghosts and singing Irish melodies. I have borrowed this sheet of thin paper that you may have the less to pay, and I have set off in this minute hand that I may have the more room to utter whatsoever shall be given to me to utter in this house: what that may be I shall not stay to conjecture, but proceed at once to the proof.

I need not describe to you the appearance of London or the manners of the inhabitants in the galleries and institutions with which it abounds, as you have had opportunities of learning better by the use of your own eyes and ears as much about these as you wish to know. Something I might say about the manners and morals of Downing Street which would be new to you, that section of London society having been rarely penetrated by travellers, and if penetrated still more rarely escaped from without the loss of that peculiar faculty by virtue of which man tells truth. But this also I shall at present spare you. Downing Street already

lies behind me, and I think it is St. Paul who tells us that we should fix our eyes on what is before, and what, I wonder, is before *me*? I see a fair array of years abounding in capabilities and in leisure to cultivate them, and if I could follow that precept of St. Paul's faithfully, and abstain from looking backwards at an equally fair array of opportunities unimproved and leisure run to waste, I should think the prospect a splendid one.... For these six years past I have been working for other men's purposes, and cultivating my life for their use. Now I set up for myself; and the question is this, of all things which most need to be done what am I best able to do?... But I had forgotten that all this will be a mystery to you who do not know what I have done to myself since I saw you. You must know this that as soon as it was clear which way the elections were going, I wrote to Stephen to say that I meant to leave the C.O., not because the change of parties need make any difference to me, but because my position had already yielded all the good I could expect from it, and a change of administration formed a natural period which it would not be desirable to let pass, the gain of the salary being, in fact, to a person who could live without it, no adequate compensation for the loss of time to a person who could use it in other ways, etc. etc. Stephen thought me quite right, and recommends me to persevere in my present intention of making literature my business: so far at least as to make a fair experiment of it: not doubting that, for a man who has

enough to live upon, and who has resolution enough to employ five or six hours every day in reading or writing with some definite practical object, there is no kind of life so eligible: and there is plenty of work to do. So on the 10th of August 1841 (which day I will trouble you, in the memoir of my life which you will prefix to your edition of the fragments of my great work which you will find among my papers at my untimely death, to make for ever memorable) I took my leave of the Colonial Office and recovered possession of my time and my hours at the moderate cost of £150 per annum, and here I am with the responsibility: a German, I suppose, would spell it with a capital R. And now what have you to say? One thing I really think is promising. I set out with a definite project, not too big or too remote: and if I had not involved myself in a desire to make something of these Baconian letters, which I could not so well do without more leisure and liberty to hunt down my game, I should not have trusted myself to my own guidance with quite so free a conscience. I have already made an entrance into the Lambeth Library and satisfied myself that former editors are not to be trusted; and that a great deal may probably be done by a man who unites two important requisites which have not yet met in any of them, industry and brains. Would you believe, for instance, that there is more than one letter from Francis Bacon to his Mother, and vice versa, which have never been included in any collection of his letters? And that there are

many letters between Antony Bacon and his mother relating to the prospects and goings on of the two brothers between the ages of twenty and thirty-five which no biographer of Francis appears to have studied, probably none has ever seen? Mr. Maitland showed me a MS. commonplace book containing a good many anecdotes about Bacon and the people of that time (most of them published I believe in the Apophthegms, etc.) interspersed with memoranda of all kinds, of which he says he can find no account. I suspect it to be Dr. Rawley's private memorandum book; a point which may easily be verified: and if so it will no doubt contain many things which being laid alongside of many other things will throw light upon various obscurities. That such a MS. should be known to exist in the Lambeth Library, and that, after some half-dozen editors have been over the ground in pursuit of Baconiana, it should remain there without anything being known about it, is it not a proof that in fact the ground has yet to be explored? And if so who can say but that among the volumes upon volumes of letters relating to these times which are still preserved in print or in MS., matter may not be found out of which to construct an edition of Bacon's letters that will read as easily and as clearly as a novel. I am sure if it were done properly, it would be one of the most valuable historical and probably the most valuable biographical works that has been produced about these times. For there is hardly any contemporary political question

> of interest which is not indirectly or directly touched upon at one time or another, and which would not therefore require elucidation.

The subject is pursued in the next letter written from Mirehouse ten days later to Thompson, who was still abroad.

> I am quite sure that much remains to be done with regard to those Baconian letters which I told you of, and I am sure too that without leisure and liberty I at least could not fairly set about it. I have been among the MSS. in the Lambeth Library and found that, though there are probably not many letters of Bacon's which have not been published, there is a wilderness of papers closely connected with them which has never been properly explored. It is a field in which nobody has been at work that had both industry and brains. For the present, therefore, I look forward to this as my main business, in which if I prosper, I shall know what to do when (Peel having lost that no confidence in his opponents in which consists all the confidence he has to rest upon himself) Lord John shall come in again and fortune shall be again in a condition to be wooed; if I prosper not, I shall still know what to do; though it will be different. But I am filling a second letter with myself.
>
> I am afraid you are not likely to see any people of the right sort, such as you describe, at Munich; though I duly advertised them of your street and lodging. Pollock has been

circuiting as simple barrister, and will shortly have to circuit again as Barrister revising. In the between he comes here, and indeed I expect him this evening.... Douglas Heath had meant to join John, who has been tumbling up and down the Alps under the guidance of some Geologist; an unsafe guide, I should fancy, for what death so sweet to a Geologist as to knock out his brains against a stone; or to be embedded in some liquid, liquefying, or indurescent substance (such as snow or mud or lava) in which a million of years hence some other Geologist may find him embedded and so satisfy himself that a man was once there? He seems to have had some fine rides on the backs of avalanches down fissures. But Douglas was kept in London by business partly, and partly by the illness of his mother and the uncertain health of his father, and does not expect to get out of England this year. I hope he will contrive to get hither in about a month. I am afraid there is no chance of your finding a chink of time between your return to England and your October term business in which you might pay us another visit. Your first object ought to be to put yourself into the most convenient place for being thoroughly cured, which implies the neighbourhood of a thoroughly good Doctor: a luxury which we cannot offer you here. But I hope that, now the year is mine all round to dispose of as I think best, we shall be able some day to make our several times suit and our several lines meet at Mirehouse, and run on together for a while. You are very much approved of

by everybody here.

Early in the year 1842, Spedding accompanied the first Lord Ashburton to the United States as Secretary to a commission, the object of which was to determine a boundary question which was successfully settled by the treaty of Washington. He writes to Thompson from Gosport on February 9, 1842:

> Having heard that you think I might have written to you upon the occasion by my breaking out in this new light, and partly concurring in that sentiment, and finding myself as much at leisure for the rest of the evening as if the destinies of no country, much less the destinies of two, depended upon me, I sit down to shake mental hands with you, and to wish you prosperity during my eclipse and setting behind the Atlantic.
>
> I will not trouble you with explanations concerning my inducement for taking so considerable a step as this. You will easily understand that I had to listen to more inward voices than one, and to wait the result of much confused inward debate before I decided to take it. Fortunately there was no question as to the comparative worth of the said two voices, nor any doubt as to the side on which they respectively appeared. It was the Fiend, *i.e.* the baser nature, the human instinct, that said, "Budge not." The better voice said, "Go, why not?" The decision was soon taken, and being taken, the thing itself seemed much easier than it looked at first. It is now above three

weeks since I have looked at it only as a thing that is to be, and I almost feel as if it would be strange if it were otherwise. What the effect of it may be on my character and fortunes I do not trouble myself to prophesy. It will at least make me think many things easy which seemed unapproachably difficult a month ago. It will teach me to keep accounts. And it will give me some insight into the nature of a state-conscience, a state-reason, a state-understanding, and a state-character. Many things besides. It may very likely ruin my reputation, but I am not sure that that would be an evil. I should be much happier, I think, without any reputation, not to add that if it were gone, I should be thrown upon my resources, which might after all turn out to be a better thing. But let these things pass. One thing is quite clear, that I could not spend the next six months in any way by which I should gain so much either in knowledge or in power. My immortal work must, of course, be suspended, but what is six months in an immortality? By the way, touching my Falstaff Platonizing, I agree with you, as reported by Merivale, that the insertion of such a joke would be unbecoming in a Museum Academicum, the more's the pity, for with the joke itself I was a good deal pleased. But then, on the other hand, you will not let me prefix a serious introduction, explaining the thing which it is meant to illustrate. I can only suggest that you should yourself write an introduction *refuting* the said theory, if you really believe that the

> thing is worth putting in at all. But let this also pass, for I see the bottom of my paper (by the way I suppose I must not say such a thing in the U.S.), and the chambermaid would fain be dismissed to her bed. At present you may truly say that I am going ahead, for I alone of the suite have arrived, and my master, by being unpunctual, has lost a day of fair wind.

At this time FitzGerald wrote to Laurence, the artist:

> You have, of course, read the account of Spedding's forehead landing in America. English sailors hail it in the Channel, mistaking it for Beachy Head. There is a Shakespeare cliff, and a Spedding cliff. Good old fellow! I hope he'll come back safe and sound, forehead and all. Not swords, nor cannon, nor all the bulls of Bashan butting at it, could, I feel sure, discompose that venerable forehead. No wonder that no hair can grow at such an altitude; no wonder his view of Bacon's virtue is so rarefied, that the common consciences of men cannot endure it. Thackeray and I occasionally amuse ourselves with the idea of Spedding's forehead; we find it somehow or other in all things, just peering out of all things; you see it in a milestone, Thackeray says. He also draws the forehead rising with a sober light over Mont Blanc, and reflected in the Lake of Geneva. We have great laughing over this.

Tennyson's 1842 volume came out while Spedding was at Washington, and FitzGerald, writing to Pollock, regretted that it contained some pieces which he thought better omitted.

> I agree with you quite about the skipping-rope, etc. But the bald men of the Embassy would tell you otherwise. I should not wonder if the whole theory of the Embassy, perhaps the discovery of America itself, was involved in that very Poem. Lord Bacon's honesty may, I am sure, be found there.
>
> "The Yankees," Donne writes to Bernard Barton, "seem to think baldness a rarity

> appertaining to the old country, for their papers could not sufficiently express their wonder, when Ld. Ashburton went over about the Boundary question, at the lack of hair among his attachés. Spedding's crown imperial of a cranium struck them like a view of Teneriffe or Atlas."
>
> "Nothing has been heard of Spedding," says FitzGerald, "but we all conclude, from the nature of the case, that he has not been scalped."

The mission ended happily in the treaty of Washington, and Spedding returned to his friends, in spite of the forebodings of FitzGerald, who says:

> A man on the coach the other day told me that all was being settled very easily in America, but stage-coach politicians are not always to be trusted.

By the end of the year (1842), Spedding was again at Mirehouse.

> "I am at present," he writes to Thompson, "absorbed in teaching the young idea of a water spaniel how to shoot. He promises to be an accomplished dog. He can already catch a wounded hare and bring it, rescue a snipe out of a rapid stream, hunt (though in vain) for a water-hen among the roots of an alder-bush, and wait with intense breathless anxiety to hear the sound of a duck's wing in the gloaming. In time I hope to teach him to do as I bid him. We are all well here. How is all at Cambridge? What shall you do at Christmas? If I am still here, can you come so

far north? You shall see the dog."

But although these country delights had their attractions for him, he had for some years established himself in London, where his rooms at 60 Lincoln's Inn Fields were the meeting-place of Tennyson, Thackeray, FitzGerald, and any of his friends who happened to be in London at the time.

> "Spedding is just now furnishing chambers in Lincoln's Inn Fields," FitzGerald writes in 1836, "so that we may look on him as a fixture in London. He and I went to dine with Tennant at Blackheath last Thursday: there we met Edgeworth, who has got a large house at Eltham, and is lying in wait for pupils. I am afraid he will not find many. We passed a very delightful evening."

His return from America after four months at Washington, led to his being selected by the editor of the *Edinburgh Review* to write an article on Dickens's *American Notes*, which gave the novelist strange and unreasonable offence. Spedding had originally written, "He is understood to have gone out as a kind of missionary in the cause of international copyright," and this had been changed by the editor to "He went out, if we are rightly informed, as a kind of missionary," etc. To this Dickens writes in a towering passion, "I deny it wholly. He is wrongly informed, and reports without enquiry, a piece of information which I could only characterise by using one of the shortest and strongest words in the language." And yet his letters show that, whether the subject of international copyright were the real object of his visit or not, his speeches on it are referred to with a kind of satisfaction as if they were

of the utmost importance. Apparently he was dissatisfied with the impartial way in which Spedding distributed his praise and blame, praising only where praise was due and blaming where it was not, and not attributing too much value to the hasty results of a four months' experience of the country.

But for several years Spedding had been a contributor to the *Edinburgh Review*, and the articles which he selected for republication are full of that calm wisdom which distinguished all that he wrote. In 1836 he reviewed his friend Henry Taylor's *Statesman*; in 1838 he wrote on "Negro Apprenticeship"; in 1839 on the "Suspension of the Jamaica Constitution"; in 1840 on the "Wakefield Theory of Colonization"; in 1841 on the "Civilization of Africa and the Niger Expedition," in which his friend John Allen lost a brother; and in 1842 on "South Australia in 1841," a sequel to the article on the "Wakefield Theory of Colonization." And now for the next thirty years of his life he devoted himself to the task of what FitzGerald called washing his blackamoor, "a Tragedy pathetic as Antigone or Iphigenia." His own special work was the arrangement of Bacon's letters and minor writings, which had hitherto been very carelessly edited, and for this purpose he spent his days among the originals in the Lambeth Library and the British Museum. "Spedding devotes his days to Lord Bacon in the British Museum," writes FitzGerald in 1844; and again in 1846, "I saw very little of Spedding in London, for he was out all day at State paper offices and Museums."

But he was not so absorbed in his special pursuits as not to take interest in public affairs, and the Maynooth Grant in 1845 and the opposition which it

excited caused him to take part in an address to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in its favour.

> "You will see in the *Morning Herald* of to-day," he writes to Thompson, "that the great event has already taken place, and though the world continues to move as it did, there does appear to be a change of weather.
>
> "We had only 300 names. But that was quite enough, considering all things, especially the respectability of the people, and the imperfection of the agitation, to make the address well worth presenting. Having gone so far, to hold back altogether would have been to confess that the attempt was a mere failure, which nobody can say it was. To hold it back past the time specified in the circulars and originally designed, for the chance of obtaining more signatures, would have been useless: people would have only said that though we boasted of the shortness of the time in which the signatures were collected, yet in fact we waited as long as there was any chance of gathering any more. And in point of fact they had begun to come in very slowly by Monday morning. At best, it could not have been improved into an effectual canvass, and as it is, it shows very well. Let any one put the two lists side by side, and then say, if the weight of opinion in Cambridge inclines one way, which way is it? I was doubtful of the expediency of stirring it at first, but I am now very glad that it has been done. I wish the *Herald* had printed the names. But it was an unlucky day, there being a great debate in both

> Houses.
>
> "Hare declined presenting; upon which H. Lushington, Venables, Micklethwaite, and myself (who had, in fact, been the chief actors), distributed ourselves into two cabs: and drove slap up to the Chancellor of Exchequer's. Harry Lushington was the chief speaker, and did it very well and gracefully. Goulburn was, of course, gracious, but I should hardly have inferred that he was glad. However, he said he was; glad that this had been done, and glad that no more had been done; and (upon the whole) easy about the matter. The fever (he said) appeared to be gradually subsiding, and indeed the opposition was less formidable than might be supposed. 'From what the gentleman said who presented the address on the other side, he gathered that it was for the most part a *conscientious* opposition, not arising from any political animosity.' Certainly *Punch* cannot be said to beat Nature."

Nothing, however, diverted him from his great object. FitzGerald writes to Frederick Tennyson:

> Spedding, you know, does not change: he is now the same that he was fourteen years old when I first knew him at school, more than twenty years ago; wise, calm, bald, combining the best qualities of Youth and Age.

But his calmness was not proof against the enthusiasm created by the advent of Jenny Lind in 1847. Again FitzGerald writes:

> All the world has been, as I suppose you have read, crazy about Jenny Lind.... Spedding's cool blood was moved to hire stalls several times at an advanced rate.... I have never yet heard the famous Jenny Lind, whom all the world raves about. Spedding is especially mad about her, I understand: and, after that, is it not best for weaker vessels to keep out of her way? Night after night is that bald head seen in one particular position in the Opera house, in a stall; the miserable man has forgot Bacon and philosophy, and goes after strange women.

His health, however, had been giving some cause for anxiety at this time to his old friend, who writes to Carlyle:

> Thank you for your account of Spedding: I had written however to himself, and from himself ascertained that he was out of the worst. But Spedding's life is a very ticklish one.

Hitherto Spedding had been working in his own way at Bacon's life and letters without any idea of contributing to a complete edition of his works, but rather with the object of defending him against what he believed to be the injustice done him by Macaulay in his famous *Essay*. But in 1847 Mr. Leslie Ellis had been preparing an edition of Bacon's philosophical works which was offered for publication to Messrs. Longman, and Spedding acted as intermediary.

> "Better, I think," he writes to Thompson, "to be with the publishers than against them so long as one keeps the reins. Therefore I have written to Longman, reporting Ellis's

> proposition, and recommending them to treat immediately with him upon those terms; for that if they get the philosophical works alone so edited, their edition will command the market, even if they do nothing but reprint the rest as they are. Whereas, if any other publisher should engage Ellis's services for that portion, their trade edition would be worthless for ever. All which I believe to be true, and I hope will be conclusive. When that point is fixed there will be time enough to consider what else may be done. If they refuse the opportunity, I think I shall decline further connexion with the enterprise. My own project, as I never counted upon anything but expense from it, will not be much affected either way."

The result, as is well known, was a complete edition of Bacon's works, in which Mr. Leslie Ellis undertook the philosophical, Mr. Douglas Heath the legal and professional, and Spedding the literary and miscellaneous, to which he afterwards added the life and letters. In the meantime he wrote, but never published, for his own satisfaction and that he might gather the opinions of his friends, *Evenings with a Reviewer*, the reviewer being Macaulay and the review his Essay on Bacon. In sending a copy to Dr. Whewell he says:

> It may seem absurd in a man to print a book, and yet to wish not only to keep it private, but also to prevent it from *circulating* privately. But after considering the matter carefully, with reference to what I may call the interest of the subject—I mean to the chance of making a successful and durable

impression upon the popular opinion—I am satisfied that it would not be judicious to present the question to the public *first* in this form. It would probably provoke controversy. The result of the controversy would depend upon reviewers. Reviewers, until they have heard the evidence as well as the argument, are not in a condition to judge; yet unless the evidence be made easily accessible and bound up with the argument, they cannot be expected either to seek it out or to suspend their opinions, but will simply proceed to judgment *without* hearing it. In such a case, considering the strength of popular prepossessions and the tendency of the first blow at them to raise a dust of popular objections, the verdict would in the first instance go against me; and though I might appeal with a better chance to the second thoughts and the next generation, yet the appeal would be conducted at great disadvantage, because I should then stand in the position of an advocate with a personal interest in the cause. As it is, I hope in my division of Bacon's works to set forth *all* the evidence clearly and impartially, so that everybody who has the book will have the means of judging for himself, and if I can get that credit for justice and impartiality which I mean to deserve, I do not much doubt the issue. But the first reception of the work, upon which in these times so much depends, will itself depend very much upon my coming before the public with a clear and unsuspected character: and this, if I should previously acquire the reputation (justly or

> not) of an advocate engaged to make good his own cause, I could not expect.

FitzGerald, writing to Donne at the end of 1848, says of *Evenings with a Reviewer*:

> I saw many of my friends in London, Carlyle and Tennyson among them; but most and best of all, Spedding. I have stolen his noble book away from him; noble, in spite (I believe, but am not sure) of some *adikology* in the second volume: some special pleadings for his idol: amica Veritas, sed magis, etc.

And Donne in reply:

> I, too, have Spedding's "glorious book," which I prefer to any modern reading. Reading one of his "Evenings" is next to spending an evening with the author.

Thompson, whose health had completely broken down in 1849, was undergoing the water-cure at Great Malvern, and early in 1850 Spedding writes to him:

> They tell me that a letter will find you at Great Malvern. Indeed, I had reason to think so before, for I had heard of you twice since you went thither; once from Spring Rice and once from Blakesley.... I have been stationary here since August, seeing nobody and hearing nothing, so you must not expect any news.... You want to know, perhaps, what I am about myself. I am at this moment sitting in an easy-chair with the ink on a table beside me, and the papers on a blotting-board on my knee. On the little table beside

me is first a leaden jar, bought long since to keep tobacco in, now holding snipe-shot. Next to it a pocket Virgil lying on its belly. On my left a ledge made for a lamp, on which are three different translations of Bacon's *Sapientia Veterum*, and some loose pieces of paper destined in due time to be enriched with a fourth translation, of which I need say no more. Next to my little table stands a large round table, now quite uninhabitable by reason of the litter of books that has taken possession of it, as, for instance, another Virgil with English translation and notes, open, upon its back; a Dryden's translation shut, and standing upright on its edge. A letter-clip holding a packet in brown-paper cover, inscribed "De sapientia veterum: translation." A volume of Bacon standing shut on its edge. A Cruden's *Concordance*; and near it, lying on its side and shut, Alford's Greek Testament (an excellent book of immense industry, and very neat execution; good in all ways so far as I have looked, and so far as I can judge of what I see in such a matter; it seems as if one might find in it everything one can want to know about the four gospels, that an editor can tell one). Another volume of Bacon open, on its back; beneath it a folio Aristotle (!) also open, and beneath that again a huge old folio Demosthenes and Æschines (but this was brought down from the garret two days ago, and has not yet been put away). Many other things of the same kind; which, however, I cannot describe particularly without getting up, which I do not feel

disposed to do. But I must not forget a striped box which belongs to my portmanteau, but serves here as a receptacle for loose papers, and stands on the table. Another table in the corner sustaining two vols. of Facciolati evidently out for use, reposing on a huge Hogarth which lies there because no bookcase is big enough to hold it, and itself reposes upon all the Naval Victories, flanked by a ball of string, an unopened packet of Bernard Barton's remains, a Speed's *History of England*, a ream of scribbling paper, and an Ainsworth. Under my chair lies my own dog Tip, who once went with you and me to the top of Ullock. Opposite stands a long narrow box containing bows, and hung about with quivers, belts, and other archery equipments. The chimney-piece is littered with disabled arrows. It is now half-past 3 P.M., I have a slight headache, due (I really believe) to a sour orange. The lake was yesterday frozen over with ice as smooth and transparent as glass. I had no skates, and to-day it is going either to thaw or to snow. I intended to buy a pair of skates last midsummer, but forgot. I have a great mind to go and buy a pair now. I leave you to gather the condition of my mind from the condition of my room. I am in truth doing very little. These family establishments are not favourable for work. I do not know how it is; the day seems as long, and one seems to have it all to oneself, but there are no *hours* in it. What becomes of half of them I cannot guess. Time leaks in a gentleman's house.

My father has had a bad cold this winter, which hung about him longer than usual, and made him both look and feel ill. But he has thrown it quite off and seems now to be as well [as] usual, which is very well. His sight grows worse as of course it must do; but as fast as it leaves him he learns to make less do, so that he does not appear to be much distressed by the gradual privation. His old bitch is dead, and his old mare retires upon a pension, a paddock, a horse-pond, and a house, all to herself, with a daily feed of corn. He is now very well mounted on a fast walking pony, borrowed from a neighbour, and has a boy to walk with him and two puppies. He looks after his farming affairs as usual, and does not at all believe that land can be ruined by plenty. In truth we hear little in these latitudes of the agricultural distress of which we see so much in the newspapers.

I have not heard from Ellis since he left England, and I do not know exactly where he is. He talked of staying some time at Avignon. But I am so doubtful whether a letter would find him there that I do not care to write upon the chance. Our publishers seem to be quite easy in mind, and made no enquiries as to the rate of progress. If Ellis can be ready within two years, I shall have to stir myself in order to be ready with my contribution. But I expect a good year's respite. I have finished the *Henry VII.*, however, which is my principal labour; and I like very well what I have done.

But all his plans were disarranged by Mr. Ellis's illness. In the latter part of 1849, while travelling on the Riviera, Ellis had a severe attack of rheumatic fever, from which he never recovered, and which entirely disabled him for the work he had undertaken and in which he had made some progress. Spedding, therefore, had to take his place and edit as best he could Bacon's Philosophical Works. He has explained very fully in the Preface to them the method he adopted, and the careful manner in which he kept Mr. Ellis's work distinct. "Early in 1853," he says, "I took the work in hand." In the meanwhile he was to be found at his rooms in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and there FitzGerald visited him in April 1850.

> "Spedding is my sheet-anchor," he says, "the truly wise and fine fellow: I am going to his rooms this very evening, and there I believe Thackeray, Venables, etc. are to be. I hope not a large assembly, for I get shyer and shyer even of those I know."
>
> "I was in London only for ten days this spring," FitzGerald writes to Frederick Tennyson, "and those ten days not in the thick of the season.... The most pleasurable remembrance I had of my stay in town was the last day I spent there; having a long ramble in the streets with Spedding, looking at books and pictures; then a walk with him and Carlyle across the Park to Chelsea, where we dropped that Latter-Day Prophet at his house; then, getting upon a steamer, smoked down to Westminster; dined at a chop-house by the Bridge, and then went to Astley's; old Spedding being quite as wise

> about the horsemanship as about Bacon and Shakespeare. We parted at midnight in Covent Garden, and this whole pleasant day has left a taste on my palate like one of Plato's lighter, easier, and more picturesque dialogues."

In August he went into Suffolk to stay with FitzGerald and the Cowells at their home in Bramford, near Ipswich. FitzGerald again writes to Frederick Tennyson:

> I have not seen any one you know since I last wrote; nor heard from any one: except dear old Spedding, who really came down and spent two days with us, me and that Scholar and his Wife in their Village, in their delightful little house, in their pleasant fields by the River side. Old Spedding was delicious there; always leaving a mark, I say, in all places one has been at with him, a sort of Platonic perfume. For has he not all the beauty of the Platonic Socrates, with some personal beauty to boot? He explained to us one day about the laws of reflection in water; and I said then one never could look at the willow whose branches furnished the text without thinking of him. How beastly this reads! As if he gave us a lecture! But you know the man, how quietly it all came out; only because I petulantly denied his plain assertion. For I really often cross him only to draw him out; and vain as I may be, he is one of those that I am well content to make shine at my own expense.

In August 1851 he writes again to Frederick

Tennyson:

> Almost the only man I hear from is dear old Spedding, who has lost his Father, and is now, I suppose, a rich man. This makes no apparent change in his way of life; he has only hired an additional Attic in Lincoln's Inn Fields, so as to be able to bed a friend upon occasion. I may have to fill it ere long.

And a few months later:

> Spedding is immutably wise, good, and delightful; not as immutably well in Body, I think, though he does not complain.

The great work went slowly on, but nothing as yet was published. Spedding had just taken over Ellis's portion and was devoting himself to this. We get a glimpse of him again in FitzGerald's letters:

> I saw old Spedding in London; only doubly calm after the death of a Niece he dearly loved, and whose death-bed at Hastings he had just been waiting upon.

It was 1857 before the first three volumes appeared, followed by three others in 1858, and by the final volume in 1859. Ellis did not live to see the completion of the work, for he died in May of that year.

FitzGerald, writing in 1857 to Cowell, who was now in Calcutta, from Portland Terrace, where he lived during his early married life, says:

> Spedding has been once here in near three months. His *Bacon* keeps coming out: his part, the Letters, etc., of Bacon, is not come

> yet; so it remains to be seen what he will do then, but I can't help thinking he has let the Pot boil too long.

It was 1861, however, before the first volume of the *Life and Letters* appeared, and Spedding found that he had already been forestalled by Hepworth Dixon in *The Story of Lord Bacon's Life*. In a note to the earliest letter printed, probably the earliest specimen remaining of Bacon's handwriting, he says, with quiet contempt:

> The copies of some of these letters lately published by Mr. Hepworth Dixon ... differ, I observe, very much from mine; most of them in the words and sense, more or less, and some in the name of the person writing, or the person written to, or both. But as mine are more intelligible, and were made with care and at leisure, and when my eyes were better than they are now, I do not suspect any material error in them, and have not thought it worth while to apply for leave to compare them again with the originals.

> "I am very glad," FitzGerald writes to Thompson, "to hear old Spedding is really getting *his* share of Bacon into Print: I doubt if it will be half as good as the "Evenings," where Spedding was in the *Passion* which is wanted to fill his Sail for any longer Voyage."

Some three years later, he says:

> Spedding's *Bacon* seems to hang fire; they say he is disheartened at the little Interest, and less Conviction, that his two first

> volumes carried; Thompson told me they had convinced *him* the other way; and that *Ellis* had long given up Bacon's Defence before he died.

And so it continued to the end. When the sixth volume appeared in 1872 FitzGerald wrote:

> And here is Spedding's vol. vi. which leaves me much where it found me about Bacon: but though I scarce care for him, I can read old Spedding's pleading for him for ever; that is old Spedding's simple statement of the case, as he sees it. The Ralegh business is quite delightful, better than Old Kensington.

Carlyle alone of all the critics was unstinted, though rather patronizing, in his praise. Writing to FitzGerald, he says:

> Like yourself I have gone through *Spedding*, seven long long volumes, not skipping except when I had got the sense with me, and generally reading all of Bacon's own that was there: I confess to you I found it a most creditable and even surprising Book, offering the most perfect and complete image both of Bacon and of Spedding, and distinguished as the hugest and faithfullest bit of literary navvy-work I have ever met with in this generation. Bacon is washed down to the natural skin; and truly he is not, nor ever was, unlovely to me; a man of no culpability to speak of; of an opulent and even magnificent intellect, but all in the magnificent prose vein. Nothing or almost nothing of the "melodies eternal" to be traced in him. There is a grim strength in

> Spedding, quietly, very quietly invincible, which I did not quite know of till this Book; and in all ways I could congratulate this indefatigably patient, placidly invincible and victorious Spedding.

But for the last eight years he had given up his rooms in Lincoln's Inn Fields and gone to live with his nieces at 80 Westbourne Terrace, where he remained till his death. Thompson, in succession to Dr. Whewell, had been appointed Master of Trinity, and in writing to congratulate him Spedding says:

> I was not unprepared for your news, having just returned from Kitlands, where the Pollocks were, and the rumour was under discussion and generally thought to be well-founded, and the thing if true very much rejoiced over. I have great pleasure in adding my own congratulations, as well to yourself as to Trinity. It was all that was wanted to make one of the last acts of Lord Russell a complete success. I should be very glad to think that I had as much to do with it as you suppose: but I was only one of many, and not by any means the most influential, and as the thing is done, no matter how it was brought about.
>
> I am myself preparing for a shift of position, though the adventure is of a milder kind. My nephew (J. J. S.) is going to be married within a month or so: and it has been settled that he is to live at Greta Bank, and that the rest of the party now living there are to take a house in London: where I am invited to join them, with due securities for liberties

> and privileges. Though the exertion incident to dislodgment from quarters overgrown with so many superfetations of confusion and disorder, is formidable to contemplate, the proposed arrangement is so obviously convenient and desirable, that I am going to encounter it. And though the place is not yet settled, it seems probable that before the end of the year I shall be transferred or transferring myself and my goods to the western part of London, and preparing to remodel my manners and customs (in some respects) according to the usages of civilized society. Though I shall live among women, they will be women of my own house, and therefore not worshippers, which is a great advantage, and though there may be some danger for an obedient uncle in being where he can always be caught, I hope to be able to preserve as much independence as is good for a man.
>
> I have four proof sheets to settle, and have just been interrupted by an engraver with a proof [of] the D. of Buccleugh's miniature of Bacon, which will be the best portrait that has yet been done of him in black and white.

This was the miniature which was reproduced at the beginning of the third volume of the *Life and Letters*, and which Spedding regarded as the original of Van Somer's portrait.

The following letter to Tennyson, written in 1870, is necessary to the full understanding of Tennyson's reply (see *Memoir by his Son*)[107]:

> MY DEAR ALFRED—I do not know where you

are, and I want to know for three reasons: 1st, that I may thank you for your book; 2nd, that I may send you mine; 3rd, that I may let you know, if you do not know it already, that there has been a box here these many weeks, which is meant for you and comes from FitzGerald.

A copy of your new volume[108] came early from the publisher, yet not so early but that it found me already half way through. I was happy to observe that neither years nor domestic happiness have had any demoralizing effect upon you as yet. Your touch is as delicate and vigorous and your invention as rich as ever: and I am still in hope that your greatest poem of all has not yet been written. Some years ago, when you were in want of a subject, I recommended Job. The argument of Job, to be treated as you treat the legends of Arthur, as freely and with as much light of modern thought as you find fit. As we know it now, it is only half intelligible, and must be full of blunders and passages misunderstood. Probably also the peculiar character of the oriental style would at any rate stand in the way and prevent it from producing its proper effect upon the modern and western mind. Yet we can see through all the confusion what a great argument it is, and I think it was never more wanted than now. If you would take it in hand, and tell it in verse in your own way, without any scruples about improving on Scripture, I believe it would be the greatest poem in the language. The controversy is as much alive to-day in London as it could ever

> have been in the place where and the time when it was composed, of which, as the author, I am altogether ignorant. And the voice out of the whirlwind may speak without fear of anachronisms.
>
> My own book,[109] though there is only one volume this time, is much bigger than yours. It is wrapped up ready to go by the book-post, and only wants to know to which of your many mansions it is to be directed.
>
> Fitz's box, which is about as large as a tailor's box for a single suit, contains a drawing of Thackeray's, an illustration of the "Lord of Burghley," a pretty sketch of the landskip-painter and the village maiden. He sent it here under the vain delusion that whenever you happened to come to London I should be sure to know. And I presume he sent word to you of what he had done, for he did not ask me to communicate the fact. I was only to write to *him* in case the box did *not* arrive, and as the box did arrive I did not write. If you will let me know what you wish to be done with it, I will do with it accordingly.
>
> There is a line in your last volume which I can't read: the last line but one of the "flower in the crannied wall."

In the course of the same year he edited the *Conference of Pleasure*, written by Bacon for some masque or festive occasion, and printed from a MS. belonging to the Duke of Northumberland which had been slightly injured by fire. FitzGerald, in a letter to me, says of it:

> Spedding's Introduction to his grilled Bacon, I call it really a beautiful little *Idyll*, the mechanical Job done so perfectly and so elegantly.

But while he was engaged in the great labour of his life he found time to write beautiful pieces of criticism on Shakespeare to which FitzGerald would willingly have had him devote his whole attention. "I never heard him read a page," he writes to Sir Frederick Pollock, "but he threw some new light upon it." In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for August 1850 he contributed a paper on "Who wrote Shakespeare's *Henry VIII.*?" which he discussed with characteristic thoroughness. His conclusion was that it was the work of two authors, one of whom was Fletcher, and this was confirmed by the investigations of another enquirer, who independently arrived at substantially the same result. The division of the Acts in *Much Ado*, *Twelfth Night*, *Richard II.*, and *King Lear* formed the subject of other discussions, and these he considered his most valuable contribution to the restoration of Shakespeare. A criticism of Miss Kate Terry's acting in Viola gave him the opportunity of pointing out the corruptions by which the fine comedy, *Twelfth Night*, has been degraded into farce.

> "Spedding says," FitzGerald writes in 1875 to Fanny Kemble, "that Irving's Hamlet is simply—*hideous*—a strong expression for Spedding to use. But—(lest I should think his condemnation was only the Old Man's fault of depreciating all that is new) he extols Miss Ellen Terry's Portia as simply *a perfect Performance*: remembering (he says) all the while how fine was Fanny Kemble's."

Again to the same correspondent early in 1880 he says:

> By far the chief incident in my life for the last month has been the reading of dear old Spedding's Paper on the *Merchant of Venice*, there, at any rate, is one Question settled, and in such a beautiful way as only he commands. I could not help writing a few lines to tell him what I thought, but even very sincere praise is not the way to conciliate him. About Christmas I wrote him, relying on it that I should be most likely to secure an answer if I expressed dissent from some other work of his, and my expectation was justified by one of the fullest answers he had written to me for many a day and year.

The paper referred to was "The Story of the *Merchant of Venice*" in the *Cornhill Magazine* for March 1880. In sending a copy to Frederick Tennyson he says:

> I now post you a paper by old Spedding—a very beautiful one, I think; *settling* one point, however unimportant, and in a graceful, as well as logical, way such as he is Master of.
>
> A case has been got up—whether by Irving, the Stage Representative of Shylock, or by his Admirers—to prove the Jew to be a very amiable and ill-used man: insomuch that one is to come away from the theatre loving him and hating all the rest. He dresses himself up to look like the Saviour, Mrs. Kemble says. So old Jem disposes of *that*, besides unravelling Shakespeare's mechanism of the Novel he draws from, in a manner (as Jem says) more distinct to us than in his

> treatment of any other of his Plays "not professedly historical." And this latter point is, of course, far more interesting than the question of Irving and Co.,—which is a simple attempt, both of Actor and Writer, to strike out an original idea in the teeth of common-sense and Tradition.

And now came the end, unexpected and the result of an accident, which he maintained was entirely his own fault. In writing to tell me of the fatal result, one of his dearest friends said:

> I grieve to tell you that all is over with our dear old friend.... He intended to cross before two carriages—crossed before one—found there was not time to pass before the other, and instead of pausing stepped back under the hansom which he had not seen, and which had not time to alter its course. He spent more strength in exculpating the poor driver than on any personal matter during his illness as soon as he regained memory of the circumstances.
>
> "Mowbray Donne," says FitzGerald, when all was over, "wrote me that Laurence had been there four or five days ago, when Spedding said, that had the Cab done but a little more, it would have been a good Quietus. Socrates to the last."

And in another letter:

> Tennyson called at the Hospital, but was not allowed to see him, though Hallam did, I think. Some one calling afterwards, Spedding took the doctor's arm, and asked, "Was it Mr.

Tennyson?" Doctors and nurses all devoted to the patient man.

To Fanny Kemble he writes:

It was very, very good and kind of you to write to me about Spedding. Yes: Aldis Wright had apprised me of the matter just after it happened—he happening to be in London at the time; and but two days after the accident heard that Spedding was quite calm, and even cheerful; only anxious that Wright himself should not be kept waiting for some communication which S. had promised him! Whether to live, or to die, he will be Socrates still.

Directly that I heard from Wright I wrote to Mowbray Donne to send me just a Post Card —daily, if he or his wife could, with but one or two words on it—"Better," "Less well," or whatever it might be. This morning I hear that all is going on even better than could be expected, according to Miss Spedding. But I suppose the Crisis, which you tell me of, is not yet come; and I have always a terror of that French Adage—"*Monsieur se porte mal—Monsieur se porte mieux—Monsieur est—*" Ah, you know, or you guess, the rest.

My dear old Spedding, though I have not seen him these twenty years and more—and probably should never see him again—but he lives—his old Self—in my heart of hearts; and all I hear of him does but embellish the recollection of him—if it could be embellished—for he is but the same that he was from a Boy—all that is best in Heart and

> Head—a man that would be incredible had one not known him.

Again he writes of him to Professor Norton:

> He was the wisest man I have known; a great sense of Humour, a Socrates in Life and in Death, which he faced with all Serenity so long as Consciousness lasted. I suppose something of him will reach America, I mean, of his Death; run over by a Cab and dying in St. George's Hospital to which he was taken, and from which he could not be removed home alive.
>
> "I did not know," he says in another letter, "that I should feel Spedding's Loss as I do, after an interval of more than twenty years [since] meeting him. But I knew that I could always get the Word I wanted of him by Letter, and also that from time to time I should meet with some of his wise and delightful Papers in some Quarter or other. He talked of Shakespeare, I am told, when his Mind wandered. I wake almost every morning feeling as if I had lost something, as one does in a Dream; and truly enough, I have lost *him*. 'Matthew is in his Grave, etc.'"

In apologizing to Fanny Kemble for not writing to her as usual, he says:

> I have let the Full Moon pass because you had written to me so lately, and so kindly, about our lost Spedding, that I could not call on you too soon again. Of him I will say nothing except that his Death has made me recall very many passages in his Life in

> which I was partly concerned. In particular, staying at his Cumberland Home along with Tennyson in the May of 1835.... His Father and Mother were both alive—he a wise man, who mounted his Cob after Breakfast, and was at his Farm till Dinner at two—then away again till Tea: after which he sat reading by a shaded lamp: saying very little, but always courteous and quite content with any company his Son might bring to the house, so long as they let him go his way: which indeed he would have gone whether they let him or no. But he had seen enough of Poets not to like them or their Trade: Shelley for a time living among the Lakes: Coleridge at Southey's (whom perhaps he had a respect for—Southey, I mean); and Wordsworth, whom I do not think he valued. He was rather jealous of "Jem," who might have done available service in the world, he thought, giving himself up to such Dreamers; and sitting up with Tennyson conning over the "Morte d'Arthur," "Lord of Burleigh," and other things which helped to make up the two Volumes of 1842. So I always associate that Arthur Idyll with Basanthwaite Lake, under Skiddaw. Mrs. Spedding was a sensible, motherly Lady, with whom I used to play Chess of a Night. And there was an old Friend of hers, Miss Bristowe, who always reminded me of Miss La Creevy, if you know of such a Person in *Nickleby*.

We will conclude with what his old friend, Sir Henry Taylor, wrote of him after his death:

> As he will not read what I write I may allow

> myself to say something more. He was always master of himself and of his emotions; but underlying a somewhat melancholy composure and aspect there were depths of tenderness known only to those who knew his whole nature and his inward life, and it is well for those by whom he is mourned if they can find what he has described in a letter to be his great consolation in all his experiences of the death of those he loved (experiences which had begun early and had not been few), "that the past is sacred and sanctified; nothing can happen hereafter to disturb or obliterate it; nor need the recollection have any bitterness if a man does not, out of a false and morbid sentiment, make it so for himself."

And he adds:

> To me there are no companions more welcome, cordial, consolatory or cheerful than my dead friends.

ARTHUR HENRY HALLAM



ARTHUR HALLAM READING "WALTER SCOTT" ALOUD ON BOARD THE "LEEDS," BOUND FROM BORDEAUX TO DUBLIN, SEPT. 9, 1830.

After Tennyson's and Hallam's memorable journey to the Pyrenees in aid of the revolutionary movement against King Ferdinand of Spain, vividly described by Carlyle in his *Life of John Sterling*.

Alfred Tennyson (in profile), John Harden and Mrs. Harden (on the left), and the Miss Hardens.

ARTHUR HENRY HALLAM

By DR. JOHN BROWN

[The following article, containing the Memoir of Arthur Hallam by his father, Henry Hallam, is reprinted from *Horae Subsecivae*.—ED.]

PRAESENS imperfectum,—perfectum, plusquam perfectum FUTURUM.—GROTIUS.

> The idea of thy life shall sweetly creep
> Into my study of imagination;
> And every lovely organ of thy life
> Shall come apparelled in more precious habit—
> More moving delicate, and full of life,
> Into the eye and prospect of my soul,
> Than when thou livedst indeed.
> *Much Ado about Nothing.*

In the chancel of Clevedon Church, Somersetshire, rest the mortal remains of Arthur Henry Hallam, eldest son of our great philosophic historian and critic,—and the friend to whom "In Memoriam" is sacred. This place was selected by his father, not only from the connection of kindred, being the

burial-place of his maternal grandfather, Sir Abraham Elton, but likewise “on account of its still and sequestered situation, on a lone hill that overhangs the Bristol Channel.” That lone hill, with its humble old church, its outlook over the waste of waters, where “the stately ships go on,” was, we doubt not, in Tennyson’s mind when the poem, “Break, break, break,” which contains the burden of that volume in which are enshrined so much of the deepest affection, poetry, philosophy, and godliness, rose into his “study of imagination”—“into the eye and prospect of his soul.”[110]

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

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
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!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

Out of these few simple words, deep and melancholy, and sounding as the sea, as out of a well of the living waters of love, flows forth all “In Memoriam,” as a stream flows out of its spring-all is here. “I would

that my tongue could utter the thoughts that arise in me,"—"the touch of the vanished hand—the sound of the voice that is still,"—the body and soul of his friend. Rising as it were out of the midst of the gloom of the valley of the shadow of death:

> The mountain infant to the sun comes forth
> Like human life from darkness;

and how its waters flow on! carrying life, beauty, magnificence,—shadows and happy lights, depths of blackness, depths clear as the very body of heaven. How it deepens as it goes, involving larger interests, wider views, "thoughts that wander through eternity," greater affections, but still retaining its pure living waters, its unforgotten burden of love and sorrow. How it visits every region! "The long unlovely street," pleasant villages and farms, "the placid ocean-plains," waste howling wildernesses, grim woods, *nemorumque noctem*, informed with spiritual fears, where may be seen, if shapes they may be called:

> Fear and trembling Hope,
> Silence and Foresight; Death the Skeleton,
> And Time the Shadow;

now within hearing of the Minster clock, now of the College bells, and the vague hum of the mighty city. And overhead through all its course the heaven with its clouds, its sun, moon, and stars; but always, and in all places, declaring its source; and even when laying its burden of manifold and faithful affection at the feet of the Almighty Father, still remembering whence it came:

> That friend of mine who lives in God,
> That God, which ever lives and loves,

One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves.

It is to that chancel, and to the day, 3rd January 1834, that he refers in Poem XVIII. of “In Memoriam”:

’Tis well; ’tis something; we may stand
Where he in English earth is laid,
And from his ashes may be made
The violet of his native land.

’Tis little; but it looks in truth
As if the quiet bones were blest
Among familiar names to rest
And in the places of his youth.

And again in XIX.:

The Danube to the Severn gave
The darken’d heart that beat no more;
They laid him by the pleasant shore,
And in the hearing of the wave.

There twice a day the Severn fills;
The salt sea-water passes by,
And hushes half the babbling Wye,
And makes a silence in the hills.

Here, too, it is, LXVII.:

When on my bed the moonlight falls,
I know that in thy place of rest
By that broad water of the west,
There comes a glory on the walls:

Thy marble bright in dark appears,

> As slowly steals a silver flame
> Along the letters of thy name,
> And o'er the number of thy years.

This young man, whose memory his friend has consecrated in the hearts of all who can be touched by such love and beauty, was in nowise unworthy of all this. It is not for us to say, for it was not given to us the sad privilege to know, all that a father's heart buried with his son in that grave, all "the hopes of unaccomplished years"; nor can we feel in its fulness all that is meant by

> such
> A friendship as had master'd Time;
> Which masters Time indeed, and is
> Eternal, separate from fears:
> The all-assuming months and years
> Can take no part away from this.

But this we may say, we know nothing of in all literature to compare with the volume from which these lines are taken, since David lamented with this lamentation: "The beauty of Israel is slain. Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither rain upon you. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me, thy love for me was wonderful." We cannot, as some have done, compare it with Shakespeare's sonnets, or with "Lycidas." In spite of the amazing genius and tenderness, the never-wearying, all-involving reiteration of passionate attachment, the idolatry of admiring love, the rapturous devotedness, displayed in these sonnets, we cannot but agree with Mr. Hallam in thinking "that there is a tendency now, especially among young men of poetical tempers, to exaggerate the beauties of these remarkable

productions"; and though we would hardly say with him, "that it is impossible not to wish that Shakespeare had never written them," giving us, as they do, and as perhaps nothing else could do, such proof of a power of loving, of an amount of *attendrissement*, which is not less wonderful than the bodying forth of that myriad-mind which gave us Hamlet, and Lear, Cordelia, and Puck, and all the rest, and indeed explaining to us how he could give us all these;—while we hardly go so far, we agree with his other wise words:—"There is a weakness and folly in all misplaced and excessive affection"; which in Shakespeare's case is the more distressing, when we consider that "Mr. W. H., the only begetter of these ensuing sonnets," was, in all likelihood, William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, a man of noble and gallant character, but always of licentious life.

As for "Lycidas," we must confess that the poetry—and we all know how consummate it is—and not the affection, seems uppermost in Milton's mind, as it is in ours. The other element, though quick and true, has no glory through reason of the excellency of that which invests it. But there is no such drawback in "In Memoriam." The purity, the temperate but fervent goodness, the firmness and depth of nature, the impassioned logic, the large, sensitive, and liberal heart, the reverence and godly fear, of

That friend of mine who lives in God,

which from these Remains we know to have dwelt in that young soul, give to "In Memoriam" the character of exactest portraiture. There is no excessive or misplaced affection here; it is all founded in fact: while everywhere and throughout it all, affection—a love that is wonderful—meets us

first and leaves us last, giving form and substance and grace, and the breath of life and love, to everything that the poet's thick-coming fancies so exquisitely frame. We can recall few poems approaching to it in this quality of sustained affection. The only English poems we can think of as of the same order, are Cowper's lines on seeing his mother's portrait:

O that these lips had language!

Burns' "To Mary in Heaven"; and two pieces of Vaughan—one beginning

O thou who know'st for whom I mourn;

and the other:

They are all gone into the world of light.

But our object now is, not so much to illustrate Mr. Tennyson's verses, as to introduce to our readers, what we ourselves have got so much delight, and, we trust, profit from—*The Remains in Verse and Prose, of Arthur Henry Hallam*, 1834; privately printed. We had for many years been searching for this volume, but in vain; a sentence quoted by Henry Taylor struck us, and our desire was quickened by reading "In Memoriam." We do not remember when we have been more impressed than by these Remains of this young man, especially when taken along with his friend's Memorial; and instead of trying to tell our readers what this impression is, we have preferred giving them as copious extracts as our space allows, that they may judge and enjoy for themselves. The italics are our own. We can promise them few finer, deeper, and better pleasures than reading, and detaining their minds over these two books together,

filling their hearts with the fulness of their truth and tenderness. They will see how accurate as well as how affectionate and "of imagination all compact" Tennyson is, and how worthy of all that he has said of him, that friend was. The likeness is drawn *ad vivum*:

> When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
> He summons up remembrance of things past.

"The idea of his Life" has been sown a natural body, and has been raised a spiritual body, but the identity is unhurt; the countenance shines and the raiment is white and glistering, but it is the same face and form.

The Memoir is by Mr. Hallam. We give it entire, not knowing anywhere a nobler or more touching record of a father's love and sorrow.

> Arthur Henry Hallam was born in Bedford Place,[111] London, on the 1st of February 1811. Very few years had elapsed before his parents observed strong indications of his future character, in a peculiar clearness of perception, a facility of acquiring knowledge, and, above all, in an undeviating sweetness of disposition, and adherence to his sense of what was right and becoming. As he advanced to another stage of childhood, it was rendered still more manifest that he would be distinguished from ordinary persons, by an increasing thoughtfulness, and a fondness for a class of books, which in general are so little intelligible to boys of his age, that they excite in them no kind of interest.
>
> In the summer of 1818 he spent some

months with his parents in Germany and Switzerland, and became familiar with the French language, which he had already learned to read with facility. He had gone through the elements of Latin before this time; but that language having been laid aside during his tour, it was found upon his return that, a variety of new scenes having effaced it from his memory, it was necessary to begin again with the first rudiments. He was nearly eight years old at this time; and in little more than twelve months he could read Latin with tolerable facility. In this period his mind was developing itself more rapidly than before; he now felt a keen relish for dramatic poetry, and wrote several tragedies, if we may so call them, either in prose or verse, with a more precocious display of talents than the Editor remembers to have met with in any other individual. The natural pride, however, of his parents, did not blind them to the uncertainty that belongs to all premature efforts of the mind; and they so carefully avoided everything like a boastful display of blossoms which, in many cases, have withered away in barren luxuriance, that the circumstances of these compositions was hardly ever mentioned out of their own family.

In the spring of 1820, Arthur was placed under the Rev. W. Carmalt, at Putney, where he remained nearly two years. After leaving this school, he went abroad again for some months; and, in October 1822, became the pupil of the Rev. E. C. Hawtrey, an Assistant Master of Eton College. At Eton he continued

till the summer of 1827. He was now become a good though not perhaps a first-rate scholar in the Latin and Greek languages. The loss of time, relatively to this object, in travelling, but far more his increasing avidity for a different kind of knowledge, and the strong bent of his mind to subjects which exercise other faculties than such as the acquirement of languages calls into play, will sufficiently account for what might seem a comparative deficiency in classical learning. It can only, however, be reckoned one, comparatively to his other attainments, and to his remarkable facility in mastering the modern languages. The Editor has thought it not improper to print in the following pages an Eton exercise, which, as written before the age of fourteen, though not free from metrical and other errors, appears, perhaps to a partial judgment, far above the level of such compositions. It is remarkable that he should have selected the story of Ugolino, from a poet with whom, and with whose language, he was then but very slightly acquainted, but who was afterwards to become, more perhaps than any other, the master-mover of his spirit. It may be added, that great judgment and taste are perceptible in this translation, which is by no means a literal one; and in which the phraseology of Sophocles is not ill substituted, in some passages, for that of Dante.

The Latin poetry of an Etonian is generally reckoned at that School the chief test of his literary talent. That of Arthur was good without being excellent; he never wanted

depth of thought, or truth of feeling; but it is only in a few rare instances, if altogether in any, that an original mind has been known to utter itself freely and vigorously, without sacrifice of purity, in a language the capacities of which are so imperfectly understood; and in his productions there was not the thorough conformity to an ancient model which is required for perfect elegance in Latin verse. He took no great pleasure in this sort of composition; and perhaps never returned to it of his own accord.

In the latter part of his residence at Eton, he was led away more and more by the predominant bias of his mind, from the exclusive study of ancient literature. The poets of England, especially the older dramatists, came with greater attraction over his spirit. He loved Fletcher, and some of Fletcher's contemporaries, for their energy of language and intenseness of feeling; but it was in Shakespeare alone that he found the fulness of soul which seemed to slake the thirst of his own rapidly expanding genius for an inexhaustible fountain of thought and emotion. He knew Shakespeare thoroughly; and indeed his acquaintance with the earlier poetry of this country was very extensive. Among the modern poets, Byron was at this time, far above the rest, and almost exclusively, his favourite; a preference which, in later years, he transferred altogether to Wordsworth and Shelley.

He became, when about fifteen years old, a member of the debating society established

among the elder boys, in which he took great interest; and this served to confirm the bias of his intellect towards the moral and political philosophy of modern times. It was probably, however, of important utility in giving him that command of his own language which he possessed, as the following Essays will show, in a very superior degree, and in exercising those powers of argumentative discussion, which now displayed themselves as eminently characteristic of his mind. It was a necessary consequence that he declined still more from the usual paths of study, and abated perhaps somewhat of his regard for the writers of antiquity. It must not be understood, nevertheless, as most of those who read these pages will be aware, that he ever lost his sensibility to those ever-living effusions of genius which the ancient languages preserve. He loved Aeschylus and Sophocles (to Euripides he hardly did justice), Lucretius and Virgil; if he did not seem so much drawn towards Homer as might at first be expected, this may probably be accounted for by his increasing taste for philosophical poetry.

In the early part of 1827, Arthur took a part in the Eton Miscellany, a periodical publication, in which some of his friends in the debating society were concerned. He wrote in this, besides a few papers in prose, a little poem on a story connected with the Lake of Killarney. It has not been thought by the Editor advisable, upon the whole, to reprint these lines; though, in his opinion, they bear very striking marks of superior

powers. This was almost the first poetry that Arthur had written, except the childish tragedies above mentioned. No one was ever less inclined to the trick of versifying. Poetry with him was not an amusement, but the natural and almost necessary language of genuine emotion; and it was not till the discipline of serious reflection, and the approach of manhood, gave a reality and intenseness to such emotions, that he learned the capacities of his own genius. That he was a poet by nature, these Remains will sufficiently prove; but certainly he was far removed from being a versifier by nature; nor was he probably able to perform, what he scarce ever attempted, to write easily and elegantly on an ordinary subject. The lines on the story of Pygmalion are so far an exception, that they arose out of a momentary amusement of society; but he could not avoid, even in these, his own grave tone of poetry.

Upon leaving Eton in the summer of 1827, he accompanied his parents to the Continent, and passed eight months in Italy. This introduction to new scenes of nature and art, and to new sources of intellectual delight, at the very period of transition from boyhood to youth, sealed no doubt the peculiar character of his mind, and taught him, too soon for his peace, to sound those depths of thought and feeling from which, after this time, all that he wrote was derived. He had, when he passed the Alps, only a moderate acquaintance with the Italian language; but during his residence in the country he came

to speak it with perfect fluency, and with a pure Sienese pronunciation. In its study he was much assisted by his friend and instructor, the Abbate Pifferi, who encouraged him to his first attempts at versification. The few sonnets, which are now printed, were, it is to be remembered, written by a foreigner, hardly seventeen years old, and after a very short stay in Italy. The Editor might not, probably, have suffered them to appear even in this private manner, upon his own judgment. But he knew that the greatest living writer of Italy, to whom they were shown some time since at Milan, by the author's excellent friend, Mr. Richard Milnes, has expressed himself in terms of high approbation.

The growing intimacy of Arthur with Italian poetry led him naturally to that of Dante. No poet was so congenial to the character of his own reflective mind; in none other could he so abundantly find that disdain of flowery redundance, that perpetual preference of the sensible to the ideal, that aspiration for somewhat better and less fleeting than earthly things, to which his inmost soul responded. Like all genuine worshippers of the great Florentine poet, he rated the *Inferno* below the two latter portions of the *Divina Commedia*; there was nothing even to revolt his taste, but rather much to attract it, in the scholastic theology and mystic visions of the *Paradiso*. Petrarch he greatly admired, though with less idolatry than Dante; and the sonnets here printed will show to all competent judges how fully he had imbibed

the spirit, without servile centonism, of the best writers in that style of composition who flourished in the sixteenth century.

But poetry was not an absorbing passion at this time in his mind. His eyes were fixed on the best pictures with silent intense delight. He had a deep and just perception of what was beautiful in this art, at least in its higher schools; for he did not pay much regard, or perhaps quite do justice, to the masters of the seventeenth century. To technical criticism he made no sort of pretension; painting was to him but the visible language of emotion; and where it did not aim at exciting it, or employed inadequate means, his admiration would be withheld. Hence he highly prized the ancient paintings, both Italian and German, of the age which preceded the full development of art. But he was almost as enthusiastic an admirer of the Venetian, as of the Tuscan and Roman schools; considering these masters as reaching the same end by the different agencies of form and colour. This predilection for the sensitive beauties of painting is somewhat analogous to his fondness for harmony of verse, on which he laid more stress than poets so thoughtful are apt to do. In one of the last days of his life, he lingered long among the fine Venetian pictures of the Imperial Gallery at Vienna.

He returned to England in June 1828; and, in the following October, went down to reside at Cambridge; having been entered on the boards of Trinity College before his

departure to the Continent. He was the pupil of the Rev. William Whewell. In some respects, as soon became manifest, he was not formed to obtain great academical reputation. An acquaintance with the learned languages, considerable at the school where he was educated, but not improved, to say the least, by the intermission of a year, during which his mind had been so occupied by other pursuits, that he had thought little of antiquity even in Rome itself, though abundantly sufficient for the gratification of taste and the acquisition of knowledge, was sure to prove inadequate to the searching scrutiny of modern examinations. He soon, therefore, saw reason to renounce all competition of this kind; nor did he ever so much as attempt any Greek or Latin composition during his stay at Cambridge. In truth he was very indifferent to success of this kind; and conscious as he must have been of a high reputation among his contemporaries, he could not think that he stood in need of any University distinctions. The Editor became by degrees almost equally indifferent to what he perceived to be so uncongenial to Arthur's mind. It was, however, to be regretted that he never paid the least attention to mathematical studies. That he should not prosecute them with the diligence usual at Cambridge, was of course to be expected; yet his clearness and acumen would certainly have enabled him to master the principles of geometrical reasoning; nor, in fact, did he so much find a difficulty in apprehending demonstrations, as a want of

interest, and a consequent inability to retain them in his memory. A little more practice in the strict logic of geometry, a little more familiarity with the physical laws of the universe, and the phenomena to which they relate, would possibly have repressed the tendency to vague and mystical speculations which he was too fond of indulging. In the philosophy of the human mind, he was in no danger of the materializing theories of some ancient and modern schools; but in shunning this extreme, he might sometimes forget that, in the honest pursuit of truth, we can shut our eyes to no real phenomena, and that the physiology of man must always enter into any valid scheme of his psychology.

The comparative inferiority which he might show in the usual trials of knowledge, sprung in a great measure from the want of a prompt and accurate memory. It was the faculty wherein he shone the least, according to ordinary observation; though his very extensive reach of literature, and his rapidity in acquiring languages, sufficed to prove that it was capable of being largely exercised. He could remember anything, as a friend observed to the Editor, that was associated with an idea. But he seemed, at least after he reached manhood, to want almost wholly the power, so common with inferior understandings, of retaining, with regularity and exactness, a number of unimportant uninteresting particulars. It would have been nearly impossible to make him recollect for three days the date of the battle of Marathon, or the names in order of the Athenian

months. Nor could he repeat poetry, much as he loved it, with the correctness often found in young men. It is not improbable, that a more steady discipline in early life would have strengthened this faculty, or that he might have supplied its deficiency by some technical devices; but where the higher powers of intellect were so extraordinarily manifested, it would have been preposterous to complain of what may perhaps have been a necessary consequence of their amplitude, or at least a natural result of their exercise.

But another reason may be given for his deficiency in those unremitting labours which the course of academical education, in the present times, is supposed to exact from those who aspire to its distinctions. In the first year of his residence at Cambridge, symptoms of disordered health, especially in the circulatory system, began to show themselves; and it is by no means improbable, that these were indications of a tendency to derangement of the vital functions, which became ultimately fatal. A too rapid determination of blood towards the brain, with its concomitant uneasy sensations, rendered him frequently incapable of mental fatigue. He had indeed once before, at Florence, been affected by symptoms not unlike these. His intensity of reflection and feeling also brought on occasionally a considerable depression of spirits, which had been painfully observed at times by those who watched him most, from the time of his leaving Eton, and even before. It was not till after several months that he

regained a less morbid condition of mind and body. This same irregularity of circulation returned in the next spring, but was of less duration. During the third year of his Cambridge life, he appeared in much better health.

In this year (1831) he obtained the first college prize for an English declamation. The subject chosen by him was the conduct of the Independent party during the civil war. This exercise was greatly admired at the time, but was never printed. In consequence of this success, it became incumbent on him, according to the custom of the college, to deliver an oration in the chapel immediately before the Christmas vacation of the same year. On this occasion he selected a subject very congenial to his own turn of thought and favourite study, the influence of Italian upon English literature. He had previously gained another prize for an English essay on the philosophical writings of Cicero. This essay is perhaps too excursive from the prescribed subject; but his mind was so deeply imbued with the higher philosophy, especially that of Plato, with which he was very conversant, that he could not be expected to dwell much on the praises of Cicero in that respect.

Though the bent of Arthur's mind by no means inclined him to strict research into facts, he was full as much conversant with the great features of ancient and modern history, as from the course of his other studies and the habits of his life it was

possible to expect. He reckoned them, as great minds always do, the groundworks of moral and political philosophy, and took no pains to acquire any knowledge of this sort from which a principle could not be derived or illustrated. To some parts of English history, and to that of the French Revolution, he had paid considerable attention. He had not read nearly so much of the Greek and Latin historians as of the philosophers and poets. In the history of literary, and especially of philosophical and religious opinions, he was deeply versed, as much so as it is possible to apply that term at his age. The following pages exhibit proofs of an acquaintance, not crude or superficial, with that important branch of literature.

His political judgments were invariably prompted by his strong sense of right and justice. These, in so young a person, were naturally rather fluctuating, and subject to the correction of advancing knowledge and experience. Ardent in the cause of those he deemed to be oppressed, of which, in one instance, he was led to give a proof with more of energy and enthusiasm than discretion, he was deeply attached to the ancient institutions of his country.

He spoke French readily, though with less elegance than Italian, till from disuse he lost much of his fluency in the latter. In his last fatal tour in Germany, he was rapidly acquiring a readiness in the language of that country. The whole range of French literature was almost as familiar to him as

that of England.

The society in which Arthur lived most intimately, at Eton and at the University, was formed of young men, eminent for natural ability, and for delight in what he sought above all things, the knowledge of truth, and the perception of beauty. They who loved and admired him living, and who now revere his sacred memory, as of one to whom, in the fondness of regret, they admit of no rival, know best what he was in the daily commerce of life; and his eulogy should, on every account, better come from hearts which, if partial, have been rendered so by the experience of friendship, not by the affection of nature.

Arthur left Cambridge on taking his degree in January 1832. He resided from that time with the Editor in London, having been entered on the boards of the Inner Temple. It was greatly the desire of the Editor that he should engage himself in the study of the law; not merely with professional views, but as a useful discipline for a mind too much occupied with habits of thought, which, ennobling and important as they were, could not but separate him from the everyday business of life, and might, by their excess, in his susceptible temperament, be productive of considerable mischief. He had, during the previous long vacation, read with the Editor the *Institutes* of Justinian, and the two works of Heineccius which illustrate them; and he now went through Blackstone's *Commentaries*, with as much of other law-

books as, in the Editor's judgment, was required for a similar purpose. It was satisfactory at that time to perceive that, far from showing any of that distaste to legal studies which might have been anticipated from some parts of his intellectual character, he entered upon them not only with great acuteness, but considerable interest. In the month of October 1832, he began to see the practical application of legal knowledge in the office of an eminent conveyancer, Mr. Walters of Lincoln's Inn Fields, with whom he continued till his departure from England in the following summer.

It was not, however, to be expected, or even desired by any one who knew how to value him, that he should at once abandon those habits of study which had fertilized and invigorated his mind. But he now, from some change or other in his course of thinking, ceased in a great measure to write poetry, and expressed to more than one friend an intention to give it up. The instances after his leaving Cambridge were few. The dramatic scene between Raffaelle and Fiammetta was written in 1832; and about the same time he had a design to translate the *Vita Nuova* of his favourite Dante; a work which he justly prized, as the development of that immense genius, in a kind of autobiography, which best prepares us for a real insight into the *Divine Comedy*. He rendered accordingly into verse most of the sonnets which the *Vita Nuova* contains; but the Editor does not believe that he made any progress in the prose translation. These sonnets appearing

rather too literal, and consequently harsh, it has not been thought worth while to print.

In the summer of 1832, the appearance of Professor Rosetti's *Disquisizioni sullo spirito Antipapale*, in which the writings of Arthur's beloved masters, Dante and Petrarch, as well as most of the mediæval literature of Italy, were treated as a series of enigmas, to be understood only by a key that discloses a latent Carbonarism, a secret conspiracy against the religion of their age, excited him to publish his own Remarks in reply. It seemed to him the worst of poetical heresies to desert the Absolute, the Universal, the Eternal, the Beautiful and True, which the Platonic spirit of his literary creed taught him to seek in all the higher works of genius, in quest of some temporary historical allusion, which could be of no interest with posterity. Nothing, however, could be more alien from his courteous disposition than to abuse the licence of controversy, or to treat with intentional disrespect a very ingenious person, who had been led on too far in pursuing a course of interpretation, which, within certain much narrower limits, it is impossible for any one conversant with history not to admit.

A very few other anonymous writings occupied his leisure about this time. Among these were slight memoirs of Petrarch, Voltaire, and Burke, for the Gallery of Portraits, published by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.[112] His time was, however, principally devoted, when not

> engaged at his office, to metaphysical researches, and to the history of philosophical opinions.
>
> From the latter part of his residence at Cambridge, a gradual but very perceptible improvement in the cheerfulness of his spirits gladdened his family and his friends; intervals there doubtless were when the continual seriousness of his habits of thought, or the force of circumstances, threw something more of gravity into his demeanour; but in general he was animated and even gay, renewing or preserving his intercourse with some of those he had most valued at Eton and Cambridge. The symptoms of deranged circulation which had manifested themselves before, ceased to appear, or at least so as to excite his own attention; and though it struck those who were most anxious in watching him, that his power of enduring fatigue was not quite so great as from his frame of body and apparent robustness might have been anticipated, nothing gave the least indication of danger either to their eyes, or to those of the medical practitioners who were in the habit of observing him. An attack of intermittent fever, during the prevalent influenza of the spring of 1833, may perhaps have disposed his constitution to the last fatal blow.

To any one who has watched the history of the disease by which “so quick this bright thing came to confusion,” and who knows how near its subject must often, perhaps all his life, have been to that eternity which occupied so much of his thoughts and

desires, and the secrets of which were so soon to open on his young eyes, there is something very touching in this account. Such a state of health would enhance, and tend to produce, by the sensations proper to such a condition, that habitual seriousness of thought, that sober judgment, and that tendency to look at the true life of things—that deep but gentle and calm sadness, and that occasional sinking of the heart, which make his noble and strong inner nature, his resolved mind, so much more impressive and endearing.

This feeling of personal insecurity—of life being ready to slip away—the sensation that this world and its on-goings, its mighty interests, and delicate joys, is ready to be shut up in a moment—this instinctive apprehension of the peril of vehement bodily enjoyment—all this would tend to make him "walk softly," and to keep him from much of the evil that is in the world, and would help him to live soberly, righteously, and godly, even in the bright and rich years of his youth. His power of giving himself up to the search after absolute truth, and the contemplation of Supreme goodness, must have been increased by this same organization. But all this delicate feeling, this fineness of sense, did rather quicken the energy and fervour of the indwelling soul—the τὶ θερμὸν πρᾶγμα that burned within. In the quaint words of Vaughan, it was "manhood with a female eye." These two conditions must, as we have said, have made him dear indeed. And by a beautiful law of life, having that organ out of which are the issues of life, under a sort of perpetual nearness to suffering, and so liable to pain, he would be more easily moved for others—more alive to their pain—more filled with fellow-feeling.

The Editor cannot dwell on anything later. Arthur accompanied him to Germany in the beginning of August. In returning to Vienna from Pesth, a wet day probably gave rise to an intermittent fever, with very slight symptoms, and apparently subsiding, when a sudden rush of blood to the head put an instantaneous end to his life on the 15th of September 1833. The mysteriousness of such a dreadful termination to a disorder generally of so little importance, and in this instance of the slightest kind, has been diminished by an examination which showed a weakness of the cerebral vessels, and a want of sufficient energy in the heart. Those whose eyes must long be dim with tears, and whose hopes on this side the tomb are broken down for ever, may cling, as well as they can, to the poor consolation of believing that a few more years would, in the usual chances of humanity, have severed the frail union of his graceful and manly form with the pure spirit that it enshrined.

The remains of Arthur were brought to England, and interred on the 3rd of January 1834, in the chancel of Clevedon Church, in Somersetshire, belonging to his maternal grandfather, Sir Abraham Elton, a place selected by the Editor, not only from the connection of kindred, but on account of its still and sequestered situation, on a lone hill that overhangs the Bristol Channel.

More ought perhaps to be said—but it is very difficult to proceed. From the earliest years of this extraordinary young man, his

premature abilities were not more conspicuous than an almost faultless disposition, sustained by a more calm self-command than has often been witnessed in that season of life. The sweetness of temper which distinguished his childhood, became with the advance of manhood a habitual benevolence, and ultimately ripened into that exalted principle of love towards God and man, which animated and almost absorbed his soul during the latter period of his life, and to which most of the following compositions bear such emphatic testimony. He seemed to tread the earth as a spirit from some better world; and in bowing to the mysterious will which has in mercy removed him, perfected by so short a trial, and passing over the bridge which separates the seen from the unseen life, in a moment, and, as we may believe, without a moment's pang, we must feel not only the bereavement of those to whom he was dear, but the loss which mankind have sustained by the withdrawing of such a light.

A considerable portion of the poetry contained in this volume was printed in the year 1830, and was intended by the author to be published together with the poems of his intimate friend, Mr. Alfred Tennyson. They were, however, withheld from publication at the request of the Editor. The poem of Timbuctoo was written for the University prize in 1829, which it did not obtain. Notwithstanding its too great obscurity, the subject itself being hardly indicated, and the extremely hyperbolical

importance which the author's brilliant fancy has attached to a nest of barbarians, no one can avoid admiring the grandeur of his conceptions, and the deep philosophy upon which he has built the scheme of his poem. This is, however, by no means the most pleasing of his compositions. It is in the profound reflection, the melancholy tenderness, and the religious sanctity of other effusions that a lasting charm will be found. A commonplace subject, such as those announced for academical prizes generally are, was incapable of exciting a mind which, beyond almost every other, went straight to the farthest depths that the human intellect can fathom, or from which human feelings can be drawn. Many short poems, of equal beauty with those here printed, have been deemed unfit even for the limited circulation they might obtain, on account of their unveiling more of emotion than, consistently with what is due to him and to others, could be exposed to view.

The two succeeding essays have never been printed; but were read, it is believed, in a literary society at Trinity College, or in one to which he afterwards belonged in London. That entitled *Theodicaea Novissima* is printed at the desire of some of his intimate friends. A few expressions in it want his usual precision; and there are ideas which he might have seen cause, in the lapse of time, to modify, independently of what his very acute mind would probably have perceived, that his hypothesis, like that of Leibnitz, on the origin of evil, resolves itself at last into

> an unproved assumption of its necessity. It has, however, some advantages, which need not be mentioned, over that of Leibnitz; and it is here printed, not as a solution of the greatest mystery of the universe, but as most characteristic of the author's mind, original and sublime, uniting, what is very rare except in early youth, a fearless and unblenching spirit of inquiry into the highest objects of speculation, with the most humble and reverential piety. It is probable that in many of his views on such topics he was influenced by the writings of Jonathan Edwards, with whose opinions on metaphysical and moral subjects he seems generally to have concurred.
>
> The extract from a review of Tennyson's poems in a publication now extinct, the *Englishman's Magazine*, is also printed at the suggestion of a friend. The pieces that follow are reprints, and have been already mentioned in this Memoir.

We have given this Memoir almost entire, for the sake both of its subject and its manner—for what in it is the father's as well as for what is the son's. There is something very touching in the paternal composure, the judiciousness, the truthfulness, where truth is so difficult to reach through tears, the calm estimate and the subdued tenderness, the ever-rising but ever-restrained emotion; the father's heart-throbs throughout.

We wish we could have given in full the letters from Arthur's friends which his father has incorporated in the Memoir. They all bring out, in different but

harmonious ways, his extraordinary moral and intellectual worth, his rare beauty of character, and their deep affection.

The following extract from one seems to us very interesting:

> Outwardly I do not think there was anything remarkable in his habits, except *an irregularity with regard to times and places of study*, which may seem surprising in one whose progress in so many directions was so eminently great and rapid. *He was commonly to be found in some friend's room, reading or canvassing.* I daresay he lost something by this irregularity, *but less than perhaps one would at first imagine*. I never saw him idle. He might seem to be lounging, or only amusing himself, but his mind was always active, and active for good. In fact, his energy and quickness of apprehension did not stand in need of outward aid.

There is much in this worthy of more extended notice. Such minds as his probably grow best in this way, are best left to themselves, to glide on at their own sweet wills; the stream was too deep and clear, and perhaps too entirely bent on its own errand, to be dealt with or regulated by any art or device. The same friend sums up his character thus:

> I have met with no man his superior in metaphysical subtlety; no man his equal as a philosophical critic on works of taste; no man whose views on all subjects connected with the duties and dignities of humanity were more large and generous, and enlightened.

And all this said of a youth of twenty—*heu nimium brevis aevi decus et desiderium*!

We have given little of his verse; and what we do give is taken at random. We agree entirely in his father's estimate of his poetical gift and art, but his mind was too serious, too thoughtful, too intensely dedicated to truth and the God of truth, to linger long in the pursuit of beauty; he was on his way to God, and could rest in nothing short of Him, otherwise he might have been a poet of genuine excellence.

> Dark, dark, yea, "irrecoverably dark,"
> Is the soul's eye; yet how it strives and battles
> Through th' impenetrable gloom to fix
> That master light, the secret truth of things,
> Which is the body of the infinite God!
> .....
> Sure, we are leaves of one harmonious bower,
> Fed by a sap that never will be scant,
> All-permeating, all-producing mind;
> And in our several parcellings of doom
> We but fulfil the beauty of the whole.
> Oh, madness! if a leaf should dare complain
> Of its dark verdure, and aspire to be
> The gayer, brighter thing that wantons near.
> .....
> Oh, blessing and delight of my young heart,
> Maiden, who wast so lovely, and so pure,
> I know not in what region now thou art,
> Or whom thy gentle eyes in joy assure.
> Not the old hills on which we gazed together,
> Not the old faces which we both did love,

Not the old books, whence knowledge we did gather,
Not these, but others now thy fancies move.

I would I knew thy present hopes and fears,
All thy companions with their pleasant talk,
And the clear aspect which thy dwelling wears:
So, though in body absent, I might walk
With thee in thought and feeling, till thy mood
Did sanctify mine own to peerless good.
.....
Alfred, I would that you beheld me now,
Sitting beneath a mossy ivied wall
On a quaint bench, which to that structure old
Winds an accordant curve. Above my head
Dilates immeasurable a wild of leaves,
Seeming received into the blue expanse
That vaults this summer noon.
.....
Still here—thou hast not faded from my sight,
Nor all the music round thee from mine ear:
Still grace flows from thee to the brightening year,
And all the birds laugh out in wealthier light.
Still am I free to close my happy eyes,
And paint upon the gloom thy mimic form,
That soft white neck, that cheek in beauty warm,
And brow half hidden where yon ringlet lies:
With, oh! the blissful knowledge all the while
That I can lift at will each curvèd lid,

> And my fair dream most highly realize.
> The time will come, 'tis ushered by my sighs,
> When I may shape the dark, but vainly bid
> True light restore that form, those looks, that smile.
> .....
> The garden trees *are busy with the shower*
> That fell ere sunset: now methinks they talk,
> Lowly and sweetly as befits the hour,
> One to another down the grassy walk.
> Hark the laburnum from his opening flower,
> This cheery creeper greets in whisper light,
> While the grim fir, rejoicing in the night,
> Hoarse mutters to the murmuring sycamore. [113]
> What shall I deem their converse? would they hail
> The wild grey light that fronts yon massive cloud,
> Or the half bow, rising like pillar'd fire?
> Or are they fighting faintly for desire
> That with May dawn their leaves may be o'erflowed,
> And dews about their feet may never fail?

In the Essay, entitled *Theodicaea Novissima*, from which the following passages are taken, to the great injury in its general effect, he sets himself to the task of doing his utmost to clear up the mystery of the existence of such things as sin and suffering, in the universe of a being like God. He does it fearlessly, but like a child. It is in the spirit of his friend's words:

> An infant crying in the night,
> An infant crying for the light,
> And with no language but a cry.

> Then was I as a child that cries,
> But, crying, knows his father near.

It is not a mere exercitation of the intellect, it is an endeavour to get nearer God—to assert His eternal Providence, and vindicate His ways to men. We know no performance more wonderful for such a boy. Pascal might have written it. As was to be expected, the tremendous subject remains where he found it—his glowing love and genius cast a gleam here and there across its gloom; but it is brief as the lightning in the collied night—the jaws of darkness do devour it up—this secret belongs to God. Across its deep and dazzling darkness, and from out its abyss of thick cloud, "all dark, dark, irrecoverably dark," no steady ray has ever, or will ever, come—over its face its own darkness must brood, till He to whom alone the darkness and the light are both alike, to whom the night shineth as the day, says, "Let there be light!" There is, we all know, a certain awful attraction, a nameless charm for all thoughtful spirits, in this mystery, "the greatest in the universe," as Mr. Hallam truly says; and it is well for us at times, so that we have pure eyes and a clean heart, to turn aside and look into its gloom; but it is not good to busy ourselves in clever speculations about it, or briskly to criticize the speculations of others—it is a wise and pious saying of Augustine, *Verius cogitatur Deus quam dicitur; et verius est quam cogitatur*.

> I wish to be understood as considering Christianity in the present Essay rather in its relation to the intellect, as constituting the higher philosophy, than in its far more important bearing upon the hearts and

destinies of us all. I shall propose the question in this form, “Is there ground for believing that the existence of moral evil is absolutely necessary to the fulfilment of God’s essential love for Christ?” (*i.e.* of the Father for Christ, or of ὁ πατήρ for ὁ λόγος).

“Can man by searching find out God?” I believe not. I believe that the unassisted efforts of man’s reason have not established the existence and attributes of Deity on so sure a basis as the Deist imagines. However sublime may be the notion of a supreme original mind, and however naturally human feelings adhered to it, the reasons by which it was justified were not, in my opinion, sufficient to clear it from considerable doubt and confusion.... I hesitate not to say that I derive from Revelation a conviction of Theism, which, without that assistance, would have been but a dark and ambiguous hope. *I see that the Bible fits into every fold of the human heart. I am a man and I believe it to be God’s book because it is man’s book.* It is true that the Bible affords me no additional means of demonstrating the falsity of Atheism; *if mind had nothing to do with the formation of the Universe, doubtless whatever had was competent also to make the Bible*; but I have gained this advantage, that my feelings and thoughts can no longer refuse their assent to *what is evidently framed to engage that assent; and what is it to me that I cannot disprove the bare logical possibility of my whole nature being fallacious? To seek for a certainty above certainty, an evidence beyond necessary belief, is the very lunacy of scepticism*: we must

trust our own faculties, or we can put no trust in anything, save that moment we call the present, which escapes us while we articulate its name. *I am determined therefore to receive the Bible as Divinely authorized, and the scheme of human and Divine things which it contains, as essentially true.*

In the Supreme Nature those two capacities of Perfect Love and Perfect Joy are indivisible. Holiness and Happiness, says an old divine, are two several notions of one thing. Equally inseparable are the notions of Opposition to Love and Opposition to Bliss. *Unless, therefore, the heart of a created being is at one with the heart of God, it cannot but be miserable.* Moreover, there is no possibility of continuing for ever partly with God and partly against Him: we must either be capable by our nature of entire accordance with His will, or we must be incapable of anything but misery, further than He may for a while "not impute our trespasses to us," that is, He may interpose some temporary barrier between sin and its attendant pain. *For in the Eternal Idea of God a created spirit is perhaps not seen, as a series of successive states*, of which some that are evil might be compensated by others that are good, *but as one indivisible object of these almost divisible modes*, and that either in accordance with His own nature, or in opposition to it....

Before the Gospel was preached to man, how

could a human soul have this love, and this consequent life? I see no way; but now that Christ has excited our love for Him by showing unutterable love for us; now that we know Him as an Elder Brother, a being of like thoughts, feelings, sensations, sufferings, with ourselves, it has become possible to love as God loves, that is, to love Christ, and thus to become united in heart to God. Besides, Christ is the express image of God's person: in loving Him we are sure we are in a state of readiness to love the Father, whom we see, He tells us, when we see Him. Nor is this all: the tendency of love is towards a union so intimate as virtually to amount to identification; when then by affection towards Christ we have become blended with His being, the beams of eternal love, falling, as ever, on the one beloved object, will include us in Him, and their returning flashes of love out of His personality will carry along with them some from our own, since ours has become confused with His, and so shall we be one with Christ, and through Christ with God. Thus, then, we see the great effect of the Incarnation, as far as our nature is concerned, *was to render human love for the Most High a possible thing*. The law had said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength"; and could men have lived by law, "which is the strength of sin," verily righteousness and life would have been by that law. But it was not possible, and all were concluded under sin, that in Christ might be the deliverance of all. I

believe that Redemption (*i.e.*, what Christ has done and suffered for mankind) is universal, in so far as it left no obstacle between man and God, but man's own will; that indeed is in the power of God's election, with whom alone rest the abysmal secrets of personality; but as far as Christ is concerned, His death was for all, since His intentions and affections were equally directed to all, and "none who come to Him will He in any wise cast out."

I deprecate any hasty rejection of these thoughts as novelties. Christianity is indeed, as St. Augustine says, "pulchritudo tam antiqua"; but he adds, "tam nova," for it is capable of presenting to every mind a new face of truth. The great doctrine which in my judgment these observations tend to strengthen and illumine, *the doctrine of personal love for a personal God*, is assuredly no novelty, but has in all times been the vital principle of the Church. Many are the forms of anti-christian heresy, which for a season have depressed and obscured that principle of life, but its nature is conflictive and resurgent; and neither the Papal Hierarchy with its pomp of systematized errors, nor the worst apostasy of latitudinarian Protestantism, have ever so far prevailed, but that many from age to age have proclaimed and vindicated the eternal gospel of love, believing, as I also firmly believe, that any opinion which tends to keep out of sight the living and loving God, whether it substitute for Him an idol, an occult agency, or a formal creed, can be nothing better than a

> vain and portentous shadow projected from the selfish darkness of unregenerate man.

The following is from the Review of Tennyson's Poems; we do not know that during the lapse of years anything better has been said:

> Undoubtedly the true poet addresses himself, in all his conceptions, to the common nature of us all. Art is a lofty tree, and may shoot up far beyond our grasp, but its roots are in daily life and experience. Every bosom contains the elements of those complex emotions which the artist feels, and every head can, to a certain extent, go over in itself the process of their combination, so as to understand his expressions and sympathize with his state. *But this requires exertion*; more or less, indeed, according to the difference of occasion, but always some degree of exertion. For since the emotions of the poet during composition follow a regular law of association, it follows that to accompany their progress up to the harmonious prospect of the whole, and to perceive the proper dependence of every step on that which preceded, it is absolutely necessary *to start from the same point*, *i.e.*, clearly to apprehend that leading sentiment of the poet's mind, by their conformity to which the host of suggestions are arranged. *Now this requisite exertion is not willingly made by the large majority of readers. It is so easy to judge capriciously, and according to indolent impulse!*
>
> Those different powers of poetic disposition, the energies of Sensitive, of Reflective, or

Passionate emotion, which in former times were intermingled, and derived from mutual support an extensive empire over the feelings of men, were now restrained within separate spheres of agency. The whole system no longer worked harmoniously, and by intrinsic harmony acquired external freedom; but there arose a violent and unusual action in the several component functions, each for itself, all striving to reproduce the regular power which the whole had once enjoyed. *Hence the melancholy which so evidently characterizes the spirit of modern poetry*; hence that return of the mind upon itself, and the habit of seeking relief in idiosyncrasies rather than community of interest. *In the old times the poetic impulse went along with the general impulse of the nation.*

One of the faithful Islâm, a poet in the truest and highest sense, we are anxious to present to our readers.... He sees all the forms of Nature with the *eruditus oculus*, and his ear has a fairy fineness. There is *a strange earnestness in his worship of beauty*, which throws a charm over his impassioned song more easily felt than described, and not to be escaped by those who have once felt it. We think that he has *more definiteness and roundness of general conception* than the late Mr. Keats, and is much more free from blemishes of diction and hasty capriccios of fancy.... The author imitates nobody; *we recognize the spirit of his age, but not the individual form of this or that writer*. His thoughts bear no more resemblance to Byron or Scott, Shelley or Coleridge, than to Homer

> or Calderon, Ferdusi or Calidasa. We have remarked five distinctive excellences of his own manner. First, his luxuriance of imagination, and at the same time his control over it. Secondly, his power of embodying himself in ideal characters, or rather modes of character, with such extreme accuracy of adjustment, that the circumstances of the narration seem to have a natural correspondence with the predominant feeling, and, as it were, to be evolved from it by assimilative force. Thirdly, his vivid, picturesque delineation of objects, and the peculiar skill with which he holds all of them *fused*, to borrow a metaphor from science, in a medium of strong emotion. Fourthly, the variety of his lyrical measures, and exquisite modulation of harmonious words and cadences to the swell and fall of the feelings expressed. Fifthly, the elevated habits of thought, implied in these compositions, and imparting a mellow soberness of tone, more impressive, to our minds, than if the author had drawn up a set of opinions in verse, and sought to instruct the understanding, *rather than to communicate the love of beauty to the heart*.

What follows is justly thought and well said:

> And is it not a noble thing that the English tongue is, as it were, the common focus and point of union to which opposite beauties converge? Is it a trifle that we temper energy with softness, strength with flexibility, capaciousness of sound with pliancy of idiom? Some, I know, insensible to these

> virtues, and ambitious of I know not what unattainable decomposition, prefer to utter funereal praises over the grave of departed Anglo-Saxon, or, starting with convulsive shudder, are ready to leap from surrounding Latinisms into the kindred, sympathetic arms of modern German. For myself, I neither share their regret, nor their terror. Willing at all times to pay filial homage to the shades of Hengist and Horsa, and to admit they have laid the base of our compound language; or, if you will, have prepared the soil from which the chief nutriment of the goodly tree, our British oak, must be derived, I am yet proud to confess that I look with sentiments more exulting and more reverential to the bonds by which the law of the universe has fastened me to my distant brethren of the same Caucasian race; to the privileges which I, an inhabitant of the gloomy North, share in common with climates imparadized in perpetual summer, to the universality and efficacy resulting from blended intelligence, which, while it endears in our eyes the land of our fathers as a seat of peculiar blessing, tends to elevate and expand our thoughts into communion with humanity at large; and, in the "sublimer spirit" of the Poet, to make us feel
>
> > That God is everywhere—the God who framed
> > Mankind to be one mighty family,
> > Himself our Father, and the world our home.

What nice shading of thought do his remarks on

Petrarch discover!

> But it is not so much to his direct adoptions that I refer, *as to the general modulation of thought, that clear softness of his images, that energetic self-possession of his conceptions, and that melodious repose in which are held together all the emotions he delineates*.

Every one who knows anything of himself, and of his fellow-men, will acknowledge the wisdom of what follows. It displays an intimate knowledge both of the constitution and history of man, and there is much in it suited to our present need:

> *I do not hesitate to express my conviction, that the spirit of the critical philosophy, as seen by its fruits in all the ramifications of art, literature, and morality, is as much more dangerous than the spirit of mechanical philosophy*, as it is fairer in appearance, and more capable of alliance with our natural feelings of enthusiasm and delight. Its dangerous tendency is this, that it perverts those very minds, whose office it was to resist the perverse impulses of society, and to proclaim truth under the dominion of falsehood. However precipitate may be at any time the current of public opinion, bearing along the mass of men to the grosser agitations of life, and to such schemes of belief as make these the prominent objects, *there will always be in reserve a force of antagonistic opinion, strengthened by opposition, and attesting the sanctity of those higher principles which are despised or forgotten by the majority*. These men *are secured by*

natural temperament and peculiar circumstances from participating in the common delusion: but if some other and deeper fallacy be invented; if some more subtle beast of the field should speak to them in wicked flattery; if a digest of intellectual aphorisms can be substituted in their minds for a code of living truths, and the lovely semblances of beauty, truth, affection, can be made first to obscure the presence, and then to conceal the loss, of that religious humility, without which, as their central life, all these are but dreadful shadows; if so fatal a stratagem can be successfully practised; I see not what hope remains for a people against whom the gates of hell have so prevailed.

But the number of pure artists is small: few souls are so finely tempered as to preserve the delicacy of meditative feeling, untainted by the allurements of accidental suggestion. The voice of the critical conscience is still and small, like that of the moral: it cannot entirely be stifled where it has been heard, but it may be disobeyed. Temptations are never wanting: some immediate and temporary effect can be produced at less expense of inward exertion than the high and more ideal effect which art demands: it is much easier to pander to the ordinary and often recurring wish for excitement, than to promote the rare and difficult intuition of beauty. *To raise the many to his own real point of view, the artist must employ his energies, and create energy in others: to descend to their position is less noble, but practicable with ease.* If I may be allowed the metaphor, one

> partakes of the nature of redemptive power; the other of that self-abased and degenerate will, which "flung from his splendours" the fairest star in heaven.
>
> *Revelation is a voluntary approximation of the Infinite Being to the ways and thoughts of finite humanity*. But until this step has been taken by Almighty Grace, how should man have a warrant for loving with all his heart and mind and strength?... Without the gospel, nature exhibits a want of harmony between our intrinsic constitution and the system in which it is placed. But Christianity has made up the difference. It is possible and natural to love the Father, who has made us His children by the spirit of adoption: it is possible and natural to love the Elder Brother, who was, in all things, like as we are, except sin, and can succour those in temptation, having been himself tempted. *Thus the Christian faith is the necessary complement of a sound ethical system.*

There is something to us very striking in the words "Revelation is a *voluntary* approximation of the Infinite Being." This states the case with an accuracy and a distinctness not at all common among either the opponents or the apologists of *revealed religion* in the ordinary sense of the expression. In one sense God is for ever revealing Himself. His heavens are for ever telling His glory, and the firmament showing His handiwork; day unto day is uttering speech, and night unto night is showing knowledge concerning Him. But in the word of the truth of the gospel, God draws near to His creatures; He bows His heavens, and comes down:

> That glorious form, that light unsufferable,
> And that far-beaming blaze of majesty,

he lays aside. The Word dwelt with men. “Come then, let *us* reason together”;—“Waiting to be gracious”;—“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man open to Me, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with Me.” It is the father seeing his son while yet a great way off, and having compassion, and running to him and falling on his neck and kissing him; for “it was meet for us to rejoice, for this my son was dead and is alive again, he was lost and is found.” Let no man confound the voice of God in His Works with the voice of God in His Word; they are utterances of the same infinite heart and will; they are in absolute harmony; together they make up “that undisturbèd song of pure concent”; one “perfect diapason”; but they are distinct; they are meant to be so. A poor traveller, “weary and waysore,” is stumbling in unknown places through the darkness of a night of fear, with no light near him, the everlasting stars twinkling far off in their depths, and yet unrisen sun, or the waning moon, sending up their pale beams into the upper heavens, but all this is distant and bewildering for his feet, doubtless better much than outer darkness, beautiful and full of God, if he could have the heart to look up, and the eyes to make use of its vague light; but he is miserable, and afraid, his next step is what he is thinking of; a lamp secured against all winds of doctrine is put into his hands, it may in some respects widen the circle of darkness, but it will cheer his feet, it will tell them what to do next. What a silly fool he would be to throw away that lantern, or draw down the shutters, and make it dark to him, while it sits “i’ the centre and enjoys bright day,” and all upon the philosophical ground that its light was

of the same kind as the stars', and that it was beneath the dignity of human nature to do anything but struggle on and be lost in the attempt to get through the wilderness and the night by the guidance of those "natural" lights, which, though they are from heaven, have so often led the wanderer astray. The dignity of human nature indeed! Let him keep his lantern till the glad sun is up, with healing under his wings. Let him take good heed to the "sure" λόγον while in this αὐχμηρῷ τοπῷ—this dark, damp, unwholesome place, "till the day dawn and φωσφόρος—the day-star—arise." Nature and the Bible, the Works and the Word of God, are two distinct things. In the mind of their Supreme Author they dwell in perfect peace, in that unspeakable unity which is of His essence; and to us His children, every day their harmony, their mutual relations, are discovering themselves; but let us beware of saying all nature is a revelation as the Bible is, and all the Bible is natural as nature is: there is a perilous juggle here.

The following passage develops Arthur Hallam's views on religious feeling; this was the master idea of his mind, and it would not be easy to overrate its importance.

> "My son, give me thine heart";—"Thou shalt *love* the Lord thy God";—"The fool hath said in his *heart*, There is no God."

He expresses the same general idea in these words, remarkable in themselves, still more so as being the thought of one so young.

> The work of intellect is posterior to the work of feeling. *The latter lies at the foundation of the man*; it is his proper self—the peculiar

> thing that characterizes him as an individual. No two men are alike in feeling; but conceptions of the understanding, when distinct are precisely similar in all—the ascertained relations of truths are the common property of the race.

Tennyson, we have no doubt, had this thought of his friend in his mind, in the following lines; it is an answer to the question, Can man by searching find out God?—

> I found Him not in world or sun,
> Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye;
> Nor thro' the questions men may try,
> The petty cobwebs we have spun:
>
> If e'er when faith had fallen asleep,
> I heard a voice "believe no more,"
> And heard an ever-breaking shore
> That tumbled in the godless deep;
>
> *A warmth within the breast would melt*
> The freezing reason's colder part,
> *And like a man in wrath, the heart*
> *Stood up and answered, "I have felt."*
>
> No, like a child in doubt and fear:
> But that blind clamour made me wise;
> Then was I as a child that cries,
> But, crying, knows his father near;
>
> And what I seem beheld again
> What is, and no man understands:
> And out of darkness came the hands
> That reach thro' nature, moulding men.

This is a subject of the deepest personal as well as speculative interest. In the works of Augustine, of Baxter, Howe, and Jonathan Edwards, and of Alexander Knox, our readers will find how large a place the religious affections held in their view of Divine truth as well as of human duty. The last-mentioned writer expresses himself thus:

> Our sentimental faculties are far stronger than our cogitative; and the best impressions on the latter will be but the moonshine of the mind, if they are alone. Feeling will be best excited by sympathy; rather, it cannot be excited in any other way. Heart must act upon heart—the idea of a living person being essential to all intercourse of heart. You cannot by any possibility *cordialize* with a mere *ens rationis*. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," otherwise we could not have "beheld His glory," much less "received of His fulness."[114]

Our young author thus goes on:

> This opens upon us an ampler view in which the subject deserves to be considered, and a relation still more direct and close between the Christian religion and the passion of love. What is the distinguishing character of Hebrew literature, which separates it by so broad a line of demarcation from that of every ancient people? Undoubtedly the sentiment of *erotic devotion* which pervades it. Their poets never represent the Deity as an impassive principle, a mere organizing intellect, removed at infinite distance from human hopes and fears. He is for them a

being of like passions with themselves, *requiring heart for heart, and capable of inspiring affection, because capable of feeling and returning it*. Awful indeed are the thunders of His utterance and the clouds that surround His dwelling-place; very terrible is the vengeance He executes on the nations that forget Him: but to His chosen people, and especially to the men "after His own heart," whom He anoints from the midst of them, His "still, small voice" speaks in sympathy and loving-kindness. Every Hebrew, while his breast glowed with patriotic enthusiasm at those promises, which he shared as one of the favoured race, had a yet deeper source of emotion, from which gushed perpetually the aspirations of prayer and thanksgiving. He might consider himself alone in the presence of his God; the single being to whom a great revelation had been made, and over whose head an "exceeding weight of glory" was suspended. For him the rocks of Horeb had trembled, and the waters of the Red Sea were parted in their course. The word given on Sinai with such solemn pomp of ministration was given to his own individual soul, and brought him into immediate communion with his Creator. That awful Being could never be put away from him. He was about his path, and about his bed, and knew all his thoughts long before. *Yet this tremendous, enclosing presence was a presence of love. It was a manifold, everlasting manifestation of one deep feeling—a desire for human affection.* Such a belief, while it enlisted even pride and self-interest

on the side of piety, had a direct tendency to excite the best passions of our nature. Love is not long asked in vain from generous dispositions. A Being, never absent, but standing beside the life of each man with ever-watchful tenderness, and recognized, though invisible, in every blessing that befel them from youth to age, became naturally the object of their warmest affections. Their belief in Him could not exist without producing, as a necessary effect, that profound impression *of passionate individual attachment* which in the Hebrew authors always mingles with and vivifies their faith in the Invisible. All the books of the Old Testament are breathed upon by this breath of life. Especially is it to be found in that beautiful collection, entitled the Psalms of David, which remains, after some thousand years, perhaps the most perfect form in which the religious sentiment of man has been embodied.

But what is true of Judaism is yet more true of Christianity: "*matre pulchrâ filia pulchrior*." In addition to all the characters of Hebrew Monotheism, *there exists in the doctrine of the Cross a peculiar and inexhaustible treasure for the affectionate feelings*. The idea of the Θεανθρωπος, the God whose goings forth have been from everlasting, yet visible to men for their redemption as an earthly, temporal creature, living, acting, and suffering among themselves, then (which is yet more important) transferring to the unseen place of His spiritual agency the same humanity He wore on earth, so that the lapse

> of generations can in no way affect the conception of His identity; this is the most powerful thought that ever addressed itself to a human imagination. It is the που στῶ, which alone was wanted to move the world. Here was solved at once the great problem which so long had distressed the teachers of mankind, how to make *virtue the object of passion*, and to secure at once the warmest enthusiasm in the heart with the clearest perception of right and wrong in the understanding. The character of the blessed Founder of our faith became an abstract of morality to determine the judgment, *while at the same time it remained personal, and liable to love*. The written word and established church prevented a degeneration into ungoverned mysticism, but the predominant principle of vital religion always remained that of self-sacrifice to the Saviour. Not only the higher divisions of moral duties, but the simple, primary impulses of benevolence, were subordinated to this new absorbing passion. The world was loved "in Christ alone." The brethren were members of His mystical body. All the other bonds that had fastened down the spirit of the universe to our narrow round of earth were as nothing in comparison to this golden chain of suffering and self-sacrifice, which at once riveted the heart of man to one who, like himself, was acquainted with grief. *Pain is the deepest thing we have* in our nature, and union through pain has always seemed more real and more holy than any other.[115]

There is a sad pleasure—*non ingrata amaritudo*—and

a sort of meditative tenderness in contemplating the little life of this “dear youth,” and in letting the mind rest upon these his earnest thoughts; to watch his keen and fearless, but childlike spirit, moving itself aright—going straight onward along “the lines of limitless desires”—throwing himself into the very deepest of the ways of God, and striking out as a strong swimmer striketh out his hands to swim; to see him “mewing his mighty youth, and kindling his undazzled eye at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance”:

> Light intellectual, and full of love,
> Love of true beauty, therefore full of joy,
> Joy, every other sweetness far above.

It is good for every one to look upon such a sight, and as we look, to love. We should all be the better for it; and should desire to be thankful for, and to use aright a gift so good and perfect, coming down as it does from above, from the Father of lights, in whom alone there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

Thus it is, that to each one of us the death of Arthur Hallam—his thoughts and affections—his views of God, of our relations to Him, of duty, of the meaning and worth of this world and the next—where he now is—have an individual significance. He is bound up in our bundle of life; we must be the better or the worse of having known what manner of man he was; and in a sense less peculiar, but not less true, each of us may say:

> ——The tender grace of a day that is dead
> Will never come back to me.

——O for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

God gives us love! Something to love
He lends us; but when love is grown
To ripeness, that on which it throve
Falls off, and love is left alone:

This is the curse of time. Alas!
In grief we are not all unlearned;
Once, through our own doors Death did pass;
One went who never hath returned.

This star
Rose with us, through a little arc
Of heaven, nor having wandered far,
Shot on the sudden into dark.

Sleep sweetly, tender heart, in peace;
Sleep, holy spirit, blessed soul,
While the stars burn, the moons increase,
And the great ages onward roll.

Sleep till the end, true soul and sweet,
Nothing comes to thee new or strange,
Sleep, full of rest from head to feet;
Lie still, dry dust, secure of change.

Vattene in pace, alma beata e bella.—Go in peace, soul beautiful and blessed.

"O man greatly beloved, go thou thy way till the end, for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."—DANIEL.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

THE COMMENTS OF TENNYSON ON ONE OF HIS LATER ETHICAL POEMS[116]

By WILFRID WARD

He had often said he would go through the “De Profundis” with me line by line, and he did so late in January or early in February 1889, when I was staying at Farringford. He was still very ill, having had rheumatic fever in the previous year; and neither he nor his friends expected that he would recover after his many relapses. He could scarcely move his limbs, and his fingers were tied with bandages. We moved him from bed to sofa, but he could not sit up. His mind, however, was quite clear. He read through the “De Profundis,” and gave the substance of the explanation I have written down. He began languidly, but soon got deeply interested. When he

reached the prayer at the end, he said: “A B” (naming a well-known Positivist thinker) “exclaimed, when I read it to him, ‘Do leave that prayer out; I like all the rest of it.’”

I proceed to set down the account of the poem written (in substance) immediately after his explanation of it. The mystery of life as a whole which so constantly exercised him is here most fully dealt with. He supposes a child just born, and considers the problems of human existence as presented by the thought of the child’s birth, and the child’s future life with all its possibilities. The poem takes the form of two greetings to the new-born child. In the first greeting life is viewed as we see it in the world, and as we know it by physical science, as a phenomenon; as the materialist might view it; not indeed coarsely, but as an outcome of all the physical forces of the universe, which have ever contained in themselves the potentiality of all that was to come—“all that was to be in all that was.” These vast and wondrous forces have now issued in this newly given life—this child born into the world. There is the sense of mystery in our greeting to it; but it is of the mysteries of the physical Universe and nothing beyond; the sense of awe fitting to finite man at the thought of infinite Time, of the countless years before human life was at all, during which the fixed laws of Nature were ruling and framing the earth as we know it, of the countless years earlier still, during which, on the nebular hypothesis, Nature’s laws were working before our planet was separated off from the mass of the sun’s light, and before the similar differentiation took place in the rest of the “vast waste dawn of multitudinous eddying light.” Again, there is awe in contemplating the vastness of space; in the thoughts which in

ascending scale rise from the new-born infant to the great globe of which he is so small a part, from that to the whole solar system, from that again to the myriad similar systems “glimmering up the heights beyond” us which we partly see in the Milky Way; from that to those others which human sight can never descry. Forces in Time and Space as nearly infinite as our imagination can conceive, have been leading up to this one birth, with the short life of a single man before it. May that life be happy and noble! Viewing it still as the course determined by Nature’s laws—a course unknown to us and yet unalterably fixed—we sigh forth the hope that our child may pass unscathed through youth, may have a full and prosperous time on earth, blessed by man for good done to man, and may pass peacefully at last to rest. Such is the first greeting—full of the poetry of life, of its wondrous causes, of the overwhelming greatness of the Universe of which this new-given baby is the child, cared for, preserved hitherto unscathed amid these awful powers, all in all to its parents, inspiring the hope which new-given joy makes sanguine, that fortune may be kind to it, that happiness may be as great, sorrow and pain as little, as the chances of the world allow.

After his explanation, he read the first greeting to the child:

> Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
> Where all that was to be, in all that was,
> Whirl’d for a million æons through the vast
> Waste dawn of multitudinous eddying light
> —
> Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
> Thro’ all this changing world of changeless law,

> And every phase of ever-heightening life,
> And nine long months of antenatal gloom,
> With this last moon, this crescent—her dark orb
> Touch'd with earth's light—thou comest, darling boy;
> Our own; a babe in lineament and limb
> Perfect, and prophet of the perfect man;
> Whose face and form are hers and mine in one,
> Indissolubly married like our love;
> Live and be happy in thyself, and serve
> This mortal race thy kin so well, that men
> May bless thee as we bless thee, O young life,
> Breaking with laughter from the dark; and may
> The fated channel where thy motion lives
> Be prosperously shaped, and sway thy course
> Along the years of haste and random youth
> Unshatter'd; then full-current thro' full man;
> And last, in kindly curves, with gentlest fall,
> By quiet fields, a slowly-dying power
> To that last deep where we and thou art still.

And then comes the second greeting. A deeper chord is struck. The listener, who has, perhaps, felt as if the first greeting contained all—all the mystery of birth, of life, of death—hears a sound unknown, unimagined before. A new range of ideas is opened to us. The starry firmament disappears for the moment. The "deep" of infinite time and space is forgotten. A fresh sense is awakened, a deeper depth disclosed. We leave this wondrous world of appearances. We gaze into that other deep—the world of spirit, the world of realities; we see the new-born babe coming to us from that *true* world,

with all the "abysmal depths of personality," no longer a mere link in the chain of causes, with a fated course through the events of life, but a moral being, with the awful power of making or marring its own destiny and that of others. The proportions are abruptly reversed. The child is no longer the minute outcome of natural forces so much greater than itself. It is the "spirit," the moral being, a reality which impinges on the world of appearances. Never can I forget the change of voice, the change of manner, as Lord Tennyson passed from the first greeting, with its purely human thoughts, to the second, so full of awe at the conception of the world behind the veil and the moral nature of man; an awe which seemed to culminate when he paused before the word "Spirit" in the seventh line and then gave it in deeper and more piercing tones: "Out of the deep—*Spirit*,—out of the deep." This second greeting is in two parts:

I
Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
From that great deep, before our world begins,
Whereon the Spirit of God moves as He will
—
Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
From that true world within the world we see,
Whereof our world is but the bounding shore
—
Out of the deep, Spirit, out of the deep,
With this ninth moon, that sends the hidden sun,
Down yon dark sea, thou comest, darling boy.

II
For in the world, which is not ours, they said,
"Let us make man," and that which should be man,
From that one light no man can look upon,
Drew to this shore, lit by the suns and moons
And all the shadows. O dear Spirit, half-lost
In thine own shadow and this fleshly sign
That thou art thou—who wailest being born
And banish'd into mystery, and the pain
Of this divisible-indivisible world
Among the numerable-innumerable
Sun, sun, and sun, thro' finite-infinite space,
In finite-infinite Time—our mortal veil
And shatter'd phantom of that infinite One,
Who made thee unconceivably Thyself
Out of His whole World-self, and all in all—
Live thou, and of the grain and husk, the grape
And ivyberry, choose; and still depart
From death to death thro' life and life, and find
Nearer and ever nearer Him, who wrought
Not matter, not the finite-infinite,
But this main-miracle, that thou art thou,
With power on thine own act and on the world.

Note that the second greeting considers the reality of the child's life and its meaning, the first only its appearance. The great deep of the spiritual world is "that true world within the world we see, Whereof our world is but the bounding shore." And this indication that the second greeting gives the deeper and truer view, is preserved in some of the side touches of description. In the first greeting, for

example, the moon is spoken of as “touch’d with earth’s light”; in the second the truer and less obvious fact is suggested. It “sends the hidden sun down yon dark sea.” The material view again looks at bright and hopeful appearances in life, and it notes the new-born babe “breaking with laughter from the dark.” The spiritual view foresees the woes which, if Byron is right in calling melancholy the “telescope of truth,” are truer than the joys. It notes no longer the child’s laughter, but rather its tears, “Thou wailest being born and banished into mystery.” Life, in the spiritual view, is in part a veiling and obscuring of the true self as it is, in a world of appearances. The soul is “half lost” in the body which is part of the phenomenal world, “in thine own shadow and in this fleshly sign that thou art thou.” The suns and moons, too, are but shadows, as the body of the child itself is but a shadow—shadows of the spirit-world and of God Himself. The physical life is before the child; but not as a fatally determined course. Choice of the good is to lead the spirit ever nearer God. The wonders of the material Universe are still recognized: “Sun, sun, and sun, thro’ finite-infinite space, in finite-infinite Time”; but they vanish into insignificance when compared to the two great facts of the spirit-world which consciousness tells us unmistakably—the facts of personality and of a responsible will. The great mystery is “Not Matter, nor the finite-infinite,” but “*this main-miracle, that thou art thou, with power on thine own act and on the world*.”

“Out of the deep”—in this conception of the true “deep” of the world behind the veil we have the thought which recurs so often, as in the “Passing of Arthur” and in “Crossing the Bar”[117]—of birth and death as the coming from and returning to the spirit-

world and God Himself. Birth[118] is the coming to land from that deep; “of which our world is but the bounding shore;” death the re-embarking on the same infinite sea, for the home of truth and light.

He seemed so much better when he had finished his explanation that I asked him to read the poem through again. This he did, more beautifully than I ever heard him read. I felt as though his long illness and his expectation of death gave more intensity and force to his rendering of this wonderful poem on the mystery of life. He began quietly, and read the concluding lines of the first “greeting,” the brief description of a peaceful old age and death, from the human standpoint, with a very tender pathos:

> And last, in kindly curves, with gentlest fall
> By quiet fields, a slowly-dying power,
> To that last deep where we and thou are still.

Then he gathered force, and his voice deepened as the greeting to the immortal soul of the man was read. He raised his eyes from the book at the seventh line and looked for a moment at his hearer with an indescribable expression of awe before he uttered the word “spirit”; “Out of the deep—Spirit,—out of the deep.” When he had finished the second greeting he was trembling much. Then he read the prayer—a prayer he had told me of self-prostration before the Infinite. I think he intended it as a contrast to the analytical and reflective character of the rest. It is an outpouring of the simplest and most intense self-abandonment to the Creator, an acknowledgment, when all has been thought and said with such insight and beauty, that our best thoughts and words are as nothing in the Great Presence—in a sense parallel to the breaking off in the “Ode to the Duke of

Wellington":

> Speak no more of his renown,
> Lay your earthly fancies down.

He began to chaunt in a loud clear voice:

> Hallowed be Thy Name—Halleluiah.

His voice was growing tremulous as he reached the second part:

> We feel we are nothing—for all is Thou and in Thee;
> We feel we are something—*that* also has come from Thee.

And he broke down as he finished the prayer:

> We know we are nothing—but Thou wilt help us to be.
> Hallowed be Thy Name—Halleluiah!

APPENDIX B

It will be seen below that the lines to which reference is made—

> That man's the true cosmopolite
> Who loves his native country best,
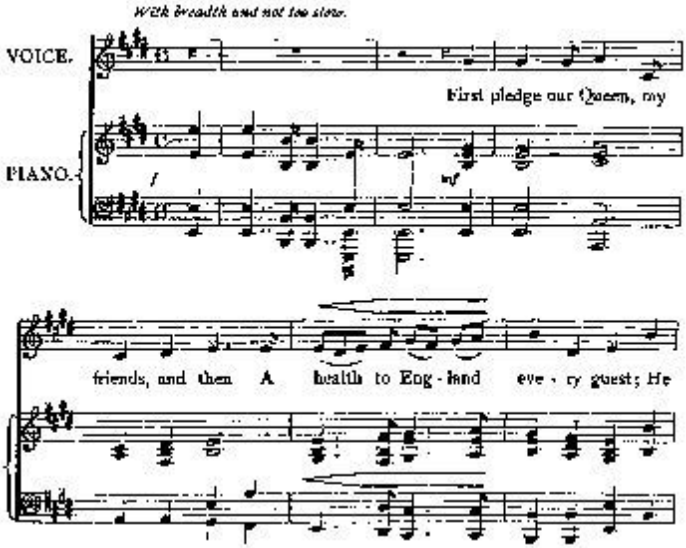
have been altered to suit my mother's setting, arranged by Sir Charles Stanford, to

He best will serve the race of men
Who loves his native country best.
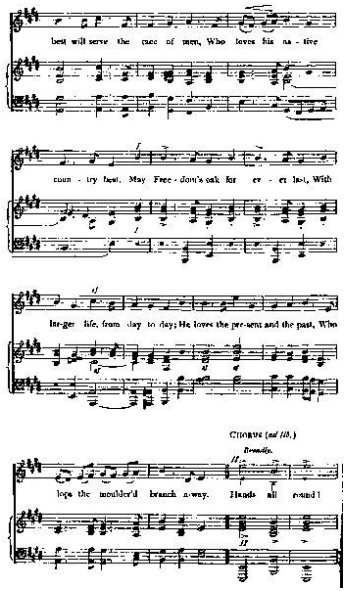
HANDS ALL ROUND

A NATIONAL SONG
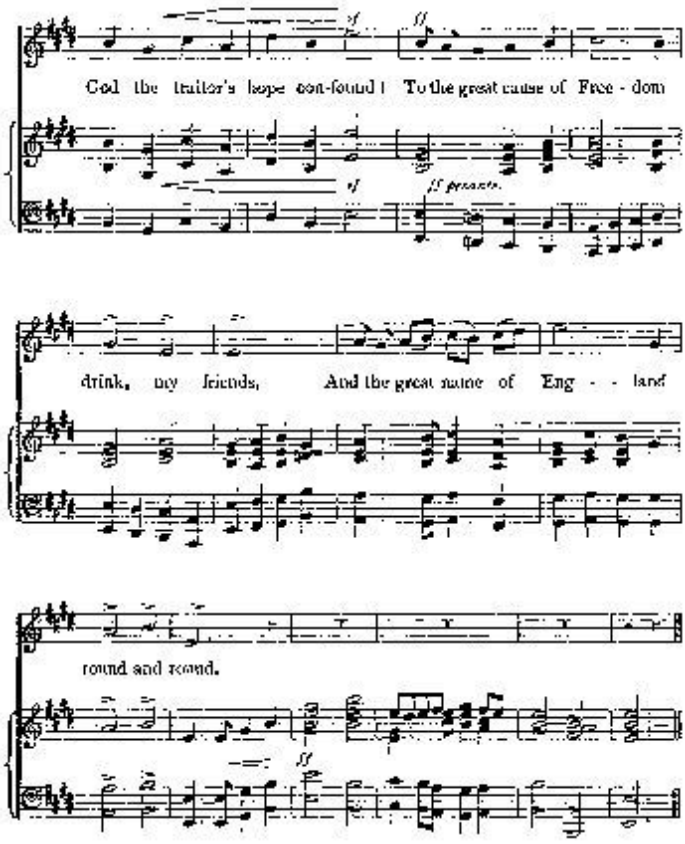
THE MELODY BY EMILY, LADY TENNYSON AND ARRANGED BY C. VILLIERS STANFORD



Larger Image



Larger Image



Larger Image

To all the loyal hearts who long
To keep our English Empire whole!
To all our noble sons, the strong
New England of the Southern Pole!
To England under Indian skies,
To those dark millions of her realm!
To Canada whom we love and prize,
Whatever statesman hold the helm.
Hands all round! God the traitor's hope confound!
To the great cause of Freedom drink, my friends,
And the great name of England round and round.

To all our statesmen so they be
True leaders of the land's desire!
To both our Houses, may they see
Beyond the borough and the shire!
We sail'd wherever ship could sail,
We founded many a mighty state;
Pray God our greatness may not fail
Thro' craven fears of being great.
Hands all round! God the traitor's hope confound!
To the great cause of Freedom drink, my friends,
And the great name of England round and round.

APPENDIX C

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS FROM UNKNOWN FRIENDS

[During the last twenty-five years of his life my

father was probably, throughout the whole English-speaking race, the Englishman who was most widely known. Hence the letters addressed to him by strangers competed in number with those which, it is well known, add a needless weariness to the heavy task of governing a civilized state. This became a correspondence mainly of request or of reverence, although the voice of disappointment or of envy of what is ranked above oneself which lurks in common human nature may have occasionally been audible. My father's experience here was that of Dr. Johnson and, doubtless, of many more men of commanding eminence; that of writers submitting their work for candid criticism, charging him with conceit if he suggested publication as unadvisable; if it were advised, and the book failed, with deception. Probably many of those who wrote thus soon repented of their eloquence; at any rate nothing of this nature will be here preserved. But of the ordinary type of strangers' letters some specimens may be of interest. And although these few have been chosen mainly from the letters addressed to my father during his last fifteen years yet they will give a general impression of the vast quantity received.

I place first letters upon poetry submitted (or proposed for submission) to my father's judgment.]

(1884)

I hope you will forgive the liberty I am taking in writing to you. I have heard a great deal about you, and I read a part of one of your poems, "The May Queen." I have not had an opportunity to read the whole of it, but I like what I have seen very much.... I

have tried to write some poems myself. I have enclosed one for you to see, which came into my mind while I was digging a ditch in my garden. I am only nine years old, and if I keep on trying some day I shall write a grand poem.

(1882)

HONOURED SIR—It has been said: where a great apology is most needed, it is best to begin with the business at once.

I never had the pleasure of seeing you, but it is enough for me to have had the pleasure of reading your heart in your works, "though they be but a part of your inward soul." I am a lad scarcely seventeen summers old. In some of my leisure hours, particularly morning and evening ones, I penned a few thousand lines of small poems in fair metre, —so my simple-minded friend or two pronounce them in their partiality.... [He deprecates the suspicion that he is applying for money.] Will you allow me to forward to you through the post a few of my poems? And when your benevolent soul has given up time to read some of my verses ("the primrose fancies of a boy"), and should my productions be considered by you deserving of your good word, half the difficulty of finding a willing publisher will, I know, be removed.

There is something truly felt and pathetic in the two following letters. The first is from a young poetess.

> I hardly know how I have summoned up sufficient courage to address you, although I have long wished to do so! Studying that most touching of poems "Enoch Arden," I felt somehow convinced that the heart that had inspired so much which is beautiful and touching, would also prompt a kind answer to me. Ever since I was a child (not so very long ago), writing was my only consolation and solace in moments of great grief or joy; writing—I shall not say *poetry* but rhyme.

(1881)

> DEAR MR. TENNYSON—I have heard and believed that great men are always the best hearted, and therefore hope you will kindly look at the enclosed and tell me if there is any hope that I may ever write anything worthy the name of poetry, and if those lines are anything but doggerel, I hope you will not think me as presumptuous as I do; something tells me you will be kind.

Now follow good average specimens.

(1890)

> DEAR AND MUCH-ADMIRED LORD TENNYSON —The writer of this, an humble admirer of your Poetry,—an uneducated girl from the bogs of Ireland, has the audacity to send you her first effort in verse: whether it is poetry or not I leave you to decide, as I am entirely incapable of judging myself, as I am wholly

ignorant of the art of versification, and indeed would never dream of attempting to write verse, only I was very anxious to succeed in prose writing....

(1882)

Will you kindly pardon my venturing to ask you to read some of my verses, and to tell me whether you consider me capable of ever writing poetry fit to be read? I have never had any desire to become a poet, but lately ideas have come into my head, once I seemed to see a line or two before my eyes, and in order to free myself from these fancies I wrote.

(1884)

DEAR SIR—I remember your figure and attire at Shiplake Vicarage in Mrs. Franklyn Rawnsley's house, 1852, thirty-two years ago. Does your memory travel back to a fine December morning when, the house full of guests for the christening of the latest blossom of the Rawnsley house, there drove up through the flooded meadows surrounding the low old vicarage, a cab with a young foreigner, a child of sixteen summers, all tremulous how she should be received, not speaking a word of English but her native German tongue, besides French, introduced by Miss Amélie Bodte, the authoress in Dresden, to teach music to Mrs.

Rawnsley's children? What a woeful feeling for the well-known counsellor's daughter to be treated in a cool way as the engaged teacher of little children. However, there was an oasis in the desert. On the following morning Mrs. Rawnsley proposed to the assembled guests to take a walk in a neighbouring Squire's park while she looked after some home duties, and a tall young gentleman with an enormous Tyrolese hat offered to walk with a solitary stranger. He spoke a little German and tried to divert the gloom of the young girl by crossing the lawn and breaking a belated rose she admired coming from snow-bound Saxony. They stopped at a turtle-dove house where he made the prettiest little German pun she never forgot hereafter, "Ich bin eine kleine Taube" (I am a little dove (deaf)?). And it began to rain, and he—it was you—took off the Spanish cloak gathered with narrow stitches on the throat, a black velvet collar falling over it, and wrapped it round the girl's shoulders. The ladies of the company frowned, returning home, all told as with one voice to Mrs. Rawnsley what had happened during the walk, and she laughed and said to me in French, "My dear, you had all the honours as a German because you did not try for them, this is the Poet Laureate, and it displeases him that the ladies torment him for attentions." And now do you remember, of course you know this girl was I. And the next day you read the "Ode to the Queen," of which I did not understand a word, and you went away to the sea to meet

> your wife and baby son, and I never saw you again. Now after thirty-two years undergoing purification in the crucible of humble life, I come to ask you to accept kindly the dedication of one of my compositions—a song. Your name is as illustrious here as in England, and my poor song will find more eager listeners with your name attached as a patron than otherwise.... "A turtle dove" could but bring an olive branch to a lone woman and gladden the heart of your Lordship's most respectful admirer,
>
> MARIA * * *

(1890)

Now a Transatlantic poetess:

(After excuse asked for "presumption" she says:)

> I have to thank you for some of the best thoughts and the purest pleasure I have ever derived from anything.
>
> I am an American girl nineteen years of age, and was named from the hero of "Aylmer's Field."
>
> I enclose some verses I have written. I would like exceedingly to hear your opinion of them and to know if they contain anything of promise.
>
> LEOLINE * * *

(1877)

From America also we have one who modestly describes himself as “a mere Collegian, a youth to fortune and to fame unknown....”

> I have during the past summer been engaged, to my great entertainment and instruction, in the perusal of your poetical works, reading many for the first time though of course familiar with a large number; having finished them, I could not refrain from expressing my admiration of your great genius in a few lines which I send herewith.
>
> > O Tennyson, how great a soul is thine!
> > Thy range of thought how varied
> > and how vast...

(1862)

> Will you accept the enclosed lines as a slight testimonial of the high admiration entertained for your exquisite genius, by a rhyming daughter of Columbia; whose poetic wings just fledging from a first unpublished vol. (commended by Wm. Cullen Bryant and Geo. Bancroft, Esqrs.) permit only a feeble fluttering around the base of that “Parnassus,” whose summit you have so brilliantly, and justly attained. * * *

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Then an “Agent for Stars” offers my father £20,000 if said Agent is permitted to arrange a tour for him in

the United States.

(1884)

The following is another—we will not say, a less acceptable offering:

> I send you by my good friend —— a dozen small parcels of smoking tobacco....
>
> We think it the best smoking tobacco in the world and I trust that you may find reason to agree with us. If it shall give you one moment's pleasure in return for the countless hours of delight that you have given me, I shall count myself a happy mortal.

(1890)

A gift certainly not less acceptable comes from a little girl:

> MY LORD—*Please* let these flowers be in your room, and *do* wear the little bunch.—I remain, your true admirer, * * *

Now follows the *Grande Armée* of natural, amiable, but remorseless autograph hunters. A miscellaneous group comes first.

(1890)

> HONOURED LORD—May I (an Australian maiden born 1870) hope to be pardoned for taking the liberty of writing to you—so

> distinguished a gentleman—to express my great admiration for your poems? It is my admiration that has emboldened me to venture so far ... etc. etc.
>
> Let me conclude with one request: namely to ask you to do me the very great honour to acknowledge this letter; so that I may be able to boast of, and dearly treasure, even a line from the Great Poet.

(1890)

An obvious fisher for good things follows:

> SIR—I hope that you will kindly excuse the liberty I take in requesting you to be so good as to inform me how the word "humble" should be pronounced: *i.e.* whether or not it is proper to aspirate the "h"?
>
> A reply at your kind convenience will inexpressibly oblige....

(1890)

Another ingenuously finds it needful to ask whether the word be pronounced *I*dylls or *E*dylls.

(1891)

> DEAR SIR—A simple child (who writes from Holland), would feel extremely happy, would be in the seventh heaven, when she would be favoured with a mere line of the greatest

poet of renown, Alfred Tennyson. Allow her, to offer you before, her sincere thanks for your autograph, with which she would feel the happiest child in the world.

With kind regards, most honourable lord, yours respectfully.

(1882)

A (German) collector of autographs, who has an autograph of Mr. Kinkel and Victor Hugo, the greatest living poets of Germany and France, only misses in his collection the autograph of the greatest living English poet. Therefore he requests you to give him an autograph of yours. May it only be your signature, it will find in my album a place of honour.

(1882)

To the prince of poets.

MONSIEUR—Forgive me, I beseech you, the liberty I take in daring to write to you; but I wish to beg the greatest of favours.

This favour, Monsieur, it is your signature.

I am only a young Belgian girl, and I have no reason to proffer why you should thus distinguish me; but I feel you must love all girls, or you could not have written “Isabel” or “Lilian”; and you must be kind and good, or you would not have given them to the

> world.
>
> So, Monsieur, I humbly beg you send me the name we all venerate, traced by the hand that has guided the world with so much beauty, and make one more heart supremely happy.—One who loves you,
>
> * * *

Three petitions, which touched my father, may here have place.

The first (1884) consists of some twenty letters, in very creditable English and excellent hand-writing, each saying some handsome thing about the "May Queen," which they had learned, and now criticized with amusing *naïveté*, and asking for a line from Tennyson—signed with the children's names, and dated from a German High School for girls: "who," says their Mistress, "in the joy of their hearts tried to express their feeling of admiration in their imperfect knowledge of the English language."

In the next a young girl from India, training in England with comrades apparently for Zenana work, thanks "Our dear aziz Sahib" for a copy of the Poems, and then proceeds, in neat round hand:

> Oh how we wish we could see you even for one minute The Great and good Poet Laureate, whom everybody loves so much and we love you too dear sweet Sahib, we are going to learn that pretty Poetry "The May Queen" and several others out of that lovely Book. Will you please, dear Sahib,

> write out "The May Queen" and "The Dedication of the Idyols of the King," with your own hand, we will keep it till the last day of our lives.

They then explain why the "Dedication" is asked for; "because we know how dearly Prince Albert loved you, and, also our beloved Queen Empress, and how you love them": also how they long to go back "to our dear India," and sing hymns, and nurse and dose "our own countrywomen in the Zenanas."

> Now good-bye our aziz (beloved) Sahib I am sending you some wild daisies and moss as you are so fond of flowers and everything beautiful in God's world. May God give you a sweet smile every day, prays your little loving, Indian Friend,,
>
> * * *

This last explains itself:

> DEAR MR. TENNYSON—I am one of a large struggling family of girls and boys who have never yet been able to afford to give 9s. for that much-coveted green volume Tennyson's "Poems," so at last, the boys having failed to obtain it as a prize, and the girls as a birthday present, I, the boldest of the party, venture to ask if you would kindly bestow a copy on a nest full of young admirers.,
>
> * * *

He wrote his little Indian maid a pretty letter, and sent his poems to the "best girl." And in many an instance, (requests for aid included) the correspondence bears witness to my father's open-

hearted kindliness and liberality. His *beggars*, at any rate, were often *choosers*.

The wish for an autograph, we may again reasonably suppose, was not absent from the minds of the following (and other analogous) writers. The first dates from Scotland:

(1878)

I take the great liberty in writing to you, in order to settle a dispute that has arisen amongst several parties, regarding the song written by Sir Walter Scott, *Jock O' Hazeldean*. The words are as follows,

> And ye shall be his bride Lady;
> So comely to be seen.

Does comely apply to the bride, or the bridegroom? As your opinion will be considered satisfactory to all, your reply will be considered a lasting favour.,

* * *

(1883)

I am an enthusiastic reader and admirer of your works, and have read those which I like especially, over and over again, in particular "Maud," which I consider to be surpassingly fresh and beautiful—there is a sort of fascination about the poem to me ... but I really cannot understand the meaning of the end of it.

> I should very much like to know whether it is intended to mean that Maud's brother, "that curl'd Assyrian bull," is slain by her lover: whether Maud is supposed to die of a broken heart, or does her lover come back, long after, presumably from the Russian war and marry her?

The remaining examples, in which respect is curiously blended with familiarity, are dated from the United States.

A lively boy of thirteen (1884) who loves "Nature and Poetry" shall here have precedence:

> In the first place I wish to ask your pardon for bothering you with this letter, but I want to make a collection, or I mean get the autographs of 5 or 6 distinguished poets; and so I thought I would write and get yours if possible and then the minor ones may follow.
>
> I have read most of your poems, and like them *very much* indeed, etc. etc.
>
> (A biographical sketch follows, including a visit to England.) When we drove back from Stoke Pogis to Windsor we saw the deer in the Queen's hunting grounds, and the tall, mighty oaks on each side of the road seemed to say, "This is an Earthly Paradise."...
>
> If you would write a verse or two from some one of your poems and write your name under it, I should be *very much* obliged to you indeed.

(1885)

Forgive the intrusion of a stranger (says a lady). Long have I desired to have some one of the noble thoughts, I have so learned to love, in your own handwriting. I have felt a delicacy in asking this, but the wish is so earnest with me that I will venture this first and last request.... I crave some tangible proof that my "hero-worship" has some sympathetic, human foundation. Could I choose a couplet?... They spring to my memory in legions. The wild melody of "Blow, bugle, blow," etc. etc. ... They have helped to make my life beautiful, earnest and true, and I am grateful for it all. If I might be once more your debtor it would be a real joy to me, but if it *feels* like a burden, do not give it another thought.

(1891)

... In behalf of *Charity Circle*, a non-sectarian organization of the order of King's Daughters, we are making a collection of autographs of prominent men and women to be used in a souvenir banner: which when finished will be sold and the proceeds devoted to charity work. We feel as if the banner will not be complete without Lord Tennyson's autograph.

(1891)

BELOVED SIR—I feel awkward and abashed, as I thus come before you, who are so great, so honored, so crowned with earthly fame and glory; and, so worthy to be thus crowned, and known to fame: but, I know, that in the midst of all these honors, which might spoil one, of the common sort of souls; you are a poet, *born*, *not* made; and therefore, you have the essential gift of the poet [sympathy] and can feel for the imprisoned soul, beating against the stifling walls of silence: and longing, fainting, to come forth into the glad sunshine, the sweet, fresh air of *utterance*, so strangely withheld from it.... From [youth] till now, Beloved Sir, you have been my friend, my soother; the dear angel, whose kindly office it has been, ever and anon, to speak *for* me ... and thus to give me the *sweet sense* of having been led forth from prison for a while into the blessed light and freedom of utterance.

I will never forget the relief afforded by those lines:

> My very heart faints and my soul grieves
> Etc. etc.

(1891)

A lady writes to the honored Poet-Laureate of

England, and the beloved world-renowned verse-maker.

> Knowing the value of even one verse and your autograph I write to you and make my request, which if granted will be beyond my anticipations. I want a dedicatory poem so much, but if I get only a line from you I should be happy. I always loved your poetry. Now please, do send me the coveted verse. I, a beggar-maid at the throne of poetry, kneel and beg of the monarch a crumb. Have you any grandchildren? I wish I could get one of their photos for my book. Hoping you will act like the good king in the fairy kingdom and grant the request—I remain etc. etc.

(1885)

> DEAR LADY TENNYSON—It is one of the glorious privileges of our government that the "first ladies of the land" may be courteously addressed without the formalities of an introduction, and why not the same rule in your country? Therefore, without the semblance of an apology, I request you will do me the honor to grant a small favor. I am engaged in collecting souvenirs from celebrated writers, and you being the wife of England's Poet Laureate, I would prize beyond measure a contribution from you: a *scrap* of silk or velvet from one of *your dresses*, and also a scrap of one of your husband's *neckties*.... There is no one who loves his works as myself ... he reaches further down into the human heart and

> touches its tender cords (sic) as no man has since the days of Shakespeare.... My husband, who has won an enviable reputation as a writer hopes soon to produce his work on *The Lives of English and American Poets*. Hoping you will not refuse me, etc. etc.

A few miscellaneous oddities follow.

(1883)

> DEAR SIR—May I ask you as a favour where I could find a "wold," to illustrate the following verse:
>
> > Calm and deep peace on this high wold,
> > And on these dews that drench the furze,
> > And all the silvery gossamers
> > That twinkle into green and gold:
> > ("In Memoriam," XI.)
>
> which is the subject given this year for a painting (for the Gold Medal), to the Students of the Royal Academy of Arts?

(1840)

A young girl, writing from America, asks a natural question.

> We have your book of poems, and I have read "Enoch Arden." So I thought I would write and see if it is true. Was there a girl

whose name was Anna Lee, and two boys named Enoch Arden and Philip Ray?

I felt very sorry for Philip at first and afterward for Enoch, when he came home and found his wife had married Philip and he saw her children grown up, but could not go to see them....

I have a pet rooster, and it is very cunning. I hold it and pet it and I love it *lots*.

Well, I must close, hoping to hear from you soon, for I want to know if the story of Enoch is true.

(1891)

U.S.A. again supplies the following *naïveté*:

DEAR SIR—I intrude a line on your notice, to ask a little favor.

I am in my fourteenth year; am considered fairly advanced for my age, by older heads. I *wish your opinion* of the *best line of books* for me to read at leisure hours, aside from novels or fiction. I attend the high school, and on Saturdays, clerk in the store, of which my father is senior partner.

P.S.—You will find five cents for return postage.

2nd P.S.—My mother says you are not living, but I say to her, I believe she is mistaken; in other words, I am glad one time to differ with her.

(1888)

MY DEAR LORD TENNYSON—I once met you....

You will think it strange indeed, my Lord, when I assure you that I am often supposed to be your noble self, once in Scarborough, often in Town at the great exhibitions and elsewhere. I wear a large Tyrolese felt hat.

There is to be a grand summer party here, my Lord, gentlemen to appear in character, I having been requested to appear as "Lord Tennyson."

Could your Lordship kindly lend me any outer clothing, by Thursday morning at latest? a cloak, etc.? Then I should feel so thankful and fulfil the character better.

America characteristically supplies the following:

Permit me to call your special attention to a pamphlet I mail you herewith, of an address to the *New Shakespere Society*, containing the announcement of a momentous discovery which I have made in the "Shakespeare" plays.

My unveiling therein of the allegory of *Cymbeline* is but a sample of what I have similarly discerned in the other dramas, and in which I find the same conclusions

consistently to be reached.

The fair writer's answers to objections and discourse on her discovery unhappily throw no light upon the subject. She proceeds:

> I would add that it is singular to myself there should be so strong a prejudice against the acceptance of Bacon's authorship of these dramas, investing them, as it does, with such additional interest both of a historical and an autobiographical kind, in the light of his concealment of it.
>
> The value of truth, and the interests of literature, constitute my apology for this intrusion upon your valuable time.

[The acceptance of Bacon's authorship of Shakespeare's dramas and the attack on Shakespeare's character made my father register his opinion thus:

> Not only with no sense of shame
> On common sense you tread,
> Not only ride your hobby lame,
> But make him kick the dead. ED.]

(1882)

RIGHT HONORABLE SIR—The editor of a Bohemian literary journal takes the liberty of

> applying, in a very delicate matter, to you the most renowned poet of the first literature in the world. Yet this liberty I draw from having a great belief in the generous character of the English nation.
>
> What I do venture to impress on your mind is this, that a poem of yours written on, and dedicated to the poor descendants of Bohemia's happier ancestors, would as a mighty missionary go the round all over their fair country evoking everywhere loud echoes out of the graves of their heroes!

(1892)

The following is a letter from an hysterical Irishman:

> EMINENT SIR—I send you the inside poem to show you what the American people think of your lives of tyranny, and may the day come when your infernal land may be torn to a million pieces. Curse you for your highway robbery of Ireland, and then holding her down in such misery, and also for your cowardly war with Napoleon. You could fight him alone, could you? I wish that every Englishman was in the hottest place of hell—their bones made into gridirons to roast their hearts on. * * *

(1888-1892)

A French chemist, hearing that "Monsieur" suffers from gout, has a certain secret cure. If he could, he

would come over to England, “et ... je vous guérirais complètement.”

He is assured that this remedy will rapidly make him rich. But it should be known beyond France.

> On m’a dit que je pouvais trouver quelques-uns à l’étranger qui sauraient l’apprécier et le faire valoir que cela vaut une petite fortune pour moi; ne serai-je que pour l’humanité, je me tacherai de la vendre.
>
> Je vous le répète, Monsieur, c’est bien regrettable que je ne sois pas plus près de chez vous, car je vous soulagerois et, Monsieur, on peut se renseigner sur moi; je ne suis pas riche mais honnête et d’une bonne famille, et en faisant mon chimisterie je m’occupe un peu d’antiquités.

Two of the latest letters amused my father much, one from Canada from a little boy who said that his mother liked cheeses, and he would like Tennyson to send him money to buy a good cheese: the other from an English artist who said that his speciality was drawing cows, but that he must have a cow of his own to live with and make proper studies of, would therefore Tennyson give him a cow?

APPENDIX D

TENNYSON’S ARTHURIAN POEM[119]

By SIR JAMES KNOWLES, K.C.V.O.

> [This letter was written after a talk with my father, and no doubt Sir James Knowles has caught much of the meaning of "The Idylls of the King." About this poem my father said to me, "My meaning was spiritual. I only took the legendary stories of the Round Table as illustrations. Arthur was allegorical to me. I intended him to represent the Ideal in the Soul of Man coming in contact with the warring elements of the flesh."—ED.]

The fine and wholesome moral breeze which always seems to blow about the higher realms of Art comes to us fresh as ever from this great poem, and more acceptably than ever just now. A constant worship of Purity, and a constant reprobation of Impurity as the rock on which the noble projects of the "blameless king" are wrecked, appear throughout upon the surface of the story.

But besides this, there doubtless does run through it all a sort of under-tone of symbolism, which, while it never interferes with the clear *melody* of the poem, or perverts it into that most tedious of riddles, a formal allegory, gives a profound *harmony* to its music and a prophetic strain to its intention most worthy of a great spiritual Bard.

King Arthur, as he has always been treated by Tennyson, stands obviously for no mere individual prince or hero, but for the "King within us"—our highest nature, by whatsoever name it may be called —conscience; spirit; the moral soul; the religious sense; the noble resolve. His story and adventures become the story of the battle and pre-eminence of the soul and of the perpetual warfare between the

spirit and the flesh.

For so exalting him there is abundant warrant in the language of many old compilers, by whom “all human perfection was collected in Arthur”; as where, for instance, one says,—“The old world knows not his peer, nor will the future show us his equal,—he alone towers over all other kings, better than the past ones, and greater than those that are to be”; or another, “In short, God has not made, since Adam was, the man more perfect than Arthur.”

How and why Arthur ever grew to so ideal a height we need not now inquire, it is sufficient here to note the fact, and that Tennyson is archæologically justified thereby in making him the type of the soul on earth, from its mysterious coming to its mysterious and deathless going.

In the “Idylls of the King,” the soul comes first before us as a conqueror in a waste and desert land groaning under mere brute power. Its history before then is dark with doubt and mystery, and the questions about its origin and authority form the main subject of the introductory poem.

Many, themselves the basest, hold it to be base-born, and rage against its rule:

> And since his ways are sweet,
> And theirs are bestial, hold him less than man;
> And there be those who deem him more than man,
> And dream he dropt from heaven.

Of those who recognize its claim, some, as the hoary chamberlain, accept it on the word of wizards who

have written all about it in a sacred book which, doubtless, some day will become intelligible. Others, as Ulfius, and Brastias, standing for commonplace men with commonplace views, are satisfied to think the soul comes as the body does, or not to think at all about it. Others, again, as Bedivere, with warmer hearts, feel there is mystery, where to the careless all is plain, yet seek among the dark ways of excessive natural passion for the key, and drift towards the scandalous accordingly. Then comes the simple touching tenderness of the woman's discovery of conscience and its influence given by Queen Bellicent in the story of her childhood; and this, again, is supplemented and contrasted by the doctrine of the wise men and philosophers put into Merlin's mouth. His "riddling triplets" anger the woman, but are a wonderful summary of the way, part-earnest, part-ironical, and all-pathetic, in which great wit confronts the problem of the soul.

The inscrutableness of its origin being thus signified, we see next the recognition of its supremacy, and its first act of kinghood,—the inspiration of the best and bravest near it with a common enthusiasm for Right. The founding of the Order of the Round Table coincides with the solemn crowning of the soul. Conscience, acknowledged and throned as king, binds at once all the best of human powers together into one brotherhood, and that brotherhood to itself by vows so strait and high,

> That when they rose, knighted from kneeling, some
> Were pale as at the passing of a ghost,
> Some flush'd, and others dazed, as one who wakes
> Half-blinded at the coming of a light.

At that supreme coronation-moment, the Spirit is surrounded and cheered on by all the powers and influences which can ever help it—earthly servants and allies and heavenly powers and tokens—the knights, to signify the strength of the body; Merlin, to signify the strength of intellect; the Lady of the Lake, who stands for the Church, and gives the soul its sharpest and most splendid earthly weapon; and, above all, three fair and mystic Queens, "tall, with bright sweet faces," robed in the living colours sacred to love and faith and hope, which flow upon them from the image of our Lord above. These, surely, stand for those immortal virtues which only will abide "when all that seems shall suffer shock," and leaning upon which alone, the soul, when all else falls from it, shall go towards the golden gates of the new and brighter morning.

As the first and introductory idyll thus seems to indicate the coming and the recognition of the soul, so the ensuing idylls of the "Round Table" show how its influence fares—waxes or wanes—in the great battle of life. Through all of these we see the body and its passions gain continually greater sway, till in the end the Spirit's earthly work is thwarted and defeated by the flesh. Its immortality alone remains to it, and, with this, a deathless hope.

From the story of "Geraint and Enid," where the first gust of poisoning passion bows for a time with base suspicion, yet passes, and leaves pure a great and simple heart, we are led through "Merlin and Vivien," where, early in the storm, we see great wit and genius succumb,—and through "Lancelot and Elaine," where the piteous early death of innocence and hope results from it,—to "The Holy Grail," where we find religion itself under the stress of it,

and despite the earnest efforts of the soul, blown into mere fantastic shapes of superstition. It would be difficult to find a nobler and manlier apology for pure and sane and practical religion, fit for mighty men, than the verdict of the King at the end of this wonderful poem.

In “Pelleas and Ettarre” the storm of corruption culminates, whirling the sweet waters of young love and faith (the very life-spring of the world) out from their proper channels, sweeping them into mist, and casting them in hail upon the land. A scarcely-concealed harlot here rides splendid to the Court, and is crowned Queen of Beauty in the lists; the lust of the flesh is all but paramount. Then comes in “Guinevere” the final lightning stroke, and all the fabric of the earthly life falls smitten into dust, leaving to the soul a broken heart for company, and a conviction that if in this world only it had hope, it were of all things most miserable.

Thus ends the “Round Table,” and the story of the life-long labour of the soul....

There remains but the passing of the soul “from the great deep to the great deep,” and this is the subject of the closing idyll. Here the “last dim, weird battle,” fought out in densest mist, stands for a picture of all human death, and paints its awfulness and confusion. The soul alone, enduring beyond the end wherein all else is swallowed up, sees the mist clear at last, and finds those three crowned virtues, “abiding” true and fast, and waiting to convey it to its rest. Character, upheld and formed by these, is the immortal outcome of mortal life. They wail with it awhile in sympathy for the failure of its earthly plans; but at the very last of all are heard to change their sorrow

into songs of joy, and departing, “vanish into light.”

Such or such like seems to be the high significance and under-meaning of this noble poem,—a meaning worthy of the exquisite expression which conveys it and of the wealth of beauty and imagery which enfolds it.

But nothing is more remarkable than the way in which so much symbolic truth is given without the slightest forcing of the current of the narrative itself. Indeed, so subtle are the touches, and so consummately refined the art employed, that quite possibly many readers may hold there is no parable at all intended. It is most interesting, for instance, to note the thread of realism which is preserved throughout, and which, whether intentionally or not, serves the double purpose of entirely screening any such symbolic under-meaning from all who do not care to seek it, and also of accounting naturally for all the supernatural adventures and beliefs recorded in the story itself.

Thus, in “The Holy Grail,” the various apparitions of the mystic vessel are explicable by passing meteors or sudden lightning flashes seen in a season of great tempests and thunderstorms—first acting on the hysterical exaltation of an enthusiastic nun, and then, by contagion from her faith, upon the imaginations of a few kindred natures.

Again, in the “Coming of Arthur,” the marvellous story of his birth, as told by Bleys, might simply have been founded on a shipwreck when the sea was phosphorescent, and when all hands suddenly perished, save one infant who was washed ashore.

Or, again, in the same poem, the three mystic

Queens at the Coronation—who become, in one sense, so all-important in their meaning—derive their import in the eyes of Bellicent simply from the accident of coloured beams of light falling upon them from a stained-glass window.

May I, in conclusion say how happily characteristic of their English author, and their English theme, seems to me the manner in which these "Idylls of the King" have become a complete poem? It brings to mind the method of our old cathedral-builders. Round some early shrine, too precious to be moved, were gathered bit by bit a nave and aisles, then rich side chapels, then the great image-crowded portals, then a more noble chancel, then, perhaps, the towers, all in fulfilment of some general plan made long ago, but each produced and added as occasion urged or natural opportunity arose. As such buildings always seem rather to have *grown* than been *constructed*, and have the wealth of interest, and beauty, and variety which makes Canterbury Cathedral, for instance, far more poetical than St. Paul's—so with these "Idylls." Bit by bit the poem and its sacred purport have grown continually more and more connected and impressive. Had Tennyson sat down in early youth to write the symbolic epic of King Arthur which he then projected, his "Morte d'Arthur" is enough to show how fine a work might have resulted. But, for once, at any rate, the interposing critics did art good service, for they deferred till the experience of life had given him, as it were, many lives, a poem which could not have been produced without wide acquaintanceship with the world and human nature. We should never otherwise have had the parable "full of voices" which we now fortunately possess.

THE END

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Footnotes:

[1] Henry Sellwood.

[2] Sister of Sir John Franklin.

[3] [EXTRACT from a LETTER from my MOTHER to Mrs. GRANVILLE BRADLEY, April 23, 1873.

"To think of your having been among our Aldworth giants (the monuments in Aldworth Church)! Pibworth belonged to my grandmother, a Rowland from Wales. I am glad you did not go there, for all the grand pine grove, which backed it, was cut down as soon as it was bought, some years ago, by some London man, and I hear it has sunk into a mere commonplace house. The little estate, in which were the ruins of Beche Castle, was ours. The tombs are those of the 'de la Beches.' Their pedigree was said to have been taken down to show to Queen Elizabeth—when she came to look at the old yew tree, the remains of which, I hope, still exist—and never to have been replaced, so that no more is known of the giants than that they were 'de la Beches.' Neither do we know if they were really our ancestors, as they

have been reported to be, or whether the report came from our having owned the remains of the castle."—ED.]

[4] Rev. Drummond Rawnsley.

[5] This is written of the Lincolnshire coast.

[6] This taken from what he saw from the cliffs over Scratchell's Bay near the Needles in the Isle of Wight.

[7] Afterwards married to Judge Alan Ker, Chief Justice of Jamaica.

[8] At Mablethorpe there was no post at all, and Alfred tells how he was indebted to the muffin man for communication with the outer world.

[9] His wife.

[10] Mother of Lady Boyne.

[11] [The unpublished letters from Frederick Tennyson, quoted throughout the chapter, were written either to my father, or to my father's friend, Mary Brotherton, the novelist. The lives of my uncles Frederick and Charles were so much interwoven with the lives of some of my father's friends that I have ventured to insert this account of them here. Moreover, these two brothers represent "the two extremes of the Tennyson temperament, the mean and perfection of which is found in Alfred."—ED.]

[12] Unpublished letter to Alfred Tennyson.

[13] Alfred was always telling his brother that Spiritualism was a subject well worthy of examination, but not to be swallowed whole. He had a great admiration for certain passages in Swedenborg's writings.

[14] Alfred used to say of the Sonnets that many of them had all the tenderness of the Greek epigram, while a few were among the finest in our language.

[15] The other three were Franklin, Harry, and Tom.

[16] She often used to sing to us “Elaine’s song” which she had set to music.

[17] [My father was devoted to Henry Lushington, and pronounced him to be the best critic he had ever known. To him he dedicated “In Memoriam.”—ED.]

[18] There are also the fine “beardless bust” by Tennyson’s friend, Thomas Woolner, R.A., and the earliest “beardless portrait” of him by his sister-in-law, Mrs. Weld.

[19] This was a misunderstanding on the part of FitzGerald.

[20] This account of the talk in the Woodbridge garden has been taken from a letter to me from the present Lord Tennyson.

[21] Sophocles, *Ajax*, 674-5.

[22] This old French paraphrase of Horace, *Odes*, I. xi., FitzGerald was very fond of, and quotes more than once in his letters.

[23] Of the *Conversations with Eckermann*, he said, “almost as repeatedly to be read as Boswell’s *Johnson* —a German Johnson—and (as with Boswell) more interesting to me in Eckermann’s Diary than in all his own famous works.”—*Letters to Mrs. Kemble.*

[24] [Some of these sayings appeared in my Memoir of my father.—ED.]

[25] See *Tennyson: a Memoir, by his Son*, p. 373.

[26] See *Tennyson: a Memoir, by his Son*, p. 352.

[27] "I suppose the worship of wonder, such as I have heard grown-up children tell of at first sight of the Alps."—*Euphranor*, by E. F. G.

[28] Arthur Hallam, Harry Lushington, and Sir John Simeon.

[29] "The Death of Œnone."

[30] ["Ulysses," the title of a number of essays by W. G. Palgrave, brother of my father's devoted friend Francis T. Palgrave.—ED.]

[31] 1888.

[32] Garibaldi said to me, alluding to his barren island, "I wish I had your trees."

[33] The tale of Nejd.

[34] The Philippines.

[35] In Dominica.

[36] The Shadow of the Lord. Certain obscure markings on a rock in Siam, which express the image of Buddha to the Buddhist more or less distinctly according to his faith and his moral worth.

[37] The footstep of the Lord on another rock.

[38] The monastery of Sumelas.

[39] Anatolian Spectre stories.

[40] The Three Cities.

[41] Travels in Egypt.

[42] Lionel Tennyson.

[43] In Bologna.

[44] They say, for the fact is doubtful.

[45] Demeter and Persephone.

[46] [This Home was founded at the suggestion of my father, for he and Gordon had discussed the desirability of founding training camps all over England for the training of poor boys as soldiers or emigrants, Gordon saying to him, "You are the man to found them."—ED.]

[47] One of Tennyson's friends asked a cabman at Freshwater, "Whose house is that?" Cabman: "It belongs to one Tennyson." Friend: "He is a great man, you know?" Cabman: "He a great man! he only keeps one man-servant, and he don't sleep in the house!"

[48] Now grown into one hundred and fifty acres.

[49] He used to protest against the misuse of words of mighty content as mere expletives, contrasting "God made Himself an awful rose of dawn," and the colloquial "young-ladyism," as he called it, of "awfully jolly." (See the *Memoir*.)

[50] And, though I knew him to the end of his days, that interval never seemed to lengthen. [Among Mr. Dakyns's rough notes I find the Greek phrase ἀεὶ παῖς, with an emphatic reference to "The Wanderer." I know he thought the spirit of him "who loves the world from end to end and wanders on from home to home" was really Tennyson's own.—F. M. S.]

[51] See *Memoir*, ii. 400.

[52] [I think that this riddle was originally made by Franklin Lushington.—ED.]

[53] See *Memoir*, ii. 288.

[54] ii. 284 foll., 293, "Some Criticism on Poets and Poetry"; *ib.* 420 foll., "Last Talks": that wonderful chapter.

[55] See "Poets and Critics," one of his last poems.

[56] *Solaciolum*, "poor dear, some solace"; *turgiduli ... ocelli* (see below), "her poor dear swollen eyes."

[57] *Miselle*, epithet of the dead like our "poor" So-and-so.

[58] Robinson Ellis notes, "The rhythm of the line and the continued *a*-sound well represent the eternity of the sleep that knows no waking," and that is just the effect that Tennyson's reading gave with infinite pathos; and then the sudden passionate change, *da mi basia*——

[59] An old experiment, being written in 1859, finished in 1860. He himself only called it "a far-off echo of the *Attis* of Catullus."

[60] See Carlyle, *Fr. Rev.* (Part I. Bk. v. c. ix), for the cry of the mob. And for Béranger, cf. *Memoir*, ii. 422.

[61] Compare Merlin's song, "From the great deep to the great deep he goes."

[62] Some commentators insist that Tennyson was born on August 5 because the date looks like 5th in the Register of his birth. He used to say, "All I can state is that my mother always kept my birthday on August 6, and I suppose she knew."

[63] I can confirm this last statement from more than one talk with him. He would note the perfection of the metre. The second line affords an instance of the delicacy of his ear. We were speaking of the undoubtedly correct reading:

The lowing herd *wind* slowly o'er the lea,

not, as is so often printed, *winds*. I forget his exact comment, but the point of it was that the double s, wind*s* *s*lowly, would have been to his ear most displeasing.

Again, speaking of the line,

And all the air a solemn stillness holds,

he observed how seldom Gray seemed satisfied with this inversion of the accusative and the nominative, and how he himself endeavoured, as a rule, to avoid it.—H. M. B.

[64] My own writing he compared to "the limbs of a flea."

[65] In *Problems and Persons* (Longmans), Appendix A.

[66] *Nineteenth Century*, January 1893.

[67] *Sunday, October 27, 1872.*—I asked A. T. at Aldworth what he thought he had done most perfect. He said, "Nothing," only fragments of things that he could think at all so—such as "Come down, O Maid," written on his first visit to Switzerland, and "Tears, idle Tears."

He told me he meant to write the siege of Delhi, an ode in rhyme, but was refused the papers.

[68] [“Until absorbed into the Divine.”—ED.]

[69] See Appendix C.

[70] See Translation by Frederick Tennyson, p. 56.

[71] Some extracts from the paper on Tennyson in *Studies and Memories* are included in this chapter by kind permission of Messrs. Constable & Co.

[72] [First published as a preface to *Tennyson as a Student and Poet of Nature* in 1910, and republished here by the kind permission of Sir Norman Lockyer and Messrs. Macmillan.—ED.]

[73] See the fine Parsee Hymn to the Sun (written by Tennyson when he was 82) at the end of “Akbar’s Dream”:

> I
> Once again thou flamest heavenward, once again we see thee rise.
> Every morning is thy birthday gladdening human hearts and eyes.
> Every morning here we greet it, bowing lowly down before thee,
> Thee the Godlike, thee the changeless in thine ever-changing skies.
>
> II
> Shadow-maker, shadow-slayer, arrowing light from clime to clime,
> Hear thy myriad laureates hail thee monarch in their woodland rhyme.
> Warble bird, and open flower, and, men, below the dome of azure
> Kneel adoring Him the Timeless in the flame that measures Time!

[74] [See *Tennyson: a Memoir*, p. 259. “It is impossible,” he said, “to imagine that the Almighty will ask you, when you come before Him in the next life, what your particular form of creed was: but the question will rather be ‘Have you been true to yourself, and given in My Name a cup of cold water to one of these little ones?’” Yet he felt that religion could never be founded on mere moral philosophy; that there were no means of impressing upon children systematic ethics apart from religion; and that the highest religion and morality would only come home to the people in the noble, simple thoughts and facts of a Scripture like ours.—ED.]

[75] [He added, “*The* Son of Man is the most tremendous title possible.”—ED.]

[76] From Tennyson’s last published sonnet, “Doubt and Prayer.”

[77] [Toward the end of his life he would say, “My most passionate desire is to have a clearer vision of God.”—ED.]

[78] [The eldest daughter of Sir John Simeon, who was my father’s most intimate friend in later life—a tall, broad-shouldered, genial, generous, warm-hearted, highly gifted, and thoroughly noble country gentleman; in face like the portrait of Sir Thomas Wyatt, by Holbein.—ED.]

[79] This MS. was given back to Tennyson at his request after Sir John Simeon’s death, and after Tennyson’s death presented by his son and Catherine, Lady Simeon, to the library of Trinity College, Cambridge.

[80] He afterwards built a larger study for himself,

"looking into the heart of the wood," as he said.

[81] "In the Garden at Swainston."

[82] Tennyson said to her, "Perhaps your babe will remember all these lights and this splendour in future days, as if it were the memory of another life."

[83] From "The Death of Œnone and other Poems," afterwards published 1892.

[84] First published 1909, by Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd., 1s. net., and kindly corrected by the author for republication here.

[85] Now Lady Ritchie.

[86] οὐρανόθεν τε ὑπερράγη ἄσπετος αἰθήρ.

[87] See note by Tennyson in the "Eversley Edition" of the poems: "I made this simile from a stream (in North Wales), and it is different, tho' like Theocritus, *Idyll* xxii. 48 ff.:

> ἐν δὲ μύες στερεοῖσι βραχίοσιν ἄκρον ὑπ᾽ ὦμον
> ἔστασαν, ἠΰτε πέτροι ὀλοίτροχοι, .οὔστε κυλίνδων
> χειμάρρους ποταμὸς μεγάλαις περιέξεσε δίναις."

When some one objected that he had taken this simile from Theocritus, he answered: "It is quite different. Geraint's muscles are not compared to the rounded stones, but to the stream pouring vehemently over them."—Ed.

[88] [I am much obliged to Mr. Sidgwick for having omitted his original statement that Tennyson "takes the anti-reform line" in the matter of the higher

education of women. My father's friends report him to have said that the great social questions impending in England were "the housing and education of the poor, and the higher education of women"; and that the sooner woman finds out, before the great educational movement begins, that "woman is not undevelopt man, but diverse," the better it will be for the progress of the world. She must train herself to do the large work that lies before her, even though she may not be destined to be wife and mother, cultivating her understanding, not her memory only, her imagination in its higher phases, her inborn spirituality, and her sympathy with all that is pure, noble, and beautiful, rather than mere social accomplishments; then and then only will she further the progress of humanity, then and then only will men continue to hold her in reverence. See *Tennyson: a Memoir*, pp. 206, 208.—ED.]

[89] From Virgil's Georgics.

[90] From Theocritus.

[91] [For another view of "Gareth" see FitzGerald's letter to my father in 1873:

MY DEAR ALFRED—I write my yearly letter to yourself this time, because I have a word to say about "Gareth" which your publisher sent me as "from the author." I don't think it is mere perversity that makes me like it better than all its predecessors, save and except (of course) the old "Morte." The subject, the young knight who can endure and conquer, interests me more than all the heroines of the 1st volume. I do not know if I admire more *separate* passages in this "Idyll" than in the others; for I have admired *many* in *all*. But I do admire

several here very much, as

> The journey to Camelot, pp. 13-14,
> All Gareth's vassalage, 31-34,
> Departure with Lynette, 42,
> Sitting at table with the Barons, 54,
> Phantom of past life, 71,

and many other passages and expressions "quae nunc perscribere longum est."—ED.]

[92] Bedivere.

[93] Reprinted, with some few alterations, from the *Edinburgh Review*, No. ccclxxxii., by the kind permission of the Editor and the late Sir Alfred Lyall.

[94] E. FitzGerald.

[95] He said to Bishop Lightfoot, "The cardinal point of Christianity is the Life after Death."

[96] See Appendix C.

[97] [The sibilants give the lisping peacefulness of the waves. For beauty of sound he would cite the following lines:

> The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
> And murmuring of innumerable bees;

and

> The mellow ouzel fluted in the elm;

and

> And affluent Fortune emptied all her horn,

ED.]

[98] [My father would not have allowed this. He

said, “It is pure nonsense to say that my later poems are melancholy. In old age I have a stronger faith in God and human good than I had in youth.”—ED.]

[99] [This is taken from Quintus Calaber.—ED.]

[100] [It is interesting to note that Sir Richard Jebb held that the “Death of Œnone” was “essentially Greek.”—ED.]

[101] [This passage must not be misunderstood, as Sir Alfred Lyall thought that he had touched high-water mark in some of his later poems, such as: “In Memoriam,” certain passages in the “Idylls of the King,” “The Ancient Sage,” and “Maud,” the “Northern Farmers,” “Rizpah,” “The Revenge,” the Dedication to Edward FitzGerald of “Tiresias,” and “Crossing the Bar.”—ED.]

[102] Presidential Address to the British Academy, October 1909 (Tennyson centenary), published here by the late Professor Butcher’s kind permission.

[103] The Master of Christ’s.

[104] Captain Thomas Hamilton, who then lived at Elleray. He was the brother of Sir William Hamilton, and is frequently mentioned in Sir Walter Scott’s Journal.

[105] *Philip van Artevelde*, by Henry Taylor.

[106] Probably August 10. See letter to Thompson, August 19, 1841.

[107] The reply referred to is:—

FARRINGFORD, *Jan. 19th, 1870*.

MY DEAR JAMES—Send the box, please, not

without your new volume hither. I shall be grateful for both. I am glad that you find anything to approve of in the “H. G.” I have not yet finished the Arthurian legends, otherwise I might consider your Job theme. Strange that I quite forgot our conversation thereupon. Where is Westbourne Terrace? If I had ever clearly made out I should assuredly have called. I have often when in town past by the old 60, the “vedovo sito,” with a groan, thinking of you as no longer the comeatable, runupableto, smokeablewith J. S. of old, but as a family man, far in the west, sitting cigarless among many nieces, clean and forlorn, but I hope to see you somewhere in ’70, for I have taken chambers in Victoria Street for three years, though they are not yet furnished.

Where is the difficulty of that line in the “Flower”? It is rather rough certainly, but, had you followed the clue of “little flower” in the preceding line, you would not have stumbled over this, which is accentual anapaest,

What you are, root and all:

rough—doubtless.—Believe me yours ever,

A. TENNYSON.

[108] [*The Holy Grail and other Poems.* It was Spedding chiefly who urged my father about this time to write his plays, because he thought that he had the true dramatic instinct. He criticized them in proof, and gave them his warm commendation.—ED.]

[109] *Life and Letters*, vol. v.

[110] The passage from Shakespeare prefixed to this paper contains probably as much as can be said of the mental, not less than the affectionate conditions, under which such a report as “In Memoriam” is produced, and may give us more insight into the imaginative faculty’s mode of working, than all our philosophizing and analysis. It seems to let out with the fulness, simplicity, and unconsciousness of a child—“Fancy’s Child”—the secret mechanism or procession of the greatest creative mind our race has produced. In itself, it has no recondite meaning, it answers fully its own sweet purpose. We are not believers, like some folks, in the omniscience of even Shakespeare. But, like many things that he and other wise men and many simple children say, it has a germ of universal meaning, which it is quite lawful to bring out of it, and which may be enjoyed to the full without any wrong to its own original beauty and fitness. A dewdrop is not the less beautiful that it illustrates in its structure the law of gravitation which holds the world together, and by which “the most ancient heavens are fresh and strong.” This is the passage. The Friar speaking of Claudio, hearing that Hero “died upon his words,” says:

> The idea of her life shall sweetly creep
> Into his study of imagination;
> And every lovely organ of her life
> Shall come apparelled in more precious habit
> —
> More moving delicate, and full of life,
> Into the eye and prospect of his soul,
> Than when she lived indeed.

We have here expressed in plain language the

imaginative memory of the beloved dead, rising upon the past, like moonlight upon midnight:

> The gleam, the shadow, and the peace supreme.

This is its simple meaning—the statement of a truth, the utterance of personal feeling. But observe its hidden abstract significance—it is the revelation of what goes on in the depths of the soul, when the dead elements of what once was, are laid before the imagination, and so breathed upon as to be quickened into a new and higher life. We have first the *Idea of her Life*—all he remembered and felt of her, gathered into one vague shadowy image, not any one look, or action, or time,—then the idea of her life *creeps*—is in before he is aware, and SWEETLY creeps—it might have been softly or gently, but it is the addition of affection to all this, and bringing in another sense,—and now it is in his *study of imagination*—what a place! fit for such a visitor. Then out comes the *Idea*, more particular, more questionable, but still ideal, spiritual,—*every lovely organ of her life*—then the clothing upon, the mortal putting on its immortal, spiritual body—*shall come apparelled in more precious habit, more moving delicate*—this is the transfiguring, the putting on strength, the *poco più*—the little more which makes immortal,—*more full of life*, and all this submitted to —*the eye and prospect of the soul*.

[111]

> Dark house, by which once more I stand
> Here in the long unlovely street;
> Doors, where my heart was wont to beat
> So quickly, waiting for a hand.
> “In Memoriam.”

This is a mistake, as his friend Dr. A. P. Stanley thus corrects: "'The long unlovely street' was Wimpole Street, No. 67, where the Hallams lived; and Arthur used to say to his friends, 'You know you will always find us at sixes and sevens.'"

[112] We had read these lives, and had remarked them, before we knew whose they were, as being of rare merit. No one could suppose they were written by one so young. We give his estimate of the character of Burke. "The mind of this great man may perhaps be taken as a representation of the general characteristics of the English intellect. Its groundwork was solid, practical, and conversant with the details of business; but upon this, and secured by this, arose a superstructure of imagination and moral sentiment. He saw little, *because it was painful to him* to see anything, beyond the limits of the national character. In all things, while he deeply reverenced principles, he chose to deal with the concrete rather than with abstractions. He studied men rather than man." The words in italics imply an insight into the deepest springs of human action, the conjunct causes of what we call character, such as few men of large experience attain.

[113] This will remind the reader of a fine passage in *Edwin the Fair*, on the specific differences in the sounds made by the ash, the elm, the fir, etc., when moved by the wind; and of some lines by Landor on flowers speaking to each other; and of something more exquisite than either, in *Consuelo*—the description of the flowers in the old monastic garden, at the "sweet hour of prime."

[114] *Remains*, vol. iii. p. 105.

[115] This is the passage referred to in Henry Taylor's delightful *Notes from Life* ("Essay on Wisdom"):

"Fear, indeed, is the mother of foresight: spiritual fear, of a foresight that reaches beyond the grave; temporal fear, of a foresight that falls short; but without fear there is neither the one foresight nor the other; and as pain has been truly said to be "the deepest thing in our nature," so is it fear that will bring the depths of our nature within our knowledge. A great capacity of *suffering* belongs to genius; and it has been observed that an alternation of joyfulness and dejection is quite as characteristic of the man of genius as intensity in either kind." In his *Notes from Books*, p. 216, he recurs to it: "'Pain,' says a writer whose early death will not prevent his being long remembered, 'pain is the deepest thing that we have in our nature, and union through pain has always seemed more real and more holy than any other.'"

[116] From *Problems and Persons*, by Wilfrid Ward, published here by his kind permission and that of Longmans, Green and Co.

[117] "From the great deep to the great deep he goes;" and "when that which drew from out the boundless deep turns again home."

[118]

> For in the world which is not ours, they said,
> "Let us make man," and that which should be man,
> From that one light no man can look upon,
> Drew to this shore, lit by the suns and moons
> And all the shadows.

[119] Reprinted from the *Spectator* of January 1, 1870.

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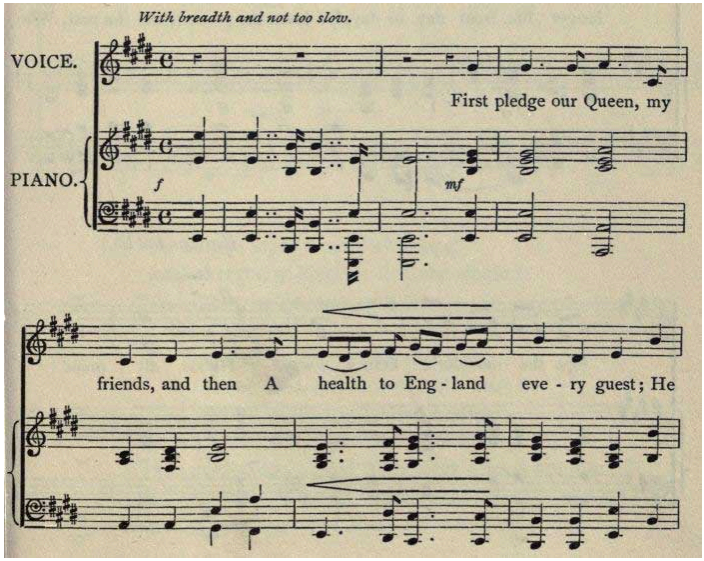
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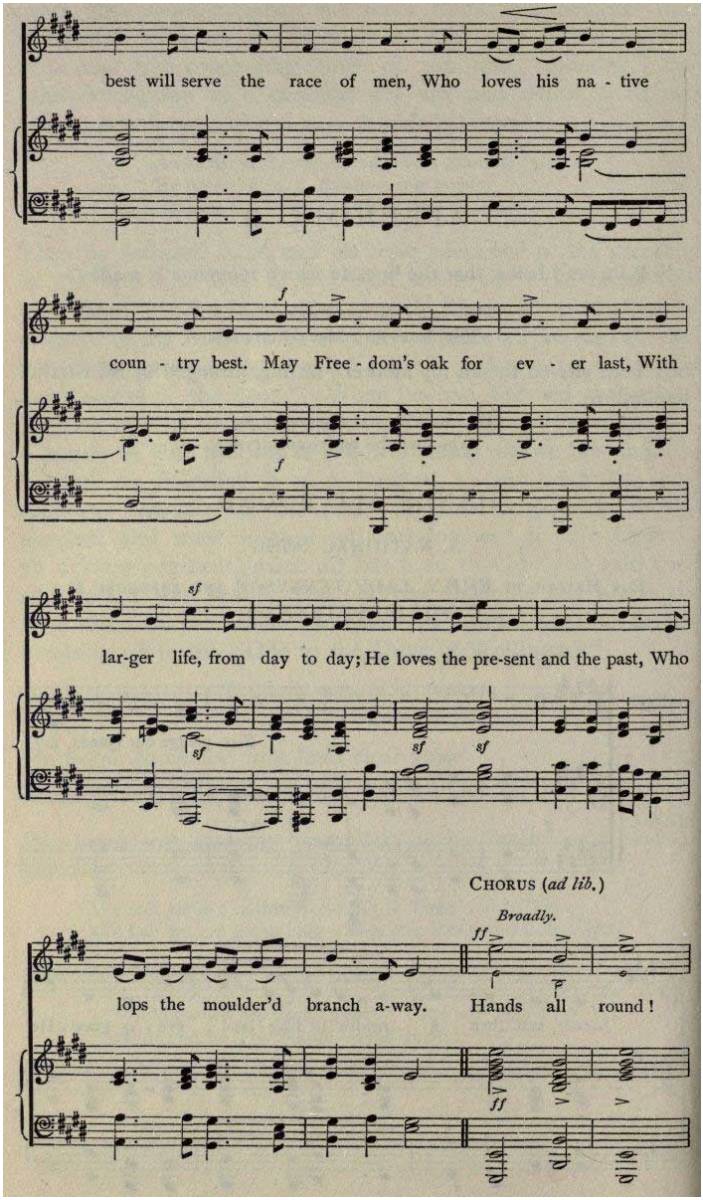
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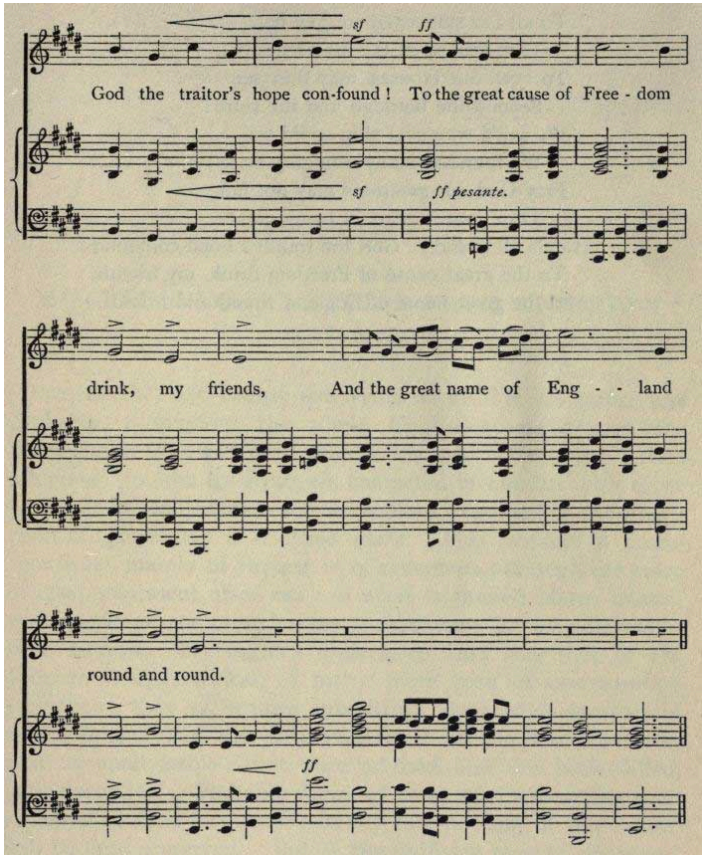
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