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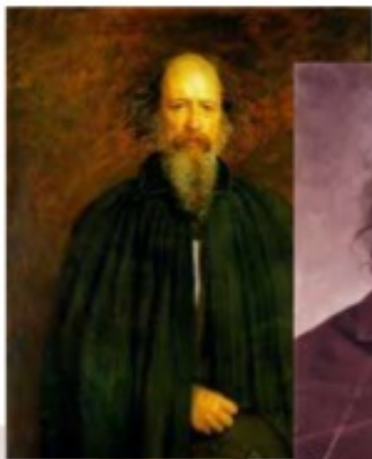
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Alfred ,Lord Tennyson

1809-1892



Tennyson Quick Facts

- Victorian era British writer, novelist, poet.
- Poet Laureate of the UK during much of Queen Victoria's reign.
- Remains one of the most popular poets in the English language.
- Works include, **“Crossing The Bar,”** **“The Eagle”** **“In Memoriam.”** , **“Ulysses”** , **“Idylls of the King”** **“Tears, Idle Tears”** and **“Break, Break, Break”**

Life in Full

The success of his 1842 Poems made Tennyson a popular poet, and in 1845 he received a **Civil** List (government) pension of £200 a year, which helped relieve his financial difficulties; the success of "**The Princess**" and **In Memoriam** and his appointment in 1850 as Poet Laureate finally established him as the most popular poet of the Victorian era.



Literary Contributions of Alfred Lord Tennyson

- Alfred's poetry brought a new sense of metrical variety, rich descriptive imagery, and exquisite verbal melodies to literature.
- Not only did his writing reflect upon the Victorian Era, but they reflected upon himself. His poetry is easily understood by any generation.

Crossing The Bar

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
Turns again home.
Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;
For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Fate
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.



Crossing the bar

- **Title**: “Crossing The Bar” : Entering into a new persona
- **Paraphrase**: The ocean & tide with sunsets crossing spirits crossing over into heaven.
- **Connotations**:
 - “Sunset & evening star”= transition.
 - “Put out to sea” & “When I embark”= dying.
 - “Flood”= Noah and the ark. “Pilot”= God.
- **Attitude**: Sadness but without mourning- pride in death, acceptance to meet God. [Not Afraid!]
- **Theme**: Death be not afraid, for the ocean brings new tides of life.

In Memoriam

- Tennyson's greatest poem
- Published in 1850
- Represents his struggle with Hallam's death and with the new developments in astronomy, biology, and geology that were diminishing man's stature in the universe.
- After publication of this poem, Tennyson was named Poet Laureate.
- Purpose – To explore the depths of grief and to commemorate the loss of a friend

Selected text

Strong Son of God, immortal
Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy
face,
By faith, and faith alone,
embrace,
Believing where we cannot
prove;

Thine are these orbs of light and
shade;
Thou madest Life in man and
brute;
Thou madest Death; and lo, thy
foot
Is on the skull which thou hast
made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:
Thou madest man, he knows not

Thou seemest human and divine,
The highest, holiest manhood,
thou.

Our wills are ours, we know not
how;
Our wills are ours, to make them
thine.

Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease
to be:

They are but broken lights of
thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than
they.

We have but faith: we cannot
know;

For knowledge is of things we
see

And yet we trust it comes from

“In Memoriam” — TPCASTT

- **Title:**

Def-In memory of; as a memorial to.

- **Paraphrase:**

Alfred Lord Tennyson employs the imagery of natural elements in order to portray his feelings and emotions after the death of his close friend, Arthur Henry Hallam.

- **Connotations:**

In the line “Nature, red in tooth and claw”, Tennyson questions Man’s trust in God’s love even after witnessing the brutality of nature. “Be blown about the desert dust, Or sealed within the iron hills?” declares that life is useless and has no purpose

- **Attitude:**

The attitude of the poem is mourning and questioning about God

- **Shifts:**

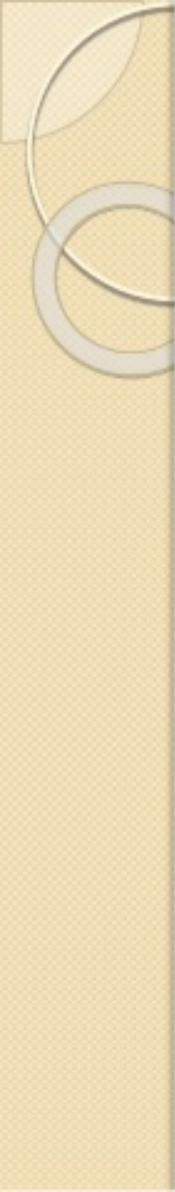
Throughout the poem Tennyson goes from questioning God to questioning nature and then to question Man.

- **Title (After Reading):**

“In Loving Memory of Hallam

- **Theme:**

The theme is about nature, God, mourning and his best friend Arthur Hallam.



Comparison

The Poet vs. Time Era

- The Victorian Era was a major time of change and upheaval.
- Alfred's poetry reflected more of his personal melancholy and included mixtures of social and religious doubts from the Victorian Era.
- Alfred was able to write poems in many different styles and genres.
- He allowed the breakthrough into *modern/contemporary* literature.

Ulysses

It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
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
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.

Analysis

- **Blank Verse:** The poem is written in blank verse or unrhymed iambic pentameter.
- **Dramatic Monologue:** The dramatic monologue is a poetic form in which the speaker of the poem is a character, distinct from the poet, addresses a silent listener, revealing his or her character, in a certain situation.

The Victorian period is the high point of this form. It is commonly used by Tennyson, Robert Browning, Matthew Arnold, and others.

Ulysses is spoken by Ulysses, addressing an unidentified listener or his fellow mariners, expressing his discontent with living without adventures.

- **Stanza form:** The poem is divided into three stanzas, or groups of lines, coinciding with the division of thought.
- **First stanza (lines 1-32):** Ulysses is speaking to himself expressing his dissatisfaction with his idle life and his longing for his former life of adventure.
- **Second Stanza (lines 33-43):** Ulysses speaks to an unidentified listener about his son.
- **Third Stanza (lines 44-70):** Ulysses is speaking to his old crew about the need to go again to the sea.

Idylls of the King

- Large-scale epic poem that occupied the second half of his career.
- Uses the Arthurian legend to construct a vision of the rise and fall of civilization
- Tennyson's most extensive social vision.
- Two parts : "the last tournament" and "the passing of "Arthur"

Tears ,idle tears

- Tennyson was inspired to write "Tears, Idle Tears" upon a visit to [Tintern Abbey](#) in [Monmouthshire](#) , an abbey that was abandoned in 1536
- the poem was about "the passion of the past, the abiding in the transient"
- "Tears, Idle Tears" is noted for its lyric richness, and for its tones of paradox and ambiguity—especially as Tennyson did not often bring his doubts into the grammar and symbolism of his works.
- The ambiguity occurs in the contrasting descriptions of the tears: they are "idle", yet come from deep within the narrator; the "happy autumn-fields" inspire sadness.

Tears , idle tears

Tears, idle tears, I know not what
they mean,

Tears from the depth of some
divine despair

Rise in the heart, and gather to the
eyes,

In looking on the happy autumn-
fields,

And thinking of the days that are no
more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering
on a sail,

That brings our friends up from the
underworld,

Sad as the last which reddens over
one

That sinks with all we love below
the verge;

So sad, so fresh, the days that are

Ah, sad and strange as in dark
summer dawns

The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd
birds

To dying ears, when unto dying eyes

The casement slowly grows a
glimmering square;

So sad, so strange, the days that are
no more.

Dear as remembered kisses after
death,

And sweet as those by hopeless
fancy feign'd

On lips that are for others; deep as
love,

Deep as first love, and wild with all
regret;

O Death in Life, the days that are no



Break, Break, Break

- The poem is an elegy that describes Tennyson's feelings of loss after Arthur Hallam died and his feelings of isolation while at Mablethorpe, Lincolnshire.
- The poem is minimalistic in terms of detail and style.



Break, Break, Break

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

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

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

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