of sonnets which have been highly praised. In June 1829 Alfred Tennyson won the Chancellor’s prize medal for his poem called “ Timbuctoo.” With great imperfections, this study in Miltonic blank verse displays the genius of a poet, in spite of a curious obscurity both of thought and style. Here are already both richness and power, although their expression is not yet clarified by taste. But by this time Tennyson was writing lyrics of still higher promise, and, as Arthur Hallam early perceived, with an extraordinary earnestness in the worship of beauty. The results of this enthusiasm and this labour of the artist appeared in the volume of *Poems, chiefly Lyrical,* pub­lished in 1830. This book would have been astonishing as the production of a youth of twenty-one, even if, since the death of Byron six years before, there had not been a singular dearth of good poetry in England. Here at least, in the slender volume of 1830, was a new writer revealed, and in “ Mariana,” “ The Poet,” “ Love and Death,” and “ Oriana," a singer of wonderful though still unchastened melody. Through these, and through less perfect examples, was exhibited an amazing magnificence of fancy, at present insufficiently under control, and a voluptuous pomp of imagery, tending to an over-sweetness. The veteran S. T. Coleridge, praising the genius in the book, blamed the metrical imperfection of it. For this criticism he has himself constantly been reproved, and Tennyson (whose impatience of anything like censure was phenomenal) continued to resent it to the end of his life. Yet Coleridge was perfectly just in his remark; and the metrical anarchy of the “ Madelines ” and “ Adelines ” of the 1830 volume showed that Tennyson, with all his delicacy of modulation, had not yet mastered the arts of verse.

In the summer of 1830 Tennyson and Hallam volunteered in the army of the Spanish insurgent Torrijos, and marched about a little in the Pyrenees, without meeting with an enemy. He came back to find his father ailing, and in February 1831 he left Cambridge for Somersby, where a few days later Dr George Tennyson died. The new incumbent was willing that the Tennysons should continue to live in the rectory, which they did not leave until six years later. Arthur Hallam was now betrothed to Emily Tennyson (afterwards Mrs Jesse, 1811-1889), and stayed frequently at Somersby. This was a very happy time, and one of great physical development on Alfred’s part. He took his share in all kinds of athletic exercises, and it was now that Brookfield said, “ It is not fair that you should be Hercules as well as Apollo.” This high physical zest in life seems to have declined after 1831, when his eyes began to trouble him, and he became liable to depression. The poetical work of these three years, mainly spent at Somersby, was given to the world in the volume of *Poems* which (dated 1833) appeared at the end of 1832. This was certainly one of the most astonishing re­velations of finished genius ever produced by a young man of less than four-and-twenty. Here were to be read “ The Lady of Shalott,” “ The Dream of Fair Women,” “ Oenone,” “ The Lotos-Eaters,” “ The Palace of Art,” and “ The Miller’s Daughter,” with a score of other lyrics, delicious and divine. The advance in craftsmanship and command over the *matériel* of verse shown since the volume of 1830 is absolutely astound­ing. If Tennyson had died of the savage article which presently appeared in the *Quarterly Review,* literature would have sus­tained terrible losses, but his name would have lived for ever among those of the great English poets. Indeed, it may be doubted whether, in several directions, he ever surpassed the glorious things to be found in this most exquisite and most precious book. It was well that its publication was completed before the blow fell upon Tennyson which took for a while all the light out of him. In August 1833 Arthur Hallam started with his father, the great historian, for Tirol. They went no farther than Vienna, where Mr Hallam, returning to the hotel on the 15th of September 1833, found his son lying dead on a sofa: a blood-vessel had broken in his brain. His body was brought back to England, and buried at Clevedon on the 3rd of January 1834. These events affected Tennyson extremely. He grew less than ever willing to come forward and face the world; his health became “ variable and his spirits indifferent.” The earliest effect of Hallam’s death upon his friend’s art was the composition, in the summer of 1834, of *The Two Voices;* and to the same period belong the beginnings of the *Idylls of the King* and of *In Memoriam,* over both of which he meditated long. In 1835 he visited the Lakes, and saw much of Hartley Coleridge, but would not “ obtrude on the great man at Rydal,” although “ Wordsworth was hospitably disposed.” Careless alike of fame and of influence, Tennyson spent these years mainly at Somersby, in a uniform devotion of his whole soul to the art of poetry. In 1837, to their great distress, the Tennysons were turned out of the Lincolnshire rectory where they had lived so long. They moved to High Beech, in Epping Forest, which was their home until 1840. The poet was already engaged, or “ quasi-betrothed,” to Emily Sellwood, but ten years more had to pass before they could afford to marry. At Torquay, in 1838, he wrote *Audley Court* on one of his rare ex­cursions, for he had no money for touring, nor did he wish for change: he wrote at this time, “ I require quiet, and myself to myself, more than any man when I write.” In 1840 the Tennysons moved to Tunbridge Wells, and a year later to Boxley, near Maidstone, to be close to Edmund Lushington, who had now married Cecilia Tennyson. Alfred was from this time more and more frequently a visitor in London.

In 1842 the two-volume edition of his *Poems* broke the ten years’ silence which he had enforced himself to keep. Here, with many pieces already known to all lovers of modem verse, were found rich and copious additions to his work. These he had originally intended to publish alone, and an earlier privately printed *Morte d’Arthur, Dora, and other Idylls,* of 1842, is the despair of book-collectors. Most of those studies of home-life in England, which formed so highly popular a section of Tennyson’s work—such as “ The Gardener’s Daughter,” “ Walking to the Mail,” and “ The Lord of Burleigh ”—were now first issued, and, in what we have grown to consider a much higher order, “ Locksley Hall,” “ Ulysses,” and “ Sir Galahad.” To the older and more luxurious lyrics, as reprinted in 1842, Tennyson did not spare the curbing and pruning hand, and in some cases went too far in restraining the wanton spirit of beauty in its youthful impulse. It is from 1842 that the universal fame of Tennyson must be dated; from the time of the publication of the two volumes he ceased to be a curiosity, or the darling of an advanced clique, and took his place as the leading poet of his age in England. Among the friends whom he now made, or for the first time cultivated, were Carlyle, Rogers, Dickens, and Elizabeth Barrett. Material difficulties now, however, for the first time intruded on his path. He became the victim of a certain “ earnest-frothy ” speculator, who in­duced him to sell his little Lincolnshire estate at Grasby, and to invest the proceeds, with all his other money, and part of that of his brothers and sisters, in a "Patent Decorative Carving Company in a few months the whole scheme collapsed, and Tennyson was left penniless. He was attacked by so overwhelming a hypochondria that his life was despaired of, and he was placed for some time under the charge of a hydro­pathic physician at Cheltenham, where absolute rest and isolation gradually brought him round to health again. The state of utter indigence to which Tennyson was reduced greatly exercised his friends, and in September 1845, at the suggestion of Henry Hallam, Sir Robert Peel was induced to bestow on the poet a pension of £200 a year. Never was public money expended in a more patriotic fashion. Tennyson’s health slowly became restored, and in 1846 he was hard at work on *The Princess;* in the autumn of this year he took a tour in Switzerland, and saw great mountains and such “ stateliest bits of landskip ” for the first time. In 1847 nervous prostra­tion again obliged him to undergo treatment at Prestbury: “ They tell me not to read, not to think; but they might as well tell me not to live.” Dr Gully’s water-cure was tried, with success. *The Princess* was now published, in a form after­wards considerably modified and added to. Carlyle and Fitz­Gerald “ gave up all hopes of him after *The Princess,”* or