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The Arthurian cycle

Russell M. Spear

University of Massachusetts Amherst

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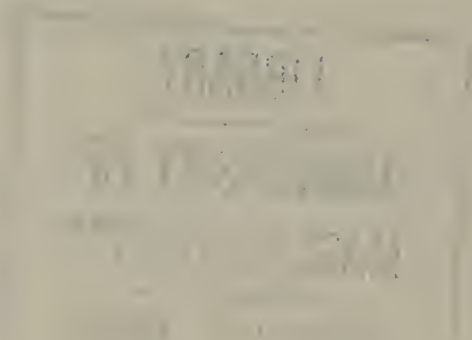
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The purpose of this study is to examine the Arabian Legend as conceived by Malory, Fenimore and Robinson respectively, in an attempt to discover each writer's especial interest and abilities, successes and failures in dealing with this theme. To determine which of these men attained the highest artistic achievement by a comparison of their works as a whole is out of the question. They are distinct and individual artists who must be enjoyed for their individual accomplishments. However, a comparative evaluation of separate phases of their writing can be made to discover in what aspect of the treatment each is most successful.

CHAPTER I
A Study of Melody.

GALOY'S LA MORTE D'ARTHUR

Sir Thomas Malory, with the aid of William Caxton, the first English printer, has left for past and future generations a stirring and memorable collection of epical stories. It has survived since 1470 (1) and is still read by thousands of persons with great enthusiasm. Edward Teachey says, "Only a true work, the offspring of genius, could have so held, and be still holding its ground, age after age." (2)

In the strictest sense Malory's work is not poetry; it is neither rhymed nor metrical, and it has no definitely prescribed form or pattern. But in a larger sense, it is magnificently poetic. If Milton's definition of poetry be applied to Malory's La Mort d'Arthur, it will be found to fit like a glove. Malory's style is simple, sensuous and rises frequently to great passion.

The stories flow along with swift action; each event is complete in itself, yet contributes its part to the whole. Concrete images and pictures follow one another in vivid succession. Here is an example selected at random:

Then Merlin lodged them in a wood among leaves
beside the highway and took off the bridles of
their horses and set them to grass, and laid them
down to rest them,....

There is no room in the stories for abstractions or generalized argument since the style is simple, direct narrative.

As for passion--it would be difficult to find anywhere a greater or purer than the lament of Lancelot over the death of Arthur and Guinever:--

1. xv, pp., cxi.
2. Ibid, pp., ix.

Truly, said Sir Lancelot, I trust I do not displease you, for he cannot die instant, for by wrong was not, nor is not, for any rejoicing of sin, but my sorrow may never leave me. For such I remember of her beauty and of her nobleness, that was both with her king and with her; so when I see his corpse and her corpse on the tapestry, truly mine heart would not serve to sustain my careful body. Also when I remember me, not by my default, mine offence, and my exile, that they were both laid cold low, that were peerless that ever was living of christian people, wit you well, said Sir Lancelot, this remembered, of their kindness and mine unkindness, work so to my heart, that I might not sustain myself. (1)

Malory has humor as well as occasion. It is exemplified in many incidents of his story. One good example is to be found in the scene at Arthur's wedding feast, when a hart runs into the hall followed by a bracket. The bracket bites the hart causing it to leap and meet a knight. The knight, thereupon, carries the bracket away. Immediately a lady comes in crying out to Arthur for the return of her bracket:

I may not be there with, said the king. With this there came a knight riding all armed on a great horse, and took the lady away with him with force, and ever she cried and made great wail. When she was gone the king was glad, for she made such a noise. (2)

This is, of course, a rough historical type of humor but it fits the time of which it is a part, and lends such brightness and natural charm to the story.

Malory's main strength lies in his sheer narrative ability. His stories are full of action and exciting action. Although some of his incidents are of highly dramatic nature, they do not approach formal drama; there is little dialogue and the scenes are too widely scattered. Most of them are recounted in the simple

1. *ibid.*, pp., 12.
 2. *Ibid.*, pp., 12.

occasional and powerful manner of heroic individualism.

A splendid example of this heroic style occurs in the conflict between Tristan and Kingmark and Isolde:

And by sudden adventure Sir Tristram met with Sir Kingmark
le Desirous, and with Sir Isolde le Sauvage, and these two
knights were with Sir Tristram and conversed with him, and
asked him if he would just with them. Sir Tristram, said
Sir Tristram, with a good will I would just with you, but
I have promised at a day set near hand to do battle with a
strong knight. And therefore I am loth to have me with
you, for and it misfortune me here to be hurt, I should not
be able to do my battle which I promised. As for you,
said Sir Kingmark, charge your hand ye shall just with us
or ye shall free us. Well, said Sir Tristram, if ye enforce
us thereto, I must do what I say. And when they crossed
their shields, and were coming together with great ire.
But through Sir Tristram's great force, he struck Sir
Kingmark from his horse. Then he lifted his horse's head,
and said to Sir Isolde, Knight, make thee ready. And so
through his force Sir Tristram strake Isolde from his
horse. And when he saw they lie on the earth he took his
bridle, and rode forth on his way, and his man Gouvernail
with him. (1)

Mr. Alfred Nutt speaks as follows on Malory's style: "Malory
is a wonderful example of the power of style. He is a most un-
fettered novelist. He frequently chooses out of many versions
of the legend, the longest, best metrical and local beautiful:
his own contributions to the story are beneath contempt as a rule.
But his language is exactly what it ought to be, and it has re-
mained in consequence the classic English version of the Arthur
story." (2)

Various critics have referred to Malory's work as formalism.
André Lang quotes Furnivall in a rather more kindly context.
"('Le Morte Darthur'), he says, 'is a most elegant jumble and

1. IV, pp., 210.
2. VII, pp., 234

summary of the legends about Arthur." (1) According to present-day standards of art, it is really necessary to agree that Le Morte d'Arthur is a "pleasant jumble." In modern writing form is so clearly defined that, at times, it seems almost to be the principal concern of the writer. Malory, however, had little in the way of form to follow. He was working in a new language, and on a large canvas. In view of the terrific amount of materials from which he had to select, and since the field in which he worked was uncharted, it is a great marvel that his work approaches unity, coherence and form as closely as it does.

For all Malory may seem diffuse to the modern reader, he has kept a definite theme in mind. The Graine of Uther, with which the story opens, leads to the revelation of Arthur's parentage from Uther, and this to his illicit love for the girl he does not know to be his sister, and thence to the birth of Mordred. Then comes the statement of God:-

"To have some of this thing that God is displeasid with you: and your sister shall have a son that shall destroy you, and all the knyghts of your realm."... (2)

Arthur tries to avoid this doom. But it seems again when Merlin warns his cousin marriage with Guinever:

"But Merlin warnid the king covertly that Guinever was not wholesome for him to take to wife, for he warnid him that Lancelot should love her, and she him again. (3)

Arthur married her regardless. The doom is forgotten through long years of prosperity. Arthur conquers Britain and establishes order. He marches on Rome, is victorious and becomes head of all

1. XVII, pp., 13.
2. *IBID.*, pp., 57.
3. XVII, pp., 24.

the kingless and chivalry of Christendom. The fame and honor of the Round Table increases and spreads continually. Everything seems above the reach of adverse destiny until the coming of the sorcerer. Then all the knights enter the quest with all their accustomed zeal in following wordly affairs. But their skill at arms and their self-reliance is of no avail in this ordeal. Only two of the knights (Galahad and Percivale) meet the test and they are called to the future world. Bors is nearly spotless; he comes back sacrificed, to reestablish the games and feasts at Camelot. In the meantime, the curse has been at work. The tragic end comes on in spite of all that Arthur and Lancelot can do. The latter cannot resist temptation; and the former will not believe evil of Guinever and his best friend.

This theme of doom is clear in the book. Even though it is forgotten at times, and the story wanders afield, it comes back at the end with desperate reality.

The unity of the work, as a whole, is observable in the characters as well as the events of the story. Arthur is a true knight. He shares the general characteristics of his nobler knights yet he differs from them all in that he alone claims to be King. He dominates in the story from start to finish. There are many other noble and notable figures whose destinies are tied in inextricably with Arthur's. Prominent among these is Lancelot, notwithstanding his one great sin. None other than he could have borne the continual taunts and violence of Gawaine with his patience and repeated efforts for a reconciliation. Gawaine, too, has a strongly marked individuality of character. His regard for

the honor of his mother, his passion for Etard, and his love for his brothers drive him to many unworthy deeds. Yet he is neither a scoundrel nor a savage. Even though he does thirst for revenge upon Lancelot for the unintentional killing of Gareth and Gaheris, his long previous affection for Lancelot, along with his devotion to Arthur and his real remorse towards Lancelot, are revealed at the end.

The Barons Palamides is another distinct warrior. He is a gallant and skillful fighter, but he lacks the gentleness and fine sense of honor of the Christian knights. Sir Biscopin, the bishop, a good fighter, is another character well drawn. He has no great physical strength but will not dodge a fight, and is continually using humorous protests against love and war. Then there is Merlin, half-Christian, half-magician, who is devotedly loyal to the house of Uther. Many others, whose characters stand out distinctly, add their contributions to the balancing of the picture. Guinever with her dignity towards Arthur and the court, her flaming passion for Lancelot and her unresisting jealousy; the wife-like docility of Izaine; and the two Maines surrendering themselves completely but from different impulses; Gant, with his a sparrow; and Percivale's sister with her pity and self-sacrifice; all these lend individuality--each in her own way--which contributes to the full balance of the great canvas Malory paints.

The unity of Malory, therefore, is to be found, not only in the theme of doom which follows through the book with the life of Arthur, but also in the distinct characterization of the lives of many individuals who are inextricably woven into that doom.

It is desirable, at this point, to make a more detailed study of one of the more distinctive characters—of Le Morte Darthur with a view toward a better understanding of Malory's special ability in creating living individuals who develop and grow during the course of the book.

The impulsive Gawaine serves the purpose exceedingly well. He is a major figure in the cycle and is drawn with the same skill that Malory shows in the characterization of Arthur, Lancelot, Guinever and the other great figures. Besides, he offers a fresher interest since he is generally less familiar to the average student.

Gawaine is a vengeful man, jealous of his honor and that of his family. Early in the book he shows this characteristic:

"But King Pellinore bare the blame of the death of King Lot, therefore Sir Gawaine revenged the death of his father...and slew King Pellinore with his own hands." (1)

This trait follows him all his life even to the end when he taunts Lancelot and finally provokes him to a duel, because of Lancelot's unintentional killing of Gareth and Gaheris.

"My kin, my lord, and mine uncle, said Sir Gawaine, will you well, now I shall make you a promise that I shall hold by my knighthood, that from this day I shall never fail Sir Lancelot, until the one of us have slain the other." (2)

In his youth he is cruel and merciless. He provokes a battle with Abbot for a petty reason. He overcomes Abbot, who begs for mercy, but Gawaine will have his life regardless.

1. *CV*, pp., 57.
2. *Ibid*, pp., 103.

Sir Gawaine would no more have, but unlaced his
helm to have anything off his head; right so came
his (adversary's) long cut of a cleaver and fell over
him, and so he smote off her head by misadventure. (1)

Gawaine is severely criticized for this action by Arthur and
the matter is brought before Arthur and Guinevere and are accord-
ingly displeas'd:

And by ordinance of the queen there was set a quest
of ladies upon Gawaine, and they judged him forever
while he lived to be with all ladies, and to fight for
their interests; and that ever he should be courteous,
and never to refuse mercy to him that seeketh mercy. (2)

Wherefore, he is sore outcast, and serves out many brave battles
in defence of widows.

He is so impulsive and not rushes into battle at the slightest
provocation, provided he is confident of at least an even chance
of winning. Generally, he is cautious about entering a conflict if
the outcome does not seem reasonably certain. Then Gawaine,
Arthur and two other knights are pursued by the five kings:

Lo, said Sir Kay, yonder be the five kings, let us
go to them and match with them. That were folly, said
Gawaine, for we are but four and they be five. (3)

With this speech Sir Kay rushes at one of the kings and kills
him, whereupon--the odds being even--

Gawaine ran into another king so hard that he smote
him through the body. (4)

He has to be belated by others, nearly always, to do as his
bravest. When Tristan or Lancelot is with him, he will chal-
lenge any foe, no matter how formidable. At the end when he returns
war as Lancelot he rushes immediately to Arthur to gain his sur-

1. *Ibid.*, pp., 65.
2. *Ibid.*, pp., 69.
3. *Ibid.*, pp., 77.
4. *Ibid.*

part and looking:

..I require, you, my lord and king, dress you to the war, for wit you well I will be revenged upon Sir Launcelot. (1)

Gawaine is easily led from the path of virtue by his lust for Elford. He promises Pellens that he will accompany in his behalf, but when he sees Elford he is seized with the desire to possess her himself and all thoughts of Pellens and never leave him. He tells her that he has slain Pellens, to which she replies:

Truly, that is a great pity, for he was a passing good knight of his body, but of all men on live I hated his cost, for I could never be quit of him. And, for ye have slain him I shall be your lady, and to do anything that may please you. (2)

But this affair is shortlived. Pellens discovers Elford and Gawaine sleeping and leaves a sword a thurst their throats:

Then she knew well it was Sir Pellens' sword. Alas! said she to Gawaine, ye have betrayed me and Sir Pellens both. And if Sir Pellens had been as uncountenance to you as ye have look to him, ye had been a dead knight. (3)

Elford will have nothing more to do with him. So rustic justice follows swiftly upon his sin.

Gawaine's light-headed imprudence is laid upon when the Sangreel makes its appearance. He is first to take up the quest:

Now, said Sir Gawaine, we have been served this day of what meats and drinks ye thought on, but one thing beguiled us, we did not see the holy Grail, it was so preciously covered; therefore I will unto here a vow, that to-morrow, without longer abiding, I shall labor in the quest of the Sangreel. (4)

As it is to be expected in impulsive behavior, Gawaine's enthu-

-
- 1. IV, ch., 451.
 - 2. Ibid, ch., 47.
 - 3. Ibid, ch., 93.
 - 4. Ibid, ch. 103.

issues soon arise. Early in the quest he becomes tired of the venture and longs for something else:

....He would long without adventure. For he loved not the tenth part of adventure as he was wont to do. (1) And within the space in a lust he kills a hundred knights, whom he soon not recognize, (2) yearly for adventure and reward.

Gawain is genuinely hard-hearted in his adventures--an adventure lover. He does not take the quest seriously for long because it is too dull. By brave action and constant thought of reward. He shows genuine power and direction in his vengeance. When Lancelot kills Gareth and Gaheris, albeit unintentionally, he will not rest until Lancelot meets him in combat. (3)

For all this, Gawain is not an unlikable savage. During his whole life he serves Arthur with devotion. He respects and loves Lancelot and Tristan. When Arthur seems forever to be harmed, he is firm in his determination of this act. (4)

Gawain has courage, too, in the face of death. Although he does not ordinarily court destruction, he faces it when it comes. Twice when Lancelot kills him he begs to be killed.

At the end of his life, after his fruitless attempt to wreak vengeance upon Lancelot, he sees the folly of his hard-headedness and avows Lancelot for furtherance, and begs him,

....For all the love that ever was between us,
make me carrying, but come over the sea in all haste,
that thou mayest with many noble knights rescue that
noble king that was my knight, that is my lord

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1. *WV*, no., 377.
 2. *Ibid*, no., 378.
 3. *Ibid*, no., 411.
 4. *Ibid*, no., 457.

Arthur, for he is fully and justly hated with a false
traitor, that is my half brother Sir Mordred. (1)

It is easy to gain from these glimpses of Gawain a good pic-
ture of him as an individual. He is obviously devoted to the
highest good of his time, but lacks genuine strength of character
and direction. Although he is impulsive, hard-headed, and at
times cruel, he is capable of noble and courageous acts, and at
the end, when he sees the fate he has brought on himself, he grows
immaculately. His plea for Lancelot's forgiveness and his appeal
to Lancelot to help Arthur in his distress, lend nobility and
gentleness to his death.

Malory's manner of portraying character is rough and out-
lined on broad simple lines. He does not show the infinite com-
plexity of the mind. Rather he shows the man through an occasional
recital of deeds and attitudes. None the less his characters are
alive, individual and capable of growth.

The morality and philosophy of Malory are thoroughly inter-
twined. A glance at the epistles readily identifies his philo-
sophical and ethical views as unambiguously Christian.

There is a curious situation in the death of King of which
Celtic myths with chivalrous adventures and the romantic theory of
cainly life.

The story of Merlin and Nimue (2) is purely mythical in char-
acter, and has little, if any, philosophical significance. There
are many like stories through the book. Yet they are in the small
minority and must yield place to the activity, courtesy, and

1. *Ibid.*, pp., 471.
2. *Ibid.*, pp., 73-76.

gentleness that fill most of the work.

Fidelity in love is strongly stressed. Lancelot is imprisoned by King Mordred and told that he will never have Guinever again and that in Mordred's prison he must choose one of them. He replies:

Lover had I die in this prison with verahie, than
to have one of you be my love, smyte my head. (1)

Guinever's infidelity to Arthur is punished in the truly Christian fashion:

She let make herself a nun, and great penance she
took, as ever did sinful lady in this land, and never
could creature make her sorry, but lived in fasting,
prayers and alas-deeds that all manner of people won-
dered her virtuously she was changed. (2)

Courtesy and gentleness, thoroughly Christian traits, are among the key notes of these chivalric tales. When Gawaine strikes down Blamor, and would then have his life, Arthur re-
generates with him.

Alas! said Arthur, that is foul and shamefully
done; that shame will never free you. Also ye should
give mercy unto them that ask mercy. (3)

Incidents of this type occur again and again in the story.

The only symbolism in de Morte Darthur is that of the Chris-
tian Church. There is none of Melory's own invention. His swift
moving, vigorous narrative style does not demand symbols.

The book has been criticized as "bold history and open man
slaughter." (4) It is true that there is a great deal of slaughter
in the stories, yet most of it is in self-defense, or in cutting

1. I, pp., 90.
2. Ibid, pp., 451.
3. Ibid, pp., 60.
4. VIII, pp., 13.

A careful examination of Le Morte Darthur fails to disclose any symbolism. The following representative pages, selected at random, demonstrates this lack of symbolic expression.

Then Ulfius was glad, and rode on more than a pace till that he came to Uther Pendragon, and told him he had met with Merlin. Where is he? said the king. Sir, said Ulfius, he will not dwell long. Therewithal Ulfius was gone where Merlin stood at the porch of the pavilion's door. And then Merlin was bound to come to the king. When king Uther saw him he said he was welcome. Sir, said Merlin, I know all your heart every deal; so ye will be sworn unto me, as ye be a true king anointed to fulfil my desire, ye shall have your desire. Then the king was sworn upon the four evangelists. Sir, said Merlin, this is my desire: after ye shall win Igraine ye shall have a child by her, and when that is born it shall be delivered to me for to nourish there as I will have it; for it shall be your worship and the child's avail, as nickle as the child is worth. I will yell, said the king, as thou wilt have it. (1)

dam lawlessness and ascending the Christian Faith. Although the means employed to make this end may be questioned, by some, nevertheless the end in itself is commendable. Little else could be expected of an early semi-barbaric society. The remarkable thing is the actual prevalence of goodness and virtue in the account.

As for the "bardry"---on the first page we encounter Igraine; but she was within good women and would not consent unto the king. (1)

Her Isle, unfortunately, was unhappy but she was good and retained good in her heart.

There is some corruption in the book, but it is not out of reasonable proportion. Any survey of life in the period would show an equal percentage of evil and vulgarity as is found in La Pierre's History. As a matter of fact, it is likely that the ratio would greatly exceed what represented in Malory.

Lancelot excels in courtesy. Somewhere in it more apparent than at the end of the stories when he meets Guinevere's repeated taunts with Christian grace and forbearance. (2)

Christian gentility appears frequently in the acts of the knights toward one another and especially toward women. Guinevere's "charge" (previously quoted) in this respect is typical of the attitude of the Table Round.

In the quest for the Holy Grail, Christianity in its mystical and medieval form has full sway. The adventures are legendary and feature the fall of the wizard, yet the purpose behind them

is left. The sentence severally takes the oath:

I shall labour in the coast of the Venograd, that I shall hold up out a twelve month and a day, or more if need be, and never shall I return again unto the court till I have seen it more deadly than it hath been seen here; and if I may not speed, I shall return again as he that may not be against the will of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1)

Two of the knights had the trails and are welcomed into heaven. Of the remainder many are killed or die in the pursuit. Less than half return. (2) They are not equal in the feat; and their failure is pointed out both literally and symbolically in this fact.

At the end of the book Christian justice comes into its own with a vengeance. Arthur, because of his crime of incest, is bereft of his kingdom and spurred to the death by the offering of that crime; (3) Mordred, the treacherous usurper is slain outright; (4) Lancelot and Guinever, in recompense for their adulterous love and the part it played in undoing the kingdom, enter the service of the church, and die of remorse and grief; (5) and Gawaine meets his own undoing through his vengeance and hard-headedness. (6) Thus, for all their sins, each one stones in the end.

This accounting may lead to the conclusion that history preaches. But that is not the case. His retribution is worked out with artistic inevitability; it never descends to the humi-
-letic.

-
1. IV, 99.
 2. Ibid, pp., 85.
 3. Ibid, pp., 479.
 4. Ibid.
 5. Ibid, pp., 485-87.
 6. Ibid, pp., 477.

The moral tone of the book is broad and wholesome. It is never narrow or didactic. In its pages may be found--"noble chivalry, courtesy, humanity, friendliness, hardness, love, friendship, covardice, murder, hate, virtue and sin", (1)--the whole ethical gamut of medieval life. The picture is presented wholly and honestly of a world in which victory sees rather more of good than of evil.

CHAPTER II

PART I: The Philosophy of F. H. Bradley.

One always hesitates in the attempt to isolate and formulate the philosophy of any poet. "My poet", in any, have developed or followed any definite system of philosophy; and many other little or nothing of philosophic content. For is this strange; since it is the function of the poet primarily to record man's feelings about life and the world in which they live. The matter of man's thoughts and conceptions is traditionally the property of philosophers.

Hence, a consideration of Dr. Robinson's poetry, with a view toward philosophic discovery and invention, is approached with unusual care. The feelings, the words, the language in poetry are of paramount importance. This fact must be understood before an effort is made to find reasons, interpretations or trends of thought.

Dr. Robinson, however, is remarkable in that he unites that rare combination of poet and philosopher. He is first of all a poet. His most felicitous and compelling expression is poetic. Nevertheless, his poetry is brooded and stirred by philosophic thought. At times even--and here his poetry suffers--his philosophy transcends his emotion, and leaves a rather stiff and unyielding residue. Yet these occasions are rare.

It is from these times that his thoughts on life are most easily ascertained. For example, Dr. Robinson has been called a cosmic pessimist. (1) What man who has read the following octave would be willing to argue with this verdict?

Unobtrusively void of a clear outline
Whisper to build, upward to fortitude,
The legion life that rights its wrongs
Does ever plucking upward, up and down,
Fast like some army regiment or crew,
Unfettered of words but language,
Yet ever led resolutely along
To certain ends by great trajectories. (1)

Here in the fourth verse, is a declaration of faith in the progress of mankind. In spite of chaos, fits, complications and reversals, Robinson thinks there is reason to believe in the forward march of man.

Again this faith is framed in an octave. This time it is expressed more subtly, and tempered by feeling and mood. In the following lines Robinson is the poet expressing his faith in life:

Here by the windy docks I stand alone,
But yet conventional. There the vessel goes,
And share my friend's pace with it; but the wide
That splits and ebb between that friend and me
Love's earnest is of life's all-purposed
And all-triumphant calling, when the ships
Loose their fretful engines and swing
Forever from the crushed shores of Time. (2)

For all one sees Mr. Robinson's faith shining out through these verses, there is an obvious conflict. "The clash arises from the unresolvable discrepancy between life experienced and life desired; the forces involved are equally reason and working faith, each impotent to conquer wholly, each incapable of complete surrender." (3)

Mr. Robinson expresses this conflict more succinctly in the following verses from his long poem, Marlin:

-
1. II, pp., 111.
 2. *Idem*, pp., 107.
 3. VIII, pp., 17.

"Andly pity on us that our words have since
and leave our souls to crawl so far below them;
For we have all two feelings, as men who dream,
Whether we lead or follow, while we serve." (1)

But for all the excellent sense, there is no demoralizing or le-
sening. Rather, the picture is of a man who can see about ir-
evitable defeat, and still meet it with smiling eyes. There is
no negation; merely an admission of the very discrepancies of life
and heroic acceptance of them.

In every other man only failure, Mr. Robinson sees success.
Masters has to be well expressed it as in the following lines:

Flourish the rich heart instant us, as she fraught
forever with indissoluble truth,
Therein shines roundly itself divine,
Transcendental, transcendently. Chief and lord,
Whence the revelation, are the dreams
Of wasted excellences; and every dream
Was in it something of an emblem that
Was flouts defiance and laughs at years. (2)

"These idealisms lifts us the poor without an heroic blow." (3)

Mr. Robinson follows according to his belief in man as a rational
being. Professor Gentry says, "Robinson is neither a mystic nor
a genius, neither a romantic dreamer nor a serious scientist,
but an observer of the facts of the spirit as well as of physical
realities, who knows man's limitations and weaknesses and yet be-
lieves in man's destiny and in life's ideal condition. He is
an idealist, who remains attached to Christian freedom, without
being hampered by Christian dogma. . . after all, Robinson turns
back to Shakespeare, being, really alive, like the poet of Ham-
let, to the interior of our highest nature and fully sensitive,

1. IV, iv, 105.
2. Id., iv, 107.
3. Id., iv, 107.

live processes, to our inability to give to the weight of our un-
realities." (1)

Dr. Robinson may well, in reply to a critic who accused him
of making the world a "barren waste", "I am sorry to learn that I
have painted myself in such lurid black colors. The world is not
a 'barren waste', but a field of vitalized birdsong where
billions of bewildered infants are trying to smell and taste the
crusts of life." (2) Again, there is no question. These words are
the cry of a man who is confused, but who has still a faith in the
eventuality of the life process. Dr. Robinson of his own definit-
ly means to arrange the blocks himself, and he comes nearest
doing so when, in Marlin, he says:

Now Arthur, Robert, Lamoleet and Lawrence
are swollen bubbles of this eternal will
which have no other way to find the way
to a lower level or to their immortality
than by the time-indurating time
of a reached end, lit up by the touch
of youth, and together with the light
that Michael found, is yet to light the world. (3)

In regard to love, Dr. Robinson follows Shelley. Like Shelley
he links together love and the realization of the ideal. "But," as
Carre says, "he has been taught by the failure of the romanti-
cists to know love's error." (4)

From these comments, it is easy to deduce the fact that
Dr. Robinson considers power essential, with love as the stimu-
lant and guide. Most of Dr. Robinson's characters see what the
world could and should be, but most of them like Aristotle's

1. III, pp. 27.
2. III, pp. 6.
3. IV, pp. 17.
4. III, pp. 28.

people, follow love and reason, and from the world; therefore, Mr. Robinson's work and mission are failures. Finally, Lawrence, the mother, the father and the mother followed love. In spite of their troubles and misfortunes, they had found what remained true, saved them and, in the eyes of Mr. Robinson, made them whole. They knew that they were doing; and they knew why they were condemned in the end. Hence, they were the staff of great beauty.

Mr. Lloyd Morris has made the best account of Mr. Robinson's philosophy perhaps in the following statement: "His (Robinson's) demand is not of positive action but of positive acceptance; follow the light as it is and it will lead you; follow it in spite of the fact that the riches of material pleasures may be those you seek, in so far as they are the way of wisdom and of virtue; however great are the temptations to the intellect, no matter what they may be, for it is to bring you into fulfilling your destiny." (1) In this, he is very close to Browning.

The of Mr. Robinson's most successful statements of this intuitive philosophy is contained in a significant lyric poem, entitled *Grade*:

I cannot find my way: there is no star
 In all the sky and no compass anywhere;
 And there is not a star in the air
 Of any living voice but one so far
 That I can hear it only as a bar
 Of lost, imperial music, which was fair
 And which I might have seen, and understood,
 Had I been in a garden where no roses are.

So there is not a flower, nor a bird,
 For you that welcome, welcome man to land,

The black and awful words of the night;
For through it all--above, beyond it all--
I know the important message of the years;
I feel the coming glory of the light. (1)

In all these utterances of Mr. Robinson we find courage and
a belief in "life's all-powerful will". Even Darwin is
made to say, after his world and historic has crumbled into
ruins:

"And in the end
The great Unknowable, though it shall pass
Unseen, shall show its power today." (2)

Mr. Robinson is not a cosmic pessimist. Rather, he is an
idealist, struggling against every god-forsaken force, toward a
goal that ever calls him. He never loses this ideal, but it is
safe to say that it represents his belief in God.

This philosophy of life is quite typical of what is held by
the majority of persons who believe in God and man.

1. *Id.*, pp., 91.
2. *Id.*, pp., 309.

CHAPTER II

BOOK II: Tennyson's Philanthropy.

"They all are now about thirty, after having passed the searching
 look of wisdom and discovered its limitations. The first princi-
 ple exhibited by Yungyuan that a God exists revealed at His
 highest in the reality/^{of} self-sacrificing love, that the world will
 be essentially free and the soul immortal, that darkness shall in
 due time be all light, and creative harmony at last, after long
 discord, shall be obtained.

Let Yungyuan claim as these principles are his own, because he
 had discovered them for himself, but because they were those upon
 which the "wisest and the best have rested through all ages." (1)

Yungyuan says in Is America LVI, 4., that he -

"expressed in my love ideal
 the love creature's final law." (2)

All the questions concerning love of man for God, of man for
 man and of man for woman are stirred into resolution through the
 action of "these three-fold laws which he, Yungyuan, places
before of the day." (3)

We behold Arthur and Harold, fighting the world's battles
 together, yelling the glorious formulae of their love for each
 other:

"Greet the two,
 For each had waged either in the fight,
 Swore on the field of death a deathless love.
 In Arthur's hand, 'God's word is God is God;
 Let Charles own still, I trust him to the death!" (4)

(The most important notes of the Idyll is in the rep-

ture of this first great episode, according to a lower allurement

- 1. II, 10., 178.
- 2. I, 10., 178.
- 3. III, 10., 178.
- 4. I, 10., 178-179.

of love.)

Through the words of the wandering Jew in Die Walküre, Wagner
has voiced his belief in the eternal truth that for man to
be yielding and self-sacrificing, is yet the highest will of the
world." (1) He is quoted as saying:

"This world is full
of pain in the shadow of death
as in the light of the sun, when the dawn,
The spirit of the world shall rise, and say," (2)

Wagner, who has a tremendous interest in social problems,
realized too well the danger of "illiberalism, cyclic
indifference, unscrupulous competition and cold division of spoils."
In every other way he exposed the vicious and pathetic frailties
of human love. He dives into the dark secrets of the heart and
pours the ugly truth and the relentless honesty. But in doing so
he is obviously pointing the finger at the vital truth in our social
order that regeneration must come:

"The world must love the light, if we are to see it," (3) he
says.

Wagner's great social message is Die Walküre
and is the basis of his artistic and dramatic genius. It is the
basis of his artistic and dramatic genius. It is the basis of his
artistic and dramatic genius. It is the basis of his artistic and
dramatic genius. It is the basis of his artistic and dramatic
genius. It is the basis of his artistic and dramatic genius.

1. III, 25, 26.
2. I, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.
3. I, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

...is better, or else to read the doctrinal statements of
 religion which are so often, for good and better, so un-
 covered... This is only another form of spiritualism, or its prob-
 able consequence.... there is a reaction against spiritualism and
 folk lore in religion, they demand a religion which is based on
 the ground of a spiritual world, or the existence of the miracu-
 lous;... which things that have been injured the love of God;
 and which take men and women away from their sacred duties." (1)

The poet severely feels this evil, and sides a vigorous re-
 sistance of it.

Before leaving the discussion of Emerson's social philoso-
 phy, it may prove interesting to offer a criticism of one of his
 doctrines. Emerson writes, in his Idylls, his belief in the su-
 preme ability of man to lead society forward. He gives further
 the power of leading his soul or community into the future of
 all his followers, thus making them leaders of himself:

'Thus when by words, and general life I lead
 With large, divine, and wonderful words,
 Beyond my words to that time--I speak
 From eye to eye through all their power fixed
 I speak like him of the time;...' (2)

There is an error in social philosophy which every man has held
 in common with Emerson. Carlyle and Ruskin never saw the fallacy
 of it.

The secret of the progress of civilization does not lie in
 the ability of one outstanding individual to speak to his fol-
 lowers and draw them to his own leaders. Rather, it lies in his

1. VIII, 10., 101.
2. I., 10., 107.

ability of yielding his own society to the point where he can
 bring out the individual qualities and characteristics of all
 whom he governs. In the Wells Review on this point, yet
 he usually breaks it down in the July Trail, where one by one
 the Wells Review themselves and in their own case.

Brooke says, "In fact, Wells Review is the Wells,
 whether consciously or not, the complete breaking down in prac-
 tice of the theory of the government which he put everyone
 into his own society. I do not think he meant to give us this
 good democratic lesson, but he has given it." (1)

Arthur Dutton says of Wells, "I do not believe that
Wells's intellectual force was pre-eminently great or that
 his knowledge was very profound; of technical philosophy, for
 instance, he said, 'I have had a glimpse of that, and have hardly
 turned a page of it'. The same might be said of his
 other largely due to the fact that his interests were limited,
 and that he was able to do his work, without any sense of ge-
 nerosity or selfishness, entirely in his private work." (2)

Wells's philosophy, in so far as he may be said to have
 any, is ethical and social. He is a religious person deeply
 alive to the social needs of his day. In his religious zeal
 and in his practical denunciations of what he believed to be
social evils, lies the kernel of his artistic philosophy. He
 once summed it up in the following words: "Art for art- and
art is the only principle," he said, and always been his principle." (3)

1. WV, pp., 107.
 2. WV, pp., 111.
 3. WV, pp., 117.

This is undoubtedly a noble aim, yet it is equally undeniable that had he not spent so much of his energy in politics & social, his art would have been immeasurably finer. Literature or, as he more specific, poetry can have moral or social messages. Many writers have succeeded in casting art and a moral passion into literature of mere force and beauty. But Tolstoy cannot do this. His art is limited and his moral passion nearly always confined to the hedonistic. This point will be brought out in greater detail later.

Tolstoy's spiritual quest is a difficult quality to isolate or describe. It can be defined best in his own words, "I see the nothingness of life, I love its emptiness--but I believe in Love and Virtue and Duty." (1) The explanation of his belief is never clearer or more logical than now. One must be satisfied with the simple knowledge that he did believe. As Tolstoy says, "Tolstoyan discipline nothing; the only law for me is to express the profound emotion, and a language of admirable beauty, the fact that there is, or seems to be, an indissoluble union of faith which humanity is bound to retain, and will not be removed or rejected." (2)

It is clear that Tolstoy, throughout his life, was a devout follower of Christ. He refers to His teachings in such words as the following:

(Christ), "that union of man and woman, strength and strength." (3)

1. V, op., 115.
 2. Ibid, no., 114.
 3. Ibid, no., 117.

"that the Sun is to cast Flower, Jesus Christ is
to my soul. He is the Sun of my soul." (1)

From this knowledge of Fenryson it is an easy step to the
understanding of his characterization of Arthur. Here obviously,
the poet created his prototype of Christ. Arthur says:

"And I was first of all the kinne who drew
The lightest-curtain of this realm and all
The realm together under me, their head,
In that fair order of my Table Round,
A glorious company, the flower of men,
To serve as model for the mighty world
and be the fair beginning of a time." (2)

One thinks back quite naturally to Christ and the calling of his
apostles. Although this analogy is not exact throughout the
layla, the calling is clear even to the casual reader. They are
good signs, sure men--or women--who held up a religious ideal
to a world that fails to listen, and eventually crosses them.

The delivery of these stories lies, not in the pretence of
their defeat, nor in their loss of faith in themselves and the
world. Instead, it emerges from their belief in the indestruct-
ibility of their souls--their lives in the life to come after
death.

On this point, a criticism of Frodo's interpretation of
Arthur is justified. Frodo says: "Arthur's work was done,
love, friendship, his ideal--have also broken. ... The writer
(Fenryson) is to judge from this poem (the layla) alone, and
from the fact he calls allegorically to Arthur, his soul here at
the end were to see, nor could he believe, his soul be right-
believed, but, on the other, thus himself at least of proper....

1. V, no.: 177.
2. I, no.: 140.

Desert, and all the tremors! Doubtful to affirm or deny! No
 clear belief, no triumph of the soul! And the last battle is
 fought in a death-white mist, not one ray of sunlight to illumine
 it! Men have not friend from foe; old ghosts look in on the
 fight; every man who fought in it fought with his heart cold". (1)

"With fearless fear; and ev'n on Arthur fell
 Confusion, since he saw not whom he fought." (2)

All this is true as far as it goes. Frodo stopped too soon.

The following passage gives the real key to Pevensie's Words.

Arthur is speaking:

"I found him in the shining of the stars,
 I sought him in the flickering of his fires,
 but in his sleep with me I found him not.
 I wept his name, and now I weep my die.
 O me! For why is all covered up here
 As if some lesser god had made the world,
 but had not force to show it as he would,
 till the high God behold it from beyond,
 and enter it, and make it beautiful?
 Or else as if the world were wholly fair,
 but that these eyes of men are dense and dim,
 and have not power to see it as it is:
 Verily, because we see not in the clear;-
 For I, being blind, thought to see the will,
 and have but stricken with the sword in vain:
 and all I deemed I loved in wife and friend
 is wrother to my name, and all my soul
 feels back into the dust and to no more.
 My God, thou hadst for given me in my death:
 'Nay--but my Christ--I dare not shall not die.'" (3)

There is bewilderment here, at the words of God and man, over all
 these in in Christ's last words. But there is also the trans-
 cendent faith that death is not a gateway to a richer life ful-
 fillment.

Frodo had to let Arthur die here. He knew that Arthur's

1. III, ch. vi, 171-2.
 2. I, ch. vi, 171-2.
 3. Ibid, 171-2.

Armen was the high for any country yet known to man. He had to
let Armin see this too. That he saved Armin. He gave him the
hope of eternal life. Armin, who was a frail spirit and
died early, is the only other of the knights whom he allowed to
reach this goal. Armin always believed in the immortality of
the soul, and he branched into faith and that how only at
some of his people whom he considered worthy.

CHAPTER III

PART I: The style of W. A. Bellman.

Dr. Bruce Wilcox in his book, From Poet to Poet in American Poetry, is very sympathetic to Mr. Colman. He says of him, "As a poet of New York, he was not without the multi-facetedness of the poet, and as a correspondent of the world, he expressed little or nothing of the various spirit of man. His is a kind of literary culture. Much of his poetry is not the genuine work of poetic inspiration, of melody and harmony and the dramatic legend, and is devoid of reference to the contemporary and the actual." (1)

This view point is often held by those who are inclined toward conservatism—and are not infrequently held by the reading public. It is in the opinion of Mr. Lloyd George who speaks in agreement with most of Mr. Colman's critics: "For all that has reflected more completely a life distinctively that of our country and our time, and has more fully shared in the life and the activities of which our time has been affected." (2)

Between the two such diametrically opposed evaluations as these there must be some error and some oversight. It is my purpose to analyze Mr. Colman's style and find a middle ground.

A careful consideration of Mr. Colman's poetry disclosed no new poetic forms, no untried meter. He has employed the age-old stanza and rhyme schemes. In his local work he has followed the venerable custom of blank verse. Very possibly this lack has caused some to think that Colman has never risen to the work of any other great poet in verse. It is in this way

1. ibid., p. 10.
2. ibid., p. 11.

has incorporated into the old forms, the luxury, the wildness, restraint, and the excess of today. Into the villanelle, traditionally plain and dry, Mr. Robinson brings a new and sombre music in the unvarnished tragedy of The House on the Hill:

They are all gone away,
The house is silent and still,
There is nothing here to say.

Through broken walls and eaves
The winds blow black and shrill:
They are all gone away.

Nor is there one to-day
To speak their grief or ill:
There is nothing here to say.

Why is it then we stray
Around the haunted hill?
They are all gone away.

And our poor things—oh
For time is cruel still:
There is nothing here to say.

There is ruin and decay
In the house on the hill
They are all gone away,
There is nothing here to say. (1)

Here is a declaration of literary independence. Mr. Robinson has taken an historically still and graceful form in sleek and solemn tragedy. Mr. Robinson will not leave the ill-used form, but he does desert from the accepted use of those forms.

He treats alone through time's old wilderness
As if the trace of all the centuries
Had left no echo--no stone and none, for use. (2)

Even if Mr. Robinson's sleek verse,—the medium to which he resorts in his intention poem—be less and brilliant in itself—

ily discernible. In the following passage from Lancelot, in which Lancelot is making a confession to Guinevere, we have a more intense, brilliant psychological insight and a more subtle, even greater, restraint:

"When I rode in between your father's guests
And heard his knights blow for my lord's honor,
I sent my memory back to Camelot,
And said once to myself, 'God save the King!'
But the words were by throat and were like blood
Upon my tongue. Then a great about went up
From shining men around me everywhere;
And I remember well fair women's eyes
That there are stars in heaven, all of them
Thrown on me for a glimpse of that high knight
Sir Lancelot--the Lancelot of the lake.
I saw their faces and I saw not one
To cover a blemish of my integrity:
But I thought upon again, to make myself
Believe a silent lie, 'God save the King!'
I saw your face, and there were no more things." (1)

There is this picture of the hero, this character portrayal and this rich subtle and literary content all of Mr. Swinburn's poetry. Let us now see how the poet has considered these the following lines from Tristram:

.....leaves of splendor
With all her heart, young Tristram's
By which she lives and fears that she shall
Will be no further could have been in fall,
Gave answer still to him and still said nothing,
Will terror born of magic's burning passion
Whom of sorrow while his life and here
But speech out like fire out by fire. (2)

Here is another,--a more subtle and more restrained--held by Swinburn still inside the limit of formal and classic restraint. Inside poetry, there is drama. Mr. Swinburn is great and intense and dramatic poet. Swinburn has broad sympathy and psychological insight, he has been wonderfully successful in portraying

1. I. K. p. 27.
2. I. K. p. 28.

the tense and terrific strain of character upon character. The following quotation from Friston illustrates this unusual power. (It is the night of Mark's marriage to Isolt. Fridson and Isolt have watched a moment from time and time to time in a room before the "barre like death" that is to follow. Isolt, Anne and Isolt of Mark, follows them. He is discovered and struck to the ground by Friston. Mark awakes in time to see Isolt in Friston's arms):

"Governail,"
 The King said with staring eyes
 About him, "he is lying there at your feet?
 Turn him and let us see?"

"You know him, sir,"
 Friston replied, in tones of no address:
 "The name of that you see there is Isolt;
 And it is manifestly at your service."

"That was an unbecoming jest, I fear,
 For you tonight, Friston," answered the King.
 "Do you not see what you have done to him?
 Isolt is bleeding."

"I am glad of that, sir.
 So long as there is loss of that bad blood
 In him, there will be no such loss of Isolt.
 Wash him, and he will be as good as ever;
 and that will be about as good as virtue.
 If I had been struck with him and dropped him,
 I'd pity the sink fishes," Friston's words,
 Coming he had not chance, fell without life
 As from a stone without it."

"Governail,"
 The King said, trembling in his conversation,
 "The Queen and her young one will be back with you,
 and when you come, take Isolt through the garden,
 and through the little window he came out of,"
 said Friston,..... (1)

This bit of dialogue shows Mr. Tolson's grasp of dramatic writing.

As one would expect, these excellent blank verses with their
 good artistic finish. The dramatic instinct is inherent in his.
Barlin, Lancelotti and Tristram show clearly the touch lines of
 classic drama. They are well like the old tragedies, with an
 exposition, a knot and a denouement. What sets it aside is of
 carefully elaborated dialogue, interspersed with narrative, where
 modern thought and speech characteristics merge in brilliant
 analysis.

Mr. Lancelotti is more than a dramatic poet, unfortunately. He
 has the skill in melody and word music found only among the best
 writers of Swedish lyric poetry. Observe the following lines
 from that Attendant lover, Lancelotti, who is writing courtly ad-
 verses to lords of Brittany:

"Your low voice tells me bells of singing gold
 Shall sound at twilight over silent water." (1)

This lyrical music answers music when Tristram is looking
 east from his tower over into the sunset. He remembers the golden
 sun of the sea at Lancelotti,--

Tristram should
 Pictorially slowly considering in the west
 To a last sunset, while on golden water
 The sun of Lancelotti's tower (gold) and sunset
 And golden sunset. (?)

Later, when Lancelotti comes to him in joyous mood, the sun is no
 longer golden, but filled with light:

...the spread of evening
 was to the brass where Tristram stood alone
 His happiness, watching a bright sunset sea
 That like a field of waving wheat and silver

1. VI, pp., 5-20.
 2. Ibid, pp., 176.

Flashed there before him. (1)

Again we see Tristran lying in the grass:

He stretched his arms,
Laughing to be alive; and over his head
Leaves in the wind that gave them a gay voice
Flickered and ticked with laughter. (2)

In description Mr. Robinson excels. But here again is a modern note that is his own. He sees things in nature as the imagist sees them and his characters interpret the things about them according to their moods. Often too there is symbolism. These three qualities are clearly brought out in the following lines from Merlin. Dagonet and Merlin, sitting on a hill overlooking the city they know to be falling to ruin, have sadly unburdened their hearts to each other. Night overtakes them:

They arose,
And, saying nothing, found a groping way
Down through the gloom together. Fiercer now,
The wind was like a flying animal
That beat the two of them incessantly
With icy wings, and bit them as they went.
The rock above them was an empty place
Where neither seer nor fool should view again
The stricken city. Colder blew the wind
Across the world, and on it heavier lay
The shadow and the burden of the night;
And there was darkness over Camelot. (3)

In this dusk that comes down upon Camelot, is a forceful symbol taken directly from nature. The poet foreshadows the death of a kingdom.

Indeed, Mr. Robinson's use of symbolism demands further comment. In addition to his symbolization in nature are his supernatural symbols of Time and Fate, which may be interpreted to rep-

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1. XI, pp., 126.
 2. Ibid, pp., 156.
 3. IX, pp., 314.

through the lines of thought and of word-formation. A comparative study is necessary to enable the reader to appreciate fully the author's intention, however, this is left to the reader's own investigation. Mr. Robinson does not, for some of a better cause, say he writes a symbolic treatment. This is best illustrated in Tristram. Certain symbols follow through the story like the motifs of a symphony. Early in Tristram we hear above the voices of the lovers in floral gardens:

...the morning cool of Cornish coasts
Cold upon Cornish rocks. (1)

Like a keen accompaniment, this melancholy music fulfils the lovers' memory wherever they get snatches of the old bliss. It is never far away from them; behind, beating always with solemn insistence.

In Tristram, too, there is the important flight of swallows, noticed by Iseult of Brittany from the tower:

Look! at the white birds, in Brittany,
Could one see far away westward anywhere
A picture more alive or less familiar
Than a blind poem, and the same white birds
Flying, and always flying, and still singing,
Yet never bringing any news of him
That she remembered.....(2)

These birds return again and again in the poem to symbolize the eternal waiting of the disappointed bride who looked out across the sea in the east, and always in vain.

Mr. Robinson has more. The style is of the drawing-room variety. It is witty, conventional and polite. An excellent example is to be found in Tristram when Iseult delivers a

1. II, pp., 24.
2. Ibid, pp., 9.

and troubled in the world, heart verily coming,
 "Some like a flower
 Twinkle," he said..... it seemed
 a flower of wonder with a crimson stem
 came leaning slowly and reverently
 To meet his will— flower of change and peril
 That had a clinging blossom of warm olive
 Half-stifled in a tyranny of black,
 and held the varying assurance of a rose
 made warm by delicious alchemy. (1)

From these diversified fragments picked here or there we gather it is possible to gather a rather clear picture of Mr. Robinson's style. His imagery, restraint, symbolism and vividness are indissolubly tied up with contemporary American poetry. They fit into no other literature or period. His treatment of character with its scientific fervor for psychological detail, will also be shown as essentially of our own time, (2) and his philosophy that of the modern thinkers. (3) Therefore, Mr. Robinson's interests and style are decidedly contemporary. It is true that he has not written of the "ambiguities of New York" nor of the "various and varied scenes". This general after all, leads itself more readily to the novelistic and miscellaneous prose writers. The poet is interested primarily in comprehending the spiritual temper and social attitudes of his time. Mr. Robinson, without question, has done this for his time. He does not care about myths, metaphoric ascriptions and the various characters since they are not necessary adjuncts to what appears. Therefore, he has not found it necessary to employ them.

Mr. Lally Larkin offers a beautiful suggestion concerning

1. *Id.*, no., 255, 271.
 2. *Ibid.*, Chapter IV, Part I, pp., 76.
 3. *Ibid.*, Chapter II, Part I, pp., 27.

Mr. Robinson's mastery of blank verse. "He (Robinson) listens in-
 to his blank verse these centuries ago - living the break of the
 human voice under the impact of fate which have always been a
 characteristic glory of English poetry." (1) For his example
 Mr. Levinson refers to Iago of Shitney who is watching the white
 gulls flying and knows at last that "winter is dead:

He had been there,
 The thought, but not for her. He had been there
 But not for her. He had not thought of her
 Perhaps, and that was strange. He had been all,
 And would be always all there was for her,
 And he had not come back to her alive,
 Not even to go again. (2)

"Had he always written thus," says Mr. Levinson, with Johnson's
 words in mind, "it had been vain to blame, and useless to praise
 him." (3)

1. VIII, 100, 250.
 2. XI, 100, 250.
 3. XVIII, 100, 250.

CAPTION III

FIGURE II: The Style of Alfred Foreman

Fenimore's style has one predominant characteristic. In general, it is passionless; a quality which gives much of his poetry an almost fatalistic tone. This lack of passion and virility in his work, was the basis of much vicious criticism by contemporary writers and reviewers. Bulwer even went so far as to call the poet "School-ink Alfred":

Let School-ink Alfred vent her chaste delight
 In "drolling little rymes so rare and light!"
 Chant "It's merry," in infectious strain,
 And catch her "blue fly singing at the house." (1)

In spite of the unnecessary crudity of these verses, it is not impossible to see the kernel of truth in them. A careful study of the Levy's fails to disclose passion except in one instance, and here it is questionable; likewise, the innumerable metaphors of Etterre, is stirred to violent speech when he finds her in bed with Caroline:

"O towers so strong,
 How, solid, would that ever in I pass
 The crack of earthquake shivering to your base
 Split you, and hell burst in your harlot's rook..
 Black as a devil's heart--yellow as a skull!
 Let the fierce east scream through your eyelid-holes,
 And whirl the dark of hell's round and round
 In dung and nettles! hiss, hiss--I got him there--
 Let the fox howl, let the wolf yell!" (2)

This is more the bombastic declamation of passion as inspired by a neurotic man. It is less rhetorical and altogether too long-winded to be entirely sincere or convincing. He is more violent than passionate.

Whatever emotion Fenimore has is to be found in his own spiritual or moral aspirations. "When the moral combat of life,

1. Vol. II, no. 100.
 2. I. IV., 100.

...and the great emotions of morality are to be distinguished, the
 system should be such that the mind is not
 of the great power. He cannot draw his passions themselves as
 their resting, with the assistance of the great powers, but he
 does draw with a level over the moral exaltation which follows
 an noble passion nobly felt, or the moral depression which fol-
 lows when they begin to feel themselves liable." (1)

This moral depression is especially apparent in the follow-
 ing passage from King Lear, where the witch says 'you are spiri-
 tual fears' (2) and comes first placed as 41. 41. Or is she dead,
 she dream -

An awful dream; for when she sees'd to stand
 On some vast plain before a setting sun,
 And from the sun there fell a shadow
 I durst not stir, nor stir the shadow
 Before it, till it was moved, and she thro'd -
 Then let her own, God breathing from her feet,
 And blackness, swallow'd all the land, and in it
 The cities burnt, as with a cry she woke. (3)

Shakespeare's over-elaborate and excessive poetry are no-
 where better demonstrated than in the speeches of his knights and
 ladies. He cannot, or will not, speak natural speech into his
 blank verse form. This is due largely to his imperfect under-
 standing of character, but more so to his own desire to
 create an artificial effect. Reference to the speech of Cordelia,
 above, makes the point clear. The form is perfect; the verse
 glitters with rich images and artistic words, the rhythm is fault-
 less, but naturalness, sincerity and real passion are lacking.

1. Fill, ed., p. 1.
 2. I. ed., p. 110.
 3. 3512, v., 400-5.

It is this very artistry which constantly creates doubt of his sincerity.

It is not the purpose of this paper to discuss, investigate or evaluate the allegorical content of the Idylls. A few words, however, are necessary to point out a grave flaw in Fenoyson's style. Countless reviewers of the Idylls have made their allegorical interpretation of the poem. Not of them speak in any details. Many of them are interesting and some of them merely ingenious. The fact that all this work has been done points definitely to the presence of some allegory in the Idylls. Fenoyson himself said, the Idylls are merely "a dream of man coming into practical life and ruining by man sin. That is the allegory in the distance." (1) This statement is sufficiently general and vague to be almost meaningless. Even a casual reading of the Idylls provokes allegorical interpretations. It is likely that the allegorical significance of the poem is much more pronounced than Fenoyson intended. But it is there; and it is nearly always involved and confusing. As Brooke says, "The allegory and the tale do not fit throughout. They clash and trouble one another...his (Fenoyson's) poem is not plainly an allegory, nor is it plainly a story. The two things are not unalloyed. In fact, the allegory might as well have been left out altogether." (2)

Andrew Lang goes further with this point, when he suggests that "there is no single fact or incident in the Idylls, how-

1. IV, pp., 10.

2. VIII, pp., 12-3.

over excessively mystical, which cannot be explained without any
opportunity of allegory whatever. The Idylls must be read, as
aesthetic poems." (1)

Although it is difficult to agree entirely with the first
statement, the latter is very wise. The fact remains, however,
that he finds it necessary to tell readers how to attack the
Idylls. Therefore, it would seem likely that some general error
is inherent in the form, style or conception of the poems, since
it is not necessary, or even customary, to warn readers away
from specific interpretations of first-rate poetry.

Tennyson's use of symbolism is ubiquitous and infinitely
varied. The subject could not be exhausted in a short learned
and lengthy monograph. It is the purpose of this paper to dis-
cuss merely the most typical forms of symbolism to be found in
the Idylls, and their relative effectiveness.

Four types of symbolism come readily to mind--the incident-
al, the moral, the mystic or religious, and the prophetic. In-
spite of the inevitable overlapping and occasional confounding of
these types, they stand out with sufficient clarity to permit
separate examination and evaluation.

An excellent example of Tennyson's incidental symbolism is
to be found in Merlin and Vivien. Merlin is tired of Camelot
and wants to get away for a time. He goes to the beach, slides
into a boat, and takes off. Unbeknownst to him, Vivien has fol-
lowed:

she took the hole, and he the tail; the cow
trays with a sudden whirl across the leaves,
and, touching Syrian sands, they discoloured. (1)

In the four words "she took the hole", Tennyson has conveyed the
signification of the whole story. Vivid images come one in
another. Verbs come next. This incidental symbolism is very common
in the idyllic and is nearly always effective. It is not over-
done or obtrusive; and it performs its function perfectly.

The moral symbolism can best be illustrated from the advan-
tures of Sir Percival in his quest for the Grail. He relates
an event of his journey:

"And I rode on and found a mighty hill,
And on the top a city wall'd; the spires
Pierced with incredible pinnacles into heaven.
And by the gateway stirr'd a crowd; and there
Cried to me shouting, 'Welcome, Percivale!
Thou art chief and thou purrest among men!
And glad was I and glad, my fount as top
To see thy face and voice.'" (2)

This is the moral symbol of the soul seeking to slake its thirst
by popular applause, and especially in the face of a ruler of
men, but all is thirst and desolation as before." (3). Tennyson
employs many symbols that are of this general type. They are
chosen to point a moral lesson. They have sufficient subtlety to
escape didacticism and very often them not, too much subtlety.
Many of them are difficult to unravel without considerable study.
Therefore, this type, though good sometimes, is generally too ob-
scure for the average reader of poetry.

The mystic or religious symbol takes many forms. Arthur
himself may be interpreted as a mystic symbol of divinity in man.

1. I, vv., 389.
2. Ibid, vv., 427.
3. VIII, vv., 134.

*I behold

From eye to eye through all their angry flash
 A momentary likeness of the King;
 And one is left; their faces, through the crowd
 And those around it and the crucified,
 Turn from the forehead over Arthur, meet
 Blue-color, vast, and sane, in three rays,
 One falling upon each of three fair curves
 The stout anvil-edge near his crown.* (1)

These verses clearly link Arthur with esoteric symbols. But the obvious symbolism is complicated with many obscure and enigmatic minor symbols. The hard reader in the attempt to bring clarity out of the welter of allusions and associations. Perhaps it is best to read for the story, and look not too closely into the uninterpretable.

The Grail is another image having mystic and religious significance. It is in itself concrete, but it symbolizes the purity and divinity of Christ, and hence is open to multitudinous interpretations. It does not confuse as much as it blinds the reader.

The finest example of the mystic symbolism is to be found in The Holy Grail where Percival describes Arthur's hall.

"O brother, had you known our mighty hall,
 Which Merlin built for Arthur long ago!
 For all the sacred legend of Camelot....
 Guide to the mighty hall that Merlin built.
 And four great scenes of sculpture, set against
 With many a mystic symbol, and the hall;
 And in the lower rooms are allying men,
 And in the upper men are sleeping beasts,
 And on the walls are warriors, perfect men,
 And on the floor are men with goring wings,
 And over all are statues in the wall
 Of Arthur." (2)

1. I, op., pp. 27-28.
 2. Ibid, pp., 404.

In these verses Tennyson has caught the whole mood and aspiration of Arthur's vision. He is lyric; and for good, his meaning is clear and vivid. Unfortunately, however, much of his poetic and religious symbolism is too rich for easy illustration.

The prophetic symbolism is found mostly in the beautiful lyrics which spring up like flowers through the Idylls. In the Passing of Arthur, Merlin's song prophesies in exquisite detail the future of Arthur:

"Rain, and cold rain! and the tree blossoms blow;
Sun, rain and sun! and where is he who knows?
From the great deep to the great deep he goes." (1)

Again, there is some obscurity. Yet the beauty and grandeur of the lyric more than makes up for any possible loss of meaning. Tennyson excels in this type of symbolism as he does in this type of verse.

From this brief examination it is easy to see that Tennyson uses symbolism extensively. When it is vivid and effective. But there are times when it becomes confused. In spite of this confusion, however, the story is seldom injured and the outlines of the narrative remain clear. It is merely unfortunate that his shades of meaning are not always distinguishable.

The general tone of the Idylls is quite different from that of Mr. Robinson's treatment of the legend. Tennyson does not have as keen a dramatic sense. His Idylls are really little more than a series of literary tales, held together loosely by the general theme of Arthur and his Noble Wound. Where Mr. Robinson has created three closely knit dramatic poems, Tennyson has

I. I, op., 101.

tailed through thirteen poetic stories of widely varying qualities of excellence. As a whole they have more or less definite forms, yet they are not closely knit. The individual stories wander and fly in several directions in all directions. Some contribute more to the main theme than others. Two of them are indispensable in the general scheme, and it is very hard to have been written without discussing the other two. The point is that Tennyson's form is loose and elastic. This matter deserves a separate study.

Tennyson's imagination has given the stories a romantic background. "The scenery throughout belongs to the country which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, and which the heart of man has imagined." (1) The landscape breathes the atmosphere of fairy land, or of visions seen in dreams. Technology is over everything. Without the air magic Tennyson's imagination has woven about the building of Camelot.

.... "The Fairy King
 and Fairy Queen have built the city, and;
 They came from west a general marriage-cleft
 Toward the morning, each with her in hand,
 And built it to the music of their organ.
 And, as they wrought, it is enchanted, son,
 For there is magic in it as it goes
 Moving the air; though some there be that hold
 The King a wizard, and the city fabled.
 "But, as they stood to view
 They saw beneath their feet, as they
 For so he heard a music, like once
 They saw building still, seeing the city is built
 To music, therefore never built of ill,
 And therefore built forever." (2)

Nature is treated with this same alluring magic. It is not

1. VIII, pp. 254.
 2. I, pp. 118.

actual nature but it is that seen in fairy lands. The descrip-
 tions are exquisite, and read in their very fancifulness, nearly
 always they serve as a device to some action of the poem. In
Paradise Lost, when Michael kills Abaddon and puts his fol-
 lowers to flight, there is a beautiful picture.

But at the flood and action of the sea
 They vanish'd - sail'd - frisk'd, like a shoal
 Of darting Fish, that on a summer morn
 When the crystal lakes of Genoa's
 Lake slipping o'er their shores on the sand,
 But if a man who stands upon the brink
 But lift a shining lead against the end,
 There is not left the sparkle of a fin
 Betwixt the greedy lake and the flying
 In, carried into the action of the sea,
 Flew all the host tremendous of the host,
 And left his lying in the white way. (1)

This is an entirely charming bit of natural description and
 an excellent simile. The misdirection of it however, as in so
 many similar passages, detracts from its effectiveness as a sim-
 ile and reduces the action of the story. Pemeyson is essentially
 a lyric poet. He can never refrain from using lyrical passages
 when and where they occur in his. Criticism on this count, how-
 ever, is scarcely justified since these lyrical passages are among
 the best things Pemeyson offers.

If the above quotation from Paradise Lost and Paradise Lost be referred to
 the next line in the context, -

So varied friendship only seen in Paradise. (2)
 there is quite justifiable reason for criticism. This line is
 brought in obviously to point a moral. It has no other signif-

1. Ibid., 200.
 2. Ibid., 201.

tion with the picture; and, as such, should be described. Pen-
son too frequently descends to details. The outstanding exam-
ple of this trait, perhaps, is to be found in Arthur's last
speech to Guinevere at Almesbury.

"Yet think not that I come to urge thy crimes;..
I, whose vast pity almost makes me die
To see thee,....
.... all is past, the sin is sin'd, and I,
Lo, I forgive thee, as Eternal God
Forgives! be thou for thine own soul the rest....
I can not take thy hand; yet see to flock,
And in the flesh thou art sin'd; and mine own flesh
Hath look'd down on thine polluted, cries
'I loathe thee!'" (1)

Here Arthur is the "impossible critic." (2) It is difficult to
find any excuse for this last speech. "The king could preach too
much to an unhappy woman who has no reply." (3)

Unlike Mr. Robinson, Penzance resorts not infrequently to
melodramatic effects. "The Guinevere throws Lancelot's gift of
diamonds into the river and Lancelot leaps in GIBBON on the win-
dow ledge.

Close underneath his eyes, and right across
There those (the diamonds) had fallen, slowly went the barge
Thereon the lily maid of Astolat
Lay sailing, like a star in blackest night." (4)

There is no definite preparation for this coincidence. It is too
well timed to have any plausibility. It is not inevitable.

It is not strange to find that Penzance shows an error in his
treatment of the Idylls. Error goes hand in hand with a wide
knowledge of life and of people. It is nowhere more obvious than

1. I, pp., 101.
2. III, pp., 51.
3. IV, pp., 125.
4. I, pp., 192.

The poet did not understand the workings of man's mind in his covered misery as he wandered.

For example, when he came to the village of the... and received with... the... in... to all his questions, he said:

"A thousand times on your...
This, then, was all... (1)

It is... that...; indeed, he is... In the next two lines, when he... alone, he is...:

"To think the... of your...
The... of the world! - What is it to me?" (2)

Then... said to... again:

"O... of the... and all,
That... of...!" (3)

This is... of a... This...
... of...: "The only...
... of... and...
... of... is... the... of..."
(4)

... of... in... this...
... of...:

"... on the...
... after...
... on..."
(5)

- 1. ...
- 2. ...
- 3. ...
- 4. ...
- 5. ...

or read from Tivoli's work:

"In love, if love be love, if love be true,
Faith and morality are never to be found:
Unfaith is such is want of faith in all."

"It is the little gift within the love,
That by and by will make the world more,
And ever children gladly receive all." (1)

There is one word which, excellent symbol of the poet's
thought. Tivoli never has better than in his songs, dramatic
and lyric passages. Tivoli is in all his poems lib-
eral, didactic, involved and uninvolved. His songs, according
to the author's definition are the more obscure sym-
bols, and very obscure stories. They seem to the level of
the poetry, however, only in their best examples.

CHAPTER IV

CASE I: W. A. Robinson's Development of Character.

In his book, *Development of American Literature*, Lewis Mumford says, "The development of American literature beyond the frontier was best to be studied in the early. For until these years themselves were in the discipline of discipline all the energies of civilization were every line of their work. Individualism brought them to the front and across the land life as their predecessors had never conceived themselves to be; it filled their imagination with symbols and substance; it built their world under their feet; it made a mythology of their individual existence;....." (1)

This statement stands as a positive verification of Mr. Mumford's aptly chosen words "the characters created the life of the frontier, with all their grandeur and mystery, and the life of modern individualism, with all their psychological and emotional complications," as Mr. Mumford says. In conclusion, "I am convinced that the (American) is the only one who has succeeded in making the particular areas of legendary characters in his life; inside his figure there is a mixture of the old and the new, and the old and the new, and the old and the new." (2)

Mr. Lewis Mumford also writes significantly in a similar vein: "It betrays something more than casual misapprehension to consider these cases, or any of the others that have been discussed here, merely as instances to refer to in the history of literature. For obviously they are the result of a very different artistic intention. They represent, it seems to me, the distillation and synthesis of a vigorous observation of human character and situa-

1. XVII, pp. 223.
 2. XVI, pp. 76.

ience in order to show the poet the need to believe in their
most shining and universal principles. To those come, the
purely casual accidents of experience have been, of course, only
what remains in a specific realm of life as a mass." (1)

It may be easy to agree or disagree with these reasonable
critics in their praise of Mr. Robinson's characters. They
have made approving statements, but they offer no proof.
Therefore, it is necessary to investigate Mr. Robinson's work
and determine first-hand what success he has had in creating
actual characters that show individuality, growth and develop-
ment. For most of those, it is necessary to list the words he
has chosen. Lincoln, a key figure in the poem, lends
himself readily to examination.

Mr. Robinson's Lincoln is no man to quarrel. He is a man
of conviction and responsibility, who gives himself to love
with his whole soul, who love is upon him. Still, he knows
that a time comes when love must yield its own place to allow
the soul freedom for pursuing self-realization. His love for
Wilverton comes upon him with sudden and terrific force, when
he finds in Wilverton's words the need for love and mercy
but he tries to leave. However, when he tried to walk away
from her, for her sake and his own, he tells her of his thoughts
on their first meeting:

"When I look in Wilverton's eyes, I see
and hear his thoughts about my love, ...
..... I feel that I must
from Wilverton and I must be free;
and I must be free to love her."

That there are those in nature, all of them
 There are no.....
 I and their faces and I am not one
 To have a ventral of my wife's life;
 But I thought more than, to make myself
 believe in what he, 'and give the light'....
 I see your face, and yours were no more mine." (1)

There is flesh and blood and love and
 lot an admirer. He has seen a great fighter, an adventurer and
 a loyal friend of Arthur. For the moment the passion of love is
 too much for him. He wants escape from the ordinary procedure
 of his life. Whenever it comes, not not for long. He wants to
 go to work about the things. These adverse circumstances
 gradually alter him. He does not he just break away from
 whatever he about himself from the things, but only for his
 own sake of mind and for love as well. But she is a woman and
 a Queen--she will not let him go. Lancelot
 colloquies and cries:

"God, what a pain of pain falls on him
 The God who has not ever loved the old." (2)

The inevitable transmission of their love by letters follows
 and the situation is doomed to death by fire. Lancelot, who
 until now has thought primarily of himself and of his strained
 position with respect to Arthur, plans to the occasion. For the
 first time he thinks more of Guinevere than of himself; and rides
 with friends to the city, killing right and left, to rescue her
 and flee with her to some safe place. Lancelot's speech is as follows:

"The usual flow has happily his life,
 Then, like a soldier's out of battle,
 There came a word of battle, and a flash

1. Ibid., p., 176.
 2. Ibid., p., 180.

of steel, and a bowing down of heroes,
Not like to any in its hatch, profound,
Madly, and unswerving execution.....
I found a refuge; and there saw the Queen,
All white, and in a shroud of woe united
By Lionel, with a dross frown about him,
And Lancelot, who seized her while he struck,
And with his lance away galloped away.
Not over in the legendary mist
Of wars that none today can verify,
Lil ever see annihilate their kind
With a more vicious intensity,
Or a more skillful frenzy. Lancelot
And all his mortal adjuncts are by her
Too far away for any swift reversal".....(1)

From this point on, the emphasis is laid on the inner conflicts and struggles that arise from this change. The crucial line in the clash of souls that takes place in Joyous Gard after the flight of the two lovers, when the King has come with an army-- at the insistence of Gawain who is mad for the loss of his brethren, Gareth and Gaherin by the hand of Lancelot. Battles are fought every day with the usual havoc of youthful lives. The rainy seasons sets in. Dark events are brewing. Lancelot's attentions to Guinevere are more slack:

He led her slowly up with a cold show
Of care that was less heartless than she knew
Her eyes would have been. (2)

Why is Lancelot's passion slackening? Is it because of sadness over the death of Gawain and Gaherin in his war--a reluctance to fight against Arthur and his knights? There are many the answer, but there is a more important reason that takes precedence over all others; Lancelot's love has come to a point where it cannot last without destroying itself. Lancelot's love is short-lived. Unfor-

1. IX, pp., 355.
2. Ibid, pp., 412.

ful love is passionately expressed in vicissitudes; it witnesses life for a time but cannot be of long duration. Circumstances deprive us of Lancelot and Guinevere to bring a swift close to their mutual decline. The sum of it all is contained in Lancelot's remark:

".....All loves have an end..." (1)

Lancelot cannot easily bear the burden of a great passion when its height is passed. He has loyalties, ambitions, and aspirations to satisfy. Love, for him, is only a game on the way to higher fulfillment. He will never be one of those-

"Who feed themselves on hopes dryer than hay,
Rejoicing not what they eat, but always eating." (2)

When Arthur offers to send Guinevere back to Lancelot in safety, and withdraw his forces, Lancelot sees the only possible way out of their trouble. Besides, he must follow his destiny which calls him to other battles, greater power and larger thoughts. He expects to lose the memory of his love for Guinevere and all that it meant to him, as a beautiful phase of his existence. Let us hope that she will remain true to their mutual vision:

"and if you did your memory not so that
your story from the book of what has been,
Your phantom hopes were a ghost indeed,
and I the least of wretches among men, —
You false to me and your sacrifice
To writ a niche in hell." (3)

When the fatal hour of parting comes and she must go back to Arthur, it is Lancelot who uses the language of reason. When things

1. *Id.*, no., 417.
2. *Idem.*
3. *Idem.*

immediate; life's business was left her.

Lancelot went to his bed. When he was up again, he was
passionately & anxiously aware of the old lady. A flash of recog-
nitive vision came over him as he lay back with burning anguish.
The contrast of his mind's vision and the actual presence reality
gave a strangely tragic effect. He rose, and he walked
down the hall & opened the door, and he stood over her. He
had only caught his breath and was not yet able to feel the
bite of bitter truth. When he told her she is not to go
with him, she recalls his former cruel words:

..... "When I was
By the St. Cecilia who was said to me,
The center of the world of you, nor say to
Love me like you say that now. (And so you only
To the old garden, to spend not stay for long!" (1)

The words cut his life in two, just as they should have
done he had pronounced them. A few more words, and she joins the
cure she was searching for round his stained hands and feet. He
hesitated to left alone, then, struck with sudden realization:

If she lay there in shadow his and then look--
leaving his life a life of a dead,
staring for what had been with him, his new
had gone and was a white face under the sea,
live there, he alone--always alone. (2)

The tragedy is over. Lancelot sought his horse and blindly
raced away:

He rode on into the dark, under the stars,
and there were no more signs. There was nothing.
But always in the darkness he rode on,
Alone..... (3)

1. *Ibid.*, no., 113.
2. *Ibid.*, no., 117.
3. *Ibid.*, no., 119.

The levers show silently listening to the beating of their hearts. Instinct breaks the coil of paralyzing horror. While face clings their nostrils, she bravely struggles her will not to let the vast prey upon the floating masses of their souls, or dare tears rain and may remain for the of promise:

"Are you sure that a word given
In thro' words were then a word promised?" (1)

The incidents that were favorable circumstances my servant
to liberate them from their dreadful fate:

"Tristram, fair things you
May have a shadow black as night before them,
And each will have a shadow black as night
Behind them. All this may be a shadow,
sometimes, that we may live to see behind us--
wishing that we had not been all so long
convinced that it was always to be done." (2)

She is the one who lights the fire in the face and a word
of hope. So, for all his power, cannot silence his will, which
looks forward and forward, linking self-conscience with spirit,
speaking on words of conscience and silence for promise. He
wishes his recent activities. Allowing to Mr. Field and Mr. Ladd's
concern, perhaps, he says:

"The fairest of all things for his love,
To find out plenty the spirit first of her kindness
To see himself a man. That was my way..." (3)

again he seems in their holiness:

"If there were not an army of people who
To bring you back in fruitless journey,
There would not be an end of this suffering
To God and the low truth of this suffering."

-
- 1. 11, no. 1.
 - 2. 1013, no. 16.
 - 3. 1013, no. 13.

That to be tried a fool is not the lady
"Number of days to cure a liver affliction." (1)

Isult can transcend the moment. The says:

Triptera, believe
That if I die my love will not be dead,
So I believe that yours will not be dead.
... 't would not be so,
So are not mighty enough to workman love,
Stronger than death to die, though to say so.' (2)

Triptera slanders still in despair. The thought of outside hangs
his mind:

"Instruction
Of such a sort as one here would be found
That's not your own himself would be a warning,
If ruin of his would make you free again." (3)

The sound is interested by a tired one to come looking on
the lovers. Triptera gratefully holds his to the ground. Isult
rushes into Triptera's arms and that appears to him to be the
end.

In the action that follows Triptera is reckless of himself.
He is unwilling to die for the sake of his own, and he believes it
and vehemently remarks:

"If it be not honor
That will you not need make a woman of you,
It may be better a while with your eyes
Arrived for a long feeling on your heart--
Dying a bit, who knows?" (4)

Triptera replies:

"In that your way
To make a woman of me? If it be so,
Before you take my reason take my life." (5).

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1. VI, 77.. 14.
 2. Ibid, 78., 49, 49
 3. Ibid, 78., 21.
 4. Ibid, 78., 17.
 5. Ibid, 80., 67.

From this moment he readily discerns the good within the courage in the face of temporal hardships even though he has often little in the face of mortal enemies. The good coincides with his doubts about Mary's fidelity. He rides forth broken-hearted into the forest, traveling slowly until he falls from the saddle from sheer exhaustion. He is found by Gouvenail and taken to the house of Marquis de Fay who makes his bed in health. The doctors all try arts to his recovery, but all in vain. When he has regained his health he journeys to Brittany where he puts in many months of residence in the house of King de Vell. The latter has a beautiful daughter, Isolt of Brittany, who dearly loves Tristan. Although Tristan cannot return her devotion, he is moved by her innocent need of him and finally marries her:

The war his child was,
 And for no love so there was life in his
 Was his to cherish and to wonder at,
 Thus he should have this white rose fiery thing
 To call his wife. (1)

This marriage is a consent on the part of Tristan. He cannot offend Vell nor Isolt, yet he cannot ever really love his wife. His love is still for Isolt of Ireland whose image continually flashes before him. He busies himself in studious labor and for the years estate has become unimpaired. From Gouvenail comes from Camelot with the news that Tristan is to be married by Arthur. Tristan returns to Camelot with Gawain, whom he knows of Mary's abandonment and Isolt's desire to see him. Isolt of

William is terrified. The old lawyer went up to the door. In the name of their common master, William has directed orders passed unopposed. He had to have the fiery order of two pages of flesh and blood. William has committed all the rest; he is satisfied with joy.

..... You have had all joy. You will be smiling and laughing like the sun when he sets if always; he will and never is never on the grass. William has, and never the same tree around him, and never the same scene. (1)

William again "smiled his head with bliss," but not for the same reason as before. When it was because William's words were a deep despair. But it is because he, ahead and un-illuminated with his long hair, saw danger in the words of contentment and joy. This reversed situation brings out clearly the change that has taken place in their characters since, as the same time, it explains the recurrence of their former feelings. I wonder how he overtook. He says,

"You see you are the friends, or the old one
In my regard to sudden stillness.
If that were so, what else would not be so." (2)

And again:

"You say you are for a king's and people,
and that people to say my will said
and what remains." (3)

William replies:

"You are the bliss all
the world," he said, "and their people's plan.
I'll be your will if only to be sure
there was no more in it." (4)

-
- 1. Ibid., pp. 177.
 - 2. Ibid., pp. 179.
 - 3. Ibid., pp. 181.
 - 4. Ibid.

This otherwise...
 obligations to...
 done...
 fortune...
 responsibility...
 holding her close, he murmurs in her ear:

"Never believe--never believe again--
 that I am not as true to you, love, as I am,
 if he said so. You are not with me,
 there is no time for fear. In the end, I say--
 It was love's power that was it, not I!
 Say to me if you only see of time's line;
 That I am--never mind what it was!
 There will be the search for me to do.
 Never mind such things..Scott! Scott! (1)

There is a start...
 day...
 being flowers for her...
 meets him and tells him what has befallen.

and without that to reason will or reason,
 Tristram, the long-accredited strong warrior
 Tristram, the learned knight among knights,
 Tristram, the son of his prophetic mother,
 broadest limb's leg; and silent on the floor,
 with wild flowers lying around him on the floor--
 wild roses for Scott--lay like a lay. (2)

Weeks pass. Tristram recovers sufficiently to move about
 but his vitality, his life, are gone. He finally returns to
 Camelot. He exacts...
 card; he says;

Tristram is said
 to have, as you know what's the name of it,
 and all because a woman had eyes and ears,
 and beauty enough to write his death with it. (3)

- . VI, no., 158.
- . XI, no., 170.
- . Reid, no., 171.

Eventually a religious letter comes from Margaret to Fay telling
 Elizabeth that Ibsen is dying in Germany. The vicarage does
 not even touch him in his excessive grief. He must see Ibsen again.
 He thinks of the almost inevitable death he will meet and urges
 Conventry to go to join him on the journey. Mark finally realises
 the futility of his vengeance and allows Elizabeth to see Ibsen.

The meeting is one of ghosts. They are both shaken out by
 the fearful fate that has befallen them. There is great sadness
 and tenderness in their speech. Ibsen says,

"I am not afraid to die,
 Elizabeth, if you are trying to think of that--
 or not to think of that. We think of it?
 My own eye turning over; and having had all
 that one life holds of joy, and in the summer,
 the church I be with crying to God,
 the world?" (1)

"God knows," he said,
 how full my love, which is the best of me,
 know what a wild of trust and unreasoning
 there is in yours, when I would have you die
 as I should and so soon, could I, by using
 that way, leave you behind as here and there.
 I would be gone from you and be forgotten
 like waves in childhood on forgotten water,
 if that were anyway left to bring your life
 and your joy bear into those church again,
 and these eyes looking at me." (2).

Meanwhile sacred, cushion by silver, clicks the chair and
 shows a shining blade in Elizabeth's side. Ibsen,

later was say to God,
 and her last cry, could hear the vicarage saying
 "If it was sacred--give my thanks--the world.....
 if you not work.....Ibsen!" (3)

Elizabeth goes unscathed in this last home. His death

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- 1. Ibsen, p. 170.
 - 2. Ibsen.
 - 3. Ibsen, p. 170.

is a history of continuous development.

This study agrees to show that Robinson's "unconquered" country
life was a success, the quality of individual and social living,
growing steadily and his leadership and inspiration in doing
them. It does not fail to see Johnson as one of his
country, yet his social and economic success ability was not
undoubtedly so easily. His power was all concentrated in himself.
The fact that Mr. Robinson's ideas gathered some are essentially
the same in theory and fact, yet apparently different in the
mastery of individuals involved in them, is a valuable ground
for his comparative ability in this important phase of literary
art. The thorough mastery of the intricacies of his art shows
his definitely as a work of the great art.

CHAPTER IV

PART II: Alfred Rosenberg's Character.

The beauty of the verse in this poem is maintained on a high artistic level. It is unfortunate that Tennyson did not elevate the tone of the poem and give us real living human values.

Vivien does not care a snap of the fingers for Merlin. She merely wants to possess his powerful charm, so that she may destroy him and others that stand in her way. She conjures him by every lure of the flesh:

"Yield my boon,
Till which I scarce can yield you all I am." (1)

When this proposition fails to elicit a favorable response, she sings him a song, challenging his lack of faith in her love;

"In love, if love be love, if love be cure,
Faith and unfaith can neer be equal powers:
Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all." (2)

Thereupon Merlin, without reason, goes into a long recital of the founding of Arthur's kingdom. When he has finished, Vivien takes up the attack again. She sings another stanza of the song. (3) Merlin responds with another long and somewhat pointless fable, which winds up with the question:

"I rather dread the loss of use than fame;
If you--and not so much from wickedness,
As some wild turn of anger-----might
play me falsely-----
Should try this charm on whom ye say/^{ye}love." (4)

Vivien is stirred to wrath at this suggestion:

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1. pp., 371.
 2. Ibid, pp., 372.
 3. Ibid, pp., 373.
 4. Ibid, pp., 374.

"Have I not sworn I am not trusted. Good!
Well, hide it; hide it: I shall find it out,
And being found take heed of Vivien'..... (1)

Merlin "sorely answers her":

"Full many a love in loving youth was mine;
I needed then no charm to keep them mine
But youth and love." (2)

Then he tells another long and rather tedious legend.

He intermits him once,

...And made her lithe arm round his neck
Tighten, and then drew back, and let her eyes
Break for her, glowing on his, like a bride's
On her new lord, her own, the first of men. (3)

The conversation then turns to her imagined wrongs. While we have wandered through all these digressions the thread of the love-contrast is nearly lost. Vivien pours forth story after story of the sins and failings of Arthur's knights (and incidentally Merlin's friends). He corrects her and so uses her tales of being "a lea-n-born and a roofless." (4)

She then falls to weeping, playing the injured woman. He puts his arm about her "more in kindness than in love." She withdraws stiffly and says:

"I will go.
In truth, but one thing now--better have died
Thrice than have asked it once--could make me stay--
That proof of trust--so often asked in vain! (5)

She is hardly done with this speech, when a fierce thunder-

-
1. I, pp., 374.
 2. Idem.
 3. Ibid, pp., 375.
 4. Ibid, pp., 376.
 5. Ibid, pp., 377.

storm breaks over them. She rushes into his arms and begs him to save her. The storm passes:

And what should not have, had been,
For Merlin, overtalk'd and over worn,
Had yielded, told her all the charm, and slept. (1)

She puts the charm over him in a moment and he lies dead in the hollow oak. She cries:

...."I have made his glory mine"
And shrieking out, "O fool!" the harlot leapt
Adown the forest, and the thicket closed
Behind her, and the forest echo'd "fool." (2)

There is no psychological truth in the poem. Merlin is not in love; he is not in his dotage. He sees through Vivien and he hates her character. And in spite of the fact that he suspects her desire to destroy him--in the end he yields, not his love, but the charm with which she does destroy him: By this act he is made not an object of pity but an object of contempt.

Where we should expect an analysis of feelings, an interplay of real thought, and emotion building up to a natural climax, we get only stories of heraldy and chivalry from Merlin's lips, and foul unprovoked slander from Vivien.

Profes or Geste has summed up the Idyll briefly: "The poem may be meant as an allegory (and rather outward at that) of the blackness of evil love. But the discultery conduct of the narrative, the lack of psychological substance and of dramatic interest prevent us from being moved. Under a rich

1. I, pp., 380.
2. Iden.

display of verbal effects, the action lags, the feelings are inadequate or vulgar, and the conclusion falls flat." (1)

Elaine is indubitably the most natural and appealing of all Tennyson's characters. She too is a type, but she does possess dignity, directness, sincerity and charm. She is first seen when Lancelot enters her father's hall at Astolot:

...the Lord of Astolot
With his two strong sons, Sir Torre and Sir Lavaine,
Moving to meet him in the castle court;
And close behind them stent the lilly maid
Elaine, his daughter;"....(2)

During the feasting and story-telling that follow, Elaine is captivated with the dashing stranger,

Herr'd us he was, he seem'd the goodliest man
That ever among the ladies ate in hall,
And noblest,....she lifted up her eyes
And loved him, with the love that was her doom. (3)

She lives in a world of dim fantasy and is happy, not knowing she is happy until she sees Sir Lancelot. Her whole being comes alight with her innocent love for him. She is the type who loves at first sight and forever. The next morning he rides away, bearing her favor, which she innocently begs ask him to wear. He leaves his shield, which she carries to her chamber. There she sits and makes fanciful stories to fit each dent and scratch in it:

....This out is fresh:

-
1. *Id.*, vol., 73.
 2. *Id.*, no., 383.
 3. *Idem.*

That ten years back; this dealt him at Caerlyle;
And that at Caerleon; this at Camelot;
And oh, God's mercy, what a stroke was there! (1)

This is a beautiful and true picture of a young girl's heart. It is thoroughly convincing.

Later when she hears of his fearful wound-

Through her own side she felt the sharp lance go... (2)

When Gawaine makes love to her she is not ashamed to tell him of her love for Lancelot. She cannot remain at home when she knows of Lancelot's wound, and begs her father to let her go to him. He says:

"Being so very wilful you must go,".. (3)

But the words change in her heart to the whispering breeze:

"Being so very wilful you must die." (4)

Her conviction that she will die of her love excuses her constant devotion to one who does not care for her. She is entirely a woman. This certainty of death does away with all convention.

She finally comes to Lancelot-

....lying unblest, unadorn
Gaunt as it were the skeleton of himself.
(She) uttered a little tender dolorous cry. (5)

When he kisses her face, as he would have kissed a child, it means much more than that to her:

At once she clumped like water to the floor...

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1. I, pp., 380-1.
 2. Ibid, pp., 389.
 3. Ibid, pp., 392.
 4. Idem.
 5. Idem.

And all her beauty had sacred bloom
In the heart's palace on her single room. (1)

The purple life had in health. And to see such features
As can make, she confesses her love for him.

From suddenly and unexpectedly she spoke:
"I have come all. I love you; let me die."
"Ah, sister," answered Lancelot, "what is this?"
And immediately uttering low white words,
"Your love," she said, "your love-to be your wife."
And Lancelot answered: "And I choose to and
I had been with you, sweet Lancelot;
But now I have never will be wife of mine."
"No, no," she cried, "I care not to be wife,
But to be with you still, to see your face,
To serve you, and to follow you through the world." (2)

There she flew to his feet, with of instant submission in her
already love, but she had not in over the years. And to be on
the verge, and not have heard it, is the very mark of innocent
girlhood even raised by unobscured love." (3)

Then Lancelot called her his loving friend and graciously
she will have none of it.

"Of all this will I know;" (4) she cried, and in return,
meaning, in her shadow. Lancelot said away.

At the end of her last / scene / she suddenly and completely returned.
The following beautiful lines, full of her lonely sadness:

Heard, like a friend's voice from a distant field
Approaching through the darkness, still; the bell's
Calling had never come before, and she was
Was familiar with the well-remembered tones
Of words, and the meaning of the time. (5)

During the night hours when she had the vision, "let me

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- 1. I, pp., 317.
 - 2. Ibid., 317-8.
 - 3. VIII, pp., 319.
 - 4. I, pp., 317.
 - 5. Ibid.

die.' With the same sense of fate. Her family matters about her and she alone her family. In her country she is a little child again. When she is married she will be followed out, she naturally and innocently dies.

It is a pathetic story with unusual tenderness and understanding. But her will that, perhaps she was created as usual individual as much as he has captured a type--the innocent sweet girl who is overcome by a sudden and profound love.

Flair more in her love, but not as a specific individual. She follows a type again. Love captured her and she believed, with this more she has to realize it. Belief it all betrayed in play- ing with an idea, and he had to make the figure fit his pattern.

Crinoline is another fixed character, and a much stronger one. Would you of her: "She represents a common sense type. Her intelligence is of the highest, and her character has little variety. It is not that she has none, but it does not appear in the World of the King,... She is chiefly and largely, courteous, never to show, capable of a great service and of a great sacrifice; but this is entirely extraordinary. Such a woman may be kept dependent. There is nothing essentially objective to Romney's character. She is given, but not a sense in herself." (1)

The central theme of my definition is in London and the. London also may if Arthur has said anything to her concerning their love.

She looks like a little beautiful thing;
"Arthur, my love, Arthur, my dear little thing,
That beautiful perfection, my dear little--"

But who can part from the man in heaven?
 He never made word of parting to me,
 He never had a shadow of the thought,
 He never met for me; only once today
 There I found a word written in his eyes;
 Now nothing more he leaves I wish to see--
 Now in the glory of his Father's hand,
 And waiting for to give himself,
 To make that his reward; but, friend, be sure
 He is all love and love on earth as well;
 For who loves us must have a touch of earth;
 The love we have the color: I am yours,
 Not yours, as you may, give by the Lord." (1)

The whole poem described above is the story of a woman's
 life. Later, in the same story she is attacked by various
 jealousy. But even in this jealousy she is still an ordinary
 woman. Jealousy and all other feelings and interests. There
 she is a woman of intellect, sense or variety, what she says is for
 jealousy and at least a touch of sense of these qualities. But
 intelligence is without them. Her speech which begins with the
 lines

"It may be I am wicked or deluded
 When you believe me, I am not of the like," (2)

is entirely inadequate. It lacks passion, sense, variety,
 or any of the qualities it should have. It betrays her again as
 a very ordinary type of woman.

When her jealousy is found to be groundless, she settles
 down again into her accustomed of strong--but not for long:

.....The picture that you see the world,
 To make it seem the death that cannot die,
 And give it back in answer, when
 To you will please her. (3)

1. I, no., 80.
 2. Ibid, no., 86.
 3. Ibid, no., 87.

This goes on until our heart is no longer, and she finally bids Lancelot adieu. This very night their wedding is unloosed, and they ride away weeping. He goes to the castle of Arthur's hand and she seeks refuge in the convent of Alabaster. Here she is alone and unloved. She feels her weakness, but is not fully repentant. Her thoughts stray from her secret as they wander, to the King's grief, and back again. She speaks with herself:

"How shall I, wretched, for surely I know,
 The end is your punishment but in thought—
 The end is yours though I think not
 The end is yours though I think not
 And I have more power to see his face,
 To see his face!"
 And even in saying this,
 Her memory from old habit of the sign
 Went clinging back upon the golden days
 In which she saw his face. (1)

Then she continues in reply to her first ride with Lancelot and wanders far and wide with Arthur.

In all these times there is no sign of repentance. She is really miserable but she joy,

(2) Her self-guilt in her thoughts again, (2)

And at this very moment the King rides to the door. However, hearing the King's step, she awakes on the floor, and Arthur's voice speaks to her. He tells her of the destruction she has wrought, tells her he is not going to die, but that he forgives and loves her still. He assures her that in the future life, she will understand and love him rather than Lancelot.

1. I, vol., 489.
 2. Idem.

This breaks down not only for Lancelot, and for the first time she loves Arthur. Then she feels her vocation. Then she doubts, but not until then. She is still the ordinary woman. A strong sense of intellect or conviction, would have prevented without losing Arthur, or would not have prevented. But, as she says, "This year of grace has not really meant to me a bit of this kind of thing and I have loved for me, and I have myself lived without. I have not lost love either, and then she has a horror of herself--oh, she has loved herself, she is someone on this one side, and, forgetting the other, looks forward to the other side in heaven. This also is characteristic of this ordinary type." (1)

However, growth is to be found in Lancelot's character only in the very last scene, and it is not growth so much as the acceptance of the natural way out of a created situation. Her intellect and her vision are all those of the ordinary woman.

The recollection of some several figures gives a good survey of Lancelot's individuality as a creature of character. He is at his best in his treatment of Elaine, but even here his selfishness is obvious. He does not understand the working of human minds, and consequently he makes it do more than he gets from his own imagination. He does not understand the idea of what he believes people to be like. His Elaine, even though she is individual from the others, is still little more than a beautiful conventional type.

X. VIII. 100, 101.

CHAPTER V

General Description: An evaluation
and comparison of the work of Robinson,
Pennington and Maloney.

There is no uniform schedule of measurement by which it is possible to judge accurately the superiority of one poet over another. Each artist has a background, a philosophy and a style that is entirely his own, and consequently unique. This situation is especially pronounced when the poets under consideration are the products of different periods and societies.

For purpose of comparison, however, it is possible to form workable judgments by placing the poets side by side and measuring their respective abilities within definitely prescribed bounds. Their philosophies may be compared, and so may their styles and their skill in creating characters. These categories reach out toward infinity in their number and variety. In this case, only the three mentioned are to be employed.

Although this method is not, and never can be exact and thoroughly just, nevertheless it will serve to differentiate the writers and give some notion of their relative success or failure in handling the traditional story.

Two things occur to the mind when the philosophies of Malory, Tennyson and Robinson are brought together. They are alike in their belief in the upward progress of civilization and its ultimate eventuation in a happier future for humanity. They aspire toward the predominance of good in the world and believe in it. At the same time these conclusions are reached by entirely different means. The philosophy of each writer is representative of the thought of his period. Malory, an adherent to the medieval Christian religion, views life with

unquestioning faith. Tennyson, a product of the Victorian era, gives reason with his religious faith. Science has made him question the orthodox religious beliefs; he has revised and amplified them but not discarded them. Robinson has completely thrown off the Christian theology and builds his philosophy entirely upon reason.

It is useless to discuss the relative merits of these philosophies. They all point toward the same end. Each is representative of its time and serves amply to justify itself in its time. Although it is more natural for individuals of the present day to accept a reasoned theory of life than to fall back on pure faith, that does not make Robinson more significant than the others. It merely shows that Robinson is essentially of our own age.

In the portrayal and development of characters there is wider ground for comparison. Malory succeeds in creating individuals who grow under his pen. They are neither complex nor subtle but rather simple rugged characters who live by the Christian ideals of courtesy, faith and courage. Tennyson's figures are not individuals so much as they are types. They do not grow; nor do they come alive very often. Some of them are not human at all. Arthur is partly divine and Vivien is wholly diabolic. With but occasional lapses into reality, Tennyson's figures are dream creatures seen in a dream world.

Robinson's characters are very much alive and very real;

they are drawn with infinite skill, they have decided individuality and they grow. Unlike Malory's men and women, these people are sophisticated, complex and subtle. Robinson has not only drawn vivid, growing individual characters but he has given us intimate knowledge of all the subtle nuances of thought that move them. They are reasoning beings. They know what they are doing and where they are going. This makes their tragedy doubly telling.

Again, although Tennyson may be eliminated on this point, it is difficult to decide where the laurels belong. Malory is more vivid than Robinson. Because his characters are simple, he creates them with few words and makes them grow by their deeds. Little attention is given to their thoughts. Robinson, however, is much more thorough and penetrating. He has brought a profound knowledge of psychology into play in developing his characters. His is, perhaps, the more difficult task because he is dealing with people who are infinitely more complex. At the same time his success is equally comparable with Malory's. For this reason then, it seems logical to give preference to Robinson.

In the matter of style, the poets are of wide variance. Malory uses a very loose form; Tennyson's form is more clearly defined but is far from tight; while Robinson weaves his stories into very close form.

Malory does not resort to the use of symbolism. But of the two others, Robinson's is the more effective. He does

not resort to symbols as frequently, nor are his symbols ever ^{so} as involved or confusing as Tennyson's.

Although Malory employs prose, while Tennyson and Robinson express themselves in blank verse, some comparison can be made. Malory and Robinson have passion; Tennyson has not. Malory and Robinson, for all the latter's complex characters, have a greater simplicity than Tennyson who is involved not only in his allegorical concepts and symbols, but in his manner of expressing simple narration or description. Malory, however, by virtue of his subject matter seems to have a greater simplicity than Robinson. All of them possess sensuousness in a more or less similar degree.

Malory shows humor; it is broad and elementary. Tennyson whose humor is good in some of his other poems, fails to put any into the Idylls. Robinson has humor, but it is subdued, polite and generally grim.

A glance at the three writers gives the impression that Tennyson is more conscious of his art than the others. His expression is almost too perfectly polished. Malory--it may be because he is writing in prose--seems to be least conscious of his medium, and probably is hence the greatest artist in the matter of expression. At least he is more direct, natural and vivid than either Robinson or Tennyson.

The three writers may be compared easily and with some justice in regard to their respective dramatic ability. Tennyson has little or no dramatic ability because he has no

definite individual characters from which to create live interplay among persons. Malory makes individual scenes dramatic but they are separated by long passages of narration and are never bound together in anything resembling dramatic form. Mr. Robinson however, is definitely dramatic not only in the conception of his characters and individual scenes, but in the whole form of each of his poems.

The morality of the three works varies greatly. Tennyson is obviously too didactic. Malory is much broader and more artistic. Nevertheless, the good Christian lesson does creep in now and again, although never as a hobby. Robinson, however, moves freely in a world outside religious creeds and doctrines. His morality is a reasoned thing, based upon a direct and penetrating study of actual life in an use of reason. He is broader, wiser and less haggard in his thinking than either Tennyson or Malory.

In lyrical and descriptive ability Tennyson is superior to the other writers. In fact, he stands almost alone in this phase of poetical art. It is especially difficult to compare Robinson and Malory on this point since they use entirely different media. Malory's non-metrical expression is undoubtedly lyrical in many passages, and he has strong, swift power of description. Nevertheless, Robinson, with the aid of meter, seems more lyrical and his descriptive ability is quite equal to Malory's if it does not surpass it. Again the two are so widely different in every respect that it is useless to be dogmatic.

The imagination of the poets, likewise, takes entirely different forms and interests. Malory excels in imaginative narration; Tennyson's imagination is most distinguished in his lyrical and descriptive passages; and Robinson's imagination turns most successfully to the portrayal of the psychological complexities of the human mind.

For this reason alone, it is impossible to say which is the greatest artist, since the things to be compared are so dissimilar.

Obviously, if this study is valid, Malory and Robinson are nearly equally matched in their abilities; and Tennyson lags far behind.

In the final analysis, however, the readers are the judges. Those who like fine lyrics and beautiful description will always turn gladly to Tennyson; those who like exciting action and vivid narration will hold fast to their Malory; and the ones who get their chief delight from poetry in the psychological presentation of characters will never forsake Robinson. And though Malory and Robinson may seem equally matched as artists, Malory will always be read by infinitely more readers than Robinson, since his stories and his people are much more easily understood.

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Approved by:

[Signature]

Harvey L. Sweetman

Harry R. Desilver

Graduate Committee

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