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Tennyson's In Memoriam; an introduction and analysis

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THESIS
TENNESSEE IN MURAL ART: INTRODUCTION AND ANALYSIS.

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ANALYSIS OF IN MEMORIAM.

Sec. I. Famous Elegiac Poems.

I. In elegiac poetry there is always a vital interest, for:
   A. It deals with human problems.
   B. It introduces us to superhuman elements.

II. In Memoriam is one of the elegiac masterpieces.

III. The best introduction to the study of In Memoriam is a survey of several of the other great elegies. The following are chosen:
   A. The Iliad.
   B. Spenser's Astrophel.
   C. Greek Elegies.
      1. The first Idyll of Theocritus.
      2. The thirtieth Idyll of Oron.
      3. The third Idyll of Moschus.
   D. Milton's Lycidas.
   E. Shelley's Adonais.
   F. Arnold's Thyrsis.

Sec. II. Occasion of In Memoriam.

I. The historic friendship between Hallam and Tennyson, which was begun at Cambridge Univ., later became the occasion of In Memoriam.

II. This friendship led to the engagement of Arthur Hallam and Emily Tennyson, the poet's sister.

III. The tragic death of Arthur Hallam, on Sept. 15, 1833, made a profound impression on both Tennyson and his sister.

IV. In Memoriam appeared anonymously in 1850.

Sec. III. Sources of In Memoriam.

I. It is difficult to trace all the sources of the poem.

II. It is, however, possible to indicate some of the more important ones.
   A. In the general scheme of the poem Tennyson was influenced by:
      1. The Sonnets and Canzone of Petrarch.
      2. Dante's Divine Comedy.
      3. The Sonnets of Shakespeare.
      4. The general writings of several other less notable poets, as: Byron, Donne, Shelley.
   B. Of the metre and stanza structure Tennyson believed himself the originator.
Sec. IV. Structure of *In Memoriam*.

I. Tennyson’s own statement makes it clear that:
   A. A formal, mechanical unity of structure was not intended.
   B. The three Christmas eves mark off three natural divisions of the poem.

II. There is a deeper and more significant unity than that of mere mechanical structure, for
   A. Tennyson obeys consciously the great, unchanging laws of art.
   B. He reveals in his perfect unconscious art that gift that only the Gods can give.

Sec. V. Method of *In Memoriam*.

I. *In Memoriam* is a supreme elegiac poem.
   A. It is free from pastoral elements.
   B. The poet assumes an intimate personal attitude.
   C. The different events of the friendship are related in a peculiarly appealing manner.
   D. In the hands of the artist, such a method of treatment is wonderfully successful. In other hands it would probably fail.

II. *In Memoriam* is a notable memorial of friendship.

III. *In Memoriam* is an exposition of immortality and the future life of the soul.
   A. The poet struggles through the way of suffering up to a larger faith.
   B. The Prolog gives an Epitome of the struggle and fore-shadows the general development of the theme.
   C. In the poem itself, the development of the thought can be traced step by step.
      1. The simple untried faith of the early days of life introduces the main poem.
      2. A great sorrow destroys this.
      3. The unrestrained tumult of grief succeeds this.
      4. The voices of Nature assuage this somewhat, and bring to the soul the calm of despair.
      5. The dreamlike, unreal sensation of being able to grasp the meaning and extent of the loss follows.
      6. Vivid memories of the old, happy life together and conjured up.
      7. The poet begins to think deeply about the deep things of faith and the future life.
      8. The first Christmas eve brings a sense of mystery and control.
      9. The Lazarus poem shows that an actual wrestling with the great mysteries has begun.
     11. The poet desired his friend to be near.
     12. The cruelty of Nature depresses him for a time.
13. The second Christmas brings a sense of calm and control.
14. It is possible to hold communion with the dead.
15. The highest faith is won by struggle.
16. At the third Christmas, the sense of calm is still deeper.
17. He resolves to mingle with his fellow men in helpful relationships.
18. The new faith in God and the future life has become firmly established.

IV. In Memoriam is an idealizing of love.

V. In Memoriam is an outlook on a great and good world future.
Tennyson's In Memoriam: An Introduction and Analysis.

I. Famous Elegiac Poems.

"To the thoughtful mind, whatever is human has imperishable interest and attraction. But above and beyond the human lies the superhuman—the worlds invisible and yet to come."—W. F. Warren.

The human interest is ever predominant in elegiac poetry, even though it may be the verse of an age long past. Many of the problems of that age are quite different from ours. A certain portion of its hopes and fears no longer have power to thrill us. But its verse has an irresistible fascination. The poets are still the real rulers of earth, and in elegiac verse there are elements of peculiar appeal.

Its human interest is so vital that we cannot escape it. We see portrayed the deep emotions of the human heart. They are the same emotions that stir our hearts today. We enter almost unconsciously into a state of sympathy and response.

"But beyond and above the human lies the superhuman! In the realm of elegiac verse this is indeed true. Even the Greek poets had some of this feeling for the superhuman. It was not deepened and refined, as it is in more modern verse; we could not expect it to be. The great things develop slowly. In the later expressions of elegiac poetry there is a majestic sweep of thoughts which reach out to the worlds invisible and yet to come."

In Tennyson's In Memoriam we find revealed a deep intimate knowledge of human values. We find, too, an all-powerful consciousness of things unseen, a noble "instinct of the invisible". The poem is a sublime achievement. It rightly deserves all the attention it has received from the English speaking world, for it is a classic in literature. More than that, it is a classic of the soul. Its outer form is faultless. Its spiritual message is a voice from the great deep.

In preparing ourselves for a study of In Memoriam, we may well survey a few of our earlier elegiac poems. The poems chosen for such a survey include the Middle English poem, The Pearl; Spenser's Astrophel; Milton's Lycidas; Shelley's Adonais; and Arnold's Thyrsis. For the sake of clearness, we may note in a general way, in each of these, the occasion, form and structure, method of treatment, literary value and influence. A short discussion of the Greek Pastoral Elegy is also introduced.

The Pearl is a Middle English poem of uncertain date and authorship. It belongs to some part of the fourteenth century. (1). The manuscript of which The Pearl forms a part is at the British Museum and is bound up with two other productions. The part containing The Pearl, Clenessa, Intience, and Gawain, was written by one and the same hand, in small sharp characters, often hard to read.

and decipher. (1)

The poem is generally accepted as an elegy, although a contrary view is set forth by Schofield. (2)

According to the interpretation generally accepted, the poet laments his lost Pearl, a little daughter who died when only two years old. The poem begins in an exalted lyrical strain, expressing deep sense of loss. "I pine with heart in unforget" (3). Yet even at the beginning of the poem, mingled with all the sense of sorrow, there is the hope of final peace and triumph suggested. At length the poet sleeps, and to comfort him in his agonizing sorrow, there comes a vision of the Pearl in all the glory of the heavenly country. At first he feels that the Pearl is his again in the old relation of tender companionship, but she rebukes him as Beatrice rebuked Dante. She shows him "how his trouble may become the very voice of God quieting his soul, and revealing to him the vision of endless peace. He listens to her description of the heavenly life and at length sees the vision of it. In the glory that bursts upon his sight he hardly misses his Pearl who has now withdrawn from him. Before him unfold in order the splendors of the heavenly city, surpassing in beauty and number the imagination of man." (4)

When he awakes, he finds himself in the grip of the old despair for a moment, but for a moment only. The heavenly vision has taught him peace and service, and the anticipation of a heavenly glory in the coming life.

In structure the poem presents one hundred stanzas, reminding us of Dante's one hundred cantos, composed of twelve iambic lines, octosyllabic, with a rhymed scheme ababcdababcd.

"The hundred stanzas fall into twenty groups, each group consisting of five stanzas of a common refrain." (5)

The diction is energetic. "Here is throughout the poem a feeling for the sublime aspects of Nature. The theme is treated with a depth of moral earnestness. Along with this we find "a glittering splendor displayed in bewildering confusion." (6)

3. The Pearl, Jewett's Translation, p. 3.
4. The Pearl, Jewett's Translation, p. x. ff.
5. Osgood, p. xlv.
6. Osagood, p. XX.
The method of treatment, as suggested above, resembles that of the Divine Comedy. It is probable that the Divine Comedy, the Fourteenth Eclogue of Boccaccio, and the poetry of Chaucer had considerable influence on the writer of the Pearl.

As a work of literature the Pearl ranks high. It has the charm of dignified simplicity. Throughout the century it has not lost its power to appeal to the heart. The unknown poet deserves to rank with the significant names of literature.

"Thy life is like a shadow fled; Thy place we know not, nor degree; The stock that bore thee, sank that bred; Yet shall thy name be sung and said, Poet of wonder, pain, and peace, Hold high thy nameless laurelled head, Where Dantes dwells with Beatrice! (1)

The distinctive influence of the Pearl is hard to trace. It has been, to some extent at least, a shaper of literary expression. Perhaps even more significantly it has played a part in moulding human thought and feeling.

The occasion of Spenser's Astrophel was the death of Sir Philip Sidney, that pattern of chivalry and knightly valor. He perished while making a daring attack, with his little arm, on the walls of Zutphen.

The poem contains forty-one stanzas of which three are introductory. Within the main poem is the Lay of Clarinda, purporting to be the lament of Astrophel's sister. This contains sixteen stanzas. The rhyme scheme throughout is ababc. The metre is iambic pentameter.

Five other poems follow, all closely related to the first. The genuineness of their authorship is a matter of dispute, but they all show a similarity of material and treatment. The Mourning Muse of Thespyis contains one hundred ninety-five iambic hexameter lines, with a somewhat complicated rhyme scheme. An eclogue upon the death of Sir Philip Sidney, Knight, etc., is a dialogue of one hundred sixty-two lines, with a rhyme scheme similar to the preceding. An elegie, or friend's passion for his Astrophell, contains thirty-nine stanzas, with a structure like those of the main poem, iambic tetrameter lines, and a rhyme scheme ababcc. An epitaph upon the right honorable Sir Philip Sidney, knight: Lord governor of Flushing, contains fifteen four line stanzas with iambic pentameter lines and a rhyme scheme like that of In Memoriam, abab. This poem is followed by another of the same, containing ten four line stanzas with the rhyme scheme abab. The first and third lines are iambic hexameter, the second and fourth are iambic heptameter.

The method of treatment is pastoral. The "Gentle Shepherd borne in Ardey of gentlest race that ever Shepherd bore", is wounded by a "cruel beast of most accursed brood". His fellow shepherds try in vain to save his life. His "loved less" grieves over him bitterly and at length falls dead by his side.

(1) Jevett, p. 7.
'The Gods which all things see the same behold
And pitying this pair of lovers drew
Transformed them to lie in the field,
Into the clover that in both red and blue.
It first grows red, and to blue both fade
Like Astrophel, which there into the tree."

In the lay of Clorinda the phalic hieroglyphy of death and immortality is taken up. This contrasts vividly with the primitive pastoral treatment in the first part.

Compared with some of the later elegies, the *Astrophel* would seem to be of less permanent value. But it is significant as being one of our English elegies which are in the direct line of literary descent from the old Greek elegies. *Spenser* adopted the pastoral treatment for the Shepherd's Calendar. Then later, he wished to write the *Innent* for Sidney he turned to the same form. Hence the *Astrophel* becomes a distinct step in the evolution.

Before considering in detail the remainder of the modern *Lycidas* for the introductory survey of Milton, it will be necessary to examine a little more closely the nature of the Greek pastoral elegy, even at the expense of a short digression.

The pastoral elegy dates from the first *Idyll* of Theocritus. "Music which the whispering pine makes to the murmuring fountains! Theocritus has left us only one elegy, but this is immortal. The lament is so pastoral that it is easy to lose sight of the elegiac features. One is tempted to think of this time as early by the siftings of rustic shepherds rather than of a dirge to commemorate the time "when Darphius passed away" Dion used the form but once, when he sang the dirge of Adonis, (Idyll IV) wounded even to the death by a fierce wild beast.

Roschus turned to the form of the pastoral elegy when he sang his master Dion in Idyll III. A touching bit of personal tribute occurs.

"My transcendent soul
For thee, my friend! Could I like Orpheus true
Odysseus or Alcides pass below
To glenly pleasure, how quickly could I go!
To see and hear thee sing for Dis."

These three elegies are the great prototypes of the modern elegy. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries this form of pastoral treatment was used in the Romance tongues. From Spenser on, down through Lycidas, Jonson, Thyrus, the line of descent of the elegy in English has continued unbroken.

Milton's Lycidas was occasioned by the death of Edward King, drowned off the Welsh coast Aug. 19, 1637. He was a friend of Milton at Christ College. A fellowship to which Milton might justly have had a greater claim was awarded to King, but their friendship, nevertheless, continued uninterrupted.

*Lycidas* is a poem of one hundred ninety-three iambic pentameter lines, with a complicated rhyme scheme, closing with an epilogue in perfect ottava
The treatment throughout is that of the Greek pastoral except for one brief passage, 1.175ff. This passage introduces the Christian element of immortality secured "through the dear night of him that walked the waves".

The literary value of Lycidas is, beyond all question, supreme. "To be able to read Lycidas with enjoyment is a test of one's capacity for enjoying poetry."

Adonais, Shelley's famous lament for Keats, is another in the great series of pastoral elegies. It was composed in the spring of 1821 at the baths of Pisa. Keats had died the February before, and thus shortly after his death appeared Shelley's great lament. In Shelley's own preface to the lament, he speaks in words of liquid fire, as he answers the carping critics of the Quarterly Review, whose "savage criticism on his Adonais produced the most violent effect on [Keat's] mind".

The poem contains fifty-five Spenserian stanzas. Several of these are of rare beauty, almost too wonderful for comprehension.

In the point of treatment, Adonais reaches the greatest height attained by the elegies that belong to the old succession. There is nothing in it in the way of sheer beauty of expression to equal Lycidas, but there is progress in the thought. In the earlier elegies we have had a narrower field. The pastoral element in them is strong, the personal sorrow felt, "the joys recalled, the griefs lamented, the hopes and desires rehearsed, material conceptions." But Shelley hurries us out upon the heights where the air is keen and stimulating, where the horizon is so vast that our gaze grows wide-eyed and eager, and where the more minute details of life are lost as the shifting pageantry of night and day is unrolled in dazzling nearness." Having reached this highest point he transcends it and gives us an outlook far cut beyond the limited range of the old pastoral. The pastoral has indeed reached its highest development. Henceforward a great personal elegy must seek new forms of expression.

Peace! peace! he is not dead, he doth not sleep. He hath weakened from the dream of life-
'Tis we, who, lost in stormy visions, keep
With phantoms an unprofitable strife,
And in mad trance strike with our spirit's knife
Invulnerable nothings.—Adonais, XXIX.

Matthew Arnold's Thyrsis was written to commemorate the author's friend, Arthur Hugh Clough, who died in Florence in 1861. It contains twenty-four ten line stanzas. Each line except the sixth is iambic pentameter. The sixth is iambic trimeter. The rhyme scheme is abcbdee.

The treatment is pastoral. The poem follows the example of the Greek elegies even more closely than does Lycidas or Adonais. It shows much the same spirit.

1. Shelley's Adonais and Masquer, edited by Roberts, p. 44
Of the value of the poem, Lowden says, "Thur is---- is perfect in its classical grace and its association of personal feeling with the loneliness of an English landscape." (1)

As a development of elegiac verse, it falls below Lucian, and Adonias. The spirit is that of the odd Greek poetry, beautiful and graceful, yet it lacks far-seeing vision which characterizes the later elegiac poems. It gives touching expression to personal sorrow, but the permanence of the higher values is not made clear. Its haunting beauty attracts, but does not comfort.

II. OCCASION OF IN MEMORIAM.

One of those intense friendships that are sometimes formed among young men began in October of 1828. The place was Cambridge University. The friends were Arthur Hallam and Alfred Tennyson. The two had much in common, and a close intimacy between them soon grew up.

In 1832, Arthur Hallam graduated, and took up the study of law. He lived in his father's house in London and during this time frequently visited Tennyson at Somersby.

"How often, hither wandering down,
My Arthur found your shadows fair! [LXXIX-2.]

In 1831, Tennyson's sister, Emily, and Arthur Hallam pledged mutual love. Hallam's father wished to delay the marriage. The prospects of his son were much brighter than those of Emily Tennyson. She was the daughter of a large family, comparatively poor. The members of it were entire strangers to him, except as they were known to him by what his son had to say about them. And in the case of a friendship like this, Arthur Hallam would hardly be in a position to give an absolutely unprejudiced opinion.

The older Hallam "sawed a promise from his son that he should not see the woman of his choice until after a year had elapsed. At the end of that time, Hallam would have attained his majority. In turn, the father promised that if the two lovers then remained in the same state of mind, no objection should be raised to their entering into a formal engagement. Furthermore, while not permitted to see each other in the interval, they were not debarred from corresponding. The prohibition of actual meeting was hardly one to be accepted by the lovers with thankfulness." (2).

The love of the two young people continued in spite of their separation. When the year was up, Arthur Hallam went promptly to Somersby. After remaining a few weeks, he left as the fiancé of Emily Tennyson.

In the spring of 1833, Tennyson and his sister Mary visited in London and for the first time met the Hallam family. The sister had looked forward to the meeting with some degree of anxiety, but it proved satisfactory on both sides.

In the summer of the same year the younger Hallam traveled on the Continent with his father. His health had not been of the best for some time, but no serious fears were entertained. His sudden death

2. Lounsbury, p. 596.
from a stroke of paralysis, on Sept. 15, came as a complete surprise. Both Willy Tennyson and her brother were prostrated when the tidings reached them. The light seemed to have entirely gone out.

"The body was taken down to Trieste, and from that place (the 'Italian shore' of In Memoriam!) brought over to England" (1). Its last resting-place was to be in the church of Clevedon, "a Somersetshire village, some sixteen miles southwest of Bristol (Arthur Tennyson's mother was a descendant of Sir Abraham Alton of Clevedon Court.) The body lies in a vault in the transept, on the west wall of which there is a memorial tablet—which the poet was wont to picture to himself when he was far away in his own Lincolnshire home" (2).

"When on my bed the moonlight falls,
I know that in thy place of rest,
By that broad water of the west,
There comes a glory on the walls."

(LXVII.)

In Memoriam itself shows, as nothing else can, how often Tennyson's thoughts were with his friend. Yet the poem, published in 1850, was growing up during this period of seventeen years. Much of its transcendent worth is no doubt due to the abundant time and thought given to it.

Two weeks before the poet's marriage, In Memoriam made its first appearance. "The title page was blank save for the words 'In Memoriam!' and the name of the publisher and the place and date of publication. The verso, go bore simply the inscription

**IN MEMORIAM**

A. H. H.

obit MDCCXXXIII.

These words gave no hint to anyone, outside of a very limited circle, of the personality of the man in whose memory the work had been written. There was no attempt to hide the authorship of the work celebrating him; equally there was no attempt to reveal it." (3)

The publisher took pains to inform the public, in indirect ways, who the author was. At the outset, lore feared that the poem would not become widely popular. This expectation was short-lived. In Memoriam had a wide acceptance, and rapidly passed through four editions.

It is interesting to note that the manuscript of In Memoriam came near being lost just before the time of publication. Tennyson had left it at his lodgings in London on returning to the Isle of Wight. He sent word to a friend to search the house for it. Through his efforts, in spite of the remonstrance of the landlady— the manuscript was recovered and forwarded to the poet. (4)

**III. SOURCES OF IN MEMORIAM.**

The sources of a broad and deep flowing river are numerous.
1. The Laureate's Country, p. 35.
2. Ibid., p. 39
3. Lounsbury, p. 616.
4. Ibid., 519.
and hard to trace. It may be very easy to name the principal sources, and, possibly, many of the tributary ones. But to name all the springs and fountain heads that provide the supply of a great stream—this is manifestly impossible.

When we turn to In Memoriam, we find that we are in the same situation while it is possible to trace a few of the principal sources, we can by no means discover them all.

Of the general scheme of the poem, John charter ton Collins says: "(1) it seems to have been suggested by the series of sonnets and canzoni dedicated by Petrarch to the memory of Laura di Lade. Tonysyon, it is true, struck deeper chords, and embraced a far wider range of subjects than Petrarch; his themes and his treatment are alike, are once more subtle, more profound and more complex. But the main lines in which the work runs are the lines in which Petrarch's odes and canzoni run." (1)

The expression of grief, the recording of happy memories, the sense of the dead friend's spiritual presence; these are common to both Tennyson and Petrarch. The questioning and speculations and on the great problems of life and death do not occur in Petrarch.

One of the leading thoughts in In Memoriam is finding peace through perfect conformity to God's will. This is also the basic idea in Dante's Divine Comedy. It is evident that in this respect Tennyson was influenced by Dante to a considerable extent.

The sonnets of Shakespeare undoubtedly had some influence on the shaping of In Memoriam. Tennyson's direct allusion to Shakespeare is significant in this connection.

"I loved thee, spirit, and love, nor can
The soul of Shakespeare love thee more." (III.)

The Prologue is "obviously a transfusion, so to speak, of some verses of Lord Herbert's brother, George Herbert, who appears to be a favorite with the Laureate." (2) There are traces of Herbert's influence in other parts of the poem.

Collins also points out numerous allusion to Byron, Donne, Shakespeer, Shelley and others. (3) Some of these references are more direct and apparent than others. Some contain almost the identical thought and phrasing of an earlier poet. Others only suggest to the reader that they have been gleaned from another's field.

Many of the great poems with which Tennyson was familiar would undoubtedly have some influence on his thought and expression. His master mind would unconsciously incorporate into its own reservoir the wealth of others. There is in this process no element of literary theft. It can hardly be termed borrowing, even. In such matters, a poet like Tennyson may be said to have the right of eminent domain.

There are, then, the distinctly traceable influences of Dante, Shakespeare, and Herbert; and the less apparent, but enriching and significant influences of a host of others.

Tennyson believed himself the originator of the metre and stanzic structure of *In Memoriam.* He made his own verse, acted in the memoir, as authority for this statement. "As for the metre of "In Memoriam," I had no notion till 1860 that Lord Moir of Chearbury had written his occasional verses in the same metre. I believed myself the originator of the metre until after "In Memoriam" was cut. Then someone told me that Ben Jonson and Sir Philip Sidney had used it." (1)

Collins thinks that Tennyson was indebted to Horace for the swing and cadence of his verse structure. (2). In one of Tennyson's earlier poems we find this verse form used in connexion with other forms. Bradley gives a list of poems from other writers in which the same metrical structure occurs. (3). It may be possible that in the case of the metre, an unconscious influence, similar to that noted in the general scheme of the poem, helped to make and shape the form which *In Memoriam* assumed.

**IV. STRUCTURE OF *IN MEMORIAM.***

Tennyson himself has given us a rather detailed statement of what he considered *In Memoriam* to be.

"It must be remembered," writes my father in 1863, "that this is a poem, not an actual biography. It is founded on our friendship, on the engagement of Arthur Hallam to my sister, on his sudden death at Vienna just before the time fixed for their marriage, and his burial at Clevedon Church. The poem concludes with the marriage of my youngest sister Celia. It was meant to be a kind of Divine Comedy, ending with happiness. The sections were written at many different times, and as the different phases of our intercourse came to my memory and suggested them. I did not write them with any view of laying them into a whole, or for publication, until I found that I had written so many. The different moods of sorrow as in a dream, are dramatically given, and my conviction that fear doubts and sufferings will find answer and relief only through Faith in a God of Love. "I" in not always the author speaking of himself, but the voice of the human race speaking through him. After the death of J. H. H., the divisions of the poem are made by the First Christmas Eve (Section XXVIII.), the Second Christmas Eve (III. and IV.) and the Third Christmas Eve (CV. and CV. etc.) I myself did not see Clevedon till years after the burial of J. H. H. Jan. 3rd, 1824, and the then in later editions of "In Memoriam" I altered the word 'Chancel!' which was the word used by Mr. Hallam in his *Memoir,* to 'dark church!' As to the localities in which the poem was written, none were written in Lincolnshire, London, Essex, Gloucestershire, Wales, anywhere that I happened to be." (4)

Two things at least are apparent from this statement of Tennyson. He did not at first intend to make the various short poems into a connected whole; but after such a whole had been built up, the three Christmas eves are intended by the poet to mark off its main divisions.

1. Memoir Vol I. 305.
2. Collins 95
3. Bradley p. 67
4. Memoir p. 306
In the light of the poet's own statement, we are not surprised to find that there is no absolute structural unity, so far as the mechanics of the poem are concerned. This has led some to conclude that there is no unity of any kind. This is far from the truth. It is evident to even the superficial observer that there is in the poem a real unity of thought. To this prevailing thought is given also a logical development. So it appears that in the most significant sense, the poem has unity. The fact that this is not a theoretical, mechanical sort of unity is not relevant.

We may note five aspects of the poem. It is an elegy; as memorial of friendship; a treatment of the great questions of immortality and the future life; an idealizing of love; an interpretation of the far-off divine world future. In each one of these different aspects of the piece it is clear that the development of the thought is orderly and progressive. There is a still more orderly and harmonious advance in the process of introducing one after the other of these different phases.

The sense and realization of this fundamental unity grows upon one as he concentrates his attention more and more on the significance of the message of In Memoriam. It is a unity that means more than mere oneness. That form of unity is extremely simple. But this unity is a form that is attained by bringing into absolute order and harmony a diversity of thoughts, emotions, volitions, that only a consummate artist could unify. And it is perfect of its kind. The art which creates the unity is both conscious and unconscious. Even though some may deny that the external form is coherent, it must be admitted that there are strong indications of conscious art. It is not everything, but it is something, and something worthwhile and to be heeded. "A use in measured language lies". This conscious art, this unwavering obedience to eternal rules and principles, stands as a lasting rebuke to all who venture to assume that the poet has no laws to obey.

The unconscious art is the gift of the gods. It is seldom, if ever, given to those who knowingly violate the fixed rules of art. It is often not granted even to those who fulfill every requirement of technique. But in Tennyson it is combined in rare degree with perfection of technique.

Next to be noted is Tennyson's comment on the divisions as marked off by the three Christmas eves. Even though he did not originally think of weaving the separate lyrics into a complete whole, he succeeded most wonderfully in doing so when at last he essayed the task. Only a shallow observer would accuse him of leaving the finished work incoherent or incomplete. It is not wholly surprising that one should get this wrong impression from a desultory reading of parts of the poem. For there are many of the sections that seem to be complete in themselves. It would thus seem impossible that so many of these could be united into a coherent structure. But they are so united. The materials are such as only an master could use. But when the master handles them his finished product is above reproach.

Between the three Christmas eves it is easy to trace the progress of the seasons. Spring, summer, autumn, winter, are all definitely marked off. Notable occasions and reminiscences are frequently introduced, and they are always in the right place. The chronology is in no way violated.

This is a noteworthy sign of the perfect form which the poem assumes.
This chronologica] arrangement alone would effectively counterbalances the suggestions of looseness of structure which in some places do occur.

The presence of related groups of lyricis makes a favorable impression. The descriptions of the three Christmas eves do just the work that they apparently were intended to do. They make it impossible for it to be truthfully said that In Memoriam is only a series of disconnected poems.

V. METHOD OF TREATMENT.

In Memoriam is justly entitled to be called an elegy. In common with the examples noted in the introduction, it is a tribute paid to one whom death has taken. Like Lycidas and Adonais, "the subject of the elegy is a young man with a life full of generous promise, whose untimely death cuts him off from a career which his powers would have made famous." (1)

Unlike Lycidas and Adonais, there is nothing of the pastoral in In Memoriam. The high water mark of the pastoral had been reached, and a supremely great elegy had to be cast in some other form.

So we find the poet speaking in the first person, without any disguise. He writes of the many things which entered into that consummate friendship. He writes of them with sympathy and understanding. He remembers the experiences and events, which, each in its own place, strengthened and deepened that friendship. These things seem very trivial to the outsider. But to the participants in the friendship it is far otherwise. These apparently trivial things have weighty significance. It is part of the beauty of friendship that these common experiences are so transfigured and remembered.

They are doubly full of meaning: in a case where the friend has been taken away by a tragic death. So we find a wonderful expression of those intimate relations in the account of Byron's personal regard for the one whom he mourns. The sorrow of his loss is accentuated by the remembrance of the old life of fellowship together.

"The path by which we twin did go,
Which led by tracks that pleased us well,
Through four sweet years across and fall,
From flower to flower, from snow to snow.

And we with singing cheered the way,
And crowned with all the seasons lent,
From April on to April went,
And glad at heart from May to May.

"But where the path we walked began
To slant the fifth autumnal slope,
As we descended, following hope,
There sat the shadow feared of men;

"Who brok' our fair companionship,
And spread his mantle dark and cold;
And wrapped thee formless in the fold,
And dalled the murmur on thy lip;

"And more thee where I could not see
Nor follow, though I walk in haste;
And think that somewhere in the waste,
The shadow sits and waits for me."

(XXII.)

He ever and again treats this path in memory. It leads him through the gladness of the springtime, the glory of summer, along through the gathering of the harvests to Christmas and the coming of the New Year. Again and again we are told of the incidents and scenes which entered into their association together. This direct personal treatment makes an appeal far more effective than the pastoral allegory could. In the hands of many writers this simple method of treatment would have been a failure. In the hands of the master, it was a supreme success.

In Memoriam is, beyond any question, a surpassingly great elegy. There are also many things in it which transcend the realm of the elegy. The elegy is not necessarily a memorial of friendship. It may be a tribute which is formal and even cold. But In Memoriam is a glowing memorial of friendship as well as a sublime elegy.

Numerous great writers have celebrated their friendships in verse. Shakespeare, in his sonnets, is the most conspicuous example. It is rather striking that Tennyson makes so direct an allusion to him.

"I loved thee, spirit, and love, nor can
The soul of Shakespeare love thee more."

(LVI.)

In some respects, In Memoriam, as a memorial of friendship, ranks above the Sonnets, just as it ranks above the other elegies, when considered from the elegiac point of view. The love and friendship of Shakespeare's Sonnets is of earth, of time and place. The love of In Memoriam is idealized. Only in a higher sphere does it find its entire consummation. This kind of treatment is found of course in various shorter poems, but these fall short of great conception of In Memoriam and its perfect execution.

If the poem be a supreme example both of the elegy and the memorial of personal friendship, it is no less supreme as a study of the future life and the immortality of the soul. The conclusions reached are well outlined in the prologue. This was written in 1849, after most of the other section. It contains in germ at least, the fundamental ideas of the poem.

One of the most significant things about this part of the treatment is that it does not represent the thoughts and feeling of one who has never struggled. It gives us, on the other hand, the story of one whose faith has been challenged, almost lost, indeed; but who, after the agony of the conflict, finds his way to a larger faith.

This faith, which is the real keynote of the prologue, is a faith based not on sight, but on insight. "Knowledge is of things we see". This faith is an instinct of the soul. It believes in the benevolent justice of a higher power, the power that having created man, does not leave him in the dust. It sees a perfection and wholeness in the universe that includes and overshadows all our own little systems. It inspires him to trust that his lost friend lives in God; and that friend is all the worthier to be loved. In the last stanza there is a
sublime expression of man's weaknesses, an overpowering sense of his shortcomings. This element in the prologue is strikingly true to life. The poet's vision of eternal justice and perfection makes him feel as if it makes any thoughtful man feel, that he must ask forgiveness for all his "wild and wandering cries!" for his many failures to live true to his instinct of the Eternal and the Invisible.

Yet he does not remain in this condition of humiliation, this abandon of despair. The manhood in him rises to the occasion, and finds expression in the last words of the stanza, "In thy wisdom make me wise!"

The development of these commanding thoughts in the body of the poem itself is gradual. There is growth of character, development of soul. There are many elements which at first appear to be subordinate. A more careful analysis shows that they all have their fitting place. They are not unlike the minor incidents of life. They lead up to the more significant ones, for one thing. For another, they furnish a background for those, and give to the completed picture a balance, a sense of harmony and order, a depth of vista.

In the opening section the poet peaks of the simple untried faith of his earlier life. It was a precious thing and highly valued, but was not powerful enough to bear him safely through the crises of life. Then one of these came, he was left helpless. It seemed to him that all faith had gone, that the universe was in the relentless grip of blind merciless forces. (Sec. III.) For a time he can think of nothing but his overwhelming loss and sorrow. In the early autumn of section XI, this grief has become calmer and more restrained, yet still intense and pungent. It is the calm of despair. The voices of Nature have brought a message to the inner life. The soul may hear this message reluctantly, but it does make some response to it. It finds for itself at least something of calm and restraint. This suggests that later other influences may come, which will make yet further changes.

In section XIII, we find another step in the development. The sorrow now seems at times unreal and like a dream. That is an experience common to us all. We first yield ourselves to the wild abandonment of sorrow; then to calm despair; then to this ghastly feeling of unreality, when at intervals we feel that there has been no break in the old relations, that there has been no loss and no unhappiness.

This feeling is succeeded by vivid memories of the old life together. (XXIII). Then the poet wonders if this life was really so pleasant as memory depicts it.

In XXVII there comes a suggestion of real thinking about the great things of faith and the future life.

"Tis better to have loved and lost
Then never to have loved at all!"

The first Christmas, (XXVIII.) brings a new sense of mystery and control. It is suggested that perhaps in spite of gloom and darkness about, all is well.

The Lazarus poem, (XXXI.) shows that an earnest wrestling with the great mysteries has begun.
In LXXIV and XXV a positive hope asserts itself. It may be that
the voice of death in III, was after all a lying voice, and that life
does indeed live forevermore.

We find in I the expression of the poet's desire that his friend may
be near to help and sympathize in the deep, significant experiences of
his life. In II, he is momentarily oppressed by the realization of his
unworthiness. He fears that some secret sin of his, some baseness of
soul, may cause his friend to love him less. But his deeper insight soon
gives the lie to this fear, for they of the other life "see with larger,
other eyes than ours, to make allowance for us all."

Faith is really beginning to grow. It may be that
'somehow good
will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Dorsets of doubt and taints of blood;

That nothing walks with aimless foot;
That not one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete."  
(LIV. 1-2)

This is not yet felt as a certainty, it is a hope, a possibility.
The struggle is still a bitter one. Many things are still dark and hard
to understand. But even though the world's great altars slope
through darkness, it is through darkness up to God. It is possible to
trust, even though faintly, the larger hope. (LIV.)

In LVI the poet is, for the time, discouraged by the ruthless cru- 

ty of Nature. In LVII and LVIII he recovers his self-control.

He learns from the vision in LXIX that the voice of faith, though
hard to understand, is far truer than the clamors of the street and the
noisy town.

At the second Christmas time, (LXXVIII) he is stronger. He is still
groping in the dark, but is is with a new feeling. "Calmly fell [the
Christmas eve!"

In LXXIV he feels that he may even hold communion with the dead.
This thought is developed to considerable length in several of the follow-
ing sections.

In XCII there is a fine expression of the truth that the highest faith
is won by struggle.

"He sought his doubts and gathered strength,
He would not make his judgment blind;
He faced the spectres of his mind
And laid them; thus he came at length

"To find a stronger faith his own;
And power was with him in the night,
Which makes the darkness and the light,
And dwells not in the light alone."
(XCVI.)

1. Robertson, Analysis of In Memoriam. Comment on Sec. 102.
(in early edition)
"The night before the daybreak a vision presents the thought, that, his friend going with us, the spirit of all that is wise and good and graceful, smiles with us on the life voyage. (1) (Foot note on preceding page)"

The third Christmas (CV) is a time of thoughtfulness and loneliness, but there is a transcendent spirit of deep calm. The outward forms of joy are absent, the lighted candles and the glowing tapers, but a clear pale light kindles in the heart at sunrise, and it speaks of hope.

In CVIII there is a significant stage of progress. The poet resolves to mingle with his fellow men in helpful, sympathetic relationships, and to learn the lessons that sorrow has to teach.

In CXXVI begins the full intense expression of the faith that has come to its own through doubt and struggle. The remainder of the poem is given to the development of this idea. In CXXI it finds particularly happy expression. The star that set in darkness and sadness, rises in glory.


Sweet Hesper-Hesper, double name
For what is one, the first, the last,
Thou, like my present and my past,
Thy place is changed; thou art the same."  
(CXII.)

This confident assurance grows stronger and stronger.
"And all is well, though faith and form
Be sundered in the night of fear;
Well rows the storm to those that hear
A deeper voice across the storm."  
(CXXVI.)

The soul has become convincingly assured of the truth of the future life and immortality. It sees far more clearly than before what life means anyway, what its attitude should be as it faces the experiences of the strange life journey. It is possible to trust

"With faith that comes of self-control
The truths that never can be proved
Until we close with all we loved,
And all we flow from, soul in soul."

To have seen the In Memoriam is an glory, a memorial of friendship, an exposition of immortality. It is also a treatment of the idealizing of love.

"Had In Memoriam been only wailing for love, it would have perished even if its work has ever been better than it is; but since it tells of loss passing into love, since it describes death passing into life, it is sure to live." (4)

"It is a song of victory and life rising out of death and death; of peace which has forgotten doubt; of joy whose mother was sorrow but who has turned his mother's heart into delight. The conquest of love, the moral triumph of the soul over the worst blows of fate, over the outward forces of Nature, over its own ill that is the motive of the poems which endure; which, like the great lighthouses, stand and shine through the terms of time." (2)
In Memoriam recalls love as a twofold thing; it is a joy of earth, and as such, to be sought and enjoyed. But this joy of earth is subject to interruption, and even to absolute termination. He has had in his own life the sad experience of this. For a time, it completely overwhelmed him. Then it led him to study into the relations of life more carefully. At length he came to see that there is another love, or at least a higher development of love, than that which is only of earth and time and place. This is the love which unites soul to soul, and soul to the lastling spiritual values of the universe. The progress of this thought is parallel with the ejaculation of the future life. It may not be necessary to separate the two phases of the poem very distinctly.

These four qualities of the poem are all of commanding interest and value. It would hardly seem that there could to any deeper significance to it than has been already pointed out. But Genung(1) declares that the culminating interest of the work is its outlook on a great and good world future, that

"far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves."

Genung quotes in this connection the almost parallel passage from Lockeley Hall:

"For Iipt into the future far as human eye could see,
Saw a vision of the world, and all the wonder that could be."

It is perhaps difficult to agree that this is the supreme idea of In Memoriam. Nevertheless, it is a grand thought, and in a certain sense, the consummating one. It is easy to concede this much even though we prefer to hold that the treatment of the future life and the idealizing of love touch the soul at greater depths.

In the New Year poem, CXL, the various elements of this greater and better future are suggested. Many things in the existing order are to be done away. Many new and grander ideals are to be realized.

"Ring out old shapes of foul disease,
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace."

"Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be."

The great and supreme values are love. (CXLVII.)

"Social truth shall spread,
And justice, even though thrice again
The red fool fury of the Seine
Should pile her barricades with dead."

If any short-sighted critic should wish to accuse the poem of being too "other-worldly", the Smith leitmotif of the Conclusion would be answer.

1. Genung 54 ff.
enough to his charge. The claims of the present life are here fully recognized. Its joys and duties are given their rightful place. The atmosphere is healthy and stimulating. The path has led through some dark places, but it has led to a satisfactory destination. The main poem closes with the assurance that the great truths of the coming life can be safely accepted through faith, and that such acceptance is enough to make life livable. It is very fitting that in the conclusion the rightful things of the present life should have due recognition.

Very skilfully the idea is developed, that through all the many experiences of life we may be—indeed, we are—working out the destiny of the race; preparing for that greater and better world future which is sometime coming to pass.
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