

Alfred Tennyson, 1809-1892

ARCHIVED ONLINE EXHIBIT

Originally exhibited at the Thomas Cooper Library, University of South Carolina

September-November 1992

Text by Patrick Scott

Hypertext by Jason A. Pierce

Archived October 13, 2013

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INTRODUCTION



Alfred Tennyson, from the frontispiece of *The Death of Ænone, Akbar's Dream, and Other Poems* (1892).

originally exhibited September-November 1992
Thomas Cooper Library, University of South Carolina

text by Patrick Scott
hypertext by Jason A. Pierce

The Tennyson exhibit in 1992 marked an important event — the Tennyson centenary. Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892) was acclaimed very early in life as "the greatest poet of our generation, perhaps of our century" (letter of Arthur Hallam to William Gladstone, the future Prime Minister, September 1829). Tennyson's longer works, such as his religious poem *In Memoriam* (1850) and his Arthurian epic *Idylls of the King* (published in stages over a forty-year period), soon established themselves among the central, canonical works of English literature. Many of his shorter poems, such as "The Brook," "The May-Queen," and "The Charge of the Light Brigade," entered popular culture as songs or recitation-pieces. His poetry has spoken to intellectuals, to aesthetes, and to more ordinary readers for more than 150 years. Tennyson, more than any other British Poet Laureate, gave that oft-derided position a genuine literary distinction, and Tennyson was the first English poet ever given a peerage "for services to literature." His was a unique career in the close interrelations it demonstrates between a highly individual creative artist and the culture of his age.

Included in this online version of the exhibit are the texts of several poems.

TENNYSON, LINCOLNSHIRE, AND THE ROMANTIC LEGACY

Tennyson was born in 1809, in the tiny Lincolnshire village of Somersby, where his father was Rector. He and his family lived there till 1837. The first island features Tennyson's first book, *Poems by Two Brothers*, along with other works from his early career, including his Cambridge prize-poem *Timbuctoo*, his contributions to literary annuals, works by his brothers Charles and Frederick, and illustrations of places connected with his Lincolnshire background.

[Alfred, Charles, and Frederick Tennyson]

Poems by Two Brothers

London: W. Simpkin and R. Marshall, and J. and J. Jackson, Louth, 1827.

First edition, second issue in original paper wrappers.



"The following poems were written from ages fifteen to eighteen, not conjointly, but individually.... [N]o doubt, if submitted to the microscopical eye of periodical Criticism, a long list of inaccuracies and imitations would result from the investigation. But so it is; we have passed the Rubicon, and we leave the rest to fate" (preface). Shown here is the text of the poem "Why Should We Weep for Those Who Die?"

This item was the first acquisition made possible through direct financial support from the Thomas Cooper Society.

T. W. Wallis

Louth Market Place (about 1848)

from Andrew Wheatcroft, *The Tennyson Album*

London: Routledge, 1980.



Louth, where Tennyson went to the old Grammar School as a boy, was a small market town some eleven miles from Somersby. The tall building in the center of the picture is the bookshop and printing-office of the Jackson brothers, who in 1827 printed and published the Tennyson boys' *Poems by Two Brothers*.

Five Illustrations of Somersby and Its Environs

prepared for John Cumings Walters, *In Tennyson Land*

London: George Redway, 1890.



These illustrations of Somersby Church, the bridge, and "Philip's Farm" are examples of the rather sentimentalized late-Victorian tourist descriptions of Tennyson's Lincolnshire roots.

Perhaps uniquely for a major English poet's birthplace, Somersby Rectory has never been regularly open to visitors, but nonetheless there was a constant stream of books like Walters's.

Edward Hull

Gate of Somersby Rectory

from Alfred J. Church, *The Laureate's Country*
London: Seeley, 1891.



Somersby was the smallest of Dr. Tennyson's four Lincolnshire parishes, with fewer than a hundred inhabitants. The Rectory and Church are down a steep-sided valley, some six miles from the nearest market-town. Though Dr. Tennyson added on to the house at both ends, it must have been very cramped for his large family and several servants.

artist unknown

Bayons Manor, Tealby (about 1848)

from Andrew Wheatcroft, *The Tennyson Album*
London: Routledge, 1980.



The contrast between Somersby Rectory and Bayons Manor illustrates one of the underlying currents in Tennyson's early life. Bayons, originally the home of Tennyson's grandfather, was inherited by his father's younger brother, Charles, who took the name Tennyson D'Eyncourt and rebuilt the house in the 1830's as a kind of pastiche medieval castle, complete with great hall, battlements, and moat. Tennyson's own, much poorer branch of the family always felt disinherited and scorned the aristocratic pretensions of the D'Eyncourts. Bayons fell into disrepair after the Second World War and was demolished in the early 1960's.

William Mearns

Somersby Rectory

from William Howitt, *The Homes and Haunts of the Most Eminent British Poets*
London: Richard Bentley, 1847.

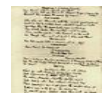


This very early published picture shows Tennyson's birthplace and childhood home. The pointed gables on the right are the roof of the Gothick dining room that the Rector, Tennyson's father, built himself to accommodate his eleven children.

Alfred Tennyson

The Devil and the Lady

London: Macmillan, 1930.



First, limited edition, edited by Charles Tennyson, the poet's grandson.

This extraordinary pastiche of an Elizabethan or Jacobean blank-verse comedy, written when Tennyson was only fourteen, illustrates how deeply he had saturated his mind in English Renaissance poetry. Though chiefly farcical, it contains lines as beautiful as any Tennyson ever wrote. He borrowed images and phrases from it for other poems, even if publication of the whole text was delayed till long after his death.

Alfred Tennyson

"Timbuctoo. A Poem"

in *Prolusiones Academicæ præmiis annuis dignitate*
Cambridge: John Smith, 1829.

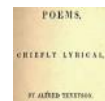


Tennyson's entry, written on an assigned topic, won the 1829 Chancellor's Medal at Cambridge University. Though the quest for Timbuctoo was in the news in 1828-29, much of Tennyson's poem came directly from an earlier work, "Armageddon." Tennyson was the first medal-winner to use blank verse rather than heroic couplets but got a friend to read the poem at the Senate House in his place. The other contributors to the *Prolusiones* were C. R. Kennedy and Charles Merivale.

Alfred Tennyson

Poems, Chiefly Lyrical

London: Effingham Wilson, 1830.



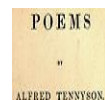
Tennyson's first solo volume included such well-known early poems as "Mariana", "Ode to Memory", "The Dying Swan", and "The Kraken". This first edition has pages 72 and 91 in the corrected state (cf. Wise 16). Effingham Wilson was known as a radical or reform publisher, and the reputation of the firm may have drawn conservative criticism of Tennyson's early work.

Alfred Tennyson

Poems

London: Edward Moxon, 1833 [December 1832].

Original paper boards.



Many of Tennyson's best-known poems first appeared in this volume, published when he was only twenty-four, including "The Lady of Shalott", "Ænone", "The Palace of Art", and "The Lotos-Eaters". The printing and publication of the volume was supervised by Tennyson's Cambridge friend Arthur Hallam, and the volume initiated a period of nearly forty years in which Tennyson's work was published by the firm of Moxon.

Alfred Tennyson
"No More"
in *The Gem: A Literary Annual*
London: W. Marshall, 1831.



Alfred Tennyson
"Sonnet"
in *Friendship's Offering and Winter Wreath: A Christmas and New Year's Present*
London: Smith, Elder, 1833 [1832].

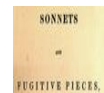
Other contributors to these collections included Macaulay, John Clare, David Moir, and Mrs. Howitt. Tennyson's sonnet had originally appeared in Moxon's *Englishman's Magazine* in 1831. Literary annuals like *The Gem* and *Friendship's Offering* were an important publishing phenomenon in the 1820's and 1830's. A mixture of giftbook and literary anthology, they collected poems, short stories, and engravings from contributors who were often well-known both as writers or artists and for their aristocratic social connections. Tennyson himself, wrote Hallam in 1832, "begins to think himself a fool for kindly complying with the daily requests of the Annuals," but his contributions brought him public attention early in his career.

Frederick Tennyson
"Poetical Happiness"
in *The Amulet: A Christian and Literary Remembrancer*
London: F. Westley and A. H. Davis, 1832.



All three of the "Two Brothers" continued to write poetry. Her great-grandson, Sir Charles Tennyson, reported that, when Tennyson's mother, as an old lady, overheard strangers in the shops or omnibuses of Cheltenham talking about *In Memoriam*, she would interject with "It may interest you to know that *I* am the *mother* of the Laureate." Then she would add, "My sons, Frederick and Charles, also have written some beautiful verses." Frederick Tennyson (1807-1898), the poet's spendthrift elder brother, lived most of his adult life out of England, in Italy (where he knew the Brownings) and on the Channel Island of Jersey (where he combined Swedenborgianism with British Israelitism). He published a further volume of poetry, *Days and Hours*, in 1854 and three more in the 1890's. Other contributors to this literary annual included Felicia Hemans, Bulwer-Lytton, L. E. L., and Geraldine Jewsbury.

Charles Tennyson
Sonnets and Fugitive Pieces
Cambridge: B. Bridges, 1830.



Charles Tennyson (later Tennyson-Turner — 1808-1879), after struggling with a recurrent addiction to opium, spent his whole career as a Vicar of the tiny North Lincolnshire village of Grasby. Late in life, he published three further volumes of sonnets.

TENNYSON, INTERPRETER OF MID-VICTORIAN BRITAIN

The second island shows Tennyson as the interpreter of Victorian England in the new social themes of *Poems in Two Volumes* (1842), his treatment of women's education in *The Princess* (1847), his poems about the Crimean War (both the well-known "Charge of the Light Brigade" and variant versions in his more complex *Maud* [1855]), and his role as Queen Victoria's Poet Laureate. The theme here is his growing public recognition and his engagement with Victorian social and political events.

Samuel Laurence

Alfred Tennyson (about 1840)

original in National Portrait Gallery, London.



This is the most famous portrait of the young Tennyson, showing how he must have appeared both to his contemporaries at Cambridge and in the 1830's to such friends on the London literary scene as Thomas Carlyle.

Edward Hull

The New Court, Trinity College, Cambridge

from Alfred J. Church, *The Laureate's Country*

London: Seeley, 1891.



Tennyson was an undergraduate at Trinity College from 1828 to 1831. The New Court in the Gothic style had been opened in 1823, and it was there that Arthur Hallam had his college rooms. Hallam's role in the student debates there of the Apostles, and Tennyson's mixed emotions on revisiting New Court in later years, are portrayed in *In Memoriam* LXXXXVII.

Alfred Tennyson

Poems. In Two Volumes

London: Edward Moxon, 1842.



This publication broke Tennyson's self-imposed "ten years' silence" following the reviewers' hostility to his 1832 volume. The frontispiece shows an engraving of the famous Lawrence portrait. The first volume is a selection and revision from Tennyson's earlier books, while in the second volume such new poems as "Locksley Hall", "Ulysses", and "Morte D'Arthur" show the poet exploring, both directly and through myth, a closer engagement with the social dilemmas of his society.

F. N. Broderick

Farringford House (1894)

from Andrew Wheatcroft, *The Tennyson Album*

London: Routledge, 1980.



Tennyson moved to Farringford, on the Isle of Wight, in 1853, and it was his main home for the rest of his life. Like his father at Somersby Rectory, he added onto his house; this photograph shows, on the left, the large neo-Gothic library added in 1871 to provide a private space away from visitors and house-guests.

Alfred Tennyson

A Welcome

London: E. Moxon, 1863.

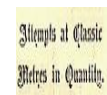


This short poem is an example of the official poetry that Tennyson wrote as Poet Laureate. Shown here in the leaflet form issued for the occasion, the poem celebrates the marriage of Princess Alexandra of Denmark ("Sea-Kings' daughter from over the sea") to Edward, Prince of Wales.

Alfred Tennyson

"Attempts at Classical Metres in Quantity"

Cornhill Magazine 8 (December 1863): 707-709.

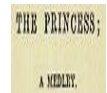


Throughout his life Tennyson was fascinated by the technical challenge of classical translation, and poems like this illustrate the poetic virtuosity that accompanied the challenging thematic foci of his middle-period work. The topic Tennyson chose for this exercise illustrates also his continuing distrust of reviewers and critics, whom he often felt misunderstood him.

Alfred Tennyson

The Princess: A Medley

London: Edward Moxon, 1847.



This poem, in which a group of undergraduates take turns telling a story about a prince and his two friends who infiltrate an all-women college disguised as female students, was in part a response to the new Queen's College, London, an experiment in women's higher education founded in 1847. Tennyson's friends F. D. Maurice and Charles Kingsley were both (part-time) professors there. Tennyson's poem, itself part burlesque, was itself burlesqued by Gilbert and Sullivan in the Savoy Opera *Princess Ida* (1884). The famous songs were added to the poem in the third edition (1850).

Alfred Tennyson
Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington

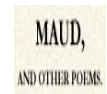
London: Edward Moxon, 1852.
Blue paper covers.



This poem was published on 18 November 1852, the day of Wellington's state funeral procession through the streets of London. The image here is from a painting of the event by Louis Haghe. Wellington's funeral was the model on which Churchill planned his own state funeral (1965).

Alfred Tennyson
Maud, and Other Poems

London: Edward Moxon, 1855.



Long misunderstood by critics, Tennyson's *Maud* is now widely regarded as his greatest poem. A fragmentary monodrama presented from the viewpoint of an alienated and often mad young man, it narrates his disillusion with Victorian commercialism, his love for the beautiful Maud, and his decision to enlist to fight in the Crimean War. Historians of psychiatry count the poem as among the earliest and most subtle descriptions of manic-depression, and literary critics now recognize it also as among the most innovative of Tennyson's works in poetic form.

Alfred Tennyson
"The Lady of Shalott"

with an illustration by William Holman Hunt
from *Poems*
London: Moxon, 1866.
From the collection of Patrick Scott.



It was the symbolic and mythical poems of Tennyson's earlier writing that most appealed to the artists of the period. The first illustrated edition of his work was commissioned by Moxon from members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, including Woolner, Hunt, Millais, Rossetti, and others. Their images still influence modern response to Tennyson's poetry.

"Ape"
Men of the Period, no. 28. The Poet Laureate
from *Vanity Fair*.
From the collection of Patrick Scott.



The famous series of so-called "Spy cartoons," caricatures of famous Victorians, appeared in the weekly magazine *Vanity Fair*. The Tennyson caricature was not by "Spy" but by his

predecessor on the magazine, Carlo Pellegrini or "Ape" (1839-1899), an Italian immigrant artist and member of the Prince of Wales' social circle.

Alfred Tennyson

"The Charge of the Light Brigade"

from *Maud and Other Poems*

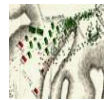
London: Edward Moxon, 1855.

Perhaps the most famous of Tennyson's recitation-pieces, this poem was written in shocked response to the first newspaper report in *The Times* on the heroic disaster of Lord Cardigan's charge with the Eleventh Hussars against a battery of Russian guns during the Crimean War. The poem first appeared in another newspaper, *The Examiner*, and was also printed as a leaflet for distribution to the troops before its first book-form appearance, shown here.

Alexander William Kinglake

The Invasion of the Crimea: Its Origin and an Account of its Progress Down to the Death of Lord Raglan

Volume IV. Edinburgh: William Blackwood, 1858.



Kinglake was the *Times* war correspondent in the Crimea, frequently getting his reports published before any official war dispatches reached London. The map shows the valley up which the Earl of Cardigan led his Light Brigade (light cavalry) to charge the Russian gun-batteries. The Light Brigade lost all but 197 men out of over 600 who began the charge "into the Valley of Death."

TENNYSON AND RELIGION

The third section features the background and development of Tennyson's major religious poem, *In Memoriam* (1850). Included is one of the scientific works that influenced his thinking as well as work by his friend Arthur Hallam, whom the poem memorializes. The primary theme here is Tennyson's role as a religious prophet in a period of great religious turmoil, showing his imaginative involvement with the domestic pieties of Victorian England in his poems of the 1850's and 1860's.

Alfred Tennyson

In Memoriam

London: Edward Moxon, 1850.

Title page & dedication shown from the fifth edition (1851).



The most famous, most influential, and most widely-quoted of Tennyson's longer poems was also one of the most personal. *In Memoriam* is both an elegy to Tennyson's college friend Arthur Henry Hallam, who died suddenly in Vienna in 1833, and a prolonged meditation on religious belief, modern science, and the significance of the individual life. All the early editions, like this one, were bound in purple, the color of mourning, rather than in Tennyson's usual green cloth.

Hallam as a Schoolboy

From the collection of Patrick Scott.



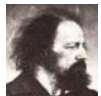
This photograph of a portrait of Hallam in his youth comes from an extra-illustrated copy of the fifth edition of Tennyson's *In Memoriam*. A manuscript notation beneath the photograph indicates that the portrait represents Hallam at age sixteen.

Julia Margaret Cameron

Alfred Tennyson (in 1865)

from Andrew Wheatcroft, *The Tennyson Album*

London: Routledge, 1980.



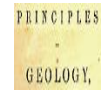
Mrs. Cameron, a neighbor of Tennyson's on the Isle of Wight, was one of the greatest of Victorian portrait photographers. She never entirely controlled the chemical processes of early photography, resulting in quite distinctive softening of the contrasts in her work, but she was a ruthless perfectionist in control over who sat for her. This portrait, somewhat coarsened by enlargement, was one of Tennyson's favorites, informally referred to as "The Dirty Monk."

Arthur Henry Hallam
"Theodicea Novissima"
in *Remains in Verse and Prose*, second edition
London: John Murray, 1863.
From the collection of Patrick Scott.



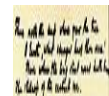
The religious and philosophical speculations of *In Memoriam* were influenced by discussions among the Cambridge University Conversazione Society, better known as the Apostles. Hallam himself had contributed to the society this essay, projecting the religion of the future and stimulating Tennyson's own speculations.

Charles Lyell
Principles of Geology, Being an Attempt to Explain the Former Changes of the Earth's Surface, by Reference to Causes Now in Operation
London: John Murray, 1830-33.



Tennyson first read this pioneering work of "uniformitarian" geology in 1836. The title-page of Lyell's second volume carried a startling epigraph about the perishing of whole species, from which Tennyson built the scientific sections LV and LVI of *In Memoriam*. Lyell's "Concluding Remarks" on the interchange of sea and land in the formation of river deltas influenced Tennyson's section CXXIII (cf. next item). This copy belonged to Thomas Cooper, second president of South Carolina College and namesake of the University of South Carolina's primary library; it includes many of his manuscript notes in the margins.

Alfred Tennyson
In Memoriam CXXIII
from Trinity Notebook 13
in Christopher Ricks & Aidan Day, eds., *The Tennyson Archive*, vol. XI
New York: Garland, 1988.



The manuscript of Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, given by his son to Trinity College, Cambridge, was long available to scholars only under severe restriction. Following Christopher Ricks' Longman edition in 1969, the College lifted the restrictions and the story of the poem's composition became fully known. The passage reproduced shows Tennyson's poetic response to Lyell's *Principles of Geology* and includes two stanzas (the second and the fourth) not included in the final published text, as well as other variants in the third stanza.

Cecilia Tennyson Lushington
"The Influence of Religion on the World"
in *Good Words* 18 (1877): 308-10.

It was not just the older Tennyson brothers who became published writers but nearly all the other children also, including the sisters. Cecilia, perhaps the most difficult of the sisters, married Edmund Lushington, a fellow Apostle and subsequently Professor of Greek at Glasgow, which she found intolerable. In this article, she treats some of the same issues about world religions and the religion of the future as her brother in *In Memoriam*.

Alfred Tennyson
"The Higher Pantheism"
from *The Holy Grail and Other Poems*
London: Strahan, 1870.

Long after *In Memoriam*, right through to his last volumes, Tennyson continued to write poems of religious and philosophical meditation. The poem illustrated here was read at the first meeting of the Metaphysical Society, a group of leading Victorian thinkers, scientists, religious leaders, and philosophers who met monthly for a number of years to discuss the changing nature of religious belief. It is now perhaps equally notable for having provoked the irreverent Swinburne to his parody "The Higher Pantheism in a Nutshell."

Alfred Tennyson
Enoch Arden, etc.
London: Edward Moxon, 1864.



Sales of each new Tennyson volume had been steadily growing since *In Memoriam*, and this story, recounting the experiences of a sailor shipwrecked on a desert island who eventually returns to find his wife has remarried, was a huge publishing success, selling over 60,000 copies in less than five months.

Alfred Tennyson
"Dedication to the Queen"
from *Poems*, seventh edition
London: Moxon, 1851.
From the collection of Patrick Scott.



Tennyson was appointed Poet Laureate in November 1850 and, though he dutifully wrote "official" poems for royal occasions, transformed the position, previously held by Wordsworth and Southey, from a political sinecure into an active platform for contributing to

public opinion. Displayed with Tennyson's dedicatory poem is a late-Victorian water-color portrait of the Queen by an unknown artist (*Scott collection*).

Alfred Tennyson

"The Grandmother's Apology"

from *Once A Week* 1.3 (16 July 1859): 41-43.



Throughout his later career, Tennyson's poems often appeared first in periodical form, as here, with an illustration by the Pre-Raphaelite artist John Everett Millais. As with many of Tennyson's works, "The Grandmother's Apology" was quickly reprinted in an American periodical — in this case, *Harper's Weekly*.

TENNYSON'S ARTHURIAN EPIC

The fourth section focuses on Tennyson's role as an Arthurian poet and his lifelong interest in reworking the medieval legends of King Arthur and the Round Table for nineteenth-century readers. Exhibit items include early nineteenth-century editions of the Arthurian sources he read as a boy, the various publication stages of Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* (published in sections over a forty-three-year period), and one of several contemporary fine illustrated editions. The major theme is the Victorian use of historical and literary tradition.

Alfred Tennyson

"Morte D'Arthur"

from *Poems*, fourth edition

London: Edward Moxon, 1845.



Originally written in 1833, this, the first of Tennyson's Arthurian idylls, was published as a separate poem in his two-volume *Poems* (1842). The poem was colored by the death of another Arthur, Arthur Hallam, and expresses Tennyson's personal sense of loss as well as his more general understanding of historical changes as "The old order changeth, yielding place to new." For the 1842 edition, Tennyson framed off the poem with a modern story, which disparagingly talks about epic and medieval romance as outmoded, like the newly discovered dinosaurs. Shown here is Daniel Maclise's illustration for the 1866 "New Edition" of Tennyson's poems.

Sir Thomas Malory

The Byrth, Lyf, and Actes of Kyng Arthu; of His Noble Knyghtes of the Rounde Table, Theyr Merveyllous Enquestes and Aduentures, Thachyeung of the Sanc Greal; and in the End le Morte Darthur, with the Dolorous Deth and Departying Out of Thys World of Them Al

introduction by Robert Southey

London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1817.



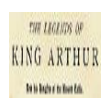
Among the books available to the young Tennyson in his father's library at Somersby Rectory were the then-recent editions of Malory's Arthurian stories. His fascination with Arthur and his knights began long before any of the *Idylls* were written.

James T. Knowles

The Legends of King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table, fourth edition

London: Strahan, 1868.

From the collection of Patrick Scott.



This brief prose guide to the Arthurian legends, published with Tennyson's knowledge and cooperation, is here open to Knowles's prefatory account of how the sequence should be interpreted, where he called on Tennyson to complete a full epic-length Arthuriad. Knowles subsequently became founder of the influential Metaphysical Society, editor of the magazine *The Nineteenth Century*, and architect of Tennyson's Gothic Revival house, Aldworth, in Surrey.

Sharon Turner

The History of the Anglo-Saxons, fourth edition
London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1823.



This early scholarly discussion of the Arthurian sources was available to young Tennyson in the Rectory library. Turner's *History* discusses, as Tennyson does, how an Arthurian reality had been transmitted and disfigured by later accounts, and Turner's footnotes illustrate the rapidly-growing range of early historical source-materials on Arthurian topics that hedged Tennyson around as he wrote. The image shows Turner's prefatory "Map of the Territory Inhabited by the Ancient Saxons North of the Elbe."

Alfred Tennyson

Idylls of the King
London: Edward Moxon, 1859.



In the early 1850's, Tennyson renewed his interest in the Arthurian tales and read more widely in Arthurian sources. This first groups of four "marriage" idylls — "Enid," "Vivien," "Elaine," and "Guinevere" — explores various ideas of chivalric love and marital infidelity, paralleling the focus of contemporary novelists.

Alfred Tennyson

Elaine
illustrated by Gustave Dore
New York: Cassell, Petter and Galpin, 1867.



Gustave Dore, who also illustrated Dante and Coleridge as well as producing a notable series of illustrations of life among the London poor, was one of the most famous Victorian illustrators.

Alfred Tennyson

"Dedication" [to Prince Albert]
in *Idylls of the King*, fourth edition
London: Moxon, 1862.

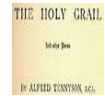


Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's German husband, died in November 1861. Victoria was greatly comforted in her bereavement by Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, and this dedicatory poem portraying Albert as the modern embodiment of the Arthurian ideal further strengthened the friendship between the Laureate and the monarch.

Alfred Tennyson

The Holy Grail and Other Poems

London: Strahan, 1870 [December 1869].



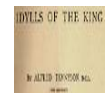
The volume saw the first book publication of "The Coming of Arthur," "The Holy Grail," and "Pelleas and Ettarre," along with revisions to "Morte d'Arthur," "The Passing of Arthur," and other poems. Opposite the title-page is a note arranging the four 1859 poems and the four new ones to form an eight-poem sequence. The 1870 expansion of the Arthurian sequence added a new religious significance to the sexual-marital focus of the 1859 group, and the new frame-poem, "The Coming of Arthur," introduces Tennyson's meditations on the religious significance of figures like Arthur who are half-historical, half-mythic.

Alfred Tennyson

Idylls of the King

London: Strahan, 1869 [January 1870].

From the collection of Patrick Scott.



This relatively uncommon one-volume edition displays how Tennyson wanted the poems to be arranged at this point in the development of the *Idylls*.

Alfred Tennyson

Gareth and Lynette, etc.

London: Strahan, 1872.



Completing the ten-book version of Tennyson's *Idylls*, this volume included the first book publication of "Gareth and Lynette" and "The Last Tournament." In rounding out his sequence to fit the epic demand for ten or twelve books, Tennyson emphasized the traditional, chivalric aspect of the Arthurian stories; "Gareth and Lynette" in particular, about a young boy who leaves home to get a knightly education at Camelot, seems to be addressed in part to Tennyson's son Hallam, then going away to school for the first time to Marlborough College.

Alfred Tennyson
"To the Queen"

from *The Works of Alfred Lord Tennyson, Poet Laureate*
London: Kegan Pual, 1878.

The pessimistic epilogue to the *Idylls*, first published in the Imperial Library Edition of 1872, balances the more idealistic opening dedication to Prince Albert. In it, Tennyson expresses his fear that Arthur's Britain was "a sinking land, / Some third-rate isle half-lost among her seas" and acknowledges how he has rewritten Malory's "adulterous" tale to make a spiritual allegory for Victorian readers. This important collected edition, with a text revised by the author, initiated a relationship between Tennyson and his final publisher, Macmillan.

Alfred Tennyson
"Balin and Balan"

in *Tiresias and Other Poems*
London: Macmillan, 1885.



The addition of this last idyll, and the division of "Geraint and Enid" into two separate poems, transformed the ten-book version into the final twelve-book epic. In "Balin and Balan," the story of two brothers locked in fratricidal strife, Tennyson was expanding on very brief source material from Malory, and many critics see this dark central addition to the sequence as psychologically the most personal of Tennyson's *Idylls*.

TENNYSON AND THE VICTORIAN PUBLISHING REVOLUTION

The fifth section focuses on Tennyson as a publishing phenomenon. Groups of works show his extensive dramatic writing, his relationship with the American publishing house of Ticknor and Fields, his reluctant republication of long-suppressed early poems to combat unauthorized piracies, his steady stream of new poetry, and his final canonization in the posthumous Eversley Edition (1907-1908). The theme here is Tennyson's representative status as the first major English poet to make his career following the revolutionary nineteenth-century developments in book production and marketing.

Partly because he wanted a higher return from these increased sales to meet an increasingly expensive lifestyle, partly because the trusted original owner Edward Moxon had died in 1858, Tennyson became dissatisfied with his long-time publishers Moxon and transferred his works to a series of other publishers — Alexander Strahan (1869-73), Henry S. King (1874-78), Charles Kegan Paul (1879-83), and finally, from 1884, the eminently respectable firm of Macmillan & Co.

Sometimes book-collectors complain that Tennyson's later works are bibliographically uninteresting because they all look very much the same. Throughout the Victorian period, each title was printed from stereotype plates, and the plates continued in use even when Tennyson changed from publisher to publisher. Hence, Tennyson's later first editions and the many reprintings that the market required appear increasingly standardized. In fact, however, these similarities may hide many small alterations of text, and these "green Tennyson's," once dismissed as worthless reprints, are now of increasing scholarly significance.

The Dramas

In the 1870's, Tennyson began a series of historical dramas and other plays, initially for the famous actor-manager Henry Irving, aiming to fill the historical gaps in and around Shakespeare's dramatic version of English history. The historical plays called for elaborate and costly staging, and they have seldom been revived since their Victorian productions.

Queen Mary: A Drama

London: Henry S. King, 1875.

First staged with Henry Irving as Philip of Spain and Kate Bateman as Queen Mary in April 1876 at the Lyceum Theater, London.



Harold: A Drama

London: Henry S. King, 1877.

First produced by the Yale University Dramatic Association in 1915.



Becket

London: Macmillan, 1884.



First staged with Henry Irving as Becket and Ellen Terry as Rosamund in February 1893 at the Lyceum Theater, London.

The Cup and The Falcon

London: Macmillan, 1884.

The Cup was first produced by Henry Irving at the Lyceum Theater, London, in January 1881 and *The Falcon* by Hare and Kendal at the St. James's Theater, London, in December 1879.



"The Promise of May"

in *Locksley Hall Sixty Years After, etc.*

London & New York: Macmillan, 1886.

First staged in November 1882 at the Globe Theater, London.



The Foresters, Robin Hood and Maid Marion

London & New York: Macmillan, 1892.

Following a staged reading in London to preserve copyright, *The Foresters* was first performed with John Drew as Robin Hood in March 1892 at Daly's Theater, New York.



Emily Tennyson

List of Tennyson's Literary Income, 1859-65

from June Steffenson Hagen, *Tennyson and His Publishers*

London: Macmillan, 1979.



This handwritten list of Tennyson's receipts from the Moxon firm shows the astonishing impact of Tennyson's income, first from the 1859 *Idylls* and then from *Enoch Arden* in 1864. Tennyson's income from *Enoch Arden* in the first few months alone would have paid even a well-salaried schoolmaster or clergyman for over fifty years.

Tennyson and His American Publishers

Through most of Tennyson's career, British authors could not obtain copyright for their books in the United States, but the prominent Boston publishing firm of Ticknor and Fields took special pride in being Tennyson's "authorized" American publisher. Ticknor's plan for a (pirated) collection of Tennyson's early poems had been one factor in persuading him to prepare the 1842 collection in England, and thereafter Ticknor sent Tennyson occasional payments and received early proofs of his forthcoming books. The images show how Ticknor used Tennyson's written authorization on the title-verso in place of the normal copyright notice. They also include two different publication formats, the standard brown cloth Ticknor used for most publications and one of the small "Blue-and-Gold" giftbook reprints, which Ticknor originally developed especially for Tennyson's works and then used for many other authors.

Alfred Tennyson

The Lover's Tale

London: C. Kegan Paul, 1879.



Tennyson arranged the belated publication of this early narrative poem solely to counteract the several pirated editions already on the market. He had written it as an undergraduate, and it had actually been set in type for his Moxon volume in 1832. At the last minute, Tennyson withdrew it as "too full of faults," though Hallam commented on the cancellation, "You must be point blank mad."

Tennyson's Later Poetic Volumes

By contrast with the mixed reception of Tennyson's plays, his poetry continued to be popular with a wide readership. The later volumes were all collections of shorter works, including popular patriotic ballads like "The Revenge" in the 1880 volume, philosophical poems such as "The Ancient Sage" and "Vastness," and newly-apprehensive political works such as "Locksley Hall Sixty Years After" (important enough politically to be reviewed by the Prime Minister himself, W. E. Gladstone).

Texts shown include *Ballads and Other Poems* (Kegan Paul, 1880), *Tiresias and Other Poems* (Macmillan, 1885), *Locksley Hall Sixty Years After, etc.* (Macmillan, 1886), *Demeter and Other Poems* (Macmillan, 1889), and *The Death of CEnone, Akbar's Dream, and Other Poems*(Macmillan, 1892).

Alfred Tennyson

The Death of CEnone, Akbar's Dream, and Other Poems

London & New York: Macmillan, 1892.

No. 435 of 500 special copies, original white cloth.



This was the last of Tennyson's poetic volumes and is unusual in being published not only in the familiar small green-bound format (above) but also in a special limited larger-format collector's edition. The Stoddart engraving of Tennyson shown here served as the latter's frontispiece.

The Works of Alfred, Lord Tennyson

The Eversley Edition, nine volumes

London: Macmillan, 1907-1907.

From the collection of Patrick Scott.



From the 1860's successive publishers had persuaded the poet to allow his separate works to be issued together as the Cabinet Edition, the People's Edition, the Library Edition, and

so on, but Tennyson held out firmly against the provision of any annotation. After his death, his son, Hallam, Lord Tennyson, gathered Tennyson's final textual correction and scattered comments on the poem for an authorized collected edition, the Eversley edition, shown here. While the text itself has been superseded by modern research, the annotations still represent an important primary source. The first volume is opened to show the frontispiece portrait of Tennyson in 1891 by G. F. Watts.

Edward Hull

Aldworth

from Alfred J. Church,, *The Laureate's Country*
London: Seeley, 1891.



Aldworth House, on the top of the Blackdown Hills in Surrey, was built for Tennyson to the designs of his friend J. T. Knowles as a summer retreat from the vacation crowds near his long-time home Farringford, on the Isle of Wight. Some of the elaborate exterior stonework and interior woodwork reflects Tennyson's description of Arthur's Camelot in *Idylls of the King*.

Alfred Tennyson

Crossing the Bar

from *Demeter and Other Poems*
London: Macmillan, 1889.



This poem (also displayed in its fair-copy manuscript form) grew from one of Tennyson's experiences while waiting for a boat to cross the Solent to his home on the Isle of Wight. Tennyson directed that this poem should always be placed last in any collection of his work. A musical setting was sung at his funeral at Westminster Abbey in 1892 and is still found in some hymnals. The illustration here, "Crossing the Bar," was published in *Punch* on 15 October 1892, nine days after Tennyson's death.

"TIMBUCTOO"

Deep in that lion-haunted inland lies
A mystick city, goal of high emprise.

CHAPMAN

I stood upon the Mountain which o'erlooks
The narrow seas, whose rapid interval
Parts Afric from green Europe, when the Sun
Had fall'n below th' Atlantick, and above
The silent Heavens were blench'd with faery light,
Uncertain whether faery light or cloud,
Flowing Southward, and the chasms of deep, deep blue
Slumber'd unfathomable, and the stars
Were flooded over with clear glory and pale.
I gaz'd upon the sheeny coast beyond, 10
There where the Giant of old Time infix'd
The limits of his prowess, pillars high
Long time eras'd from Earth: even as the Sea
When weary of wild inroad buildeth up
Huge mounds whereby to stay his yeasty waves.
And much I mus'd on legends quaint and old
Which whilome won the hearts of all on Earth
Toward their brightness, ev'n as flame draws air;
But had their being in the heart of Man
As air is th' life of flame: and thou wert then 20
A center'd glory-circled Memory,
Divinest Atalantis, whom the waves
Have buried deep, and thou of later name
Imperial Eldorado roof'd with gold:
Shadows to which, despite all shocks of Change,
All on-set of capricious Accident,
Men clung with yearning Hope which would not die.
As when in some great City where the walls
Shake, and the streets with ghastly faces throng'd
Do utter forth a subterranean voice, 30
Among the inner columns far retir'd
At midnight, in the lone Acropolis,
Before the awful Genius of the place
Kneels the pale Priestess in deep faith, the while
Above her head the weak lamp dips and winks
Unto the fearful summoning without:
Nathless she ever clasps the marble knees,
Bathes the cold hand with tears, and gazeth on
Those eyes which wear no light but that wherewith
Her phantasy informs them. 40

Where are ye
Thrones of the Western wave, fair Islands green?

Where are your moonlight halls, your cedarn glooms,
The blossoming abysses of your hills?
Your flowering Capes, and your gold-sanded bays
Blown round with happy airs of odorous winds?
Where are the infinite ways, which, Seraph-trod,
Wound thro' your great Elysian solitudes,
Whose lowest deeps were, as with visible love,
Fill'd with Divine effulgence, circumfus'd, 50
Flowing between the clear and polish'd stems,
And ever circling round their emerald cones
In coronals and glories, such as gird
The unfading foreheads of the Saints in Heaven?
For nothing visible, they say, had birth
In that blest ground but it was play'd about
With its peculiar glory. Then I rais'd
My voice and cried, "Wide Afric, doth thy Sun
Lighten, thy hills enfold a City as fair
As those which starr'd the night o' the elder World? 60
Or is the rumour of thy Timbuctoo
A dream as frail as those of ancient Time?"

A curve of whitening, flashing, ebbing light!
A rustling of white wings! the bright descent
Of a young Seraph! and he stood beside me
There on the ridge, and look'd into my face
With his unutterable, shining orbs.
So that with hasty motion I did veil
My vision with both hands, and saw before me
Such colour'd spots as dance athwart the eyes 70
Of those, that gaze upon the noonday Sun.
Girt with a Zone of flashing gold beneath
His breast, and compass'd round about his brow
With triple arch of everchanging bows,
And circled with the glory of living light
And alternation of all hues, he stood.

"O child of man, why muse you here alone
Upon the Mountain, on the dreams of old
Which fill'd the Earth with passing loveliness,
And odours rapt from remote Paradise? 80
Thy sense is clogg'd with dull mortality,
Thy spirit fetter'd with the bond of clay:
Open thine eyes and see."

I look'd, but not
Upon his face, for it was wonderful
With its exceeding brightness, and the light
Of the great Angel Mind which look'd from out
The starry glowing of his restless eyes.

I felt my soul grow mighty, and my Spirit
 With supernatural excitation bound 90
 Within me, and my mental eye grew large
 With such a vast circumference of thought,
 That in my vanity I seem'd to stand
 Upon the outward verge and bound alone
 Of full beatitude. Each failing sense
 As with a momentary flash of light
 Grew thrillingly distinct and keen. I saw
 The smallest grain that dappled the dark Earth,
 The indistinctest atom in deep air,
 The Moon's white cities, and the opal width 100
 Of her small glowing lakes, her silver heights
 Unvisited with dew of vagrant cloud,
 And the unsounded, undescended depth
 Of her black hollows. The clear Galaxy
 Shorn of it's hoary lustre, wonderful,
 Distinct and vivid with sharp points of light,
 Blaze within blaze, an unimagined depth
 And harmony of planet-girded Suns
 And moon-encircled planets, wheel in wheel,
 Arch'd the wan Sapphire. Nay--the hum of men, 110
 Or other things talking in unknown tongues,
 And notes of busy life in distant worlds
 Beat like a far wave on my anxious ear.

A maze of piercing, trackless, thrilling thoughts,
 Involving and embracing each with each,
 Rapid as fire, inextricably link'd,
 Expanding momentarily with every sight
 And sound which struck the palpitating sense,
 The issue of strong impulse, hurried through 120
 The riv'n rapt brain; as when in some large lake
 From pressure of descendant crags, which lapse
 Disjointed, crumbling from their parent slope
 At slender interval, the level calm
 Is ridg'd with restless and increasing spheres
 Which break upon each other, each th' effect
 Of separate impulse, but more fleet and strong
 Than its precursor, till the eye in vain
 Amid the wild unrest of swimming shade
 Dappled with hollow and alternate rise
 Of interpenetrated arc, would scan 130
 Definite round.

I know not if I shape
 These things with accurate similitude
 From visible objects, for but dimly now,
 Less vivid than a half-forgotten dream,

The memory of that mental excellence
Comes o'er me, and it may be I entwine
The indecision of my present mind
With its past clearness, yet it seems to me
As even then the torrent of quick thought
Absorbed me from the nature of itself
With its own fleetness. Where is he that borne
Adown the sloping of an arrowy stream,
Could link his shallop to the fleeting edge,
And muse midway with philosophic calm
Upon the wondrous laws, which regulate
The fierceness of the bounding Element?

My thoughts which long had grovell'd in the slime
Of this dull world, like dusky worms which house
Beneath unshaken waters, but at once
Upon some Earth-awakening day of Spring
Do pass from gloom to glory, and aloft
Winnow the purple, bearing on both sides
Double display of starlit wings which burn,
Fanlike and fibred, with intensest bloom;
Ev'n so my thoughts, erewhile so low, now felt
Unutterable buoyancy and strength
To bear them upward through the trackless fields
Of undefin'd existence far and free.

Then first within the South methought I saw
A wilderness of spires, and chrystal pile
Of rampart upon rampart, dome on dome,
Illimitable range of battlement
On battlement, and the Imperial height
Of Canopy o'er-canopied.

Behind

In diamond light upsprung the dazzling cones
Of Pyramids as far surpassing Earth's
As Heaven than Earth is fairer. Each aloft
Upon his narrow'd Eminence bore globes
Of wheeling Suns, or Stars, or semblances
Of either, showering circular abyss
Of radiance. But the glory of the place
Stood out a pillar'd front of burnish'd gold,
Interminably high, if gold it were
Or metal more ethereal, and beneath
Two doors of blinding brilliance, where no gaze
Might rest, stood open, and the eye could scan,
Through length of porch and valve and boundless hall,
Part of a throne of fiery flame, wherefrom
The snowy skirting of a garment hung,

And glimpse of multitudes of multitudes
That minister'd around it--if I saw
These things distinctly, for my human brain
Stagger'd beneath the vision, and thick night
Came down upon my eyelids, and I fell.

With ministering hand he rais'd me up:
Then with a mournful and ineffable smile,
Which but to look on for a moment fill'd
My eyes with irresistible sweet tears, 190
In accents of majestic melody,
Like a swoln river's gushings in still night
Mingled with floating music, thus he spake:

"There is no mightier Spirit than I to sway
The heart of man: and teach him to attain
By shadowing forth the Unattainable;
And step by step to scale that mighty stair
Whose landing-place is wrapt about with clouds
Of glory' of Heaven.* With earliest light of Spring,
And in the glow of fallow Summertide, 200

And in red Autumn when the winds are wild
With gambols, and when full-voiced Winter roofs
The headland with inviolate white snow,
I play about his heart a thousand ways,
Visit his eyes with visions, and his ears
With harmonies of wind and wave and wood,
--Of winds which tell of waters, and of waters
Betraying the close kisses of the wind--
And win him unto me: and few there be

So gross of heart who have not felt and known 210
A higher than they see: They with dim eyes
Behold me darkling. Lo! I have given *thee*
To understand my presence, and to feel
My fullness; I have fill'd thy lips with power.

I have rais'd thee nigher to the spheres of Heaven
Man's first, last home: and thou with ravish'd sense
Listenest the lordly music flowing from
Th' illimitable years. I am the Spirit,
The permeating life which courseth through
All th' intricate and labyrinthine veins 220

Of the great vine of *Fable*, which, outspread
With growth of shadowing leaf and clusters rare,
Reacheth to every corner under Heaven,
Deep-rooted in the living soil of truth;
So that men's hopes and fears take refuge in
The fragrance of it's complicated glooms,
And cool impleachèd twilights. Child of Man,
See'st thou yon river, whose translucent wave,

Forth issuing from the darkness, windeth through
The argent streets o' th' City, imaging 230
The soft inversion of her tremulous Domes,
Her gardens frequent with the stately Palm,
Her Pagods hung with music of sweet bells,
Her obelisks of rangèd Chrysolite,
Minarets and towers? Lo! how he passeth by,
And gulphs himself in sands, as not enduring
To carry through the world those waves, which bore
The reflex of my City in their depths.
Oh City! oh latest Throne! where I was rais'd
To be a mystery of loveliness 240
Unto all eyes, the time is well-nigh come
When I must render up this glorious home
To keen *Discovery*: soon yon brilliant towers
Shall darken with the waving of her wand;
Darken, and shrink and shiver into huts,
Black specks amid a waste of dreary sand,
Low-built, mud-wall'd, Barbarian settlements.
How chang'd from this fair City!"

Thus far the Spirit:
Then parted Heaven-ward on the wing: and I 250
Was left alone on Calpe, and the Moon
Had fallen from the night, and all was dark!

"MARIANA"

from *Poems, Chiefly Lyrical* (London: Effingham Wilson, 1830).

"Mariana in the moated Grange."--*Measure for Measure*.

WITH blackest moss the flowerplots
Were thickly crusted, one and all,
The rusted nails fell from the knots
That held the peach to the gardenwall.
The broken sheds looked sad and strange,
Unlifted was the clinking latch,
Weeded and worn the ancient thatch
Upon the lonely moated grange.
She only said, "My life is dreary,
He cometh not," she said; 10
She said, "I am aweary, aweary;
I would that I were dead!"

II.

Her tears fell with the dews at even,
Her tears fell ere the dews were dried,
She could not look on the sweet heaven,
Either at morn or eventide.
After the flitting of the bats,
When thickest dark did trance the sky,
She drew her casementcurtain by,
And glanced athwart the glooming flats. 20
She only said, "The night is dreary,
He cometh not," she said:
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

III.

Upon the middle of the night,
Waking she heard the nightfowl crow:
The cock sung out an hour ere light:
From the dark fen the oxen's low
Came to her: without hope of change,
In sleep she seemed to walk forlorn, 30
Till cold winds woke the grey-eyed morn
About the lonely moated grange.
She only said, "The day is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,

I would that I were dead!"

IV.

About a stonecast from the wall,
A sluice with blackened waters slept,
And o'er it many, round and small,
The clustered marishmosses crept. 40
Hard by a poplar shook alway,
All silvergreen with gnarled bark,
For leagues no other tree did dark
The level waste, the rounding grey.
She only said, "My life is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;
She said "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

V.

And ever when the moon was low,
And the shrill winds were up an' away, 50
In the white curtain, to and fro,
She saw the gusty shadow sway.
But when the moon was very low,
And wild winds bound within their cell,
The shadow of the poplar fell
Upon her bed, across her brow.
She only said, "The night is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;
She said "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!" 60

VI.

All day within the dreamy house,
The doors upon their hinges creaked;
The blue fly sung i' the pane; the mouse
Behind the mouldering wainscot shrieked,
Or from the crevice peer'd about.
Old faces glimmered through the doors,
Old footsteps trod the upper floors,
Old voices called her from without.
She only said, "My life is dreary,
He cometh not," she said; 70
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

VII.

The sparrow's chirrup on the roof,
The slow clock ticking, and the sound
Which to the wooing wind aloof
The poplar made, did all confound
Her sense; but most she loathed the hour
When the thickmoted sunbeam lay
Athwart the chambers, and the day
Downsloped was westering in his bower.

80

Then, said she, "I am very dreary,
He will not come," she said;
She wept, "I am weary, weary,
Oh God, that I were dead!"

"NO MORE"

from *The Gem: A Literary Annual* (London: W. Marshall, 1831).

OH sad *No More!* Oh sweet *No More!*
Oh strange *No More!*
By a mossed brookbank on a stone
I smelt a wildweed-flower alone;
There was a ringing in my ears,
And both my eyes gushed out with tears.
Surely all pleasant things had gone before,
Lowburied fathomdeep beneath with thee, NO MORE!

"SONNET"

from *Friendship's Offering and Winter Wreath: A Christmas and New Year's Present* (London: Smith, Elder, 1833 [1832]).

CHECK every outflash, every ruder sally
Of thought and speech; speak low, and give up wholly
Thy spirit to mild-minded Melancholy;
This is the place. Through yonder poplar alley,
Below, the blue-green river windeth slowly;
But in the middle of the sombre valley,
The crispèd waters whisper musically,
And all the haunted place is dark and holy.
The nightingale, with long and low preamble,
Warbled from yonder knoll of solemn larches, 10
And in and out the woodbine's flowery arches
The summer midges wove their wanton gambol,
And all the white stemmed pinewood slept above--
When in this valley first I told my love.

PART THE SECOND.

No time hath she to sport and play:
A charmed web she weaves alway.
A curse is on her, if she stay
Her weaving, either night or day, 40
 To look down to Camelot.
She knows not what the curse may be;
Therefore she weaveth steadily,
Therefore no other care hath she,
 The Lady of Shalott.

She lives with little joy or fear.
Over the water, running near,
The sheepbell tinkles in her ear.
Before her hangs a mirror clear,
 Reflecting towered Camelot. 50
And, as the mazy web she whirls,
She sees the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market-girls,
 Pass onward from Shalott.

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

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

PART THE THIRD.

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

The gemmy bridle glittered free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden galaxy.
The bridle-bells rang merrily,
 As he rode down from Camelot.
And from his blazoned baldric slung,
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And, as he rode, his arm our rung,
 Beside remote Shalott. 90

All in the blue unclouded weather,
Thickjewelled shone the saddle-leather.
The helmet, and the helmet-feather
Burned like one burning flame together,
 As he rode down from Camelot.
As often thro' the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
 Moves over green Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glowed. 100
On burnished hooves his war-horse trode.
From underneath his helmet flowed
His coalblack curls as on he rode,
 As he rode down from Camelot.
From the bank and from the river,
He flashed into the crystal mirror,
"Tirra lirra, tirra lirra,"
 Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web: she left the loom:
She made three paces thro' the room: 110
She saw the waterflower bloom:
She saw the helmet and the plume:
 She look'd down to Camelot.
Out flew the web, and floated wide,
The mirror cracked from side to side,

"The curse is come upon me," cried
The Lady of Shalott.

PART THE FOURTH.

In the stormy eastwind straining
The pale-yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complaining, 120
Heavily the low sky raining

 Over towered Camelot:
Outside the isle a shallow boat
Beneath a willow lay afloat,
Below the carven stern she wrote,
 THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

A cloudwhite crown of pearl she dight.
All raimented in snowy white
That loosely flew (her zone in sight,
Clasped with one blinding diamond bright,) 130

 Her wide eyes fixed on Camelot,
Though the squally east-wind keenly
Blew, with folded arms serenely
By the water stood the queenly
 Lady of Shalott.

With a steady, stony glance--
Like some bold seer in a trance,
Beholding all his own mischance,
Mute, with a glassy countenance--
 She looked down to Camelot. 140
It was the closing of the day,
She loosed the chain, and down she lay;
The broad stream bore her far away,
 The Lady of Shalott.

As when to sailors while they roam,
By creeks and outfalls far from home,
Rising and dropping with the foam,
From dying swans wild warblings come,
 Blown shoreward: so to Camelot
Still as the boathead wound along 150
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her chanting her deathsong,
 The Lady of Shalott.

A longdrawn carol, mournful, holy,
She chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her eyes were darkened wholly,

"CENONE"

from *Poems* (London: Moxon, 1833 [1832]).

text from *The Works of Alfred, Lord Tennyson* (London: Macmillan, 1891).

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 10
Stands up and takes the morning: but in front
The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal
Troas and Ilion's column'd citadel,
The crown of Troas.

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

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
For now the noonday quiet holds the hill:
The grasshopper is silent in the grass:
The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,
Rests like a shadow, and the winds are dead.
The purple flower droops: the golden bee
Is lily-cradled: I alone awake. 30
My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love,
My heart is breaking, and my eyes are dim,
And I am all aweary of my life.

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Hear me, O Earth, hear me, O Hills, O Caves
That house the cold crown'd snake! O mountain brooks,
I am the daughter of a River-God,
Hear me, for I will speak, and build up all
My sorrow with my song, as yonder walls 40

Rose slowly to a music slowly breathed,
A cloud that gather'd shape: for it may be
That, while I speak of it, a little while
My heart may wander from its deeper woe.

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
I waited underneath the dawning hills,
Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy-dark,
And dewy-dark aloft the mountain pine:
Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris, 50
Leading a jet-black goat white-horn'd, white-hooved,
Came up from reedy Simois all alone.

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Far-off the torrent call'd me from the cleft:
Far up the solitary morning smote
The streaks of virgin snow. With down-dropt eyes
I sat alone: white-breasted like a star
Fronting the dawn he moved; a leopard skin
Droop'd from his shoulder, but his sunny hair
Cluster'd about his temples like a God's: 60
And his cheek brighten'd as the foam-bow brightens
When the wind blows the foam, and all my heart
Went forth to embrace him coming ere he came.

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

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

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
He prest the blossom of his lips to mine,
And added 'This was cast upon the board,
When all the full-faced presence of the Gods
Ranged in the halls of Peleus; whereupon 80
Rose feud, with question unto whom 'twere due:
But light-foot Iris brought it yester-eve,
Delivering that to me, by common voice

Elected umpire, Herè comes to-day,
Pallas and Aphroditè, claiming each
This meed of fairest. Thou, within the cave
Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest pine,
Mayst well behold them unbeheld, unheard
Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of Gods.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.

90

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

100

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.

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

110

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.

Still she spake on and still she spake of power,
'Which in all action is the end of all;
Power fitted to the season; wisdom-bred
And throned of wisdom--from all neighbour crowns
Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand
Fail from the sceptre-staff. Such boon from me,
From me, Heaven's Queen, Paris, to thee king-born,
A shepherd all thy life but yet king-born,
Should come most welcome, seeing men, in power
Only, are likest Gods, who have attain'd

120

Rest in a happy place and quiet seats 130
Above the thunder, with undying bliss
In knowledge of their own supremacy.'

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

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

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

Yet, indeed,
If gazing on divinity disrobed
Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of fair,
Unbias'd by self-profit, oh! rest thee sure
That I shall love thee well and cleave to thee,
So that my vigour, wedded to thy blood,
Shall strike within thy pulses, like a God's, 160
To push thee forward thro' a life of shocks,
Dangers, and deeds, until endurance grow
Sinew'd with action, and the full-grown will,
Circl'd thro' all experiences, pure law,
Commeasure perfect freedom.'

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

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die. 170

Italian Aphroditè beautiful,
Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian wells,
With rosy slender fingers backward drew
From her warm brows and bosom her deep hair
Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat
And shoulder: from the violets her light foot
Shone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded form
Between the shadows of the vine-bunches
Floated the glowing sunlights, as she moved.

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die. 180
She with a subtle smile in her mild eyes,
The herald of her triumph, drawing nigh
Half-whisper'd in his ear, 'I promise thee
The fairest and most loving wife in Greece.'
She spoke and laugh'd: I shut my sight for fear:
But when I look'd, Paris had raised his arm,
And I beheld great Herè's angry eyes,
As she withdrew into the golden cloud,
And I was left alone within the bower;
And from that time to this I am alone, 190
And I shall be alone until I die.

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

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

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
I wish that somewhere in the ruin'd folds,
Among the fragments tumbled from the glens,
Or the dry thickets, I could meet with her 220
The Abominable, that uninvited came
Into the fair Peleïan banquet-hall,
And cast the golden fruit upon the board,
And bred this change; that I might speak my mind,
And tell her to her face how much I hate
Her presence, hated both of Gods and men.

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

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

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
Hear me, O earth. I will not die alone,
Lest their shrill happy laughter come to me
Walking the cold and starless road of death
Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love
With the Greek woman. I will rise and go
Down into Troy, and ere the stars come forth
Talk with the wild Cassandra, for she says 260
A fire dances before her, and a sound

Rings ever in her ears of armed men.
What this may be I know not, but I know
That, wheresoe'er I am by night and day,
All earth and air seem only burning fire."

"MORTE D'ARTHUR"

from *Poems*, 4th edition (London: Moxon, 1845).

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd
Among the mountains by the winter sea;
Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
Had fallen in Lyonesse about their Lord,
King Arthur: then, because his wound was deep,
The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
A broken chancel with a broken cross,
That stood on a dark strait of barren land. 10
On one side lay the ocean, and on one
Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
"The sequel of to-day unsolders all
The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep
They sleep--the men I loved. I think that we
Shall never more, at any future time,
Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,
Walking about the gardens and the halls 20
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
I perish by this people which I made,--
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come again
To rule once more--but let what will be, be,
I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm
That without help I cannot last till morn.
Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
Which was my pride: for thou rememberest how
In those old days, one summer noon, an arm 30
Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
Holding the sword--and how I row'd across
And took it, and have worn it, like a king:
And, wheresoever I am sung or told
In aftertime, this also shall be known:
But now delay not: take Excalibur,
And fling him far into the middle mere:
Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring me word."

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere:
"It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus, 40
Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm.
A little thing may harm a wounded man.

Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word."

So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he stept
And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He, stepping down
By zigzag paths, and juts of pointed rock, 50
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth
And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt:
For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,
Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth work
Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled, as he stood,
This way and that dividing the swift mind, 60
In act to throw: but at the last it seem'd
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd
There in the many-knotted water-flags,
That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.
So strode he back slow to the wounded King.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
"Hast thou perform'd my mission which I gave?
What is it thou hast seen, or what hast heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag." 70

To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale:
"Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy name,
Not rendering true answer, as beseem'd
Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight:
For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again
As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing 80
I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me word."

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,
Counting the dewy pebbles, fixed in thought;
But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,

How curiously and strangely chased, he smote
His palms together, and he cried aloud,

"And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
Should thus be lost forever from the earth, 90
Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.
What good should follow this, if this were done?
What harm, undone? deep harm to disobey,
Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.
Were it well to obey then, if a king demand
An act unprofitable, against himself?
The King is sick, and knows not what he does.
What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath 100
And rumours of a doubt? but were this kept,
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,
Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
Saying, 'King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake;
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps
Upon the hidden bases of the hills.'
So might some old man speak in the aftertime
To all the people, winning reverence.
But now much honour and much fame were lost."

So spake he, clouded with his own conceit, 110
And hid Excalibur the second time,
And so strode back slow to the wounded King.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily:
"What is it thou hast seen, or what hast heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"I heard the water lapping on the crag,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds."

To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath:
"Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me! 120
Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye
That bow'd the will. I see thee what thou art,
For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all,
Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt;
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,

And the third time may prosper, get thee hence: 130
But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands."

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

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath:
"Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out: what is it thou hast heard, or seen?" 150

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems
Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.
Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him;
But when I look'd again, behold an arm,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
That caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him 160
Three times, and drew him under in the mere."

And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard:
"My end draws nigh; 't is time that I were gone.
Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,
And bear me to the margin; yet I fear
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die."

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere 170
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found not words,
Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,

O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,
And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs.

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

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

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them; and descending they were ware
That all the decks were dense with stately forms
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream--by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold--and from them rose
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony 200
Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
Or hath come, since the making of the world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, "Place me in the barge,"
And to the barge they came. There those three Queens
Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.
But she that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his hands,
And call'd him by his name, complaining loud 210
And dropping bitter tears against his brow
Striped with dark blood: for all his face was white
And colourless, and like the wither'd moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops
Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls--
That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the daïs-throne--were parch'd with dust;
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,

Mix'd with the knightly growth that fringed his lips. 220
So like a shatter'd column lay the King;
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,
From spur to plume a star of tournament,
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere:
"Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go?
Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes?
For now I see the true old times are dead,
When every morning brought a noble chance, 230
And every chance brought out a noble knight.
Such times have been not since the light that led
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
But now the whole ROUND TABLE is dissolved
Which was an image of the mighty world;
And I, the last, go forth companionless,
And the days darken round me, and the years,
Among new men, strange faces, other minds."

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

For what are men better than sheep or goats 250
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.
But now farewell. I am going a long way
With these thou seest--if indeed I go--
(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)

To the island-valley of Avilion;
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow, 260
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard-lawns
And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail

Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hull
Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away.

"ULYSSES"

from *Poems, In Two Volumes* (London: Moxon, 1842).

IT little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.
I cannot rest from travel: I will drink
Life to the lees: All times I have enjoy'd
Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those
That loved me, and alone, on shore, and when
Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades 10
Vext the dim sea: I am become a name;
For always roaming with a hungry heart
Much have I seen and known; cities of men
And manners, climates, councils, governments,
Myself not least, but honour'd of them all;
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
Gleams that untravell'd world whose margin fades 20
For ever and forever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!
As tho' to breathe were life! Life piled on life
Were all too little, and of one to me
Little remains: but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things; and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
And this gray spirit yearning in desire 30
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

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

There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail:
There gloom the dark, broad seas. My mariners,
Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought with me--
That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads--you and I are old;
Old age hath yet his honour and his toil; 50
Death closes all: but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:
The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'T is not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds 60
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will 70
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

"DEDICATION TO THE QUEEN"

from *Poems*, 12th edition (London: Moxon, 1858).

REVERED, beloved--O you that hold
A nobler office upon earth
Than arms, or power of brain, or birth
Could give the warrior kings of old,

Victoria,--since your Royal grace
To one of less desert allows
This laurel greener from the brows
Of him that utter'd nothing base;

And should your greatness, and the care
That yokes with empire, yield you time
To make demand of modern rhyme
If aught of ancient worth be there; 10

Then--while a sweeter music wakes,
And thro' wild March the throstle calls,
Where all about your palace-walls
The sun-lit almond-blossom shakes--

Take, Madam, this poor book of song;
For tho' the faults were thick as dust
In vacant chambers, I could trust
Your kindness. May you rule us long, 20

And leave us rulers of your blood
As noble till the latest day!
May children of our children say,
'She wrought her people lasting good;

'Her court was pure; her life serene;
God gave her peace; her land reposed;
A thousand claims to reverence closed
In her as Mother, Wife, and Queen;

'And statesmen at her council met
Who knew the seasons when to take
Occasion by the hand, and make
The bounds of freedom wider yet 30

'By shaping some august decree,
Which kept her throne unshaken still,
Broad-based upon her people's will,
And compass'd by the inviolate sea.'

"THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE"

from *Maud and Other Poems* (London: Edward Moxon, 1855).

1.

HALF a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
"Charge," was the captain's cry;
Their's not to reason why,
Their's not to make reply,
Their's but to do and die,
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

10

2.

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

3.

Flash'd all their sabres bare,
Flash'd all at once in air,
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wonder'd:
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Fiercely the line they broke;
Strong was the sabre-stroke:
Making an army reel
Shaken and sundere'd.
Then they rode back, but not,
Not the six hundred.

20

30

4.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
 Volley'd and thunder'd;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
They that had struck so well
Rode thro' the jaws of Death,
Half a league back again,
Up from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
 Left of six hundred.

40

5.

Honour the brave and bold!
Long shall the tale be told,
Yea, when our babes are old--
 How they rode onward.

"DEDICATION"

from *Idylls of the King* (London: Strahan, 1869).

THESE to His Memory--since he held them dear,
Perchance as finding there unconsciously
Some image of himself--I dedicate,
I dedicate, I consecrate with tears--
These Idylls.

And indeed He seems to me
Scarce other than my own ideal knight,
'Who reverence his conscience as his king;
Whose glory was, redressing human wrong;
Who spake no slander, no, nor listen'd to it;
Who loved one only and who clave to her--'
Her--over all whose realms to their last isle, 10
Commingled with the gloom of imminent war,
The shadow of His loss drew like eclipse,
Darkening the world. We have lost him: he is gone:
We know him now: all narrow jealousies
Are silent; and we see him as he moved,
How modest, kindly, all-accomplish'd, wise,
With what sublime repression of himself,
And in what limits, and how tenderly;
Not swaying to this faction or to that;
Not making his high place the lawless perch 20
Of wing'd ambitions, nor a vantage-ground
For pleasure; but thro' all this tract of years
Wearing the white flower of a blameless life,
Before a thousand peering littlenesses,
In that fierce light which beats upon a throne,
And blackens every blot: for where is he,
Who dares foreshadow for an only son
A lovelier life, a more unstain'd, than his?
Or how should England dreaming of *his* sons
Hope more for these than some inheritance 30
Of such a life, a heart, a mind as thine,
Thou noble Father of her Kings to be,
Laborious for her people and her poor--
Voice in the rich dawn of an ampler day--
Far-sighted summoner of War and Waste
To fruitful strifes and rivalries of peace--
Sweet nature gilded by the gracious gleam
Of letters, dear to Science, dear to Art,
Dear to thy land and our, a Prince indeed,
Beyond all titles, and a household name, 40
Hereafter, thro' all times, Albert the Good.

Break not, O woman's-heart, but still endure;
Break not, for thou art Royal, but endure,
Remembering all the beauty of that star
Which shone so close beside Thee, that ye made
One light together, but has past and leaves
The Crown a lonely splendour.

May all love,
His love, unseen but felt, o'ershadow Thee,
The love of all Thy sons encompass Thee,
The love of all Thy people comfort Thee,
Till God's love set Thee at his side again!

"A WELCOME"

(London: Moxon, 1863).

SEA-KINGS' daughter from over the sea,

Alexandra!

Saxon and Norman and Dane are we,
But all of us Danes in our welcome of thee,

Alexandra!

Welcome her, thunders of fort and of fleet!
Welcome her, thundering cheer of the street!
Welcome her, all things youthful and sweet,
Scatter the blossom under her feet!
Break, happy land, into earlier flowers!
Make music, O bird, in the new-budded bowers!
Welcome her, welcome her, all that is ours!
Warble, O bugle, and trumpet, blare!
Flags, flutter out upon turrets and towers!
Flames, on the windy headland flare!
Utter your jubilee, steeple and spire!
Clash, ye bells, in the merry March air!
Flash, ye cities, in the rivers of fire!
Welcome her, welcome the land's desire,

10

Alexandra!

Sea-kings' daughter as happy as fair,
Blissful bride of a blissful heir,
Bride of the heir of the kings of the sea,
O joy to the people and joy to the throne,
Come to us, love us and make us your own:
For Saxon or Dane or Norman we,
Teuton or Celt, or whatever we be,
We are each all Dane in our welcome of thee,

20

Alexandra!

"THE HIGHER PANTHEISM"

from *The Holy Grail and Other Poems* (London: Strahan, 1870).

THE sun, the moons, the stars, the seas, the hills and
the plains--
Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of Him who reigns?

Is not the Vision He? tho' He be not that which He
seems?
Dreams are true while they last, and do we not live in
dreams?

Earth, these solid stars, this weight of body and limb,
Are they not sign and symbol of thy division from
Him?

Dark is the world to thee: thyself art the reason
why;
For is He not all but thou, that hast power to feel
'I am I?'

Glory about thee, without thee; and thou fulfillst
thy doom,
Making Him broken gleams, and a stifled splendour
and gloom.

10

Speak to Him thou for He hears, and Spirit with
Spirit can meet--
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands
and feet.

God is law, say the wise; O Soul, and let us rejoice,
For if He thunder by law the thunder is yet His voice.

Law is God, say some: no God at all, says the fool;
For all we have power to see is a straight staff bent in
a pool;

And the ear of man cannot hear, and the eye of man
cannot see;
But if we could see and hear, this Vision--were it not
He?

"TO THE QUEEN"

from *The Works of Alfred Lord Tennyson, Poet Laureate* (London: Kegan Paul, 1878).

O LOYAL to the royal in thyself,
And loyal to thy land, as this to thee--
Bear witness, that rememberable day,
When, pale as yet, and fever-worn, the Prince
Who scarce had pluck'd his flickering life again
From halfway down the shadow of the grave,
Past with thee thro' thy people and their love,
And London roll'd one tide of joy thro'all
Her trebled millions, and loud leagues of man
And welcome! witness, too, the silent cry, 10
The prayer of many a race and creed, and clime--
Thunderless lightnings striking under sea
From sunset and sunrise of all thy realm,
And that true North, whereof we lately heard
A strain to shame us 'keep you to yourselves;
So loyal is too costly! friends--your love
Is but a burthen: loose the bond, and go.'
Is this the tone of empire? here the faith
That made us rulers? this, indeed, her voice
And meaning, whom the roar of Hougoumont 20
Left mightiest of all peoples under heaven?
What shock has fool'd her since, that she should speak
So feebly? wealthier--wealthier--hour by hour!
The voice of Britain, or a sinking land,
Some third-rate isle half-lost among her seas?
There rang her voice, when the full city peal'd
Thee and thy Prince! The loyal to their crown
Are loyal to their own far sons, who love
Our ocean-empire with her boundless homes
For ever-broadening England, and her throne 30
In our vast Orient, and one isle, one isle,
That knows not her own greatness: if she knows
And dreads it we are fall'n.--But thou, my Queen,
Not for itslef, but thro' thy living love
For one to whom I made it o'er his grave
Sacred, accept this old imperfect tale,
New-old, and shadowing Sense at war with Soul
Rather than that gray king, whose name, a ghost,
Streams like a cloud, man-shaped, from mountain peak,
And cleaves and cromlech still; or him 40
Of Geoffrey's book, or him of Malleor's one
Touch'd by the adulterous finger of a time
That hover'd between war and wantonness,
And crownings and dethronements: take withal

Thy poet's blessing, and his trust that Heaven
Will blow the tempest in the distance back
From thine and ours: for some are scared, who mark,
Or wisely or unwisely, signs of storm,
Waverings of every vane with every wind,
And wordy trucklings to the transient hour, 50
And fierce or careless looseners of the faith,
And Softness breeding scorn of simple life,
Or Cowardice, the child of lust for gold,
Or Labour, with a groan and not a voice,
Or Art with poisonous honey stol'n from France,
And that which knows, but careful for itself
And that which knows not, ruling that which knows
To its own harm: the goal of this great world
Lies beyond sight: yet--if our slowly-grown
And crown'd Republic's crowning common-sense, 60
That saved her many times, not fail--their fears
Are morning shadows huger than the shapes
That cast them, not those gloomier which forego
The darkness of that battle in the West,
Where all of high and holy dies away.

"CROSSING THE BAR"

from *Demeter and Other Poems* (London: Macmillan, 1889).

SUNSET and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
And turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;

10

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.