Hardy, we do not let slip from our grasp all that is best and noblest among our Catholic authors. It is well that they have not all passed into oblivion.

Our range and scope of Catholic literature are now sufficiently large for our critics to recommend nothing but the best. Our magazines and reviews should be up to the top notch of excellence. If, after a fair trial, any among them cannot reach that position—if there is no definite reason for their existence—then, why should mercy be shown them? They only block the way for something better. The namby-pamby and the goody-goody have no place in modern thought. Our journals are not under obligation to make their pages receptacles of school-boy essays and school-girl romancings. The waste-paper basket is the proper place for such articles. Young writers, be they young in years or be they young in the use of the pen, should put in a long and severe apprenticeship before appearing in print. What Pierre Loti has recently said of the higher forms of literary art applies here with equal force: "I do not claim," he says, "that in constructing any work in any manner whatever, a writer can always achieve a real success, even if he is possessed of the keenest sensibility."

A PEEP INTO TENNYSON'S WORK-SHOP.

Alfred Tennyson has passed from earth. His gropings to lift the veil concealing the life beyond the grave are over. He sees the whole meaning of life. In the words of a brother poet who dropped away a little earlier he can now say:

"Over the ball of it,
Peering and prying,
How I see all of it,
Life there outlying."

And now comes home to him the larger thought that he himself so exquisitely wrote, that with God rests a man's past and future. His life-work is measured in a scale of divine making not of human construction:

"We pass; the path that each man trod
Is dim, or will be dim, with weeds:
What fame is left for human deeds
In endless age? It rests with God."

Now that poets are chanting his name and critics are commenting upon his genius and influence, it were pleasant and profitable to enter his literary workshop and take note of the manner in which he struck out the beautiful thoughts that filled his poet-soul. It has been our

privilege, thanks to the kindness of a dear friend, to study the manuscript of Tennyson's poem, called *The Daisy*, and to note the changes, and even the very efforts made by the poet before happening upon the best form of thought. Tennyson was pre-eminently a word-artist. If he so excelled, it has been the result of much study and great painstaking.

No poet could be more painstaking than Tennyson. Every idea was evolved slowly. Note the evolution of *Maud* from the stanzas published in 1855, to the version printed in 1856; thence to the edition of 1859, when the poem appeared in two parts, and the final edition when it appeared in its present form. Note the changes, the striking out of whole pages of matter that represented long and weary hours of work. Here are lines that stood in the original proof of *Maud*, descriptive of the heroine's brother:

"But his essences *made the Morning* sick,
And barbarous opulence, jewel-thick,
Flashed on his *obstinate-fingered* hands."

The phrase "the Morning" is too general. It is only the air that becomes tainted by the perfumes that exhale from this rich and vulgar brother of Maud. So he replaces these words by the expression, "turned the live air." Again, "obstinate-fingered" is an awkward epithet. The poet places a diamond in the brother's breast, and changes the line so that all three read as follows:

"But his essences turn'd the live air sick,
And barbarous opulence, jewel-thick,
Sunned itself on his breast and his hands."

This is the final reading. Professor Shepherd has traced many interesting variations in the poem as it was evolved from the poet's brain. *

The Daisy was written at Edinburgh in 1852 or 1853. It alludes to a trip that the poet and his wife had made in Europe. Their child Hallam, who was born August 11, 1852, was evidently alluded to in these lines:

"So dear a life your arms enfold,
Whose crying is a cry for gold."

The argument of the poem is this: The poet finds himself in Edinburgh

"When ill and weary, alone and cold,"

with no other companion than a book lent him by his wife. Opening the book, he finds in it a daisy 'crushed to hard and dry,' which he had plucked when ascending the Splügen and given to his wife, because it reminded them both of their native England. The sight of it recalls their tour through the sunny South, and he rehearses in musical lines of rare form the principal scenes through which he passed with his wife. And so he concludes the poem:

"Perchance, to lull the throbs of pain,
Perchance, to charm a vacant brain;
Perchance, to dream, you still beside me,
My fancy fled to the South again."

* North American Review, vol. 138, 1884. Art., "Genesis of Tennyson's *Maud*," by Richard Herne Shepherd.

The metre of this poem is worthy of careful study. It runs as follows:

⏑ – ⏑ – ⏑ – ⏑ – (a)
⏑ – ⏑ – ⏑ – ⏑ – (a)
⏑ – ⏑ – ⏑ – ⏑ – ⏑ – (b)
⏑ – ⏑ – ⏑ – ⏑ – ⏑ – (a)

Of this metre Edmund Clarence Stedman writes: "A winsome, novel stanzaic form, possibly of the Laureate's own invention, is to be found in *The Daisy* and in the Horatian lines to his friend Maurice."*

We shall here take note of various readings.

1. The line that reads

'Now pacing mute by ocean's rim,'

in the MS. was written

'Now pacing mute by ocean's *brim*.'

The improvement is seen at a glance.

2. Both the MS. and the first edition have this line in the ninth stanza:

'Oft we saw the glisten
'Of ice, far off on a mountain head.'

Here the three words, *oft—of—off*—in such close proximity offend the ear. In later editions the line reads:

'Of ice, far up on a mountain head.'

3. Now we come to the construction of the most interesting stanza in the poem. It is the tenth. The author made no less than seven attempts before he satisfied himself that he had struck the correct form in which to clothe the scene he would paint. He is describing the Doges' Hall in Genoa. He began:

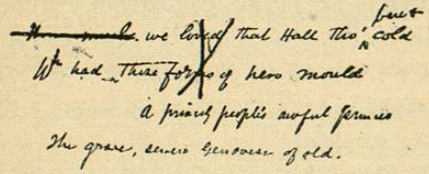
* Victorian Poets, p. 174.

(*a*) That Doges' Hall tho' bare and cold
Had shapes of men of hero mould—

This not suiting him, he crossed it out and started once more:

(*b*) How much we loved that Hall tho' cold
Which had those forms of hero mould,
A princely people's awful princes
The grave, severe Genovese of old.

He is unsatisfied with the first two lines. He crosses out the words 'how much,' and inserts the words 'bare and' before the word 'cold.' It looks thus in the MS.:



(*c*) The author makes another attempt:

Well pleased that Hall tho' white and cold
Such forms were these of noble mould.

(*a*) This not satisfying him he changes the first and second lines as follows:

We loved that Hall tho' white and cold
Those niched forms of noble mould.

(*e*) The poet still finds something wanting in the second line, and makes another change:

Such shapes were there of noble mould.

He now writes out the whole stanza in lead-pencil in the shape that best pleases him.

We loved that Hall tho' white and cold
Such shapes were there of noble mould,
A princely people's awful princes,
The grave, severe Genovese of old.

(*f*) He makes a final correction, which is a blending of (*a*) and (*e*). This must have been done in proof.

We loved that hall tho' white and cold
Those niched shapes of noble mould,
A princely people's awful princes,
The grave, severe Genovese of old.

Only in the seventh attempt does the poet strike the last form of expression. Here is a rare instance of the poet struggling to fit his conception to appropriate words. In noting the efforts, the changes, the reconstructions, we are, so to speak, silent witnesses in the poet's workshop of the processes by which a thought is evolved and moulded.

4. In the eleventh stanza, the first verse reads:

'At Florence too what *happy* hours.'

and the fourth:

'Or walks in Boboli's *ducal* bowers.'

Here the author changed *happy* to '*golden*,' and '*ducal*' to '*hanging*,' but upon second thought restored the word '*ducal*.'

5. The fourteenth stanza was inserted after the poem had been written. The first verse was originally penned:

And *grave and* stern (so rare the smiles
Of sunlight) looked the Lombard piles.

This was improved in the form now printed:

And stern and sad (so rare the smiles
Of sunlight) looked the Lombard piles.

6. The last two lines of the next stanza were penned as follows:

The height, the gloom, the space, the glory!
The marble mount, *with* a hundred spires!

Those lines now read as then corrected:

The height, the space, the gloom, the glory!
A mount of marble, a hundred spires!

This is a great improvement.

7. The third line of the eighteenth stanza was written:

Shower and storm and blast
Had *swoll'n* the lake beyond *its* limit.

This was changed to the present construction:

Had blown the lake beyond his limit.

The word *beyond* is crossed out in the MS. and replaced.

8. Now we come to the study of another interesting stanza. In its first form it reads as follows:

Like ballad-burthen music, kept,
As on the Larians crept
To fair Bellagio's happy gardens,
And sweet Varenna, *in which* we slept.

(*a*) The third line is crossed out, and over it is written this:

And paused at happy quays, and left us

(*b*) Here *and* is changed to *or*.

(*c*) The fourth line is made to read:

In sweet Varenna, *whereat* we slept.

(*a*) Again the last two lines are changed as follows:

" *With pauses made in* happy *haven*
To fair Varenna, whereat we slept.

(*e*) Finally, the poet erases the image of the boat's stoppages, and brings in the more picturesque and historic allusion to the castle of Queen Theodolind:

"To that fair port below the castle
Of Queen Theodolind, where we slept.

9. The third line in the twenty-second stanza read:

But ere we *touched* the highest summit

The word *touched* is changed to *reached*. The word *touching* occurs in the previous stanza. The last line of this stanza stands:

'I plucked a daisy *and* gave it you,'

but in the first edition it reads:

'I plucked a daisy, I gave it you.'

10. In the second last stanza the poet wrote:

The bitter east, a misty summer,

but changed *a* into *the:*

The bitter east, the misty summer.

PANEGYRIC

OF

BROTHER AZARIAS.