to believe from the study of the tertiary formations, that species and groups of species gradually disappear, one after another, from first one spot, then from another, and finally from the world." [1] Tennyson's keen vision takes in the whole bearing of Darwin's first announcement; still less does he find Nature's course to tally with man's instinctive trust that no life may fail beyond the grave, and he resumes the subject in another lyric, in which he expresses Darwin's conclusion with grasp and force not excelled by the scientist's own form: —

> " 'So careful of the type?' but no.
> From scarpëd cliff and quarried stone
> She cries, 'A thousand types are gone:
> I care for nothing, all shall go.'" [2]

It would indeed seem, in the light of this new discovery, as though Nature were confirming the materialist's doctrine that "the spirit does but mean the breath." The poet asks with alarm, shall this be the end of man, with all his noble aspirations, and elevated ideals, and great achievements, that he shall

> " be blown about the desert dust,
> Or sealed within the iron hills?
>
> "No more? A monster then, a dream,
> A discord. Dragons of the prime,
> That tare each other in their slime,
> Were mellow music matched with him." [3]

Terrified and perplexed by these revelations and analogies of modern science, he despairs of solving

[1] *Genesis of the Species*, 1859, p. 318.
[2] *In Memoriam*, lvi. 1.
[3] *Ibid.* lvi. 5, 6.

the overwhelming enigma in this life, and seeks refuge in the other: —

> " What hope of answer, or redress?
> *Behind the veil, behind the veil.*" [1]

He would have man, against evidence to the contrary, in the midst of doubt and darkness, hold by the clue of a future life in which all mystery shall be made clear.

3. Elsewhere, and at a later date, Tennyson dwelt more forcibly upon the barrenness of life without these fundamental truths. In his poem called "Despair" he has grandly shown how in any view of the world that destroys belief in a moral government, in a hereafter, and in a personal God, the light from the stars shines forth a lie, "bright as with deathless hope;" man a worm writhing in a world of the weak trodden down by the strong; darkness everywhere — "Doubt lord of this dung-hill, Hope with broken heart running after a shadow of good," and Love dead — rather, a delusion that had never existed. In still another poem he depicts the overwhelming vastness of the universe from the materialist's point of view, and shows how that awful sense of inert immensity can alone be counteracted in the soul's life and aspirations: —

> "Many a hearth upon our dark globe sighs after many a vanished face,
> Many a planet by many a sun may roll with the dust of a vanished race.
>
> "Raving politics, never at rest — as this poor earth's pale history runs, —
> What is it all but a trouble of ants in the gleam of a million million of suns? . . .

[1] *In Memoriam*, lvi. 7.

"What is it all, if we all of us end but in being our own corpse-coffins at last,
Swallowed in Vastness, lost in Silence, drowned in the deeps of a meaningless Past?

"What but a murmur of gnats in the gloom, or a moment's anger of bees in their hive? —
Peace, let it be! for I loved him, and love him forever: the dead are not dead but alive." [1]

Was ever the sense of oppressiveness arising from contemplation of the vastness of the universe more powerfully expressed? Were man a mere spawn of matter — a mere development of protoplasm — born for time and ending with time, that vastness and that oppressiveness would be overpowering. But with a profound sense of his greater majesty as a spiritual being, and conscious of his capacity for undying love, — for is not love stronger than death? — this undying love represented by the author's love for Arthur, — man in that consciousness raises himself above and beyond the whole length and breadth and height and depth of this material universe; its vastness shrinks into insignificance by the side of a single spiritual act of an immortal soul. Man loves; his love, when pure, above all when supernatural, grows and strengthens with his years, and he cherishes it because it is to outlive all conditions of time and place.

"Peace, let it be!" — even so in the "In Memoriam" does the poet turn aside from the nightmare horrors of Nature, shrieking against his belief in another and a better world: —

[1] *Vastness.*

"Peace; come away: the song of woe
Is after all an earthly song:
Peace; come away: we do him wrong
To sing so wildly: let us go." [1]

4. In another lyric Tennyson contemplates this earth in its evolution from "tracts of fluent heat" till it has assumed its present form, and "at the last arose the man," and he watches the course of human progress through joy and sorrow, man himself being in his view only "the herald of a higher race;" but he cautions us not to lose our hold upon the clue of immortality, —

"Nor dream of human love and truth,
As dying Nature's earth and lime.

"But trust that those we call the dead
Are breathers of an ampler day
For ever nobler ends." [2]

And he would have all men drive out of themselves the beasts of passion and raise themselves to higher things: —

"Arise and fly
The reeling Faun, the sensual feast;
Move upward, working out the beast,
And let the ape and tiger die.[3]

XII.

1. Here ends the struggle. The poet can now look back on it all and say: —

"I trust I have not wasted breath:
I think we are not wholly brain,

[1] *In Memoriam*, lvii. 1. [2] *Ibid.* cxviii. 1, 2.
[3] *Ibid.* cxviii. 7.

Magnetic mockeries; not in vain,
Like Paul with beasts, I fought with Death;

"Not only cunning casts in clay:
Let Science prove we are, and then
What matters Science unto men,
At least to me? *I would not stay.*

"Let him, the wiser man who springs
Hereafter, up from childhood shape
His action like the greater ape,
But I was born to other things." [1]

2. This singer of Christian hope would not stay with the science that speaks in the name of materialism. Evolution — progress spiritual, intellectual, material — he can understand, but he will none of materialism. He is unwearied in reiteration of this truth. Science reveals change in the earth's crust: —

"There rolls the deep where grew the tree.
O earth, what changes hast thou seen!
There where the long street roars, hath been
The stillness of the central sea." [2]

"But," paraphrasing in the words of one who made a loving study of the poem, "there is one thing fixed and abiding — that which we call spirit; and, amid all uncertainty, one truth is certain — that to a loving human soul a parting which shall be eternal is unthinkable." [3] And equally fixed in human consciousness is the conviction that there is a loving God. This is proven, in the argument of the poem, not by the things of Nature, though the material

[1] *In Memoriam*, cxx. 1, 2, 3. [2] *Ibid.* cxxiii. 1.
[3] E. R. Chapman, *A Companion to In Memoriam*, p. 67.

universe suffices to prove it, but rather by the universal yearning of the human heart. On this point both Tennyson and Cardinal Newman struck the same chord. In prose no less noble than the poetry of Tennyson the Cardinal says: "The world seems simply to give the lie to that great truth, of which my whole being is so full; and the effect upon me is in consequence, as a matter of necessity, as confusing as if it denied that I am in existence myself. . . . Were it not for this voice speaking so clearly to my conscience and my heart, I should be an atheist, or a pantheist, or a polytheist when I looked into the world. I am speaking for myself only; and I am far from denying the real force of the arguments in proof of a God, drawn from the general facts of human society, but they do not warm me or enlighten me; they do not take away the winter of my desolation, or make the buds unfold and the leaves grow within me, and my moral being rejoice." [1]

3. Strengthened and inspired by the virtues of faith and hope and love, the poet — and with him humanity — rises triumphant over all difficulties, and looking back upon the strife he can now sing: —

"And all is well, though faith and form
Be sundered in the night of fear;
Well roars the storm to those that hear
A deeper voice across the storm." [2]

When the virtues he would sing are not merely natural virtues, but possess the supernatural char-

[1] *Apologia*, p. 267. [2] *In Memoriam*, cxxvii. 1.

acter of the theological virtues, the soul's triumph is indeed complete. And the dead who have passed through the strife and have come out of it victorious overlook the tumult from afar, and smile, "knowing all is well." For Tennyson considers faith in human progress, in spite of all apparent evidence to the contrary, as akin to divine faith; and he still sees, however darkly, that all things work towards a good end: —

> "I see in part
> That all, as in some piece of art,
> Is toil coöperant to an end."[1]

4. The author leaves out in his calculation the one element that explains the anomalous state of things, the retrogressions of races, otherwise than as mere eddies of time: —

> "No doubt vast eddies in the flood
> Of onward time shall yet be made,
> And thronëd races may degrade:"

but that element, that great factor in humanity, Cardinal Newman has supplied. He says: "And so I argue about the world: *if* there be a God, *since* there is a God, the human race is implicated in some terrible aboriginal calamity. It is out of joint with the purposes of its Creator. This is a fact — a fact as true as the fact of its existence; and thus the doctrine of what is theologically called original sin becomes to me almost as certain as that the world exists, and as the existence of God."[2] Had the poet reckoned with this element he would have caught a clearer glimpse of the infinite love

[1] *In Memoriam*, cxxviii. 6. [2] *Apologia*, p. 268.

of God for man, his pæan of victory would have been none the less jubilant, and his sense of dependence would have been all the more profound.

5. But what can excel the clarion note in which Tennyson in this last group asserts the communion of the living and the dead? Alluding to his trance, he sings that if Arthur was with him then, none the less can this friend be with him whenever the great desire to commune with the departed spirit grows upon him: —

> "If thou wert with me, and the grave
> Divide us not, be with me now,
> And enter in at breast and brow,
> Till all my blood, a fuller wave,
>
> "Be quickened with a livelier breath,
> And like an inconsiderate boy,
> As in the former flash of joy,
> I slip the thoughts of life and death;
>
> "And all the breeze of Fancy blows,
> And every dewdrop paints a bow,
> The wizard lightnings deeply glow,
> And every thought breaks out a rose."[1]

In his final song every trace of doubt has vanished. The feeling of an immortal existence has become part of his thinking. His friend that was, is and shall be his beyond all power of separation: —

> "Sweet human hand and lips and eye;
> Dear heavenly friend that canst not die,
> *Mine, mine, for ever, ever mine.*"

And therefore the image of his friend is mingled everywhere: —

[1] *In Memoriam*, cxxii. 3, 4, 5.

"Behold, I dream a dream of good,
And mingle all the world with thee." [1]

6. That there is between the dead and the living something in common, that they are intimately united, that there exists an unseen and an unspeakable communion between them, is a conviction borne in upon the author with a force beyond all resistance. Is this truth not also the common heritage of humanity? He addresses Arthur: —

"Far off thou art, but ever nigh;
I have thee still, and I rejoice;
I prosper, circled with thy voice;
I shall not lose thee though I die." [2]

But all this triumph of faith and hope and love over doubt and materialism is not of man's own merit. He should will it; he should pray for the grace of it; he should place himself in the hands of the Supreme Will, the guide and strength-giver of all finite wills. And so Tennyson addresses the Divine Will: —

"O Living Will that shalt endure
When all that seems shall suffer shock,
Rise in the spiritual rock,
Flow through our deeds and make them pure." [3]

He asks that our deeds may be made pure in order that we may all the more readily rise to faith in the truths that we cannot prove, or in his own apt words: —

"And trust,
With faith that comes of self-control,
The truths that never can be proved

[1] *In Memoriam*, cxxix. 3. [2] *Ibid.* cxxx. 3.
[3] *Ibid.* cxxxi. 1.

Until we close with all we loved,
And all we flow from, soul in soul." [1]

Faith, though based upon knowledge, springs not from knowledge alone. It is not commensurate with science. It is a gratuitous and a gracious gift of God, and not infrequently descendeth where it is least expected.

7. The song that was begun as a dirge over the dead ends in a marriage-lay. Now that the poet has found life worth living, he sings the marriage of a dear sister with another bosom friend, as a pledge and a hope of a future generation that shall approach nearer to, and hasten the reign of the universal good that he descries in the far-off future, where abide: —

"One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves." [2]

8. Finally, as Petrarca ends his lyrics and sonnets upon Laura with a beautiful prayer to the Blessed Virgin, as Goethe finds in woman through the same immaculate Mother redemption from the ills of life, so does Tennyson conclude the work of his poem of sorrow, and struggle, and triumph over the powers of darkness infesting the age, with a magnificent hymn to Him who is Light and Love and Life: —

"Strong Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove." [3]

[1] *In Memoriam*, cxxxi. 3. [2] *Epithalamium*, 36.
[3] *Prelude*, 1.

Thus, the final note of Tennyson's song, which he makes the prelude of his poem, terminates where the final note of Dante's song terminates, in that Love which moves the world, the sun and all the other stars.[1]

XIII.

"In Memoriam," viewed from the ground upon which we now stand, is a highly finished expression of the heart-hunger of a soul groping after the fulfillment of its desires and aspirations, searching into science and art, and challenging heaven and earth to yield up the secret of happiness and contentment, and in the primitive instincts of human nature together with the essential truths of the Christian religion — in these alone interpreted in the light of faith — discovering the meaning of life and answers to the questionings of doubt and materialism. In this fact lies the claim of the poem to rank with "Faust" and the "Divina Commedia," not indeed in degree of greatness and fullness of expression, but in kind. "In Memoriam" is also a world-poem.

[1] *Paradiso*, xxxiii. 131.

CHAPTER XI.

CONCLUSION.

1. In the previous pages we have sought the ideal in thought and applied the principles of criticism which we regard as most fruitful in word and work. Had the writer known a more elevating doctrine he would have imparted it cheerfully, were the expression of it ever so inadequate. The mere negations of criticism are barren of results; the mere clash and clamor of controversy only too frequently end in personal animosities and the strengthening of prejudice. Meanwhile thought is starving and paralyzed for want of the warmth of life and the nourishment of life-giving food in men's teachings. Keen and bright intellects, hungering and thirsting, grope in cold and darkness after spiritual meat and drink with a yearning and an earnestness that are rarely witnessed in the history of human thought.

2. Beneath the rationalism and agnosticism of the day there is a strong religious feeling crying out for light and life and warmth. Witness the neo-Christian movement in France. It is a reaction against the barrenness of materialism in philosophy and the rottenness of realism in literature. It is a school of choice spirits who refuse to subscribe to