this time Swinburne’s energy was at fever height; in 1879 he published his eloquent *Study of Shakespeare,* and in 1880 no fewer than three volumes, *The Modern Heptalogia,* a brilliant anonymous essay in parody, *Songs of the Springtides,* and *Studies in Song.* It was shortly after this date that Swinburne’s friendship for Theodore Watts-Dunton (then Theodore Watts) grew into one of almost more than brotherly intimacy. After 1880 Swinburne’s life remained without disturbing event, devoted entirely to the pursuit of literature in peace and leisure. The conclusion of the Elizabethan trilogy, *Mary Stuart,* was published in 1881, and in the following year *Tristram of Lyonesse,* a wonderfully individual contribution to the modern treatment of the Arthurian legend, in which the heroic couplet is made to assume opulent, romantic cadences of which it had hitherto seemed incapable. Among the publications of the next few years must be mentioned *A Century of Roundels,* 1883; *A Mid­summer Holiday,* 1884; and *Miscellanies,* 1886. The current of his poetry, indeed, continued unchecked; and though it would be vain to pretend that he added greatly either to the range of his subjects or to the fecundity of his versification, it is at least true that his melody was unbroken, and his mag­nificent torrent of words inexhaustible. His *Marino Faliero* (1885) and *Locrine* (1887) have passages of power and intensity unsurpassed in any of his earlier work, and the rich metrical effects of *Astrophel* (1894) and *The Tale of Balin* (1896) are inferior in music and range to none but his own masterpieces. In 1899 appeared his *Rosamund, Queen of the Lombards·,* in 1908 his *Duke of Gardia;* and in 1904 was begun the publication of a collected edition of his Poems and Dramas in eleven volumes.

Besides this wealth of poetry, Swinburne was active as *a* critic, and several volumes of fine impassioned prose testify to the variety and fluctuation of his literary allegiances. His *Note on Charlotte Bronte* (1877) must be read by every student of its subject; the *Study of Shakespeare* (1880)—followed in 1909 by *The Age of Shakespeare—*is full of vigorous and arresting thought, and many of his scattered essays are rich in suggestion and appreciation. His studies of Elizabethan literature are, indeed, full of “ the noble tribute of praise,” and no contemporary critic did so much to revive an interest in that wonderful period of dramatic recrudescence, the side-issues of which have been generally somewhat obscured by the pervading and dominating genius of Shakespeare. Where his enthusiasm was heart-whole, Swin­burne’s appreciation was stimulating and infectious, but the very qualities which give his poetry its unique charm and character were antipathetic to his success as a critic. He had very little capacity for cool and reasoned judgment, and his criticism is often a tangled thicket of prejudices and predilec­tions. He was, of course, a master of the phrase; and it never happened that he touched a subject without illuminating it with some lightning-flash of genius, some vivid penetrating suggestion that outflames its shadowy and confused environ­ment. But no one of his studies is satisfactory as a whole; the faculty for sustained exercise of the judgment was denied him, and even his best appreciations are disfigured by error in taste and proportion. On the other hand, when he is aroused to literary indignation the avalanche of his invective sweeps before it judgment, taste and dignity. His dislikes have all the superlative violence of his affections, and while both alike present points of great interest to the analyst, revealing as they do a rich, varied and fearless individuality, the criticism which his hatreds evoke is seldom a safe guide. His prose work also includes an early novel of some interest, *Love’s Cross-currents,* disinterred from a defunct weekly, the *Tatler,* and revised for publication in 1905.

Whatever may be said in criticism of Swinburne’s prose, there is at least no question of the quality of his poetry, or of its important position in the evolution of English literary form. To treat first of its technique, it may safely be said to have revolutionized the whole system of metrical expression. It found English poetry bound in the bondage of the iambic; it left it revelling in the freedom of the Choriambus, the dactyl and the anapaest. Entirely new effects; a richness of orchestra­tion resembling the harmony of a band of many instruments; the thunder of the waves, and the lisp of leaves in the wind; these, and a score other astonishing poetic developments were allied in his poetry to a mastery of language and an overwhelm­ing impulse towards beauty of form and exquisiteness of imagina­tion. In *Tristram of Lyonesse* the heroic couplet underwent a complete metamorphosis. No longer wedded to antithesis and a sharp caesura, it grew into a rich melodious measure, capable of an infinite variety of notes and harmonies, palpitating, intense. The service which Swinburne rendered to the English language as a vehicle for lyrical effect is simply incalculable. Tie revolutionized the entire scheme of English prosody. Nor was his singular vogue due only to this extraordinary metrical ingenuity. The effect of his artistic personality was in itself intoxicating, even delirious. He was the poet of youth insurgent against all the restraints of conventionality and custom. The young lover of poetry, when first he encounters Swinburne’s influence, is almost bound to be swept away by it; the wild, extravagant licence, the apparent sincerity, the vigour and the verve, cry directly to the aspirations of youth like a clarion in the wilderness. But, while this is inevitable, it is also true that the critical lover of poetry outgrows an unquestion­ing allegiance to the Swinburnian mood more quickly than any other of the diverse emotions aroused by the study of the great poets. It is not that what has been called his “ pananthropism” —his universal worship of the holy spirit of man—is in itself an unsound philosophy; there have been many creeds founded on such a basis which have impregnably withstood the attacks of criticism. But the unsoundness of Swinburne’s philosophy lies in the fact that it celebrates the spirit of man engaged in a defiant rebellion that leads nowhere; and that as a “ criticism of life ” it has neither finality nor a sufficiently high seriousness of purpose. Walt Whitman preaches very much the same gospel of the “ body electric ” and the glory of human nature; but Whitman’s attitude is far saner, far more satisfying than Swinburne’s, for it is concerned with the human spirit realizing itself in accordance with the unchangeable laws of nature; while Swinburne’s enthusiasm is, more often than not, directed to a spiritual revolution which sets the laws of nature at defiance. It is impossible to acquit his poetry entirely of the charge of an animalism which wars against the higher issues of the spirit—an animalism sometimes of love, sometimes of hatred, but, in both extremes, out of centre and harmony.

Yet, when everything has been said that can be said against the unaesthetic violences of the poet’s excesses, his service to contemporary poetry outweighed all disadvantages. No one did more to free English literature from the shackles of formalism; no one, among his contemporaries, pursued the poetic calling with so sincere and resplendent an allegiance to the claims of absolute and unadulterated poetry. Some English poets have turned preachers; others have been seduced by the attractions of philosophy; but Swinburne always remained an artist absorbed in a lyrical ecstasy, a singer and not a seer. When the history of Victorian poetry comes to be written, it will be found that his personality was, in its due perspective, among the most potent of his time; and as an artistic influence it will be pronounced both inspiring and beneficent. The topics that he touched were often ephemeral; the causes that he celebrated will, many of them, wither and desiccate; but the magnificent freedom and lyrical resource which he introduced into the language will enlarge its borders and extend its sway so long as English poetry survives.

On the 10th of April 1909, after a short attack of influenza followed by pneumonia, the great poet died at the house on Putney Hill, “ The Pines,” where with Mr Watts-Dunton he had lived for many years. He was buried at B0nchurch, Isle of Wight. ' (E. G.)

**SWINDON,** a market town and municipal borough in the Cricklade parliamentary division of Wiltshire, England, 771/4 m. W. of London by the Great Western railway. Pop. (1891), 33,001; (1901), 45,006. It has two parts, New and Old. The