Where in despairing death the dying languished,
Wherever sin, wherever suffering anguished,
He in their service took his shining way.

And soaring, an aërial apparition,
Ever before him hung a splendid vision,
Where, far within the sapphire crystalline,
Unstained by wrong, unspotted by a sorrow,
The sweet earth floated in a gleaming morrow,
And joy welled through it from the heart divine.

Full of the word that made the sunlit weather,
Full of the strength that holds the stars together,
White with the whiteness of the Holy Ghost,
By all the forces of the day surrounded,
Then rode he forth, his trump of onset sounded,
All sacrosanct, a Knight of Pentecost.

Harriet Prescott Spofford.

RECOLLECTIONS OF LORD TENNYSON.

AN EVENING AT THOMAS WOOLNER'S.

PREFATORY NOTE.

HEN I was a young man of twenty-five, it was my good fortune to spend an evening in company with the great and noble poet whose loss all England is now deploring. I had a very retentive memory at that time, and was able afterward to write down accurately not only my impressions, but also the conversation which I heard. The manuscript has lain by me all these years, and though I have enjoyed many opportunities of conversing with Lord Tennyson, I never recorded so much of his talk as upon that first occasion. It seems so very long ago that I feel justified in publishing the passage from my diary just as it stands.

While doing so, I ought to pay a tribute here to the memory of our host of that evening, Thomas Woolner, the sculptor, who died only a few weeks after Tennyson. Inspired by the early enthusiasm for nature of the Preraphaelite school, he broke away from the traditions of the English academic line of sculptors, and adopted a style of marked individuality. The realism of Woolner remained crude, imperfectly harmonized with motives of imaginative art. Still, he claims a place of honor for the sincerity of his aims and the honesty of his practice. We owe to him vivid portraits of some great Englishmen who will live forever in the Valhalla of the nation—Tennyson, F. D. Maurice, W. E. Gladstone, and others. Among my own cherished possessions I reckon a bust of my father chiseled by Woolner's hand.

The diary is dated Friday, December 8, 1865. Woolner's house was at 29 Welbeck street, London.

MY father came to us this afternoon. He is going to dine with Woolner, to meet Tennyson, Gladstone, and Holman Hunt. I am to go in the evening at 9:30.

When I arrived at Woolner's, the maid said she supposed I was "for the gentlemen." On my replying "Yes," she showed me into the dining-room, where they were finishing dessert. Woolner sat, of course, at the bottom of the table, Tennyson on his left, my father on his right hand. Next Tennyson sat Gladstone, and Hunt next my father. I was seated in an armchair between Woolner and my father.

The conversation continued. They were talking about the Jamaica business, Gladstone bearing hard on Eyre, Tennyson excusing any cruelty in the case of putting down a savage mob. Gladstone had been reading official papers on the business all the morning, and just after I had entered said with an expression of intense gravity, "And that evidence wrung from a poor black boy with a revolver at his head!" He said this in an orator's tone, pity mingled with indignation, the pressure of the lips, the inclination of the head, the lifting of the eyes to heaven, all marking the man's moral earnestness. He has a face like a lion's; his head is small above it, though the forehead is broad and massive—something like Trajan's in its proportion to the features. Character, far more than intellect, strikes me in his physiognomy, and there is a remarkable duplicity of expression—iron, vise-like resolution combined with a subtle, mobile ingenuousness.

Tennyson did not argue. He kept asserting various prejudices and convictions. "We are too tender to savages; we are more tender to a black than to ourselves." "Niggers are tigers, niggers are tigers," in *obbligato*, *sotto voce*, to Gladstone's declamation. "But the Englishman is a cruel man—he is a strong man," put in Gladstone. My father illustrated this by stories of the Indian Mutiny. "That 's not like Oriental cruelty," said Tennyson; "but I could not kill a cat, not the tom-cat who

scratches and miawls and keeps me awake"—thrown in with an indefinable impatience and rasping hatred. Gladstone looked glum and irate at this speech, thinking probably of Eyre. Then they turned to the insufficiency of evidence as yet in Eyre's case, and to other instances of his hasty butchery—the woman he hanged, though she was recommended to mercy by court-martial, because women had shown savageness in mutilating a corpse. "Because *women*, not the *woman*—and that, too, after being recommended to mercy *by court-martial*, and he holding the Queen's commission!" said Gladstone with the same hostile emphasis. The question of his personal courage came up. That, said Gladstone, did not prove his capability of remaining cool under, and dealing with, such special circumstances.

Anecdotes about sudden panics were related. Tennyson said to my father: "As far as I know my own temperament, I could stand any sudden thing; but give me an hour to reflect, and I should go here and go there, and all would be confused. If the fiery gulf of Curtius opened in the City, I would leap at once into it on horseback. But if I had to reflect on it, no—especially the thought of death—nothing can be weighed against that. It is the moral question, not the fear, which would perplex me. I have not got the English courage. I could not wait six hours in a square, expecting a battery's fire." Then stories of martial severity were told. My father repeated the anecdote of Bosquet in the Malakoff. Gladstone said Cialdini had shot a soldier for being without his regimental jacket. Tennyson put in, *sotto voce*, "If they shot paupers, perhaps they would n't tear up their clothes," and laughed very grimly.

Frank Palgrave here came in, a little man in morning dress, with short beard and mustache, well-cut features, a slight cast in his eye, an impatient, unsatisfied look, and some self-assertion in his manner. He directed the conversation to the subject of newspapers. Tennyson all the while kept drinking port, and glowering round the room through his spectacles. His mustache hides the play of his mouth, but, as far as I could see, that feature is as grim as the rest. He has cheek-bones carved out of iron. His head is domed, quite different from Gladstone's—like an Elizabethan head, strong in the coronal, narrow in the frontal regions, but very finely molded. It is like what Conington's head seems trying to be.

Something brought up the franchise. Tennyson said, "That 's what we 're coming to when we get your Reform Bill, Mr. Gladstone; not that I know anything about it." "No more does any man in England," said Gladstone, taking him up quickly, with a twinkling laugh; then adding, "But I 'm sorry to see you getting nervous." "Oh, I think a state in which every man would have a vote is the ideal. I always thought it might be realized in England, if anywhere, with our constitutional history. But how to do it?" Soon after came coffee. Tennyson grew impatient, moved his great gaunt body about, and finally was left to smoke a pipe. It is hard to fix the difference between the two men, both with their strong provincial accent—Gladstone with his rich, flexible voice, Tennyson with his deep drawl rising into an impatient falsetto when put out; Gladstone arguing, Tennyson putting in a prejudice; Gladstone asserting rashly, Tennyson denying with a bald negative; Gladstone full of facts, Tennyson relying on impressions; both of them humorous, but the one polished and delicate in repartee, the other broad and coarse and grotesque. Gladstone's hands are white and not remarkable, Tennyson's are huge, unwieldy, fit for molding clay or dough. Gladstone is in some sort a man of the world; Tennyson a child, and treated by Gladstone like a child.

Woolner played the host well, with great simplicity. His manner was agreeably subdued. He burst into no unseasonable fits of laughing, no self-assertive anecdotes. Palgrave rasped a little. Hunt was silent. My father made a good third to the two great people. I was like a man hearing a concerto: Gladstone first violin, my father second violin, Tennyson violoncello, Woolner bass viol, Palgrave viola, and perhaps Hunt a second but very subordinate viola.

When we left the dining-room we found Mrs. Woolner and her sister, Miss Waugh (engaged to Holman Hunt), in the drawing-room. Miss Waugh, though called "the goddess," is nowise unapproachable. She talked of Japanese fans like a common mortal. Mrs. Woolner is a pretty little maidenly creature, who seems to have walked out of a missal margin.

Woolner gave Gladstone a manuscript book to read containing translations from the Iliad by Tennyson. Gladstone read it by himself till Tennyson appeared. Then Woolner went to him and said, "You will read your translation, won't you?" And Palgrave, "Come you! A shout in the trench!" "No, I sha'n't," said Tennyson in a pettish voice, standing in the room, and jerking his arms and body from the hips. "No, I sha'n't read it. It 's only a little thing. Must be judged by comparison with the Greek. Can be appreciated only by knowing the difficulties overcome." Then, seeing the manuscript in Gladstone's hand, "This is n't fair; no, this is n't fair." He took it away, and nothing could pacify him. "I meant to read it to Mr. Gladstone and Dr. Symonds." My father urged him to no purpose, told him he would be reading to an intelligent audience; but he cried, "Yes, you

and Gladstone; but the rest don't understand it." "Here's my son, an Oxford first-class man." "Oh, I should be afraid of him." Then my father talked to him about his poems — "Mariana in the Moated Grange." This took them to the Lincolnshire flats, as impressive in their extent of plain as mountain heights. My father tried to analyze the physical conditions of ideas of size, but Tennyson preferred fixing his mind on the ideas themselves. "I do not know whether to think the universe great or little. When I think about it, it seems now one and now the other. What makes its greatness? Not one sun or one set of suns, or is it the whole together?" Then, to illustrate his sense of size, he pictured a journey through space like Jean Paul Richter's, leaving first one galaxy or spot of light behind him, then another, and so on through infinity. Then, about matter. Its incognizability puzzled him. "I cannot form the least notion of a brick. I don't know what it is. It 's no use talking about atoms, extension, color, weight. I cannot penetrate the brick. But I have far more distinct ideas of God, of love, and such emotions. I can sympathize with God in my poor way. The human soul seems to me always in some way — how, we do not know — identical with God. That 's the value of prayer. Prayer is like opening a sluice between the great ocean and our little channels." Then of eternity and creation: "Huxley says we may have come from monkeys. That makes no difference to me. If it is God's way of creation, he sees the whole, past, present, and future, as one." Then of morality: "I cannot but think moral good is the crown of man. But what is it without immortality? Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die. If I knew the world were coming to an end in six hours, would I give my money to a starving beggar? No; if I did not believe myself immortal. I have sometimes thought men of sin might destroy their immortality. The eternity of punishment is quite incredible. Christ's words were parables to suit the sense of the times." Further of morality: "There are some young men who try to do away with morality. They say, 'We won't be moral.' Comte, I believe, and perhaps Mr. Grote, too, deny that immortality has anything to do with being moral." Then from material to moral difficulties: "Why do mosquitos exist? I believe that after God had made his world the devil began and added something."

A move was made into the dining-room. Tennyson had consented to read his translations to Gladstone and my father. I followed them, and sat unperceived behind them. He began by reading in a deep bass growl the passage of Achilles shouting in the trench. Gladstone continually interrupted him with small points about words. He has a combative House-of-Commons mannerism, which gives him the appearance of thinking too much about himself. It was always to air some theory of his own that he broke Tennyson's recital; and he seemed listening only in order to catch something up. Tennyson invited criticism.

Tennyson was sorely puzzled about the variations in Homeric readings and interpretations. "They change year after year. What we used to think right in my days I am told is all wrong. What is a poor translator to do?" But he piqued himself very much on his exact renderings. "These lines are word for word. You could not have a closer translation: one poet could not express another better. There! those are good lines." Gladstone would object: "But you will say 'Jove' and 'Greeks.' Can't we have 'Zeus' and 'Achæans'?"

"But the sound of Jove! Jove is much softer than Zeus — Zeus — Zeus."

"Well, Mr. Worsley gives us Achæans."

"Mr. Worsley has chosen a convenient long meter; he can give you Achæans, and a great deal else."

Much was said about the proper means of getting a certain pause; how to give equivalent suggestive sounds, and so on. Some of the points which rose between the recitations I will put down.

Τανύπεπλος — My father asked why Gladstone translated this "round-limbed." He answered that he had the notion of "lateral extension" of the robe, since a long trailing dress was not Achæan, but Ionian. Homer talks of the Ionians, ἑλκεχίτωνες. Tennyson did not heed this supersubtle rendering, but said, "Ah! there 's nothing more romantic than the image of these women floating along the streets of Troy with their long dresses flying out behind them. Windy Troy! I dare say it was not windier than other places, but it stood high, open to the air. As a schoolboy, I used to see them. A boy of course imagines something like a modern town."

Φυσίζοος αἶα — My father instanced this as a curious fixed epithet, and incongruous for a burial-field of battle. Gladstone objected that it was not a common epithet. He and Tennyson agreed in the pathos which it strikes by way of contrast with death. The exactness of Homer's epithets — not nearly so fixed and formal as supposed.

Γλαυκῶπις — Tennyson translated this "gray-eyed," in the Shaksperian meaning of "blue-eyed." Gladstone said it ought to be "bright-eyed." Homer knew nothing about colors: the human eye had not yet learned to distinguish colors. Question raised whether it were not that the nomenclature of colors had not yet been perfected. Gladstone preferred to think that the sense itself had not been edu-

cated to perceive colors. No green in Homer—χλωρηῒς ἀηδών means truly "the nightingale that loves the greenwood." But this is a rare instance, and the idea of greenness is not predominant. [Query, whether this has not reference to the color of the bird itself. Scholiast says, ἡ ἐν χλωροῖς διατρίβουσα: Liddell and Scott add, "but wrongly."] Again, πορφύρεος means simply dark-brown or blue; even ἰοειδής is applied to sheep. [Query, what ἴον really meant—a violet? or some other flower?] There was, of course, some probability in this argument; but Gladstone overworked it, and denied that even Egyptians understood color, who, however, in frescos at least as old as Homer, as my father suggested, evinced a most accurate sense of color. [*E.g.*, the Negroes, Nubians, and Assyrians, black, red, and yellow, under Rameses; even complexions finely distinguished—the different colors of the lotus, etc. On the other hand, they paint some skins of men blue.] It seemed as if Gladstone were a champion in the medieval schools, throwing down theses and defending them for pure argument's sake, not for any real love of truth—a dangerous quality in a statesman, and apt to make him an untrustworthy debater. The only contribution I made to this discussion on color was to quote the fragment from Xenophanes about the rainbow.

Καλλίτριχες ἵπποι—Tennyson rendered "beauteous horses." He thought it meant sleek, etc.; might have said "fair-haired," but wanted same quality of sound which beauteous had. Gladstone said what had occurred to me, that καλλίτριχες was meant as a picturesque epithet, to describe the flowing mane of the horses as they stopped suddenly and turned, affrighted by the shout of Achilles. This seemed supersubtle.

Ηὔδα, φθέγξατο—Tennyson had made the first *spake*, the second *shouted*. Gladstone said, "I think rightly, that it ought to have been ἀπάτερθε." What did this exactly mean? Tennyson had an image of Pallas standing above Achilles with her ægis, and shouting above him—but he had been told ἀπάτερθε meant a sort of echo from behind doubling her voice.

Difficulty of getting Homer's meaning. The old conventional translations. Αἰζήϊος, Gladstone said, used to be rendered *youth;* ought to be *able-bodied man;* from youth, when the scepter is taken into a prince's hand, to old age, when he puts his garden-gloves on, like *Laertes*, and leaves it to his son. Tennyson instanced γέφυρα, "bridge, ridge, bridge, ridge," in successive editions of Liddell and Scott.

Other points:

(1.) Gladstone said Virgil had misrepresented Homer intentionally; had used him, but altered, so that we could gain nothing from reading Homer in Virgil's light.

(2.) His deep meaning. Gladstone thought a special significance might be found in the list of Thetis's nymphs. They have pure Greek names, whereas Nereus was an old non-Hellenic Pelasgic god. Homer, Hellenizing Thetis, the mother of his Greek hero Achilles, invents a train of pure Greek ladies for her. He never mentions Nereus by name, calls him "the old man," keeps him in the background. Is not this supersubtle? He was angry with Lord Derby for cutting up these names.

(3.) "Lord Derby's not blank verse; prose divided into five beats." Said to have been improvised as the mood seized him, and wondered at by some people accordingly.

(4.) Could Homer be got into hexameters? Tennyson repeated some quantitative hexameters, "beastly bad," which he had made. English people could not understand quantity. "I showed 'em to a man, Allingham; he wanted to scan 'em; could n't see they had quantity." Gladstone observed that modern Greek readings of Homer must be all wrong. We have lost accent, which was not emphasis, but arsis and thesis of voice. At end of word, *e. g.*, the grave becomes the acute, and the voice is raised. There are three parts in pronunciation: time, emphasis, and pitch.

Palgrave suggested a translation of Homer into biblical prose. He began it. Jowett dissuaded him, saying he thought he had not enough command of English. [How like Jowett!] "Rather disparaging to you," said Tennyson.

Tennyson said he had read the "Odyssey" offhand in old English to his wife. "And it struck me I did it very well."

(5.) Real difficulty of translation. No two languages hit each other off. Both have some words "like shot silk" [Tennyson's metaphor, good]. These cannot be rendered. We can never *quite* appreciate another nation's poetry on this account. Gave as an instance the end of "Enoch Arden," "calling of the sea," a phrase well known to sailors, for a clear night with a sea-sound on the shore in calm. A German translator rendered it "geschrei," which suggested storm, etc., wrongly. He meant a big voice of the sea, but coming through the calm. [The Venetian sailors say, "Chiama il mare."]

Gladstone, just before we parted, said he always slept well. He had only twice been kept awake by the exertion of a great speech in the House. On both occasions the recollection that he had made a misquotation haunted him.

At about one we broke up. Gladstone went off first. My father and I walked about the studio, then shook hands with Tennyson, and got home.

MY LAST INTERVIEW WITH LORD TENNYSON.

THE last time I saw Tennyson was on August 28, 1892, not quite six weeks before his death. Fortunately, I related what happened in a letter to my daughter, from which I will now proceed to make extracts.

Angelo (my Venetian gondolier) and I came here (Haslemere) yesterday; and to-day we walked over with our host to Aldworth. It was a lovely day, after storm and rain. The road leads through a lane overarched with witch-elms, up to moorland deep in purple heath and bracken. The prospect from those ridgy hills included the whole weald of Sussex, with Fairlight just visible above Hastings at one end of the horizon, and Leith Hill at the other. Surveyed in a straight line, the extent is said to be sixty miles. The whole panorama — so green, so violet, so blue, so dappled with cloud-shadows, so diversified by heavy-tinted copses, meadows, yellow corn-fields — lies stretched out before the windows and the terraces of Aldworth. The house, embosomed in trees, and thickly planted with conifers, seems to be suspended on a steep descending slope.

We left Angelo in the shrubbery, and were taken up to Mr. and Mrs. Hallam Tennyson's sitting-room. After a few minutes' conversation, we went down to Lord Tennyson's study, a large room longer than its breadth. He was sitting near a window at one end of a wide lounge-sofa; shawls over his knees, and a velvet skull-cap defining the massive, nobly sculptured bones of his forehead. He welcomed me very kindly as an old friend, and began immediately to talk of former meetings. I reminded him how he once asked me at Farringford what I thought Shakspere meant by "long purples" in the speech about *Ophelia's* death, and how I promptly answered "arums" to his satisfaction. "Aye, aye; you were right. I think he meant jack-in-the-box" (a name I had not heard before for "lords and ladies"); "but I have used the word in my poetry to signify a hedgerow vetch with trailing lilac flowers." We also spoke about the daisies on the lawn at Farringford, and how a lady's skirts sweeping over these flowers will make them bend their heads, and show the crimson of their under petals — a fact recorded in that line of "Maud":

> For her feet have touched the meadows
> And left the daisies rosy.

He showed me a French translation of "Enoch Arden," which was intended to be used in schools by teachers of English. This led him to discuss grammar. "I don't understand English grammar. Take *sea-change*. Is *sea* here a substantive used adjectively, or what? What is the logic of a phrase like *Catholic-Disabilities Annulling Bill?* Does *invalid chair maker* mean that the chair-maker is a sickly fellow?" Apropos of the French book, he repeated Renan's story about himself and the Breton landlady, winding up: "She made me pay her bill, though. Renan was wrong there." Then we got on to English meters, how they had never yet been reduced to rules of prosody. "True; and just as I don't understand English grammar, so I don't understand English verse." "For one man who can read poetry, there are a hundred who can whistle a tune. I heard some one the other day read out that line of mine — beneath a picture of Lear's — *Lit bý a lárge low móon*. The proper accents are, of course, on *lit* and *large*." I remarked how, in spite of the English heroic line being described as an iambic, you could often find only one iamb, and that at the end. I quoted from his own "Lucretius":

> Ruining along the illimitable inane.

"True," he said; "but you will find five beats." I replied that there sometimes seemed to me to be but three beats in a blank verse, and instanced from "Paradise Regained":

> Lancelot, and Pelleas, and Pellenore.

He admitted there were only three strong beats, and repeated a line of his own from one of the "Idyls of the King" constructed on the same type as Milton's. The verse in question is repeated several times in "The Coming of Arthur":

> Ulfius, and Brastias, and Bedivere.

"But you must be sure to say Pellenôre, Pellenôre," he added.

Then he began to talk of Milton and Virgil, reciting passages from both to show how the English poet had modeled the pauses and cadence of his blank verse upon the Latin hexameter. "Strange, considering the difference between the languages and meters." Next he told me that he was going to write a poem on Bruno; and Hallam showed me the seventh volume of my "Renaissance in Italy," which they had been reading together. He asked whether I could understand Bruno's attitude toward Christianity. I tried to express what men like Pomponazzi, and Bruno himself before the Venetian Inquisition, maintained about the possibility of speculating like a skeptic and believing like a churchman. Tennyson observed that Bruno's great discovery was the infinity of the universe, filled with solar systems like our own, all penetrated with the divine life. "That con-

ception must react on Christianity — I mean its creed and dogma; its morality will always remain invulnerable." Somebody had told him that astronomers could calculate 550,000,000 solar systems. "There is no reason why each of these should not have one planet inhabited by people like ourselves. Then see what becomes of the sacrifice for fallen man upon this little earth!" At this point a neighbor, dressed in a very neat suit of lavender-colored cloth, came in. "How d' ye do?" said Tennyson. "You look like the gray dawn, so fresh and clean!" We all laughed; and he went on: "Well, so you do. Look at those fellows [myself and my friend], how dingy they are!" The conversation turned on Ireland and Gladstone. Tennyson disbelieves in Home Rule, and thinks Gladstone mischievous in politics. In his view, the Irish are the people least capable of political freedom and self-management under the sun. It was nearly time to go, when he accused me of having said he borrowed his *Margery* from *Dame Quickly*. I had forgotten utterly what and who his *Margery* is,— a character of one of the plays, I suppose,— and protested that I never said anything of the sort. "Oh, but you did. I have got the article in print, signed by your name, and pasted into that book yonder." This proves me, if it be so, to be an "irresponsible reviewer" with a vengeance; for I cannot remember *Margery*, or my remarks upon her at all, *at all*. Then the great man wanted to see Angelo, whom I called up from the shrubbery. He looked very soldierly and handsome in his gondolier's costume, bending over the poet's outstretched hand, and kissing the long, shapely fingers. I said in Italian: "Questo signore, Angelo, è il più grande poeta di Inghilterra—forse del mondo. Non ti scordar mai di questo momento."[1] "Eh? What 's that you 're saying to the fellow?" asked the bard. I repeated my words in English, and he looked as though he thought I had not overshot the mark. He then asked me about Davos, and said he had once been in Chur, but could remember nothing there except a grotesque incident in the hotel corridor. That was after crossing the Splügen, as recorded in "The Daisy." This beautiful poem, so original in rhythm and so perfect in its succession of carefully executed landscape-vignettes, is comparatively little known, I think; which justifies me perhaps in citing the stanza in question:

> What more? we took our last adieu,
> And up the snowy Splügen drew,
> But ere we reached the highest summit
> I plucked a daisy, I gave it you.

Angelo seemed to remind him of Italy, and he suddenly exclaimed: "All the Tennysons have big calves. My brother was bathing at Naples, and as he came up the hotel-steps in his bathing costume, a maid cried out: "Santissima Madonna, che gambe!" The impression left on me by this visit to Lord Tennyson was of a vigorous and green old age, full of cheer and interest and humor, intellectually acute as ever. He complained only of a chronic cough and of gout in the jaws, which made mastication painful.

John Addington Symonds.

[1] "This gentleman, Angelo, is the greatest poet of England — perhaps of the world. Never forget this moment."

TO ALFRED TENNYSON.

THE land whose loveliness in verse of thine
Shows lovelier yet than prank'd on Nature's page
Shall prove *thy* poet in some future age,
Sing thee — *her* poet — not in measured line
Or metric stave, but music more benign;
Shall point to British Galahads who wage
Battle on wrong; to British maids who gage,
Like Agnes, heart and hope to love divine.
Worn men like thy Ulysses, scorning fear,
Shall tempt strange seas beneath an alien star;
Old men from honored homes and faces dear
Summoned by death to realms unknown and far
Thy "Silent Voices" from on high shall hear;
With happier auspice cross the "Harbour Bar."

DECEMBER 12, 1892.

Aubrey de Vere.