

THE SCEPTICAL STRAIN
READINGS IN TENNYSON'S POETRY, 1829-1855

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Thesis

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Notes on Sources, Abbreviations and References	iv
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1. Introductory: The Spirit of Fable	1
2. Wasted Lands: 'The Hesperides' and 'The Lotos-Eaters'	55
3. Burning Fire: 'Oenone'	102
4. The Empty Phantom: <u>The Lover's Tale</u> (1832)	144
5. The Archetype that Waits: <u>In Memoriam</u>	197
6. That Abiding Phantom Cold: <u>Maud</u>	284

APPENDICES

A. The Manuscript Drafts of 'Armageddon'	347
B. G.S. Faber and Tennyson: A Note on the Question of Influence	388
C. The Textual Development of 'Oenone' between <u>Poems</u> , 1832 and <u>Poems</u> , 1842	393
D. Notes on the Textual Development of <u>The Lover's Tale</u> to 1868, with a Transcription of the Earliest Extant Manuscript Draft	414

Bibliography	448
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NOTES ON SOURCES, ABBREVIATIONS AND REFERENCES

Except where noted otherwise I have used throughout this study Christopher Ricks's brilliantly authoritative standard edition of The Poems of Tennyson, Longman Annotated English Poets Series (London, 1969); hereafter cited as Ricks. Where a poem is mentioned for the first time I have noted in brackets the date of its first publication. In the case of works which originally appeared in the 1832 Poems and which were then republished, extensively revised, in the 1842 Poems, I have noted both dates. Where I discuss poems that appeared in both 1832 and 1842 I have used the 1842 version (all variants from 1832 are given in Ricks). An identification of a poem as 'unpublished' means unpublished in Tennyson's lifetime. I have referred to manuscript drafts of poems where such evidence has seemed relevant to my critical discussion of the published texts. Details on my use of manuscript and related material, together with references to the information presented in the Appendices of this study, are given in my chapter footnotes.

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I have used short titles for the following sources. Other titles and references are given in full on the first citation and thereafter referred to by short title and/or author/editor.

AHH Letters The Letters of Arthur Henry Hallam, ed. Jack Kolb
(Ohio, 1981).

- Campbell Tennyson in Lincoln: A Catalogue of the Collections in the Research Centre, compiled by Nancie Campbell, 2 vols (Lincoln, 1971-73).
- Carey John Milton: Complete Shorter Poems, ed. John Carey, Longman Annotated English Poets Series, Paperback Edition (London, 1971).
- Eversley The Works of Alfred, Lord Tennyson, annotated by Alfred Lord Tennyson, ed. Hallam Tennyson, 9 vols (1907-8).
- Fowler John Milton: Paradise Lost, ed. Alastair Fowler, Longman Annotated English Poets Series, Paperback Edition (London, 1971).
- Killham Critical Essays on the Poetry of Tennyson, ed. John Killham (London, 1960).
- Letters The Letters of Alfred, Lord Tennyson, ed. Cecil Y. Lang and Edgar F. Shannon, Jr., Vol I: 1821-1850 (Oxford, 1982). I am deeply indebted to the editors for permission to quote from the typescript of the forthcoming second volume of the Letters.
- Memoir Hallam, Lord Tennyson, Alfred, Lord Tennyson: A Memoir by his Son, 2 vols (London, 1897).
- PMLA Publications of the Modern Language Association.
- Tennyson Christopher Ricks, Tennyson (New York, 1972).
- TLS Times Literary Supplement.
- Wise Thomas J. Wise, A Bibliography of the Writings of Alfred, Lord Tennyson, 2 vols (Privately-Printed, London, 1908).

I have sometimes used TRC in reference to archival material now in the Tennyson Research Centre, Lincoln.

* * * * *

In my quotations from the works of other poets I have used the following editions.

- Arnold The Poems of Matthew Arnold, ed. Kenneth Allott, Longman Annotated English Poets Series (London, 1965).
- Browning Browning: Poetical Works, 1833-1864, ed. Ian Jack (Oxford, 1970).
- Coleridge Complete Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ed. Ernest Hartley Coleridge, 2 vols (Oxford, 1912).
- Keats The Poems of John Keats, ed. Miriam Allott, Longman Annotated English Poets Series (London, 1970).
- Milton Carey and Fowler
- Shelley Shelley: Poetical Works, ed. Thomas Hutchinson, Oxford Standard Authors Series (Oxford University Press, London, originally published 1905; reset 1943).
- Spenser Edmund Spenser: The Faerie Queene, ed. A.C. Hamilton, Longman Annotated English Poets Series, Paperback Edition (London and New York, 1980).
- Wordsworth References to Wordsworth's The Prelude are to the Text of 1805 edited by Ernest de Selincourt (Oxford University Press, London, 1933). All other quotations

from Wordsworth are from the Poetical Works, edited by Thomas Hutchinson and revised by Ernest de Selincourt, Oxford Standard Authors Series (Oxford University Press, London, 1936).

Translations of the classics are from the Loeb editions.

* * * * *

Portions of Chapter 2 have been published as 'Voices in a Dream: The Language of Skepticism in Tennyson's "The Hesperides"', Victorian Newsletter, No.62 (Fall 1982), pp.13-21. Appendix B, 'G.S. Faber and Tennyson: A Note on the Question of Influence', was published in Notes and Queries, n.s., 27, 6 (December 1980), pp.520-22. Appendix C is a slightly revised version of an article, 'Two Unrecorded Stages in the Revision of Tennyson's "Oenone" for Poems, 1842', which appeared in The Library, 6th Series, II, 3 (September 1980), pp.315-25.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY: THE SPIRIT OF FABLE

In 'The Epic', which serves as a frame prefacing and concluding his early Arthurian poem 'Morte d'Arthur' (1842), Tennyson contrives, in the words of Edward FitzGerald, 'to anticipate or excuse the "faint Homeric echoes"' of the poem, and 'to give a reason for telling an old-world [Fairy-] tale'.¹ The stratagem of 'The Epic' takes the form of a Christmas-eve discussion among a group of friends concerning an epic poem in twelve books written by one of their number, Everard Hall, during his college days. We learn that Hall consigned his poem to the fire but that, through the intervention of his friend Francis Allen, the eleventh book, the 'Morte d'Arthur' has been preserved. The explanation given as to why the poet originally rejected his work reveals something of Tennyson's sense of the inadequacy for his age of traditional poetic mythologies. According to Francis Allen, Hall had

'thought that nothing new was said, or else
Something so said 'twas nothing -- that a truth
Looks freshest in the fashion of the day ...' (30-32)

By the Christmas fire Hall reaffirms this view:

'Why take the style of those heroic times?
For nature brings not back the Mastodon,
Nor we those times; and why should any man
Remodel models? these twelve books of mine
Were faint Homeric echoes, nothing-worth,
Mere chaff and draff, much better burnt .' (35-40)

The early-Victorian preoccupation -- of which these lines are characteristic -- with the question of poetics, the feeling that

1. Cited Ricks, p.582.

certain long established forms were in some sense inappropriate for the times and that new ones somehow needed to be brought into service, was intimately related to that wider aspect of Victorian experience which involved a crisis of confidence in the culture's supporting beliefs and systems of value. 'The Epic' itself notes the abatement of Christianity as a vital and inclusive view of the world:

we held a talk,
 How all the old honour had from Christmas gone,
 Or gone, or dwindled down to some odd games
 In some odd nooks like this; till I, tired out ...
 Fell in a doze; and half-awake I heard
 The parson taking wide and wider sweeps,
 Now harping on the church-commissioners,
 Now hawking at Geology and schism;
 Until I woke, and found him settled down
 Upon the general decay of faith
 Right through the world, 'at home was little left,
 And none abroad: there was no anchor, none,
 To hold by .' (6-9, 13-21)

Such a picture of the waning of an old synthesis finds a counterpart in the representation in the 'Morte d'Arthur' of the dying away of the Christian order invested in Arthur:

King Arthur ... because his wound was deep,
 The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him ...
 And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
 A broken chancel with a broken cross,
 That stood on a dark strait of barren land. (5-6, 8-10)

At points in the poem there are hints of something more even than a dying away or a passing, hints of an ultimate desolation and a final

desertation:

A cry that shivered to the tingling stars,
 And, as it were one voice, an agony
 Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills
 All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
 Or hath come, since the making of the world ...

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere,
 'Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go?
 Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes?
 For now I see the true old times are dead ...
 And I, the last, go forth companionless,
 And the days darken round me, and the years,
 Among new men, strange faces, other minds.'

(199-203, 226-29, 236-38)

Yet there is in the 'Morte d'Arthur' no commitment to the idea of the total extinction of the old order. As Martin Dodsworth has noted, the conclusion of the 'Morte d'Arthur' is 'superficially emphatic, actually inconclusive':

Long stood Sir Bedivere
 Revolving many memories, till the hull
 Looked one black dot against the verge of dawn,
 And on the mere the wailing died away. (269-72)

'The last line', Martin Dodsworth writes,

seems to bring the poem to a point of rest, as the idea of death itself dies away with the wailing. There is plenty to think about -- Arthur's own prophecy of change ('The old order changeth, yielding place to new'[l.240]) and his uncertainty about his destination ('For all my mind is clouded with a doubt' [l.258]). Rehearsing these things in his memory, Sir Bedivere is left in a state of suspended animation, and a sense of this qualifies the

conclusiveness of the last line. There is, too, a syntactic ambiguity about the wailing. The last line has all the appearance of being a main clause. but it might just as well be subordinate -- 'Bedivere stood until the wailing died away'. The uncertain status of the final clause softens its conclusiveness greatly.... Bedivere could go on reminiscing or he could take new action, and Arthur might or might not be dead.¹

While the 'Morte d'Arthur' reveals a Tennysonian awareness of the possibility of things falling apart, it also displays a Tennysonian reserve, an avoidance of unambiguous declarations that things have finally fallen apart. Reservation also pervades 'The Epic'. It is significant that the 'Morte d'Arthur' is there identified as the eleventh of the twelve books originally written. Further, Parson Holmes brings contemporary scientific thought into view as he takes his widening sweeps at the general decay of faith throughout the world and in so doing he clearly gives expression to anxieties that are, to some extent, Tennyson's own. But we are not invited to consider the Parson's judgements uncritically, for he is a figure of mild burlesque and his gloomy armchair cogitations on the state of the world are obviously the object of a gentle ironic mockery and caricature.

One thing, however, that the poet Everard Hall -- and through him Tennyson -- had seemed fairly sure of was the bankruptcy of a poetry which merely remodelled models: 'nothing-worth,/Mere chaff and draff, much better burnt'. Even so, in the second half of 'The Epic' there are excuses made: 'Perhaps some modern touches here and there/ Redeemed it from the charge of nothingness' (ll.278-79). Tennyson

1. 'Patterns of Morbidity: Repetition in Tennyson's Poetry', The Major Victorian Poets: Reconsiderations, ed. Isobel Armstrong (London, 1969), p.18.

himself published -- far less burned -- his 'Morte d'Arthur'. Moreover, in the very substance of 'The Epic' -- designed, as FitzGerald said, to confess to felt inadequacies in the use of a traditional poetic and a traditional fable -- the poet attempts to insist on the possibility of putting contemporary history and a mythic world into a revitalised and revitalising relationship:

in sleep I seemed
 To sail with Arthur under looming shores,
 Point after point; till on to dawn, when dreams
 Begin to feel the truth and stir of day,
 To me, methought, who waited with a crowd,
 There came a bark that, blowing forward, bore
 King Arthur, like a modern gentleman
 Of stateliest port; and all the people cried,
 'Arthur is come again: he cannot die'....
 At this a hundred bells began to peal,
 That with the sound I woke, and heard indeed
 The clear church-bells ring in the Christmas-morn.

(288-96, 301-303)

Unfortunately, while in the opening part of 'The Epic' Tennyson may have displayed something like a discriminating awareness of a 'copious and complex present',¹ his suggestion in the closing lines of the poem that Prince Albert may be seen as Arthur come again descends, as Christopher Ricks has said, into inanity and mawkishness.²

Nevertheless, it is the tensions, contradictions and ambiguities,

1. Matthew Arnold, 'On the Modern Element in Literature', The Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold, ed. R.H. Super, 11 vols (Ann Arbor, 1960 - 77), I, 20.

2. Tennyson, pp. 140-41.

the engagements and evasions upon which the aesthetic and intellectual structures of 'The Epic' and the 'Morte d'Arthur' are raised that most tellingly define the peculiar predicament of the artist in the early-Victorian world. When Tennyson's poet Everard Hall explained that he had rejected his epic poem because 'a truth/ Looks freshest in the fashion of the day' he stood even then in danger of an evasion, or at least in danger of putting the matter too simply. The formulation comes close to implying that truth remains a stable commodity; its contemporary poetic expression no more than a matter of finding the appropriate modern ornament. But such a latently Augustan tenor of thought would have been fundamentally misplaced. For it was, in truth, not only an age in which 'old opinions, feelings -- ancestral customs and institutions [were] crumbling away',¹ but an age in which there could seem to be no fresh system and order emerging: 'Wandering between two worlds, one dead,/ The other powerless to be born' was how Matthew Arnold was to express his sense of his own situation in 1855.² For the poet the problem was not merely that poetry had lost resource, but that the generation of new poetic languages seemed difficult, if not impossible, in an age when poetry seemed to have lost cultural credence. As Isobel Armstrong has observed:

It was quite seriously maintained that 'the age' was inimical to poetry, either because there was simply nothing more for the poet to say, the materials of poetry having been 'used up', or because of a deep antipathy between a mechanistic way of living and thinking and the poetic imagination.³

1. Edward Bulwer Lytton, England and The English (first published 1833), London and New York, 1874, p.281.

2. 'Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse', ll.85-86.

3. Victorian Scrutinies (London, 1972), p.15.

Tennyson was to explore facets of the problem in In Memoriam (1850). In section LXXVII of that poem we find him asking:

What hope is here for modern rhyme
 To him, who turns a musing eye
 On songs, and deeds, and lives, that lie
 Foreshortened in the tract of time?

These mortal lullabies of pain
 May bind a book, may line a box,
 May serve to curl a maiden's locks;
 Or when a thousand moons shall wane

A man upon a stall may find,
 And, passing, turn the page that tells
 A grief, then changed to something else,
 Sung by a long-forgotten mind. (1-12)

In reflecting thus Tennyson was relating to his own creative endeavour in In Memoriam the kind of questions which had been proposed by Richard Chenevix Trench -- a contemporary of Tennyson's at Cambridge -- in a letter written in 1830 to another Cambridge man, William Bodham Donne:

But the future, the future -- who shall question that? What will one be? What will this age be? ... will it prove the decrepitude of the world? Are we not gathering up the knowledge of past generations because we are adding nothing ourselves? Do we not place the glory of our century in the understanding of past ages, because our individual energy is extinct, and we are ourselves nothing? After one or two revolutions in thought and opinion, all our boasted poetry, all, or nearly all, of Keats and Shelley and

Wordsworth and Byron, will become unintelligible. When except in our times, did men seek to build up their poetry on their own individual experiences, instead of some objective foundations common to all men?¹

Arthur J. Carr has isolated some of the implications for the whole body of Tennyson's work of these questions proposed by Trench:

The question of 'objective foundations' permeates Tennyson's career and binds his poetry to the crisis of the arts in our century. Tennyson took in the sickening fact that the continental areas of common values were breaking up The sense of this fact is the atmosphere of his poetry and is present everywhere. It is evident in his exploitation of a multitude of poetic forms, in the question of electing a tradition and in the desperate virtuosity of his style²

On the question of the fundamental tradition elected by Tennyson there has never been serious disagreement among commentators, although some may have preferred to emphasise less the principle of election than that of an essentially unavoidable inheritance. Although, in his reference in 'The Epic' to 'faint Homeric echoes', Tennyson may have pointed to a classical model in order to suggest a kind of poetry untenable for his age, he had (as even the invocations in Trench's letter would suggest) to establish his poetic identity principally in the wake of that radical redirection in habits of thought and feeling

1. Richard Chenevix Trench, Archbishop: Letters and Memorials, ed. [Maria Trench], 2 vols (London, 1888), I, 73.

2. 'Tennyson as a Modern Poet', Killham, p.43; Carr's essay was originally published in the University of Toronto Quarterly, XIX (1950), pp.361-82.

effected by the writers of the English Romantic movement. When still at Somersby Tennyson may have become acquainted with the poetry of Shelley, but it has long been obvious that his real exposure to Romantic literature came during the period of his undergraduate career at Cambridge.¹ The short spell (from October 1829 to February 1830) of Tennyson's formal membership of the debating society known as 'The Apostles' ('the whole band', as Richard Chenevix Trench called them, of 'Platonico-Wordsworthian-Coleridgean-anti-utilitarians')² does not of course delimit the bounds of the influence of Romantic writing on Tennyson at Cambridge. Tennyson was familiar with members of the society before and after the period of his own formal membership. Further, whatever the conservatism of the official University curriculum,³ there was already a wide currency of Romantic ideas and attitudes in Cambridge when Tennyson went up to Trinity in November 1827⁴ and the process would have begun early which brought him to a

1. Tennyson's boyhood admiration of Byron is well-known. The very earliest of his surviving letters, written at the age of twelve, displays his familiarity with the poet (see Letters, I,1). But it is less clear that Tennyson read Shelley at Somersby. In Alfred Tennyson (London, 1949), p.34, Sir Charles Tennyson wrote: 'One day Frederick came back to Lincolnshire from a visit, and as he and Alfred were driving home from the coach whispered: "I've got a poet who is much finer than Byron", and repeated one line from the introductory stanza to Shelley's "Revolt of Islam" ... which Alfred thought delicious. But it seems that he never saw a copy of any poem by Shelley until he went up to Cambridge two or three years later, and the same is probably true about Wordsworth and Keats'. However, in his recent biography Tennyson: The Unquiet Heart (Oxford, 1980), p.97, R.B.Martin observes that Tennyson 'Before going to Cambridge ... had learned to love Shelley's poems'. Unfortunately, Martin cites no evidence to support this observation. Certainly the poetry that Tennyson wrote before going up to Cambridge shows little evidence of significant reading in the writings of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats or Shelley, as is demonstrated in W.D.Paden's analysis (in Tennyson in Egypt: A Study of the Imagery in his Earlier Work, Lawrence, Kansas, 1942, pp.99-110) of the references, echoes, and allusions in Poems by Two Brothers (1827).

2. Quoted in Harold Nicolson, Tennyson: Aspects of his Life, Character, and Poetry (London, 1923), p.76.

3. In a letter of 1828 to his Aunt Russell Tennyson declared 'the studies of the University [are] so uninteresting, so much matter of fact -- none but dryheaded calculating angular little gentlemen can take much pleasure in $a\sqrt{b}$ $a-b+c+d-e$ or \sqrt{a} etc' (Letters, I, 23).

4. On the date of Tennyson's entry to the University, see Edgar F. Shannon, Jr., 'Alfred Tennyson's Admission to Cambridge', TLS, 6 March 1959, p.136.

position -- by the time he left Trinity in March 1831 -- where he 'was fully responsive to the fresh impetus of the great Romantics and had put away as childish his early emulations of Pope and Thompson'.¹

What critics have not always agreed over is the exact nature of Tennyson's response to his Romantic inheritance. W.E.Houghton found no difficulty in placing Tennyson in relation to his Romantic forbears when he made the following observations on Victorian concepts of the writer as 'Vates...Prophet or Poet':²

1. Edgar F. Shannon, Jr., 'Poetry as Vision: Sight and Insight in "The Lady of Shalott"', Victorian Poetry, 19,3 (November 1981), p.212. When Tennyson went up to Trinity in November 1827 the Cambridge Union Debating Society would have constituted an open arena for the discussion of Romantic literature and values; if only because, as Peter Allen has said, involvement of members of the Apostles with the Union 'seems to have reached its height' in 1827 (The Cambridge Apostles: The Early Years, Cambridge, 1978, p.37). Among those men who were Apostles and also prominent debators in the Union at the time of Tennyson's admission to Cambridge were John Mitchell Kemble and William Bodham Donne. These two, along with Richard Chenevix Trench and Joseph William Blakesley were closely associated with Frederick Denison Maurice and John Sterling -- the two senior Apostles who directly shaped the Society in the mid 1820s and were its guiding spirits throughout the later 1820s and early 1830s. These six Apostles 'formed the nucleus' (Allen, p.37) of the 'mystics' -- a distinct group within the Society comprising those 'who followed Maurice in holding that social regeneration would come ... through the spiritual influence of modern literature, specifically the writings of Coleridge, Wordsworth, Shelley and Keats' (Allen, p.36). Maurice and his followers 'could not ignore such a useful vehicle' as the Union 'for telling their own generation about their avant-garde views on the social function of modern literature' (Allen, p.46). Already well established in Apostolic and Union life at the time Tennyson was a freshman, Donne, Kemble, Trench and Blakesley are, of course, remembered as figuring prominently among the poet's circle of intimates at the University. An indication of the special impact on Tennyson at Cambridge of Keats and Shelley, in particular, may be found in the large number of echoes of these poets (noted in Ricks) which appears in the work of the younger poet from 1827 - 28 onwards. The fruition of Tennyson's writing during his early days at Cambridge is to be found in his 1830 volume of Poems, Chiefly Lyrical. A valuable discussion of the 'equal debt' owed by Tennyson to Shelley and Keats in many of the poems in this volume is undertaken by Margaret A. Lourie in 'Tennyson as Romantic Revisionist', Studies in Romanticism, 18, 1 (Spring 1979), pp.3-27.

2. T.Carlyle, On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History, in Collected Works, Library Edition, 34 vols (London, 1869-72), XII,95.

The man of letters was generally considered, and often considered himself, no mere artist or craftsman. He was a genius in a period ... when young men at Oxford could take Modern Painters or Past and Present ... as nothing short of 'inspired and absolute truth'. That environment ... was created by the transformation... of the natural genius of the eighteenth century ... into the Romantic Genius of the nineteenth whose imagination was an oracular organ of Truth. This heady doctrine, preached by Wordsworth and Shelley as well as Goethe and Fichte was adopted from those sources by the Cambridge Apostles. Their leading spirit, F.D.Maurice, formulated it in 1828 in terms which bring out the omniscience of the poet's insight:

The mind of a poet of the highest order is the most perfect mind that can belong to man He sympathises with all phenomena by his intuition of all principles

He cannot be untrue, for it is his high calling to interpret those universal truths which exist on earth only in the forms of his creation.

One Apostle who listened and believed was Alfred Tennyson¹

If such works as 'The Poet' or 'The Poet's Mind' (1830) were representative of all that Tennyson had ever written it would be hard to disagree with Houghton in his assumption of Tennyson's complete assimilation of Maurice's doctrines. In 'The Poet', after all, we hear how the poet 'in a golden clime was born' (l.1), how he 'saw through life and death' (l.5), how 'The viewless arrows of his thoughts were headed/ And winged with flame' (ll.11-12); and in 'The Poet's Mind' we are expected to appreciate that the poet's mind is 'holy ground'

1. The Victorian Frame of Mind, 1830-1870 (New Haven and London, 1957), p.152.

(1.9). But I have already spoken of the tensions, contradictions and ambiguities infecting the situation of the artist in the early-Victorian period and the whole question of Tennyson's attachment to Romantic values is more complex than his youthful effusions in 'The Poet' or 'The Poet's Mind' would suggest. Evidence of that complexity of response is not hard to find. It is discernible, as I shall show next, even in Tennyson's writing while he was still at -- and very soon after he left -- Cambridge.

It is interesting to place against the enthusiasms of 'The Poet' or 'The Poet's Mind' the satirical attacks on idealistic pretension which are to be found in two other of Tennyson's minor Cambridge poems, 'The Idealist' (unpublished; written 1829) and 'A Character' (1830). In 'The Idealist' Tennyson parodied his speaker as follows:

A mighty matter I rehearse,
 A mighty matter undescried ...
 I weave the universe,
 And indivisible divide,
 Creating all I hear and see.
 All souls are centres: I am one,
 I am the earth, the stars, the sun ...

I am Place

And Time, yet is my home
 Eternity: (let no man think it odd ...

(1-2, 5-9, 13-15)

'A Character', directed at the notable Cambridge Union speaker Thomas Sunderland, was written, as Christopher Ricks has noted, in 1829 or early 1830 when Tennyson's friends Richard Monckton Milnes and J.W. Blakesley 'complained of Sunderland's zest for ... "direct contemplation of the absolute"¹:

He spake of beauty: that the dull
 Saw no divinity in grass,
 Life in dead stones, or spirit in air;
 Then looking as 'twere in a glass,

1. Ricks, p.218.

He smoothed his chin and sleeked his hair,
And said the earth was beautiful. (7-12)

It is also worth remembering the direct observations on his Romantic inheritance that Tennyson made in a letter which he wrote in 1834, three years after leaving Trinity, to another Cambridge friend, James Spedding. In the same year Sir Henry Taylor, in the Preface to his Philip Van Artevelde, had attacked the poetry of the younger Romantics, explaining that theirs was 'a moving and enchanting art, acting upon the fancy, the affections, the passions, but scarcely connected with the exercise of the intellectual faculties'. In brief, they lacked 'subject matter'.¹ Shortly after the appearance of Taylor's work, Tennyson replied to a letter sent him by Spedding:

By a quaint coincidence I received your letter directed (I suppose) by Philip van Artevelde with Philip himself (not the man but the book) and I wish to tell you that I think him a noble fellow. I close with him in most that he says of modern poetry though it may be that he does not take sufficiently into consideration the peculiar strength evolved by such writers as Byron and Shelley ...

Tennyson's defence of these poets disparaged by Taylor becomes more complicated as he continues --

... the peculiar strength evolved by such writers as Byron and Shelley which however mistaken they may be did yet give the world another heart and new pulses -- and so are we kept going. Blessed be those that grease the wheels of the old world, insomuch as to move on is better than to stand still.²

1. Philip Van Artevelde; A Dramatic Romance, 2 vols (London, 1834), I, xii.

2. Letters, I, 120.

In these last lines Tennyson is, of course, virtually re-wording Keats's account of the 'mighty workings' of the great spirits -- first among them, Wordsworth -- of the Romantic Revival:

These, these will give the world another heart

And other pulses. Hear ye not the hum

Of mighty workings? --

Listen awhile ye nations, and be dumb.

(Second Sonnet to Haydon, ll.11-14)

Yet, although the closeness between Keats and Tennyson is important, the difference is equally, if not more, significant. Keats's unquestioning exultation is countered in Tennyson by the grimly attenuated images of almost weary prolongation. Apart from that doubleness of response which appears in his simultaneous endorsement and qualification of Taylor's attack, there is evident, in Tennyson's assertion of the need to work within the achievements of his poetic predecessors, a certain tone of frustration, a sense that the new heart and pulses recently given to the world may in fact signify nothing more than a deeply ambiguous vitality, and that a fully vital new world is still waiting to be born.

A fundamental division in Tennyson's attitude towards his Romantic predecessors is apparent in his 1829 Cambridge Prize Poem 'Timbuctoo' (the title laid down in the rules of the competition). Tennyson never thought too highly of the poetic merits of 'Timbuctoo'. We would not want to revise his estimate in this respect, though we should hardly want to lose the poem altogether (in 1831 Tennyson wrote: 'I could have wished that poor Timbuctoo might have been suffered to slide quietly off with all its errors into forgetfulness').¹ As far as Tennyson's Romantic bearings are concerned, however, the evidence of 'Timbuctoo' is important and deserves, in the following pages, some detailed discussion.

1. Letters, I, 47-48.

Romantic potentialities in 'Timbuctoo' have not passed unnoticed in critical discussion of the poem. A. Dwight Culler, for example, has spoken of the vision sequence of the work as the 'inward and humane conception of [a] Romantic poet';¹ and W. David Shaw has commented that the poem 'presents a rite of passage ... in which the youthful visionary is asked to channel his Romantic and Miltonic heritage ... through the narrow passage of his mind'.² However, in their attempts to identify influences which may have affected Tennyson in his drafting of 'Timbuctoo' and which may help account for the Romantic bias which marks this poem, commentators have tended to refer only to the general influences I have already mentioned: the broad currency of Romantic ideas at Cambridge in the later 1820s and the particular enthusiasm for Romantic literature among members of 'The Apostles'. The availability to Tennyson -- from the time he went up to Trinity in 1827 -- of Romantic ideas circulating in the context of Cambridge as a whole is obviously an important factor to be borne in mind. But one of my main purposes in discussing 'Timbuctoo' will be to suggest that in certain points of his presentation and interpretation of Romantic values in the poem Tennyson seems to have been indebted specifically to ideas advanced by his friend Arthur Hallam. Much has been made of the formative role played by Hallam in Tennyson's early intellectual and artistic development and 'Timbuctoo' may be seen in some measure to confirm this view and to enlarge our understanding of the nature of Hallam's impact on Tennyson. A consideration of Tennyson's poem in the manner I propose (initially through a comparison with Hallam's own submission for the 1829 Prize Poem Competition) will enable us to distinguish clearly some of the principal areas and emphases within Romantic ideology which appear to have attracted Tennyson's attention writing at this threshold of his mature poetic career. More important, however, 'Timbuctoo' also gives us an opportunity to approach in some depth the dimension of tension and

1. The Poetry of Tennyson (New Haven and London, 1977), p.21.

2. Tennyson's Style (Ithaca and London, 1976), p.52.

ambiguity in Tennyson's response to Romantic writing. The poem can be shown to demonstrate ultimately Tennyson's failure of confidence in the Romantic credo concerning the shaping and organising power of the poetic imagination. A closer examination than has hitherto been attempted of this aspect of the poem will provide -- not least through the insight it affords us into the limits of Hallam's influence on his friend's thought and imaginative concerns -- crucial orientations for my reading of Tennyson's treatment of Romantic values in a number of his later works.

It appears that Hallam actually claimed to have exercised a very considerable influence over Tennyson's 'Timbuctoo'. In a letter of 25 June 1829 J.M. Gaskell wrote

I received a letter this morning from Hallam. He is delighted that Tennyson is successful. He says that Tennyson deserved it, but that he borrowed the pervading idea from him, so that 'he is entitled to the honours of a Sancho Panza in the memorable victory gained in the year 1829 over prosaicism and jingle jangle ... '¹

1. Records of an Eton Schoolboy, ed. Charles Milnes Gaskell (London, 1883), p.139. The subject for the Chancellor's English Poem was announced in the Times for 13 December 1828 (p.3, col.4); entries were to be submitted by 31 March 1829. In Memoir, I, 45, Hallam Tennyson writes that 'On June 6th, 1829, the announcement was made that my father had won the prize'. The exact date at which Tennyson met Arthur Hallam is uncertain. Tennyson, as I have noted, had gone up to Cambridge in November 1827 and Hallam had entered Trinity in October 1828 (see E.F. Shannon, Jr., Tennyson and the Reviewers ... 1827 - 1851, Harvard, 1952, p.22). In 'When did Tennyson meet Hallam?' Modern Language Notes, LVII (March 1942), pp.209-10, T.H. Vail Motter suggested April 1829 as the possible date of the first meeting, but Sir Charles Tennyson in Alfred Tennyson, p.66, decided that 'It is likely that Alfred and Arthur met soon after Hallam's arrival at Trinity'. In Tennyson: The Unquiet Heart, p.69, R.B. Martin, in the continuing absence of any conclusive evidence, is slightly equivocal in his following of T.H. Vail Motter's speculations concerning the date of the meeting: 'It was ... in April [1829] that Tennyson and Hallam first became friends, but they may have met casually before that, since Hallam used to claim that Tennyson had borrowed from him the pervading idea of his poem'. Of course, if the latest submission date for entries in the Prize Poem competition was indeed 31 March 1829 then my argument in this chapter that Hallam had some influence

Hallam's claim may seem extravagant when we recall that Tennyson's 'Timbuctoo' was largely made up out of an earlier work, 'Armageddon', the first version of which he had composed before going up to Cambridge and before meeting Hallam. Yet it appears that Hallam would have made his claim in full knowledge of this fact. On 16 September 1829 he replied to a letter sent him by John Frere:

I cannot agree with you by the bye that Alfred's poem is not modelled upon [Shelley's] Alastor, nor by any means that it is a specimen of his best manner. The bursts of poetry in it are magnificent; but they were not written for Timbuctoo; and as a whole, the present poem is surely very imperfect.¹

Tennyson's comments on the matter in 1889 were recorded by Andrew Hichens:

Tennyson said the Cambridge Prize Poem was looked on with the greatest contempt in his time 'but my father said, you must try for it -- the absurd thing was that I sent in an old poem on "Armageddon" and, altering the beginning and the end, made it "Timbuctoo" -- I was never so surprised as when I got the prize'.²

'Armageddon' was first published by Sir Charles Tennyson in Unpublished Early Poems by Alfred Tennyson (London, 1931), pp.6-15.

From the manuscript used by Sir Charles (now Harvard MS.Eng.952.2;

over the composition of Tennyson's poem must imply the existence of a fairly developed relationship -- if not actually a friendship -- between the two men before April 1829. Hallam's own 'Timbuctoo' was completed by 15 February 1829, as is clear from a letter of that date which he wrote to his father: 'The English poem I wrote off in a fit of enthusiasm There is but one possible fine method of treating the subject; and that I have tried to grasp: in all other points of view it strikes me as immeasurably absurd' (AHH Letters, p.274).

1. AHH Letters, p.326.

2. Holograph MS. Journal inserted in the eighth of ten MS. volumes (hereafter cited as the MS Materials, TRC) compiled by Hallam Tennyson in preparation for the Memoir. Hallam Tennyson printed a version of Hichens's note in the Memoir, II, 355.

hereafter H.Nbk.2) it had appeared that less than fifty lines had been incorporated from 'Armageddon' in 'Timbuctoo'. But Christopher Ricks has noted that a different version of 'Armageddon' in a manuscript notebook at Trinity College, Cambridge (MS. 0.15.18; hereafter T.Nbk.18) shows that while, as Tennyson said, the opening and the closing passages of 'Timbuctoo' (ll. 1-61 and 191-248) were largely new, in his composition of the central vision sequence of the Prize Poem (ll. 62-190) the poet merely altered a few lines in the account of the vision of the battle of Armageddon as it stood in the Trinity manuscript in order to produce his account of a vision of the City of Timbuctoo.¹ Clearly, the almost verbatim adoption in 'Timbuctoo' of this vision section of 'Armageddon' means that the borrowing was massive. But Tennyson's alterations of 'Armageddon' in the making of 'Timbuctoo' were more significant than a straightforward count of the number of new lines in the new poem would reveal. These alterations may be best understood, and Hallam's claim to have influenced Tennyson's work best appreciated, through, first, a consideration of Hallam's own poem on 'Timbuctoo', second, a consideration of 'Armageddon', and finally an examination of the prize-winning entry in the light of this preliminary discussion.

1. 'Tennyson: "Armageddon" into "Timbuctoo"', Modern Language Review, LXI, (1966), pp.23-24. In this article Ricks described the T.Nbk.18 draft of 'Armageddon' in 'general terms'. The version of 'Armageddon' printed by Sir Charles Tennyson from H.Nbk.2 (hereafter this text will be referred to as 1931) appears in Ricks's edition of Tennyson's poems. A few passages from the T.Nbk.18 version of the poem were printed by Ricks in the TLS for 21 August 1969, p.921, but the entirety of the Trinity draft has never been published. My critical discussion demands reference to both versions of the work and in Appendix A of this study I have provided an account of the relationship between 'Armageddon' and 'Timbuctoo' in a form which includes a complete transcription of the T.Nbk.18 text of 'Armageddon'. Both the H.Nbk.2 and T.Nbk.18 MSS. are damaged and the drafts of 'Armageddon' in each contain material that allows incomplete lines in one version to be completed from the other. In order to facilitate comparison and reference I have therefore transcribed the T.Nbk.18 draft in a parallel text with 1931 (as printed in Ricks). In my critical discussion I draw attention throughout to instances where passages in one version do not appear in the other. Where there are close counterparts between the two versions I cite 1931.

Laboured and derivative though Hallam's poem is, the nature of the derivativeness itself is significant, and Hallam himself acknowledges his models by means of his epigraph, taken from Wordsworth's 'Yarrow Unvisited' and through his extensive notes to the poem.¹ Not all echoes, it is true, are formally noticed. However, the principal influences discernible in the work are those of Wordsworth, Shelley and Coleridge.² Hallam's conversion of these influences into an almost systematised external authority in 'Timbuctoo' marks a significant difference in imaginative effort between the poem and the Romantic texts which it invokes. Earl R. Wasserman's account of the nature of the Romantic response to the failure, by the end of the eighteenth century, of received systems of structuring and ordering experience is worth recalling here:

Pope and Denham could be assured that their readers would come to their poems with the whole dialectic of concordia discors in mind, and they were able to evoke that pattern by explicitly

1. The text of the poem I have used is that published in The Writings of Arthur Hallam, ed. T.H. Vail Motter (London and New York, 1943), pp.37-44. Motter derives his text from the 1830 edition of Hallam's Poems. He prints the notes appended by Hallam to 'Timbuctoo' in that edition, together with the notes to the poem as privately printed in 1829.

2. Arthur Hallam's attachment to writers of the English Romantic School seems to have been forged at Cambridge. Hallam wrote without special enthusiasm of Wordsworth and Coleridge in a letter to W.E. Gladstone of 26 August 1828 (AHH Letters, p.233) and in a letter to Gladstone of 8 November 1828, written a few weeks after he had arrived at Trinity, Hallam commented on the poetical sympathies of the Cambridge Union: 'at the present day Shelley is the idol before which we are to be short by the knees ... but I cannot bring myself to think Percy Bysshe a fine poet' (AHH Letters, p.245). Soon, however, Hallam was discovering in Romantic writing elements which accorded well with the taste for Platonic and Neo-Platonic thought and literature he had acquired before going up to Cambridge. By the time he had finished 'Timbuctoo' in mid-February 1829 Hallam's conversion seems to have been almost complete. In 'Two Sonnets, Purporting to be Written in ... Rome by Moonlight', published in The Athenaeum for 25 March 1829 (when the journal was edited by F.D. Maurice and John Sterling), Hallam eulogises Shelley and Keats. It is to his lasting credit that later in the same year he arranged for the publication of the first English edition of Shelley's Adonais (cf. AHH Letters, p.293).

calling attention to it. But the meaningful order of things in, say, Keats's 'Ode on a Grecian Urn' or Shelley's 'Sensitive Plant' -- that which establishes meaningful ligatures among its images, statements, gestures -- is inherent in the entire activity of those poems and is inseparable from the poetic activity. Each of these poems both generates and employs its own extra-linguistic syntax The nineteenth-century mythological poem is internally constitutive of the myth that makes possible its own existence as a poem For there to be a meaningful whole the nineteenth-century poet -- although a common body of private beliefs may run through all his utterances -- must make it by his own wilful creative act No longer can a poem be conceived of as a reflection or imitation of an autonomous order outside itself.¹

In 'Timbuctoo' Hallam actually reveals little of the confidence in self-derived authority and little of the innovative and exploratory imaginative impulse of his Romantic mentors. The poem reads to some extent like a versified treatise on the imagination and we should be hard pressed to recognise in it that 'vital union' between language and figure² which we take to be the distinguishing feature of the fully realised Romantic poem. Hallam displays, indeed, a fundamentally discursive and rationalistic tendency of mind in his arbitrary assumption of the existence among the Romantic writers to whom he alludes, of a fixed system of thought and belief about the world. Yet probably the most that can and should be claimed on this matter is

1. The Subtler Language: Critical Readings of Neoclassic and Romantic Poems (Baltimore, 1959), pp. 172-86.

2. Wordsworth, 'Essay upon Epitaphs, III', in The Prose Works of William Wordsworth, ed. W.J.B. Owen and Jane Worthington Smyser, 3 vols (Oxford, 1974), II, 82.

that, as René Wellek has put it, the 'great poets of the English Romantic movement constitute a fairly coherent group'.¹ They share similar views of poetry and the imagination and they share, as Wellek has it, 'a poetic style, a use of imagery, symbolism, and myth, which is quite distinct from anything that had been practiced by the eighteenth-century'.² But while we may speak of Romantic values and ideas, of Romanticism even, there is no single, unitary, formally pronounceable body of Romantic doctrines which can be recognised as a system of thought and belief existing quite autonomously and exclusively of, say, the main body of Christian doctrine. Whatever special epistemological and metaphysical emphases were shared by the great Romantic writers, they are of a kind which -- although we should never underestimate their own distinctive structures -- are remarkably versatile and able both to accommodate and accommodate themselves to a wide (though not an unlimited) range of ideological systems. In the Romantic period the question of the exact form of the poet's beliefs is in some senses -- as Earl R. Wasserman partly suggested -- less important than the question of the source of authority sanctioning those beliefs. But Hallam's 'Timbuctoo' clearly reflects, and suffers in its enactment of, its author's 'taste for philosophical poetry'.³ Attempting to press an unsystematic body of literature into a systematised framework, Hallam betrays in 'Timbuctoo' an eclectic reliance on his Romantic models and an apparent lack of awareness of conflicting attitudes and ideas which can lead to amalgamations that are reductive to the point of cliché. However, it is not my intention

1. 'The Concept of Romanticism', Comparative Literature, I,2 (Spring 1949), p.158.

2. ibid., pp.158-59.

3. Henry Hallam, 'Preface' to the Remains of Arthur Henry Hallam (privately-printed, London, 1834), p.ix.

to dwell on these negative aspects of the work, but to indicate broadly an overt conceptual and imaginative affiliation.

Summarising the opening theme of his poem in lines 82-97, Hallam complains that his is an age witnessing a decline in the spiritual and imaginative energies of mankind. He observes that the "'veiled maid'" (l.84) and 'every thing that makes us joy to be' (l.87) have vanished, overwhelmed by 'the world's o'ershadowing form' (l.95). He recalls the Wordsworth of the 'Immortality Ode' (l.18) as he declares that

there hath passed away a glory of Youth

From this our world; and all is common now ... (88-89)

In a note on his reference to the disappearance of the "'veiled maid'" in the text of 'Timbuctoo' privately printed in 1829, Hallam explains that this is an allusion to 'the exquisite personification of Ideal Beauty in Mr. Shelley's Alastor'. (It is, incidentally, characteristic of the kinds of weakness I have referred to that Hallam never pauses to consider whether it is at all important that the maid should be veiled, or what the consequences of her unveiling might be.) In an expanded note on the allusion in the text of the poem published in his edition of Poems, 1830, Hallam suggests that the critics may determine how far he has the right

to transfer the 'veiled maid' to my own Poem, where she must stand for the embodiment of that love for the unseen, that voluntary concentration of our vague ideas of the Beauty that ought to be, on some one spot, or country yet undiscovered

This note directs us to the second movement of Hallam's argument in 'Timbuctoo', in which we learn that despite the signs of impoverishment, the spiritual dispossession of mankind is not quite complete:

there is one, one ray that lingers here,

To battle with the world's o'ershadowing form ... (94-95)

Hallam refers us to the fabulous City of Timbuctoo. We are told that in this 'City divine' (l.129) which 'yet no mortal quest hath ever found' (l.102) it is possible still to find 'th' ideal aliment/Of Man's most subtle being' (ll.107-08); in this territory of the mind may

still be blent

Whate'er of heavenly beauty in form or sound

Illumes the Poet's heart with ravishment. (109-11)

An imaginative projection of 'Man's most subtle being', the City expresses the fundamental identity of the human mind with 'the Eternal Reason's perfectness' (l.117). What Henry Hallam called 'the Platonic spirit' of his son's 'literary creed'¹ shows itself in Hallam's adumbration of an idealistic epistemology in 'Timbuctoo'. As might be expected, however, in a work which bears a Romantic orientation, Hallam places special emphasis on the imagination as a cognitive organ which provides insights into an order of reality transcending the phenomenal world. Nor is it surprising, when Hallam describes those moments of 'phantasy' (l.144) in which he has a clear intuition of the inhabitants of Timbuctoo, that his account should in some measure fulfil Northrop Frye's observation that:

the metaphorical structure of Romantic poetry tends to move inside and downward instead of outside and upward, hence the creative world is deep within, and so is heaven or the place of the presence of God In Blake this world at the deep center is Jerusalem Jerusalem is also ... Atlantis, the sunken island kingdom which we can rediscover by draining the 'Sea of

1. op.cit., pp.xxxii-xxxiii.

Time and Space' off the top of the mind.¹

This world at the deep centre is not, of course, a condition that is easily recoverable, but it is a state that stands over and against the demands of the world of time and space and the energy that is required for its attainment is something that may be represented in ideal terms. In lines 161-163 of Hallam's 'Timbuctoo' we hear that the envisioned inhabitants of the City gathered around 'a good old man' (who is styled, Hallam informs us in a further note, on Coleridge) and drank

The sweet, sad tones of Wisdom, which outran
The life-blood, coursing to the heart, and sank
Inward from thought to thought, till they abode
'Mid Being's dim foundations, rank by rank
With those transcendent truths arrayed by God
In linked armor for untiring fight,
Whose victory is, where time hath never trod. (165-71)

Northrop Frye has commented further on the importance of the Atlantis theme in Romantic metaphors of depth and interiority:

In Prometheus Unbound Atlantis reappears when Prometheus is liberated, and the one great flash of vision which is all that is left to us of Wordsworth's Recluse uses the same imagery:

Paradise, and groves
Elysian, Fortunate Fields - like those of old
Sought in the Atlantic Main - why should they be

1. 'The Drunken Boat: The Revolutionary Element in Romanticism', in Romanticism Reconsidered, ed. N. Frye (New York and London, 1963), p.16.

A history only of departed things ...

['Prospectus' to The Recluse, ll.47-50, in Preface to the first edition of The Excursion, 1814]¹

At the very opening of Hallam's 'Timbuctoo' we find that the legendary lost Atlantis, while 'still an Eden, shut from sight' (l.38), while retaining, that is, its integrity as a region of the mind, was simply a variant type of the "'veiled maid'" as a traditional expression of the creative imagination:

There was a land, which, far from human sight,
 Old Ocean compassed with his numerous waves,
 In the lone West. Tenacious of her right,
 Imagination decked those unknown caves,
 And vacant forests, and clear peaks of ice
 With a transcendent beauty ... (1-6)

The opening theme of Hallam's poem has been that this particular myth or poetic image has become unavailable to man. In describing the loss of Atlantis as a region of the mind, Hallam recalls Wordsworth's preoccupation, in The Excursion, with the demythologising influence of rational, scientific knowledge.² In The Excursion the problem is explored both in terms of the private experience of the individual (the loss of the 'visionary powers of eye and soul/In youth', IV.111-12), and in terms of mankind's loss of an aboriginal innocence; the loss of the world of the Chaldean Shepherds, for example, when 'The imaginative faculty was lord/Of observations natural' (IV.707-08). Against the minute and speculative inquiries of the sceptical intellect the Wanderer opens his famous protest, comparing modern habits of thought with the mythopoeic conceptions of the pagans of old time:

1. op.cit., p.17.

2. It is worth noting that in a letter of 14 September 1829 to W.E. Gladstone Hallam said: 'Let me quote ... the words of my favourite poet' and went on to quote The Excursion, IV. 10-17 (AHH Letters, pp.317-18).

'Now, shall our great Discoverers, 'he exclaimed,
 Raising his voice triumphantly, 'obtain
 From sense and reason less than these obtained ...
 Enquire of ancient Wisdom; go, demand
 Of mighty Nature, if 'twas ever meant
 That we should pry far off yet be unraised;
 That we should pore, and dwindle as we pore,
 Viewing all objects unremittingly
 In disconnection dead and spiritless ...'(IV. 941-43, 957-62)

For Hallam, in 'Timbuctoo', the discovery of the Americas and the post-Columban reduction of 'phantasmal' (1.64) Atlantis into a literal and rationally exploitable new world stand as an image of the dissipation of the radiant forms of the imagination; -- a vanishing, in Hallam's terms, of the "'veiled maid". Hallam, however, does not follow Wordsworth's pattern of maintaining a clear distinction (though simultaneously exploring the analogies) between the personal loss of a period of imaginative integrity and the wider cultural loss that is associated with the disruption, through the emergence of a historical consciousness, of a mythical world view. In 'Timbuctoo' we can at best only infer the private, individual experience of deprivation from Hallam's account of the failure of the myth of Atlantis. Hallam's construct does not allow for a detailed investigation, in the manner of Wordsworth, into the forces which threaten the successful working of the individual creative or mythopoeic imagination in a world that is separated by history from the resources of a living mythical tradition.

The structure of Hallam's poem endeavours, however, to enact a typically Romantic programme of spiritual decline and recovery. Assuming a Romantic position concerning the redemptive role of the

imagination, Hallam identifies in its workings a principle of order which transcends and compensates for the breakdown of human continuities in the realm of natural process and ordinary historical time. Following the Wordsworth of the 'Immortality Ode', who finds that although the ecstasy may have passed, the 'habitual sway' (l.195) of nature and his own 'primal sympathy' (l.185) are not lost, and like the Wanderer of The Excursion who, taught by nature's 'humbler power' (IV.1190), finds still a leavening and a creative power in the 'imaginative Will' (IV.1128), Hallam anticipates the conclusion of his poem at its outset and sees the 'transcendent beauty' associated with the working of the imagination as

that which saves

From the world's blight our primal sympathies,

Still in man's heart ... (6-8)

Finding assurance in the thought that the undiscovered City of Timbuctoo bears witness to the abiding power of the imagination, Hallam ends his poem on a note of confidence. He quotes line 42 of 'Tintern Abbey' and thus invokes that Wordsworthian mood in which 'laid asleep/In body, and become a living soul:/... We see into the life of things' ('Tintern Abbey', ll.45-46, 49):

Ever may the mood

'In which the affections gently lead us on'

Be as thy sphere of visible life. (193-95)

v

Christopher Ricks has described Tennyson's poem 'Armageddon' as 'a fragmentary vision of the last great battle, with a Miltonic angel as expositor'.¹ Certainly, Milton is the prevailing influence and we find that the seraph of the poem, identified in the opening lines with

1. Tennyson, p.19.

the Spirit of Prophecy, fulfils to some extent a conventional role within the terms of traditional vision poetry as the vehicle and symbol of a grace which is dispensed to man from without. Thus it appears that perception is cleansed in the 'bright descent/Of a young seraph' 1931 (II.1-2) whose words, addressed to the speaker of the poem, seem to imply a higher authority for visionary experience than the speaker himself:

'O Son of Man ...
 Thy sense is clogged with dull Mortality,
 Thy spirit fettered with the bond of clay -
 Open thine eyes and see!' 1931 (II.10, 14-16)

There follows, however, a curious process of identification between speaker and Spirit which, at its furthest development, threatens to erase the distinction between a faculty that is divinely bestowed and one that is purely self-expressive:

I looked, but not
 Upon his face, for it was wonderful
 With its exceeding brightness, and the light
 Of the great Angel Mind which looked from out
 The starry glowing of his restless eyes.
 I felt my soul grow godlike, and my spirit
 With supernatural excitation bound
 Within me, and my mental eye grew large ...
 I wondered with deep wonder at myself ...
 Yea! in that hour I could have fallen down
 Before my own strong soul and worshipped it.

(1931 II.16-23, 40, 49-50)

An overt scheme of transcendental reference based on metaphors of externality is maintained in 'Armageddon' but is subverted by the manner in which the speaker's acknowledgement of the power of the Spirit of Prophecy tends always to move towards a celebration of his own prophetic spirit. In a passage in the Trinity manuscript of 'Armageddon' which appears neither in 1931 nor in 'Timbuctoo', Tennyson again declared his primary interest in the human mind:

Past, present, future swept, a mighty host
 Of multiplied & multiplying shapes,
 In fleet review before me, as y^e mind ...
 Collated, measured & compar'd & weigh'd
 All fact & speculation, argument,
 Falsehood & truth, minutest History,
 Y^e opposites of will & Destiny
 Evil & good & worn Despair & Hope
 Shrinking & trembling betwixt tear & smile
 And all that makes y^e wondrous mind of Man.

(T.Nbk.18, VII. 90-92, 96-102)

It is hard to imagine that Tennyson was unaware that he was confusing orders of reality in a way which would not have been possible for Milton, yet the poem as a whole does not show a convincing sense of direction. It confuses and is confused. Tennyson certainly attempted to find an adequate rationale for the position of the speaker in the 1931 version of 'Armageddon' but he achieved only a rather shaky formulation when he had his Spirit of Prophecy declare:

'O Everlasting God, and thou not less
 The Everlasting Man (since that great spirit
 Which permeates and informs thine inward sense,
 Though limited in action, capable

Of the extreme of knowledge -- whether joined
 Unto thee in conception or confined
 From former wanderings in other shapes
 I know not -- deathless as its God's own life
 Burns on with inextinguishable strength) ...'

(1931 III.1-9; not in T.Bk.18)

The fact that neither of the extant manuscripts of 'Armageddon' constitutes a complete poem may simply be the result of the manuscripts having been mutilated, but it is perhaps indicative of Tennyson's inability to resolve the conceptual confusions and difficulties inherent in the work.

vi

The large -- though intrusive, given the ostensibly external authority of the Spirit --spiritual claims made for the human speaker in 'Armageddon' provide, however, a clear basis for the assertions of 'Timbuctoo'. In refashioning a vision of the battle of Armageddon -- a subject necessarily invested with some of the ideas and values of the Biblical tradition from which it is drawn -- into a vision of the City of Timbuctoo and in modifying the context of significance in which the vision is set by completely re-writing the opening and closing passages of the poem, Tennyson may be seen to be exploiting a new language for the definition and expression of 'mystical' or visionary experience -- experience that has no external, universally accepted support for its validity. In this respect it is of some importance that the speaker at the outset of 'Armageddon' asserts the impossibility of painting in language the supernatural things seen by him. Not only is this 'past the power of man' (l.20), but also

No fabled Muse
 Could breathe into my soul such influence
 Of her seraphic nature, as to express
 Deeds inexpressible by loftiest rhyme. (1931 I.20-23)

By contrast, in 'Timbuctoo', the seraph of the vision becomes a personification of man's expressive and creative capacities. In this poem it is precisely the Spirit of Fable, regarded as impotent in 'Armageddon', which makes possible the vision of the City, as these lines from the newly composed conclusion make clear:

is
 'There\ no mightier Spirit than I to sway
 The heart of man: and teach him to attain
 By shadowing forth the Unattainable ...
 I play about his heart a thousand ways ...
 ... I am the Spirit,
 The permeating life which courseth through
 All the intricate and labyrinthine veins
 Of the great vine of Fable, which, outspread
 With growth of shadowing leaf and clusters rare,
 Reacheth to every corner under Heaven,
 Deep-rooted in the living soil of truth ...'

(191-93, 201, 215-21)

In his conception of this organic tutelary Spirit Tennyson has moved towards an internalisation of the agency of transcendental insight in terms consonant with Romantic notions concerning the mythopoeic or poetic imagination. Within the newly formulated conceptual frame of the poem, the central vision undergoes a transformation in its nature, source and status, functioning explicitly as a testament to the capacity of the human imagination to apprehend and to generate metaphors for the infinite and the ideal.

Writing about the central vision section of 'Timbuctoo', Christopher Ricks has pointed out that 'Armageddon' includes 'some extra lines, so that the MSS. do not present us with the uninterrupted sequence of lines, "Timbuctoo" ll.62-190'.¹ Most noticeably, Tennyson omitted in 'Timbuctoo' a number of lines from the vision section of 'Armageddon' which had made absurdly grandiose claims for the scope and authority of individual human insight. Possibly Tennyson was content to let the new frame of the poem, which makes clear the interior, imaginative grounds of spiritual perception, do the work more discreetly. Thus, lines 40-50 in section II (1931) of 'Armageddon' (beginning 'I wondered with deep wonder at myself' and ending 'I could have fallen down/Before my own strong soul and worshipped it') do not appear in 'Timbuctoo'. The 'trivial variants' noted by Ricks between the vision sequence of 'Armageddon' on one hand, and that of 'Timbuctoo' on the other,² also show a desire on Tennyson's part to reduce, in his later poem, some of the more exaggerated postures of his earlier work. Lines 25-27 in section II (1931) of 'Armageddon' had read:

... I seemed to stand
Upon the outward verge and bound alone
Of God's omniscience.

In 'Timbuctoo' (ll.92-94) these lines were altered to '... the outward verge and bound alone/Of full beatitude'. Similarly, the opening words of line 21 in section II (1931) of 'Armageddon', 'I felt my soul grow godlike', became in 'Timbuctoo': 'I felt my soul grow mighty' (l.88). These trivial modifications between 'Armageddon' and 'Timbuctoo' contribute to an important overall difference between the two poems.

1. 'Tennyson: "Armageddon" into "Timbuctoo"', p.23.

2. *ibid.*, p.23.

Through the excisions and alterations in the vision sequence as it stood in 'Armageddon', and by the entirely new opening and conclusion to the work, 'Timbuctoo' becomes a poem in which the word 'God' is never used. The difficult question, which had arisen for Tennyson in 'Armageddon', of how best to define the place of a cosmically expanded human mind in relation to a God who must retain at least some of His traditional attributes, is thus avoided in 'Timbuctoo'.

The confusion in accommodating the vision in 'Armageddon' to a mode of inward metaphorical structures does not entirely disappear in 'Timbuctoo'. However, the very fact that Tennyson chose, in his later poem, to interpret the theme set by the Cambridge examiners as a vision of the City of Timbuctoo, where the vision constitutes an assertion of the power of the faculty of imagination, suggests an exploration of new modes. It certainly provides a striking parallel with Hallam's work.

The general argument of Hallam's poem is also strikingly paralleled in Tennyson's work. Tennyson's 'Timbuctoo', like Hallam's, begins with a reference to 'Divinest Atalantis' (1.22), which is presented as a place that had its 'being in the heart of Man/As air is the life of flame' (11.19-20) but which, like the fabled Eldorado, is for the speaker an unavailable dream of 'ancient Time' (1.61). The same is true in the following lines (also from Tennyson's newly composed introduction to the poem) of the legendary Blessed Isles of the West:

Where are ye

Thrones of the Western wave, fair Islands green? ...

Where are the infinite ways, which, Seraph-trod,

Wound through your great Elysian solitudes,

Whose lowest deeps were, as with visible love,

Filled with Divine effulgence, circumsused...?

(40-41, 46-49)

Like Hallam, Tennyson then turns his attention to 'the rumour of ... Timbuctoo' (l.60) as surviving evidence of that same apprehending sense manifest in ancient fable.

The parallels between Hallam's poem and Tennyson's 'Timbuctoo' are an indication that Tennyson's exploitation of an ^sessentially Romantic mode and language in this particular work may owe something to his friend's enthusiasm for the writers of that school, and may reflect discussions of aesthetic theory between them.¹ I have noted Tennyson's apparent uncertainty of direction in 'Armageddon'. It seems very possible that Hallam may have provided an interpretation of Romantic views of mind and imagination in which Tennyson was able to perceive conceptual or theoretical solutions to some of the problems which he had encountered in 'Armageddon', and which enabled him to establish in 'Timbuctoo' an organising frame for material which he had been unable to order satisfactorily in the earlier poem. Tennyson's comment that he 'sent in an old poem' under the new name of

1. We would not, of course, be justified in considering the Romantic elements in 'Timbuctoo' exclusively with reference to Hallam. As is shown in my account of the manuscripts of 'Armageddon' in Appendix A, while the draft of that poem in H.Nbk.2 pre-dates Tennyson's undergraduate career, the draft in T.Nbk.18 was written almost certainly during the poet's first year at Cambridge -- that is, at a time before he had met Arthur Hallam and when he was, as I have suggested, already responding to Romantic literature and ideas. Echoes of Shelley and Keats appear very noticeably in the T.Nbk.18 version of 'Armageddon'. But whatever superficial evidences of Tennyson's reading in the Romantic poets there may be in 'Armageddon', they do not define the fundamental modifications in structure and orientation which occur in 'Timbuctoo'.

'Timbuctoo', and Hallam's assertion that Tennyson borrowed from him the 'pervading idea' of 'Timbuctoo', may appear to be contradictory and mutually exclusive claims. However, if viewed in the terms I have outlined, there does emerge a sense in which both assertions may be seen to be equally accurate accounts of a very complex interaction which resulted in Tennyson's poem.

But while we can perhaps say that Tennyson may have been attracted to an area of theoretical consistency in Hallam, his responses would seem to have been merely conditioned rather than contained by any system of ideas propounded by his friend. For we find in Tennyson's poem a conceptual and imaginative extension, exploration and complication of the theoretical simplicities manifest in Hallam's 'Timbuctoo'. While Tennyson's Timbuctoo may be, like that of Hallam, a City of the imagination, there is a development in Tennyson's argument which has no equivalent in Hallam's ultimately rather comfortably circumscribed treatment of the same subject. The idea that literal discovery results in an impoverishment of imaginative power is introduced in Tennyson's work after the apparent affirmation of that power in the speaker's glimpse of Timbuctoo. As the Spirit of Fable finally calls attention to his 'fair City' (l.245) he foresees the 'river' which winds through its streets 'not enduring/To carry through the world those waves, which bore/The reflex' of the City 'in their depths' (ll.225, 233-35). He envisages the onset of a world that exists in 'disconnection dead and spiritless' (The Excursion, IV.962) as the wasted imagination, in the face of Discovery, fails to maintain its idealising and unifying activity:

'the time is well-nigh come

When I must render up this glorious home

To keen Discovery: soon yon brilliant towers

Shall darken with the waving of her wand;
 Darken, and shrink and shiver into huts,
 Black specks amid a waste of dreary sand ...' (238-43)

Forsaken by the Spirit of Fable at the very end of the poem, the speaker is enveloped by a darkness which seems to confirm the envisaged breakdown of imaginative correspondence between the 'world' and the 'Unattainable'.

Such a conclusion has, in fact, been a possibility fairly early in the poem in Tennyson's account of the shattering of a city by an earthquake (ll.28-40). Christopher Ricks comments that these lines of 'Timbuctoo' are 'clearly a re-working (though without close verbal similarities) of passages which occur early in the Trinity MS. but not in 1931'.¹ It is important to note, however, that the essential concern of 'Timbuctoo' lines 28-40, a concern intimately related to the new theme of the new poem, is not anticipated in the passages in the Trinity manuscript referred to by Professor Ricks. In the first extract the first three lines and the last line correspond to lines 71-73 and 74 in section I of the 1931 text of 'Armageddon':

Nor did y^e glittering of white wings escape
 My notice far within y^e East wh^{ch} caught
 Ruddy reflection from th' ensanguin'd West
 (Where with wide interval y^e long low moaning
 Of inarticulate thunder like y^e wail
 Of some lost City in its evil day
 Rose, mutter'd, deepen'd round y^e verge of Heaven)
 Nor ever & anon y^e shrill clear sound

(T.Nbk.18, IV. 1-8)

The first line, the first half of the second and the last line of the

1. 'Tennyson: "Armageddon" into "Timbuctoo"', p.24.

second extract correspond to lines 96-97 and 101 in section I of the 1931 text of 'Armageddon':

In y^e East
 Broad rose y^e Moon -- first [^]like_^ y^e rounded Dome
 Of some huge Temple in whose twilight vault
 Barbaric Priesthood meditate high things
 To wondrous Idols on y^e crusted wall
 Then with dilated Orb & mark'd with lines

(T.Nbk.18, V. 1-6)

There indeed seem to be no close verbal similarities between these passages and lines 28-40 of 'Timbuctoo'. Nor do they give expression to the anxious thought that legends, myths, all poetic dreams, may be groundless fantasies containing no element of higher truth. In 'Timbuctoo' we are told that men clung to the legend of Atlantis with a desperate hope as when, in a city shaken by earthquake,

At midnight, in the lone Acropolis
 Before the awful Genius of the place
 Kneels the pale Priestess in deep faith, the while
 Above her head the weak lamp dips and winks
 Unto the fearful summoning without:
 Nathless she ever clasps the marble knees,
 Bathes the cold hand with tears, and gazeth on
 Those eyes which wear no light but that wherewith
 Her phantasy informs them. (32-40)

The failure here to affirm the possibilities of 'a soul/Imparted -- to brute matter' (The Excursion, VIII. 203-04) contrasts sharply with the shrill idealism of 'The Poet' and 'The Poet's Mind'. The contrast directs us to Tennyson's lifelong preoccupation with the difficulty of achieving an apprehension of the integrity of the whole, a difficulty

which may be considered in the light of what Robindra Kumar Biswas has termed 'the disintegration [in the early-Victorian period] of the special object-subject synthesis achieved through Romantic ... theories of imagination and poetic cognition'.¹

1. Arthur Hugh Clough: Towards a Reconsideration (Oxford, 1972), p.203.

The dissolution of confidence in the Romantic unities of meaning and experience characteristic of the early-Victorian period was, of course, no more than the realisation of tendencies which had begun to be apparent in the writings of the second-generation Romantics. In 'Ode to a Nightingale' Keats had expressed an anxiety that the wings of dream or poetry may elevate to nothing more than mere forgetfulness of the world of ordinary consciousness and literal fact. In Alastor, in the image of the 'veiled maid' of which Arthur Hallam was so complacently fond, Shelley employed the motif of an elusive female figure, pursued for love by the protagonist of the poem, in order to dramatise the quest of the isolated individual human soul for communion or identity with a larger spiritual reality. But in this poem the potentially disturbing and dangerous elements inherent in Romantic concepts of mind make themselves strongly felt. Shelley's delineation in Alastor of the untrammelled and unmanageable impulses of the self-predicated imagination amounts almost to a psychology of suicide. The fleeting insight into the ideal imaged in the momentary appearance of the veiled maid is something which destroys for the poet-protagonist all sense of value in the natural universe and he pursues his vision quite literally beyond the bounds of natural life. But the poem is poised uneasily between an affirmation of this ending as defining a true, objectively grounded fulfilment of the unfinished self of the protagonist, on the one hand, and an anxiety that the subjective vision may have been no more than a meaningless, self-consumptive and self-destructive delusion, on the other.

Such doubts that the imagination may not be, as Wordsworth put it in The Prelude, an 'absolute strength' (XIII. 168), and that the poet may not -- as Shelley himself claimed in A Defence of Poetry -- participate in 'the eternal, the infinite, and the one',¹ involved also a measure of retreat from the high Romantic position concerning the public authority of the poet's voice and the universality of his poetic field. In the 'Prospectus' to The Recluse, Wordsworth invoked the 'human Soul of universal earth' which 'dost possess/A metropolitan temple in the hearts/Of mighty Poets' (84, 85-87). But the essential resilience of Wordsworth's belief in the existence of a vital relationship between the individual poetic imagination and a wider world was not so easily or consistently maintained by the second-generation Romantics. The potential for a distressing isolation was acknowledged -- indirectly, at least -- by Shelley when he spoke, again in the Defence of Poetry, of the poet being as 'a nightingale; who sits in darkness and sings to cheer its own solitude with sweet sounds'.²

Tensions that had often been merely implicit in the writings of the younger Romantics 'broke', as D.J. Palmer has put it, 'into open division'³ in the early years of Tennyson's artistic development and continued thereafter to constitute the fundamental terms of Victorian poetic experience. Throughout his career, Tennyson's work can be seen to elaborate on the conclusion to 'Timbuctoo' as it demonstrates an inheritance of the Romantic credo concerning the intense life and feeling of the individual imagination at the same time as revealing a

1. Peacock's Four Ages of Poetry; Shelley's Defence of Poetry, Etc., ed. H.F.B. Brett-Smith, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1923), p.27.

2. ibid., p.31

3. 'Tennyson's Romantic Heritage', Writers and their Background: Tennyson, ed. D.J. Palmer (London, 1973), p.35.

radical uncertainty about the validity of imaginative experience. Tennyson, we may say, suffers from a double dispossession. Not only was he working within a culture whose long-established patterns of intellectual and spiritual authority appeared to be breaking up, but he was working at a time when it was becoming difficult to share in the most recent attempt at coping with that process of disintegration in the form of Romantic assertions of the individual imagination as an adequate centre and principle of order. We have already seen something of the way in which Tennyson came to be preoccupied with the problem in section LXXVII of In Memoriam. At the very outset of that poem Tennyson demonstrates his sense of the insufficiency of the imagination as an organising principle. In section XVI he is unclear whether his utterances as a poet should be associated either with an unstable fluctuation or with the inert stability reflecting a dissipation into nothingness that is suggested by the dead lake and its unreal images of the natural world:

What words are these have fallen from me?

Can calm despair and wild unrest

Be tenants of a single breast,

Or sorrow such a changeling be?

Or doth she only seem to take

The touch of change in calm or storm;

But knows no more of transient form

In her deep self, than some dead lake

That holds the shadow of a lark

Hung in the shadow of a heaven? (1-10)

In much early-Victorian critical thinking on the nature and function of poetry the uncertainty about the ultimate status of imaginative vision and about the poet's authority as a legislator of the world was reflected in distinctions drawn between the interests of sensibility, the poet's private, emotional and imaginative life on one hand, and the demands of responsibility, the moral and intellectual demands belonging to the wider dimension of society on the other. In his 1831 review of Tennyson's Poems, Chiefly Lyrical Arthur Hallam observes¹ that the 'different powers of poetic disposition, the energies of Sensitive,² of Reflective, of Passionate Emotion ... in former times were intermingled, and derived from mutual support an extensive empire over the feelings of men'; but, he says, the contemporary age is one in which there has been a 'change in the relative position of artists to the rest of the community' and in which poetry 'is likely to have little immediate authority over public

1. 'On Some of the Characteristics of Modern Poetry, and on the Lyrical Poems of Alfred Tennyson'. This review appeared unsigned in Edward Moxon's Englishman's Magazine, I (August 1831), pp.616-28. All quotations below are from the text in The Writings of Arthur Hallam, pp.183-98.

2. In a note to his review Hallam tells us that we may, for this word, substitute 'sensuous'.

opinion'. The reason for this is that the 'different powers of poetic disposition' have become dissociated , each 'restrained within separate spheres of agency'. Because the 'whole system' of consciousness no longer has an 'intrinsic harmony' it cannot find 'external freedom' and modern poetry is characterised by the 'return of the mind upon itself and the habit of seeking relief in idiosyncrasies rather than community of interest'. A reintegration according to a traditional pattern Hallam believes to be impossible: 'repentance is unlike innocence'; and, because the divisions between modes of conscious activity cannot be healed, any contemporary 'objective amelioration' in poetry would involve a 'decrease of subjective power'. Accordingly Hallam makes his famous distinction between poets of 'reflection', whose work it is a 'gross fallacy' to suppose constitutes the 'highest species of poetry', and poets of 'sensation', whose work gains 'depth and truth' in proportion as it remains 'free and unalloyed'; in proportion, that is, as it remains true to the artist's personal aesthetic sense -- his 'desire of beauty' -- and disengages itself from matters of direct social, intellectual and moral concern. Other critics of the period did not follow Hallam in his taste for a purely 'sensuous' poetry -- for a poetry of feeling rather than thought. W.J. Fox was perhaps more representative of the majority view when he wrote in his review of Poems, Chiefly Lyrical that 'A genuine poet has deep responsibilities to his country and the world, to the present and future generations, to earth and heaven'. 'It is not', pronounced Fox, 'for such men to sink into mere verse-makers for the amusement of themselves They can influence the associations of unnumbered minds ... they can

disseminate principles'.¹ The special problem for the Victorian poet was that such differing sets of opinion about the nature of the poet's calling could present themselves as contradictory demands.

The theme of the dichotomy between feeling and thought in poetry and the idea of the discrepancy between the poet's private interests and his public responsibilities is familiar to us for the way in which it has controlled, in its own terms, much twentieth-century discussion of Tennyson's early verse (usually -- if somewhat arbitrarily -- taken to cover the period of his work up to the publication of the 1842 Poems). At worst a great deal of this poetry has been seen as a poetry of feeling in the opprobrious sense that it is a poetry of morbid introversion, of regression, dream, pathos and luxurious despair. Tennyson, thus, is the example par excellence of the Romantic imagination that is dispossessed of any sustaining system of thought and belief about the world. He was a singer born whose lack of theme generated a poetry of evasion and escape, a poetry of vapid -- albeit sometimes colourful and sonorous -- subjectivity. Moreover, by this view, when he did attempt to relate his poetry to a large and coherent body of ideas, he prostituted what integrity of imaginative impulse he had by mechanically appending to that poetry a set of received, traditional and merely conventional ideas. The poetry of pictures and sweet sounds, it is to be supposed, was no more than juxtaposed with a poetry of bald, direct statement notable for the tameness and shallowness of its concepts and for its failure to cope interestingly and effectively with the confused intellectual and spiritual issues of the day.

Such were the prevailing terms of Tennyson criticism in roughly

1. Tennyson: The Critical Heritage, ed. John D. Jump (London, 1967), pp.32-33. Fox's review originally appeared, unsigned, in the Westminster Review, XIV (January 1831), pp.210-24.

the first half of the twentieth-century. The terms continue to prove extremely resilient, but since the 1950s there have also been a number of attempts to approach Tennyson's work through a range of formal and linguistic interpretative categories that differ significantly from the older critical orthodoxies. Of these, one in particular has shown itself to be persistently and persuasively successful. In 1957 John Bayley commented on the sense in which the symbolist mode in poetry issued from the failure of confidence in high Romantic assertions about the social authority of poetry. In the wake of that failure, he observed,

the French did not give up the Romantic conception of the poet as a man of power The poet is no longer an unacknowledged legislator, but a magician, a déchiffreur ... of the riddles of the universe. And a magician cannot be expected to occupy himself with ordinary human affairs In England, Tennyson and Arnold were doing their best to make their poetry a criticism of Victorian life; but as the Romantic movement returned from France in the shape of Symbolism, the poet rejected -- as Yeats put it -- 'the view that poetry is a criticism of life, and became more and more convinced that it is a revelation of a hidden life'. The poet is going underground for the magician poet the idea of a common symbol is repellent; images that enabled the early Romantic to see into the life of things are for the youthful Yeats only a painful interruption of a private intensity as the materials of the symbolists grow more rarefied ... their theories grow ever more insistent and more elaborate. The idea of imaginative synthesis is worked to death in such extravagances as that poetry exists to evoke le son d'une odeur, la couleur d'une note, le parfum d'une pensée One cannot help wondering how

the word of God and the secret of life is to emerge from the colour of a note and the perfume of a thought.¹

Professor Bayley's view of Tennyson is based essentially upon the terms of early twentieth-century appreciation which I have outlined above. But numerous commentators, while not necessarily relinquishing the idea that Tennyson did ultimately become a mouthpiece for conventional Victorian ideas and values, have argued that at the centre of Tennyson's early 'subjective' poetry lies a striking anticipation of symbolist poetic technique. This view has the attraction of being able to confirm the idea of the importance to Tennyson of the person and ideas of Arthur Hallam in a way that makes Tennyson's verse appear peculiarly relevant and amenable to certain twentieth-century aesthetic preoccupations and tastes.

The question of Tennyson's proto-symbolist achievements was discussed in relation to Arthur Hallam's theoretical formulations in his review of Poems, Chiefly Lyrical by H.M. McLuhan in a seminal article first published in 1951 and entitled 'Tennyson and Picturesque Poetry'.² In his essay McLuhan argued that Hallam's 1831 reflections on the nature of poetry arrive at

the twentieth-century controversy over poetry and beliefs. It implies the Symbolist and Imagist doctrine that the place of ideas in poetry is not that of logical enunciation but of immediate sensation or experience. Rhetoric must go, said the symbolists. Ideas as ideas must go. They may return as part of a landscape that is ordered by other means. They may enter into a unified experience as one kind of fact. They may contribute to an aesthetic emotion, not as a system of demonstration but as part

1. The Romantic Survival: A Study in Poetic Evolution (London, 1957), pp.42-44.

2. Essays in Criticism, I, 3 (July 1951), pp.262-82. All my references are to the essay as reprinted in Killham, pp.67-85.

of a total order which is to be contemplated.

So Hallam pronounces in favour of the Cockney School over 'the Lakers':

Shelley and Keats are both poets of sensation rather than reflection.... So vivid was¹ the delight attending the simple exertions of eye and ear, that it became mingled more and more with their trains of active thought, and tended to absorb their whole being into the energy of sense. Other poets seek for images to illustrate their conceptions; these men had no need to seek; they lived in a world of images; for the most important and extensive portion of their life consisted in those emotions which are immediately conversant with sensationHence they are not descriptive, they are picturesque.¹

Hallam's statements in his review of Tennyson about the modern dissociation of the 'different powers of poetic disposition' might seem to constitute a retraction of the confident claims for the imagination which he had made in 'Timbuctoo'. But in his review Hallam emphasises the decline of the poet's authority over 'public opinion', rather than calling into question the ground of poetic vision itself. No more than the French symbolists does Hallam give up the idea of the poet as being, in one sense at least, a man of power. In Hallam's distinction between poets of reflection and poets of sensation and between the descriptive and the picturesque in poetry, Marshall McLuhan finds an incipient symbolist poetic which he believes profoundly affected Tennyson's modes of composition in the early part of his career:

Until 1842 Tennyson seems to have retained Hallam's insights

1. Killham, pp.68-69

exclusively. Thereafter he began to admit rhetoric and reflection into his verse The volumes of 1830 and 1833 try to surpass Keats in richness of texture and sensuous impact. And 'Mariana' is there to prove that the most sophisticated symbolist poetry could be written fifty years before the Symbolists. On a dependent and uncertain temper such as Tennyson's the effect of the death of the vigorous and clear-headed Hallam was not merely that of personal loss. It was more nearly the loss of his poetic insight and his critical judgement.¹

As I have suggested, McLuhan's thesis has met with considerable approval. In 1971, Harold Bloom wrote:

Hallam's is necessarily a theory of pure poetry (as H.M. McLuhan shows) and while Tennyson could not allow himself to share the theory overtly, he inspired it by his early practice, and fell back on it implicitly to save his poetry time and time again. In a way that In Memoriam does not apprehend, the dead Hallam remained Tennyson's guardian angel.²

Attributing a symbolist significance to much of Tennyson's poetry of sensuous feeling allows the reader to maintain an objection to the thinness of the poet's ideas. Bloom, for instance, comments:

No poet in English seems to me as extreme and fortuitous as Tennyson in his sudden moments of recognition of his own powers, bursts of radiance against a commonplace conceptual background that cannot accommodate such radiance. The deeply imaginative reader learns instinctively to listen to the song and not the singer³

1. Killham, pp.67,70.

2. 'Tennyson, Hallam, and Romantic Tradition', The Ringers in the Tower: Studies in Romantic Tradition (Chicago and London, 1971), p.150.

3. ibid., p.154.

One further example of the orthodoxy which McLuhan's argument has achieved should be recorded. In 1980, W.E. Buckler remarked that

It is well recognised by students of modern poetry that what later became known on the Continent as the symbolist movement or manner in poetry (Verlaine, Mallarmé, Maeterlinck) had emerged as an unmistakeable poetic presence in Tennyson's work almost two generations earlier Two of Tennyson's poems have been especially cited as representatively symbolist, 'Mariana' (1830) and 'Mariana in the South' (1832) But it should also be noted that, although the Mariana-poems are firmly recognisable examples of a symbolist presence in Tennyson's early poetry, that presence can be generalised far beyond these two poems and seen as one of the defining characteristics of his poetry it can be seen ... in such dramatic lyrics as 'The Lady of Shalott', 'Oenone', 'The Hesperides', 'The Lotos-Eaters', 'Ulysses', 'The Vision of Sin' and 'Tithonus'.¹

In the following two chapters of this study, in which I shall be concerned with Tennyson's early work, I do not wish to propose that there is no justification at all for the view that the condition of intellectual and spiritual uncertainty could never be more than a negative experience for the poet. As a 'startled enquirer' of his times he can be perceived sometimes to have 'recoiled from the abyss that seemed to open at his feet'² either into private fantasy or an enfeebled dependence on simplistic and barrenly conventional forms of thought and belief. The envisioning of Prince Albert as Arthur come again in the conclusion to 'The Epic' is there to remind us of one form of Tennysonian escapist fantasy. 'The Two Voices' (1842)

1. The Victorian Imagination: Essays in Aesthetic Exploration (Brighton, Sussex, 1980), pp.172-73.

2. Alfred Lyall, 'Tennyson: his Life and Work', Tennyson and his Friends, ed. Hallam Lord Tennyson (London, 1911), pp.355-56.

displays -- as do also such works as 'Supposed Confessions of a Second-Rate Sensitive Mind' (1830) and 'You ask me, why, though ill at ease' (1842) -- the inadequacies of a Tennysonian poetry of ideas that is also a poetry of direct statement. Nor would I want to quarrel absolutely with the view that there is a 'symbolist presence' in several of those early poems that seem to us successful in proportion as they eschew a language of direct statement. However, I would not press the Tennyson as early-symbolist case as far as some commentators. Taking my cue from what we have learned (in looking at the differences between Tennyson's and Hallam's poems on Timbuctoo) of Tennyson's independence of mind in relation to Hallam, and bearing in mind also Tennyson's observations on Henry Taylor's offensive against the highly-coloured poetry of the younger Romantics, I would resist the tendency to read many of Tennyson's early poems in the light of (indeed, almost as if they were immediately inspired by) Hallam's formulations on poetics as recorded in his 1831 review of Poems, Chiefly Lyrical.

What I want to offer is detailed readings of three poems composed in the 1830s and early 1840s which exhibit Tennyson's use of a sensuous poetic language at its most intense. I shall take 'The Hesperides' (1832), 'The Lotos-Eaters' (1832, 1842), and 'Oenone' (1832, 1842) and attempt to demonstrate that these constitute examples of a type of Tennysonian achievement which cannot be satisfactorily accounted for within the categories of appreciation so far prescribed for readers of his work. Each of the examples I have chosen is rich both in sensuous impact and in symbolic and mythological resonance. But I propose to show through my readings that, whatever their richness of texture and freedom from explicit conceptual statement, ideas as such are not absorbed and neutralised in what Arthur Hallam

called the energy of sense, or what H.M. McLuhan termed a poetry of immediate sensation. Symbolist elements there may be, even mere picture-making, but these are not the dominating modes. Whether he is evolving personal (not private) symbols, or whether -- following the example of the Romantics -- he is eclectically appropriating, assimilating and reconstituting for his own purposes traditional and communal symbols, Tennyson reveals in these poems that he has the kind of mind that can think of symbolism as 'something calculated and willed, a deliberate mental translation of concepts into illustrative, pedagogic, sensuous terms'.¹ In these poems Tennyson can be seen to have sought deliberately for images to illustrate his conceptions. This is not to say that the poetry does not achieve an immense power of organic implication, but that it is at once -- contrary to McLuhan's notion of the organisation of symbolist verse -- a poetry that is ordered and directed by certain key or fundamental ideas.

The ideas I am speaking of can conveniently be described as sharing one tendency in common. They involve a scepticism towards both Romantic idealist concepts and attitudes and traditional Christian ideas and beliefs. In identifying a sceptical direction of thought in these poems I do not seek to refute what I have already acknowledged: that Tennyson was capable of voicing, in other works, ideas and attitudes of a very different quality. What I do want to show is that within and throughout these works Tennyson refuses to '[shrink] from a gap or jump in nature'.² In them he reveals himself to be in firm possession of 'the temper or disposition of

1. René Wellek and Austin Warren, Theory of Literature (New York, 1949), p.193.

2. T.E. Hulme, Speculations (2nd ed., London, 1936), p.3.

mind which can look at a gap or chasm without shuddering'.¹ He shows that he can contemplate such a gap or chasm in reality without recoiling into private despair and fantasy on one hand, and without feeling the need to place the perception of the gap in a context that ultimately closes it, on the other.

Of this latter practice, In Memoriam stands as the prime example. Maud (1855), however, may be seen as a kind of recantation: the whole poem a bitterly angry denial of the possibilities of genuine reintegration; its closing section, a recent commentator has suggested, amounting to 'one of the great deflationary closures in satiric literature'.² Following a preliminary discussion in chapter four of The Lover's Tale (privately- printed 1832; published 1879), I shall be treating In Memoriam and Maud in the final two chapters of this study. In examining examples of Tennyson's shorter works from the 1830s and the 1840s in chapters two and three I want to establish the early poetic evidence for the uncompromised scepticism which seems to me to have formed an important element of the poet's mind and art throughout his career and which he expressed most violently in Maud. Tennyson's was not a homogeneously sceptical cast of mind. The sceptical strain coexists with actively idealist impulses. One may even grant a certain priority to the idealistic tendency. The dimension of anger, bitterness and protest that is always involved in the poet's scepticism bears the signature of frustrated idealism: disappointment that things which it is felt ought to be -- or may once have seemed -- coherent and whole, are not in fact so. What I seek to demonstrate is that in significant areas of his early work Tennyson does not allow his idealism, or his disappointment, or his nervousness, to compromise the authority and integrity of his sceptical insight. I also hope to draw attention to the fact that

1. T.E.Hulme, op.cit., p.4.

2. James R. Bennet, 'Maud', Part III: Maud's Battle-Song', Victorian Poetry, 18,1 (Spring 1980), p.48.

though Romantic metaphorical and symbolic modes characteristically emphasise a vision of continuity and unity, in Tennyson's subversive use of myth in the poems I have chosen, his examination of a sense of discontinuity, we see him using the language of Romanticism against itself. Anthony Burgess has suggested that Tennyson's poetry

is thoroughly Romantic. Romantic, however, with a difference, for Tennyson brings to his sensuous verse a care, a deliberate contrivance of effect, which suggests Pope more than Keats.¹

The effect has often been noted. Isobel Armstrong, for example, observes that

A Tennyson poem is a burnished, meticulously finished object, demanding no more completion than it possesses²

I would suggest of the early works I shall be discussing that this 'effect' derives to a significant extent from the calculated and willed use of symbolism to explore ideas. The spirit of Tennyson's use of symbolism and myth is, no doubt paradoxically, as much critical as creative. Tennyson was indeed doing more than merely greasing the wheels of the old world. In the considered surface and the informing critical spirit of his sensuous poetic style he was directly engaged in disinvesting the Romantic mythopoeic mode of some of its hiding places of power. But this was modification and extension rather than reduction. In the special coincidence of thought and feeling in these poems the great Romantic syntheses were neither being diminished through a retreat into the narrow privacies and unintelligibilities of the symbolist vein, nor were they being dissipated through an adherence to externally derived, merely conventional formulations of objective unity and order.

1. English Literature: A Survey for Students, 2nd ed. (London, 1974), p.189.

2. 'Browning and the "Grotesque" Style', The Major Victorian Poets: Reconsiderations, ed. Isobel Armstrong (London, 1969), p.97.

CHAPTER 2

WASTED LANDS: 'THE HESPERIDES' AND 'THE LOTOS-EATERS'

In his perceptive and influential essay 'Tennyson's Garden of Art: A Study of "The Hesperides"',¹ G. Robert Stange has spoken of the work as an 'allegory of personal and inward experience', and more specifically, 'a symbolic statement of the situation of the artist'.² He has also observed that the poem's epigraph from Comus -- 'Hesperus, and his daughters three/That sing about the golden tree' (ll.981-82) -- reminds us that

this nineteenth-century vision is to be compared with Milton's description ... of the paradisaical home of the Attendant Spirit. Milton's Garden of the Hesperides ... has been best described ... as a symbol of life itself In Tennyson's version the religious implications of Comus are lacking. The chief resemblance of his poem to Milton's is in the parallel conception of the gardens as a ... source of creativity -- in Milton's case of the higher life, and in Tennyson's of the life of art.³

In my view Stange is correct in his observation that the epigraph from Comus has an important bearing on 'The Hesperides', but my initial purpose in this chapter will be to show there is no reason to accept his assertion that the ethical, metaphysical and religious implications of the Hesperidian Gardens in Milton are lacking in Tennyson. There are, I think, larger significations to the nineteenth-century Hesperidian Garden than Stange allows, though Tennyson does

1. First published in ELMA, LXVII (September 1952), pp.732-43. All my references are to the text of essay as reprinted in Killham, pp.99-112.

2. Killham, pp.101,100.

3. ibid., p.101.

not adopt a religious position directly comparable to Milton's. We may, in fact, discern in 'The Hesperides' a profound scepticism concerning the existence of a providential order in the universe. In the second part of this chapter I shall suggest that in 'The Lotos-Eaters' Tennyson establishes a metaphysical position closely related to the one adopted in 'The Hesperides', and I shall examine the extent to which accepted readings of 'The Lotos-Eaters' need to be modified in the light of such a view.

In asserting that there is a metaphysical plane of reference in 'The Hesperides', I certainly do not wish to reject the view that there is a psychological level of meaning in Tennyson's presentation of the Garden, although here again I am disinclined to accept Stange's reading of that meaning. To the extent that there are elements in 'The Hesperides' indicating Tennyson's concern to explore 'the roots of being from which the poet's visions arise',¹ the work may usefully be considered in the light of Romantic theories of mind and reality, whereby any statement regarding the interior life of the individual imagination usually implies at once some kind of metaphysical concern. Similarly, it seems to me that there is an important psychological meaning in the metaphysical significations of Tennyson's island in 'The Lotos-Eaters'. Taking up the idea that both poems are concerned in part with the life of the imagination, I shall attempt to show in the final section of this chapter that while 'The Hesperides' and 'The Lotos-Eaters' bear witness to the vital influence of Romantic habits of thought and feeling on Tennyson's poetic concerns, they also enact a significant movement away from certain fundamental Romantic

1. R.Stange, Killham, p.107.

positions. I shall seek to show that the poems may, indeed, be understood to constitute criticisms of that essential optimism concerning the relation between the finite world and the infinite which lies at the centre of high-Romantic conceptions of the imagination.

i

In the 'Song', which forms the main body of 'The Hesperides', we learn that the root of the Hesperidian 'fruittree' is 'charmed' (l.17) and that its blossom 'Evermore ... is born anew' (l.31). The laws of natural process and temporal succession are suspended. In this image of renewal, which involves a conflation of the several stages of the seasonal cycle, decay and death seem to have no reality as states distinguishable from the phenomenon of birth. An unnatural and ahistorical perspective is thus established in which the Garden is seen as existing in the perpetual luxury of springtime. This is clearly an equivalent of the condition of life found in the Hesperidian Gardens of Milton's Attendant Spirit, those 'happy climes' situated in the 'broad fields of the sky' (ll.976, 978), where

The Graces, and the rosy-bosomed Hours,
Thither all their bounties bring,
That there eternal summer dwells ... (985-87)

The idea of the Hesperidian Garden as a realm exempt from the logic of life in time is realised throughout 'The Hesperides' in Tennyson's use of present and present continuous tenses to describe all forms of activity in the Garden. It is also rendered through his

exploitation of the theme of an inclusive and unbroken ritual circularity: the Sisters never cease their singing and they watch 'Every way' both 'night and day' (ll.40, 41). Father Hesper must 'twinkle not' his 'stedfast sight' (l.45) and must forever 'Number, tell them over and number/How many the mystic fruittree holds' (ll.49-50). This unremitting attentiveness appears either to dictate or to be dictated by the quiescence, even torpor, of other life in the Garden which strikes one as the necessary condition of the song. Thus the Sisters sing:

Standing about the charmed root.
 Round about all is mute,
 As the snowfield on the mountain-peaks,
 As the sandfield at the mountain-foot.
 Crocodiles in briny creeks
 Sleep and stir not: all is mute. (17-22)

The vigilance and the stupefaction which together characterise the Garden are not, paradoxically, contradictory or mutually exclusive states. We notice, for example, that the redcombed dragon's 'ancient heart is drunk with overwatchings night and day' (l.54). Similarly, the Sisters mysteriously insist that 'Hesper, the dragon, and sisters three,/Daughters three' (ll.107-108) are a single reality composed of five elements: 'Five links, a golden chain, are we' (l.106). But in the interdependence of Father Hesper, the redcombed dragon with his ancient heart, and the Hesperidian maidens, connotations of extreme age, of experience and tired time, on one hand, are fused with connotations of youth, innocence and vigour on the other. The poem offers no clues as to how these contradictions may be reconciled: the Sisters' incantation seems expressly designed to maintain a level of being which escapes formulation in rational terms. The fruit-tree is

'mystic', there is a 'bliss of secret smiles' (1.78), and 'Honour comes with mystery;/Hoarded wisdom brings delight' (11.47-48).

Notwithstanding their role as the voice of the Garden, the Sisters' own wisdom is, to apply Carlyle's use of the phrase, 'ever a secret to itself'¹ and appears not to partake of the discursive and critical examinations of ordinary, historical self-consciousness. In referring to the redcombed dragon they define a condition of consciousness that is unreflective with regard to its own motivation and is without autonomous, individuated will:

If he waken, we waken,
Rapidly levelling eager eyes.
If he sleep, we sleep,
Dropping the eyelid over the eyes. (59-62)

The 'treasure/Of the wisdom of the west' (11.26-27) that is defined by this condition is equated in the 'Song' with the truth of the whole, the truth of 'All things' (1.79). This truth, like the dragon which helps and must be helped to preserve it, is 'older than the world' (1.58) and is identified with qualities of eternity: the Sisters declare that if their chant comes to an end: 'We shall lose eternal pleasure,/Worth eternal want of rest' (11.24-25).

The 'ancient secret' (1.72) which the Sisters are so concerned to preserve acquires a more specific connotation if we consider the possible analogues to Tennyson's Hesperidian fruit-tree which, with its 'golden apple' (1.14) and sap of 'Liquid gold' (1.37) is the embodiment of the wisdom of the Garden. The tree is associated, as we have seen, with a perpetual renewal of life. An important aspect of classical versions of the myth of the Garden of the Hesperides is the idea that the Hesperidian tree confers immortality,² and in Paradise

1. 'Characteristics', Collected Works, VIII, 333.

2. Cf. H.J. Rose, A Handbook of Greek Mythology, Including its Extension to Rome (London, 1928), p.216.

Lost Milton recalls classical descriptions of the golden Hesperidian fruit as he reports that the 'tree of life' (IV.218) in Eden stood 'High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit/Of vegetable gold' (IV.219-20).¹ The 'golden tree' of the Attendant Spirit's Hesperidian Gardens in Comus, to which we are referred in Tennyson's epigraph, is itself connected with the idea of eternal life through its identification with a realm of spiritual purification. In the Attendant Spirit's 'gardens fair/Of Hesperus' (ll.980-81) we learn that the

young Adonis oft reposes,
Waxing well of his deep wound
In slumber soft, and on the ground
Sadly sits the Assyrian queen ... (998-1001)

In the somewhat baroque cosmology of Milton's Masque, classical and Christian elements are, of course, compounded in a highly individual poetic conception of the spiritual order and hierarchy of the universe. I shall return briefly to the question of the relationship between classical and Christian ideas in the poem -- a relationship which turns on the association between the classical idea of Virtue and the Christian doctrine of Grace -- at a later stage in this essay. For the moment, we should simply observe that Milton's picture of

1. Fowler, p.205, suggests that Milton's image recalls particularly Ovid's description of the Hesperidian fruit in Metamorphoses, IV. 637 ff. In Tennyson in Egypt W.D. Paden suggested that in his conception of 'The Hesperides' Tennyson owed much to notions advanced by the early nineteenth-century mythologist G.S. Faber in his treatise The Origin of Pagan Idolatry (London, 1816). The analogues and connotations of the Hesperidian tree in Faber are the exact opposite of those I have pointed to, with reference to Milton. For Faber, the tree was, for example, a type of the fatal tree in Eden, the Hesperidian Sisters were a kind of triplicated Eve and the dragon 'an antithetical type of the satanic serpent in Eden' (Tennyson in Egypt, p.155). But the argument that there are strict correspondences between the various motifs in 'The Hesperides' and all the elements in Faber's interpretation of the myth of the Hesperidian Garden carries the implication that Tennyson's poem is confused: 'Among so many competing symbols, it would not be strange if Tennyson became slightly unintelligible' (Tennyson in Egypt, p.155). There is, in fact, no external evidence to show that Tennyson had read any of Faber's works before he composed 'The Hesperides' (see Appendix B).

Adonis healing in the Hesperidian Gardens represents a higher mode of regeneration than that principle of merely natural regeneration represented in Spenser's portrayal of the Garden of Adonis in The Faerie Queene (III.vi). As John Carey has noted in elucidating the Platonic dimension of the cosmology of Comus, whereas Spenser's Garden of Adonis is on earth, Milton's Venus and Adonis lie in a transitional state 'in the Elysian fields of the moon' where they await the 'separation of soul and mind, when mind will finally return to its source, the sun', a sun which is 'to be distinguished from that of mere earthly fruitfulness'.¹ At the very opening of Comus the Attendant Spirit makes explicit the spiritual orientation of his realm of repose. His abode, he declares, is where 'those immortal shapes/Of bright aerial spirits live ensphered' above the 'dim spot' of earth (ll.2-3, 5) where men

Strive to keep up a frail, and feverish being
Unmindful of the crown that virtue gives
After this mortal change, to her true servants
Amongst the enthron'd gods on sainted seats.
Yet some there be that by due steps aspire
To lay their just hands on that golden key
That opes the palace of eternity ... (8-14)

Bearing in mind these kinds of mythical and literary antecedents and Tennyson's own presentation of the special attributes of the Garden we can perceive in Tennyson's Hesperidian realm a metaphor for a higher principle of life, for an ultimate reality where rational antinomies and logical opposites are reconciled, and where the pains of earthly existence are not felt.

We may digress slightly at this point in order to note that

1. Carey, p.227.

Tennyson's image in 'The Hesperides' of the paradisaical Garden, with its self-fulfilling patterns of completion and its obscure bliss of secret smiles, anticipates his grappling with a sense of the arcane integrity of the whole in section LXXXVIII of In Memoriam. In the first two stanzas of this section Tennyson expresses his inability to penetrate through to the unity which he thinks must underlie the divisions and multiplicities of the formed world:

Wild bird, whose warble, liquid sweet,
 Rings Eden through the budded quicks,
 O tell me where the senses mix,
 O tell me where the passions meet,

Whence radiate: fierce extremes employ
 Thy spirits in the darkening leaf,
 And in the midmost heart of grief
 Thy passion clasps a secret joy ...

It will be relevant to my examination of 'The Hesperides' in the last section of this chapter to point out that section LXXXVIII of In Memoriam takes up the question of poetics. The last stanza shows Tennyson conceding at this moment in the poem that the poetic imagination is not 'another name for absolute strength/And clearest insight':¹

And I -- my harp would prelude woe --
 I cannot all command the strings;
 The glory of the sum of things
 Will flash along the chords and go.

Tennyson's presentation of the Hesperidian Garden in 'The Hesperides' does not reflect the fine distinctions employed by Renaissance writers in their representation of paradisaical gardens.

1. W. Wordsworth, The Prelude, XIII. 168-69.

There is, for example, no question of our being invited to view his Garden of the Hesperides as a false paradise, in the manner of Spenser in his description of the Bower of Bliss in The Faerie Queene (II.xii); or as a symbol of purely natural regeneration, as in Spenser's portrayal of the Garden of Adonis. Tennyson's reference to Comus, where the Hesperidian Gardens are associated with a spiritual principle of life does, however, establish a broad context of meaning for the Garden in 'The Hesperides'. Tennyson allows by this reference the highest possible significance for his Garden as an image of the absolute. But the elaborate Platonic-Christian cosmology within which Milton places the Hesperidian Gardens in Comus is not carried over into Tennyson's work. Tennyson resolves the several possible levels of traditional classical-Christian cosmology to two basic terms: the supramundane reality of the Garden in the West stands in simple opposition, as we shall shortly see, to the quotidian world represented by the East. This simplification does not betray a want of sophistication on Tennyson's part. Rather, it is symptomatic of the failure of confidence in traditional religious and philosophical systems which, as I have said, lies at the centre of Tennyson's work.

In contrast to the intact and unitary condition represented by the West, the East of the 'Song' is a state characterised by deviation and discontinuity. The Sisters compare, for example, the rich integrity of their western 'seawind' with the more disturbed 'landwind' belonging to the East:

Every flower and every fruit the redolent breath
 Of this warm seawind ripeneth,
 Arching the billow in his sleep;
 But the landwind wandereth,
 Broken by the highland-steep ... (83-87)

The nature of the dissociation intrinsic to the East becomes clearer when we recall the observation of the Sisters that if the golden apple be taken by 'one from the East' (1.42) the 'world will be overwise' (1.64); so wise, indeed, that the 'old wound of the world' will 'be healed' (1.69). There are obvious connotations of the Fall in this reference to the 'old wound of the world'. As Gerhard Joseph has pointed out, the 'archetypal "deep wound"' of Adonis -- alluded to in the same passage of Comus from which Tennyson took his epigraph -- has traditionally been seen by Christian mythologists as a type of the wound felt by creation at the Fall. Moreover, given such a Miltonic key as the epigraph, it is difficult to avoid an association 'between the "old wound" of "The Hesperides" and the "wound" that earth feels when Eve first tastes of the apple in Paradise Lost (IX.780-84)'.¹ Certainly, a basic identification in 'The Hesperides' of the West with an otherworldly state of unity and harmony, and of the East with the fallen, imperfect and incomplete 'world' (1.104) of human experience, resides in the opposition that the Sisters make between the stable eternity of their Garden and the realm of historical and natural shift and process:

Father, twinkle not thy stedfast sight;
Kingdoms lapse, and climates change, and races die;
Honour comes with mystery ... (45-47)

The problematic aspect of the relation between these finite and infinite worlds, between the world of time and change on one hand and the sphere of the Garden on the other, is that the Sisters are committed to maintaining an absolute separation between the two. Tennyson's line about one from the East who threatens (from the point of view of the Sisters) to take the golden apple is clearly to be

1. Tennysonian Love: The Strange Diagonal (Minneapolis, 1969), p.132.

linked with classical stories concerning the slaying of the guardian-serpent of the Hesperidian tree and the theft of the fruit by Hercules. The unwillingness of Tennyson's Sisters to let the apple be taken is entirely consistent with this story. But the situation involving the defence of the Garden is complicated by the further possibilities of meaning introduced through Tennyson's allusion to the Biblical theme of the Fall. Donna Fricke has noted a straightforward parallel, in the instinct of the Sisters to protect the apple, to both the Greek myth of Hercules and the 'Hebrew-Christian Eden myth' where man was prevented from eating the fruit of the tree of life 'after he defied God and ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil'.¹ Tennyson's Miltonic epigraph, however, in referring us to Comus, does not refer us simply to this part of the 'Hebrew-Christian Eden myth'. In Christian thought, although man may be supposed to have forfeited at the Fall the right to physical immortality, the tree of life is made available to him again, in the sense that the possibility of spiritual regeneration is made available to him, through the endeavour and sacrifice of Christ. This larger idea of the tree of life supports Milton's presentation of the Hesperidian Gardens in Comus. As J.B. Leishman has written, 'Milton's world, unlike Plato's, is a Christian world, a redeemed world'.² Within the cosmology of Comus the Hesperidian Gardens are above earth but are associated with a plane of spiritual purification lower than that represented by Cupid and Psyche, who exist 'far above in spangled sheen' (l.1002). There is a higher spiritual reality than all the 'sphery chime' (l.1020), however, and despite all the Platonic elements in Comus, in the Attendant Spirit's concluding words the idea of Divine Grace is

1. 'Tennyson's "The Hesperides": East of Eden and Variations on the Theme', Tennyson Research Bulletin, I, 4 (November 1970), p.100.

2. Milton's Minor Poems (London, 1969), p.222.

confirmed as an essential feature of the poem. Here the Spirit reassures us: if human Virtue alone is insufficient to climb higher than the celestial spheres, there nevertheless remains a higher dispensation at the service of man:

Mortals that would follow me,
Love Virtue, she alone is free,
She can teach ye how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime;
Or if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her. (1017-22)

For the purposes of this essay, perhaps the most useful gloss on this passage is that in The Poetical Works of John Milton, edited in six volumes by Henry John Todd (London, 1801). Tennyson's own copy of this edition is still extant in the Tennyson Research Centre.¹ In volume five (pp.410-11) Todd prefixes his own note on a manuscript variant of the poem with a quotation from 'the Rev. Mr. Egerton' who observes that in the last six lines of Comus Milton contemplates

'... that stupendous Mystery, whereby He, the lofty theme of Paradise Regained, stooping from above all height, "bowed the Heavens, and came down" on Earth, to atone as Man for the Sins of Men, to strengthen feeble Virtue by the influence of his Grace' [Todd then continues:] The last line had been written thus by Milton: 'Heaven itself would bow to her'. He altered bow to stoop, because the latter word expresses greater condescension. So, in his Ode on the Passion, he applies, to the Son of God when he took our nature upon him, the phrase 'stooping his regal head'.²

1. Campbell 1601.

2. The variant to which Todd refers, in line 1022 of Comus, occurs in the author's manuscript at Trinity College, Cambridge (MS. R.3.4).

In Comus the ultimate power presiding over the Attendant Spirit's ethereal Hesperidian Gardens is sympathetic to the 'sin-worn mould' (l.17) of earthly existence. In Tennyson's poem this is flatly contradicted. The powers of Tennyson's Garden are bent, not merely on denying access to the tree of life in the sense that the 'Hebrew-Christian' God originally denied man access to the tree of life in Eden, but on refusing all possibility for the redemption of what is already described as the 'old' wound of the world.

There are important conclusions to be drawn from Tennyson's presentation of 'one from the East' who promises (from the point of view of the world) to heal the old wound of Earth. The image of a potential redeemer in Tennyson's line goes beyond the possibilities of meaning inherited directly from classical accounts of the eleventh labour of Hercules. Tennyson is apparently drawing on a traditional Christian interpretation of the figure of Hercules as a type of Christ (Milton himself makes such a comparison in Paradise Regained, IV.563-71). While, however, there is an obvious suggestion of a Redeemer figure in Tennyson's line, it is not there as part of a larger Christian idea governing the poem as a whole. The Garden, with its fruit-tree, dragon, Father Hesper, and the Hesperidian maidens, serves as a compound image of an absolute which does not sanction -- and which is intractably alien to the purpose of -- the one from the East.

Although the East, understood as the 'fallen' world of everyday experience, must logically be derived from the West, viewed as the eternal principle of 'All things', there is in 'The Hesperides' no presentation of the fall as the historical event of Christian doctrine, enacted under the view of a God whose providential purpose has been revealed to man. Key elements of Christian doctrine are suggested only to have their meaning and validity cancelled by the

larger metaphysical frame of reference established through Tennyson's characterisation of the Hesperidian Garden. If there is a Christian motif involved in the idea of one who is to come from the East, it is a motif which, by the metaphorical terms of the poem as a whole, can never be completed. The picture of the absolute stability of the Garden and the image of a potential Redeemer are held in tension, the attributes of one perpetually denying the possibilities of the other. 'The Hesperides' presents us with a radical split between the interests of man and the operation of an essentially blind, impersonal absolute.¹ There is no uniquely personal Deity in the Garden responsible to the world of activity and strife. In the detached and clinical manner in which the Sisters note the existence of a realm of flux and instability we can detect a kind of constitutional inability to sympathise with the painful problems of that world. However the world of history may be related to them, in their ritual activity they are bound to an automatic principle of guarding their secret and maintaining their mystery. They are bound absolutely by the laws of their own Being which they cannot alter because, as we have seen, they are without independent, individuated will. 'The Hesperides' would seem to constitute an early formulation of that vision of an indifferent and impersonal force governing the universe which Tennyson

1. A different view of the matter is taken by Joshua Adler in 'The Dilemma in Tennyson's "The Hesperides"', *Scripta Hierosolymitana*, 17 (Jerusalem, 1966), pp.190-208. Commenting on the categories of East and West in the poem, Adler observes that 'Outside the garden is History' (p.197) but asserts that 'a strict separation of the two domains is not what is intended' (p.199). James D. Merriman, in 'The Poet as Heroic Thief: Tennyson's "The Hesperides" Reexamined', *Victorian Newsletter*, 35 (Spring 1969), pp.1-5, examines the moral and psychological aspects of Tennyson's poem and notes the Sisters' 'chilling lack of concern for mankind' (p.3). He prefers, however, to perceive a distinction between the symbolic function of the Sisters and the wider context of the Garden in which they are set. For Merriman, the Sisters simply embody the difficulties which the poet has to overcome in his search for inspiration and insight. In his view, what is in the Garden apart from the Sisters remains fundamentally valuable and accessible to man.

was to define in the light of contemporary geological and biological science in In Memoriam.

It is impossible that we should think of Tennyson endorsing the Sisters' refusal to let the old wound of the world be healed, or to allow the 'ancient secret', the key to joy, to be revealed. The Sisters observe that 'The world is wasted with fire and sword,/But the apple of gold hangs over the sea' (ll.104-105). The import of these lines is that, while the world may be suffering, all is nevertheless well from the point of view of the Sisters as long as the apple of gold hangs secure and unaccountable over the sea. The Sisters may not be able to help themselves in their inveterate and callous disregard of the world, but the picture surely registers Tennyson's feelings of moral revulsion at the kind of absolute they represent.

ii

Founded upon a detail of Homeric story (Odyssey, IX. 82-104), 'The Lotos-Eaters' is most readily placed within the tradition of English poetry dealing with the human impulse to retreat from the demands and stresses of ordinary existence into sensuous lethargy and indolent forgetfulness. Spenser, as Christopher Ricks has noted, 'was the major influence on the style and tone' of the poem: 'in particular', we may notice Spenser's descriptions in The Faerie Queene of the Cave of Morpheus (I.i.41), the blandishments of Despair (I.ix.40), the Idle Lake 'and its enervating island' (II.vi.10), and the Bower of Bliss (II.xii.32).¹ But while such Spenserian passages may in some degree have served as models for Tennyson it is very noticeable that the terms upon which Tennyson presents his Lotos-Eaters (and his lotos-eating mariners) are significantly different

1. Ricks, p.429.

from the imaginative and conceptual framework within which Spenser places, say, Phaedria in The Faerie Queene, II.vi, or the 'man of hell, that calls himself Dépaire' in The Faerie Queene, I.ix.28.1.4. John Bayley, speaking of the process by which the Romantic imagination came to be 'dispossessed' -- divorced, that is, from 'philosophy and ideology' and confined to 'the world of action and sensation' -- has stated his sense of the difference between Spenser and Tennyson as follows:

if we compare Spenser's description of the Cave of Despair ... with Tennyson's account of the Lotos Eaters, the difference between the ordered and the dispossessed imagination is extremely clear. Both poets get the utmost out of their material -- the poetry of accidie could not be better apprehended or more vividly set down -- but whereas Spenser knows what he thinks about it, and fits the description into the pattern of traditional ethics to which he adheres, Tennyson merely exploits the imaginative situation as a thing in itself: he is not conditioned to relate his imagination to a settled scheme of thought and belief.¹

In speaking thus Professor Bayley is, of course, working within the scope of the nexus of critical formulae -- comprising the feeling/thought, art/life, private/public antitheses -- which, as I noted in chapter three, has directed so much commentary upon Tennyson's early poems. What is perhaps the most familiar view of 'The Lotos-Eaters' underwrites Professor Bayley's stress on the dichotomy between feeling and thought in the poem with an emphasis on the private/public antithesis and reads the work as dealing primarily with the conflict between the claims of social ties and the attraction of individual and

1. op.cit., pp.63-64

private experience. Importing the ethical terms provided in a more traditional poetry of accidie, a number of commentators have also taken the apparent absence of such terms in 'The Lotos-Eaters' as grounds for calling in question the nature of Tennyson's commitment to his subject. It is thought by such readers that in his seeming failure to provide such terms Tennyson is actually displaying a failure to control his personal sympathies with the lotos-eating life and betraying an unqualified desire to escape the social, moral, and intellectual responsibilities of his age. Robert Langbaum has asserted that the poem by no means fulfils the criteria of the true dramatic monologue:

In Tennyson ... the longing for oblivion is not a first step toward a vision of transformed being but an end in itself, overwhelming us and dispelling all other considerations. It is presented in 'Tithonus' ... and in 'The Choric Song' of 'The Lotos-Eaters', where it is ... consonant with the song of men who have rejected life for an infantile voluptuousness The opening lines of 'Tithonus' allow us no reserve of judgement ... while the lotos-eaters argue us out of any speck of reserve that may linger¹

Not all critics, it is true, take as extreme a view as Langbaum. Christopher Ricks, for example, reiterates the notion that 'The Lotos-Eaters' is structured around two opposing sets of interest. ('The mariners are drawn toward drug and dream, and away from toil and obligation') but he holds a balanced judgement on the question of the distribution of loyalties in the poem and notes that the work is equivocal in its seductive languorousness.² In the 'Choric Song', after all, 'Relaxation never obliterates indignation'.³ Then there is the

1. The Poetry of Experience: The Dramatic Monologue in Modern Literary Tradition (first published 1957; Penguin Paperback Edn., Harmondsworth, 1974), p.84.

2. Tennyson, pp.88-89.

3. ibid., p.90.

matter of the Homeric background to Tennyson's work. In Homer the story of the land of the Lotos-eaters ends with Odysseus simply asserting his authority and forcing back to the ships and the high seas those who had eaten of the lotos-fruit and who had so grown 'forgetful of their homeward way'. In the Homeric episode we are never allowed to lose sight of the values of the heroic ideal: neither as established in the past nor as pictured in the anticipated action of restoring authority in Ithaca. Whatever the particular difference between Homer's order of higher values and Spenser's, in both writers an outer frame of reference circumscribes and contains the representation of the escapist impulse. But instead of showing the mariners restored from Lotos-land Tennyson's poem, in Professor Ricks's view, 'preserves a potent silence'.¹ The silence raises several questions. On the one hand there is the opening of the poem's narrative prologue: "'Courage!" he said, and pointed toward the land'. Yet that he 'does not return in the poem' and, Professor Ricks asks, 'Is the note of command in the first two lines of the poem authoritative enough to command the poem?'² Not only is the 'he' dissolved into 'they' even by the third line of the poem, but that third line ends with the very same word ('land') as had concluded the first -- a no-rhyme initiating a process by which the strength of the opening command is slowly ebbed away. On the other hand, we are entitled to ask whether the 'he' is 'simply dropped? He is assuredly not among those who eat the lotos; perhaps he broods over those who brood'.³ While the poem 'does not ever return to its narrative from the "Choric Song"',

that is not at all the same as saying that the mariners are not

1. Tennyson, p.92.

2. ibid., p.92.

3. ibid., p.92.

to return from the land of the Lotos-eaters (did Odysseus never complete his journey?). Our wishes -- the poem tacitly reminds us -- are not necessarily sovereign.¹

These are acute observations. Yet something further remains to be said on the matter of Tennyson's acknowledgement or otherwise of a world larger than Lotos-land -- a world to which Tennyson's mariners and to which we as readers (with perhaps one eye on the Homeric context) must perforce return. Professor Ricks associates the only explicit indication in the poem of an external frame of reference with the anonymous 'he' and the exhortation to courage in the opening line of the narrative prologue. (Incidentally, it would be no more than a reasonable assumption that the 'he' is Odysseus the commander rather than any other worthy sea-faring spirit; just as there are no sure grounds for assuming that the 'he', when it came to it, was not amongst those who ate of the lotos-fruit.) But does Tennyson attempt to evoke an external frame of reference -- a moral context -- only through reference to this 'he'? The narrative voice of the poem is clearly to be distinguished from the figure referred to by the third person in the first line of the prologue. And that voice may be seen to exercise a greater authority over the whole poem than the 'he': simply, but irreducibly, by virtue of the fact that it speaks in the past tense. The voice is to a significant extent unidentified and unlocated, but it has a definite temporal placing, postdating and thus distanced from the experience it recounts. Whether it belongs to omniscient author or even, not inconceivably, to able-seaman or commander himself, the voice establishes an organising perspective which is outside and larger than the present tense of the 'Choric Song'. The narrative introduction is written, as A. Dwight Culler has

1. Tennyson, p.92.

said, 'in a Spenserian stanza which is quite as lazy and indolent as the long, loping strophes' of the 'Choric Song' itself.¹ Thus the narrative renders with a disturbing and, I would say, disturbed intimacy of understanding the condition of the isle and of the mind intoxicated by the lotos-fruit. The disturbance is evident in lines from the prologue which describe the approaches of the natives of the isle:

A land where all things always seemd the same!
 And round about the keel with faces pale,
 Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,
 The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted stem,
 Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they gave
 To each, but whoso did receive of them,
 And taste, to him the gushing of the wave
 Far far away did seem to mourn and rave
 On alien shores; and if his fellow spake,
 His voice was thin, as voices from the grave ...

(24-34)

The suggestion of veiled threat in the description of 'Dark faces pale' modulates into an account of an offer which at first sight might well have been thought (and by some of the mariners obviously was thought) to hold out possibilities of enriching growth, of fulfilment and culmination ('enchanted ... flower ... fruit'). But whatever the mariners may have wished to believe, the narrative voice is quite clear that all was not as it may have seemed. Rather than and, the voice says 'but whoso did receive of them ...' and so, arrested by

1. op.cit., p.53.

this qualifying preposition, we are prepared for what the voice knows to have been an experience more properly characterised in terms of loss, madness, alienation, impoverishment, and death ('mourn ... rave ... alien ... thin ... grave'). Whatever acquaintance the narrative voice may have had with the lotos-eating life, and however much it may demonstrate that acquaintance in the very form of the prologue, it is clear that lotos-intoxication does not constitute its immediate condition. The voice places the lotos-eating life as the experience of others, or as remembered experience, and what we witness of laziness in the prologue seems to be only the capacity of the mind to empathise with, or potentially to recall, a condition that is not, or is no longer, its own. This kind of capacity does not vitiate the operation of the self-conscious, critical faculty defined through the exposure of the false offer of the Lotos-eaters or through the controlled use of the past tense.¹ The use of that tense denotes a consciousness engaged in the sequential structures of ordinary historical time rather than the continuous present of a world where 'all things always' are 'the same'. Whatever kind of participancy in the lotos-eating experience might be claimed by the voice for itself, it speaks from the point of view of standing extrinsic to and from the position of having a standard by which to measure that experience. At the end of the 'Choric Song' the poem has no need to return literally to its narrative. For the principle of return or of separation from Lotos-land is designated through the temporal arrangements and the evaluative perspectives of the prologue.

1. The self-conscious perspective attributed to the narrative voice may be distinguished from other devices used by Tennyson in 'The Lotos-Eaters' to call attention to the doubtful status of the lotos-eating life: the dramatic ironies of the 'Choric Song' itself, where the mariners refer to Lotos-land as 'barren' (l.145) or 'Hollow' (l.154); and where, in the last section of the poem, in condemning the uncaring gods whom they at once seek to emulate, the mariners themselves provide a measure by which they may be judged and found wanting.

But why should Tennyson establish such a perspective or frame of reference -- why register the fact of a world existing outside and accommodating Lotos-land -- without detailing certain specific and highly relevant features of that world? We might infer something of the forms of social commitment and moral responsibility which constitute the value system of the outer world from observations made by the mariners during the course of the 'Choric Song' itself. But why did Tennyson not directly invoke the terms and outcome of the story as it is in Homer? Why not draw explicit attention to a system of values by which to judge the escapist impulse? If there is not exactly the silence observed by Professor Ricks, there is yet a curious silence in the poem. All we have is a framework which sets some kind of distance on the lotos-eating life and perhaps an implication -- founded in the fact that Tennyson's text may be judged to have a larger context in Homer -- that the removal of the mariners from Lotos-land is somehow an inevitable or necessary thing. I want to suggest a little later that in his use of the story from Homer Tennyson does not achieve merely a tacit or indirect point about the necessity of the mariners' withdrawal from Lotos-land. 'The nineteenth-century mythological poem is internally constitutive of the myth that makes possible its own existence as a poem',¹ and Tennyson demonstrates the necessity of the mariners' withdrawal from within the poem itself and by means which have less to do with the Homeric than with the nineteenth-century context of the poem. For the moment, however, I would return to the matter of Tennyson's refusal to provide a direct explication of a system of spiritual and ethical values while at the same time going so far as to construct a distanced perspective for the narrative voice. The crucial point here is precisely that

1. Earl R. Wasserman, loc.cit.

Tennyson was writing in an age when 'continental areas of common values were breaking up'.¹ John Bayley approaches the differences between Tennyson's poetry of accidie and Spenser's by saying that Tennyson is not conditioned to relate his imagination to a settled scheme of thought and belief. But assuming 'The Lotos-Eaters' is no 'mere rechauffé' of an old legend and that it is, as Tennyson said all such treatments should be, conceived in a modern dimension, then there is something misconceived in a straightforward comparison of Tennyson with either Spenser or Homer.² The essential point of Tennyson's handling of the poetry of accidie in 'The Lotos-Eaters' is that his are distinctively nineteenth-century mariners living in a world where traditional schemes of thought and belief have become profoundly unsettled. It should not be difficult to perceive that the poem may be governed by the perfectly coherent idea that it is no longer possible to rest securely on the authority of traditional definitions of the nature and limits of moral obligation. It is the absence of any settled scheme of thought and belief that constitutes the conceptual framework of the poem. Tennyson may be understood to be reworking the classical story in a way which records the atmosphere of a time when, as J.A. Froude spoke of the eighteen-forties, 'the intellectual lightships had broken from their moorings ... the lights all drifting, the compasses all awry';³ a time, as Tennyson's mariners put it, of 'confusion worse than death' (l.128) to 'hearts worn out by many wars/And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot-stars' (ll.131-32).

The idea that Tennyson's Lotos-land is displaced beyond the scope

1. Arthur J. Carr, loc.cit.

2. Tennyson is reported by his son to have said 'when I write an antique like this ['Demeter and Persephone', 1889] I must put it into a frame -- something modern about it. It is no use giving a mere rechauffé of old legends' (Memoir, II, 364).

3. Thomas Carlyle: A History of his Life in London, 2 vols (London, 1897), I, 311.

and measure of traditional spiritual and moral charts does not allow for any easy justification of the mariners' desire to escape the burden of life, nor does it preclude, as I have said, the notion that there must necessarily be a withdrawal from Lotos-land. What does happen under this idea is that a genuine authority is imparted to the mariners' questionings of the meaning of human pain and to their uncertainty regarding the ultimate sanction of a life spent struggling in the service of a high ideal:

Why are we weighed upon with heaviness,
 And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
 While all things else have rest from weariness?
 All things have rest: why should we toil alone,
 We only toil, who are the first of things ... (57-61)

If the organising conceptual frame of Tennyson's poem involves the idea that traditional spiritual and moral terms of reference have broken down, then the mariners' questions -- issuing from a sense of the difference between human and natural life -- are not presented as being in themselves misconceived and misplaced in the manner that Spenser so invites us to regard Phaedria's attempt to persuade men away from responsibility through an unfavourable comparison of the 'carefull paines' of mankind with the careless life of nature (Faerie Queene, II.vi.15). The lotos-eating response to a world in which it is no longer possible to see any pilot-stars may be in itself deficient, but at the same time the questions and questionings of the mariners are real and not in themselves evidence of degeneracy. In the revised conclusion to the poem published in 1842 Tennyson confirmed his representation of the special authority of certain of the mariners' statements when he chose to develop that element of protest which runs through nearly all of their utterances. The gods to whom the mariners

refer in the 1842 conclusion are 'based', as Christopher Ricks puts it, 'on Lucretius's account of Epicureanism':¹

Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal mind,
 In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie reclined
 On the hills like Gods together, careless of mankind.
 For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are hurled
 Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are lightly
 curled
 Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleaming
 world:
 Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,
 Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps
 and fiery sands,
 Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships,
 and praying hands. (153-61)²

F.E.L. Priestly has commented aptly on the stridency of these lines.

They are, he writes,

not lines expressive of lassitude, they are marked by strong indignation over man's lot, a measured, stately, and angry denunciation of the gods who find man's tragedy meaningless or amusing. When, at the end of the chorus, the lines lose their energy and relax ... the lassitude is not that of the drugged pleasure-seeker, but of the exhausted and toil-worn sufferer.³

1. Ricks, p.437.

2. Lines 150-73 in the 1842 text of 'The Lotos-Eaters' were an almost complete rewriting of the lines which had appeared in the 1832 version of the poem (the other major alteration was the addition in 1842 of lines 114-32). In the conclusion of 1832 it is proposed that some of the lotos-eating mariners will eat the lotos 'On the ancient heights divine' (l.147), but no comparison is made between the lotos-eating life and the life of the Epicurean gods. The comparison in the rewriting of 1842 allows -- as I shall shortly attempt to demonstrate -- for a significant amplification and development of the elements of narrative and dramatic distance already established in the 1832 text.

3. Language and Structure in Tennyson's Poetry (London, 1973), p.58.

Behind the presentation in the Odyssey of Ulysses's action in bringing his men back to the ships and homeward lay Homer's certitude as to the meaning of duty. For Tennyson to identify the outside world of his narrative voice too strictly with the homeward bound state of the mariners of Odysseus would be to belie the theme of dispossession which runs throughout 'The Lotos-Eaters'. The point of the poem is that for the nineteenth-century voyagers it depicts there is no direction home. And while it appears from the narrative prologue that Tennyson neither wishes us to assume we can remain in Lotos-land, nor yet knows exactly what course we should set once placed outside it, it is at least clear he is not going to allow any easy solution through a simple reversion to the terms of the classical story.

Reading 'The Lotos-Eaters' in the light of a traditional English poetry of accidie commentators have assumed the poem to be structured ultimately around a principle of conflict or of dilemma, whatever private choice of preference in the matter happens to be betrayed by Tennyson in his treatment of the theme. But the assumption that the poem is organised fundamentally around such a principle is itself something standing subject to question if we accept that the ethical system informing not only The Faerie Queene, but also a work such as Comus, is in an important sense inapplicable to a consideration of 'The Lotos-Eaters'. The ethical terms at play in the poems by Spenser and Milton are themselves an integral part of a whole religious and metaphysical system. The notion that 'The Lotos-Eaters' should be read in the light of a pattern of traditional ethics presupposes a metaphysic in Tennyson's poem comparable to that in Spenser or Milton. However, it seems to me that consonant with the absence of an authorially endorsed conventional pattern of ethics there is also adumbrated in 'The Lotos-Eaters' a metaphysic radically different from

anything in Spenser or Milton. Through a consideration of the metaphysical implications of Tennyson's poem I shall approach the question of the principle upon which the work is structured and the related question concerning the demonstration of the necessity of the mariners' withdrawal from Lotos-land.

While the equivalences are not total there are yet so many points of compatibility between Tennyson's account of Lotos-land and his description of the Garden of the Hesperides that we can scarcely avoid perceiving the metaphysical significations of the island to which Tennyson's mariners arrive. Firstly, there is an immediately obvious parallel between Lotos-land as an Island of the Blest seen under the aspect of a sunset that 'lingered low adown/In the red West' (ll.19-20) and Tennyson's symbolic geography of West and East in 'The Hesperides'. By this symbolism we might expect Lotos-land to bear connotations of a supramundane order of being set apart from the world of historical and natural process. Such an expectation is fulfilled when we find the word 'charmèd', a key term in Tennyson's description of his Hesperidian Garden, reappearing to help define what do indeed turn out to be the unnatural and ahistorical potentialities of the Lotos-isle: 'The charmèd sunset lingered low adown ... '. The exemption from the logic of life in time which is the distinctive feature of the Hesperidian Garden also finds a parallel in the manner that Lotos-land is presented as a place where 'all things always seemed the same!' (l.24). Not that the sameness is discovered only through a myopic attention to detail, for it pervades the entire frame of things:

above the valley stood the moon ...

From the inner land: far off, three mountain-tops,

Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,

Stood sunset-flushed: and, dewed with showery
drops,

Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the woven copse.

(7, 15-18)

Here elements of night and day and antithetical connotations of darkness and light, cold and heat, age and youth, stasis (snow as immobile water) and movement (the melting transitions from 'snow' to 'flushed' to 'drops'), are juxtaposed to produce the effect of an unnatural simultaneity of occurrence. The need to suggest a realm beyond ordinary terms of reference called forth from Tennyson some of his most superb evocations of that sense of near-suspended animation which characterises the state of narcotic trance:

like a downward smoke, the slender stream
Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem ...
a slumberous sheet of foam below.

(8-9, 13)

The somnambulism of Tennyson's Hesperidian Sisters is recalled when we are told that those who ate the lotos-fruit seemed 'deep-asleep ... yet all awake'(1.35). The imagery of gold is common to both the account of the Hesperidian tree, and the account in 'The Lotos-Eaters' of the 'golden houses' (1.158) of the gods, whose mode of being the mariners equate with the lotos-eating life. And if the Hesperidian Sisters -- as part of a Garden which images the absolute -- impassively note a world 'wasted with fire and sword' whilst affirming the 'bliss of secret smiles', so at the same time the gods who are the presiding spirits of place in Tennyson's Lotos-isle are careless of the world of mankind and 'smile in secret, looking over wasted lands' (1.159).

If there are significant correspondences between the alien heaven of Lotos-land and Tennyson's use of the Hesperidian Garden as a symbol of the unsympathetic power of the universe, then through his invocation of the Epicurean Gods in 'The Lotos-Eaters' the poet may be found attaching a more explicit name to that power than in 'The Hesperides' (or even in the 1832 version of 'The Lotos-Eaters' itself). We remember that in Lucretius's rendering of the materialist vision of Epicurus the origin and government of the universe is attributable not to the divine power of the Gods but to the blind generative impulse of nature. Lucretius did not jettison the Gods altogether. In De Rerum Natura we find them still real entities occupying a space that is contained -- however tenuously -- within the frame of nature. But they neither regulate natural phenomena nor concern themselves with human affairs. With his assertion that 'no thing is ever by divine power produced from nothing' (I. 150) Lucretius leaves no room for any spiritual or divine order transcending nature:

this world was made by nature, and the seeds of things
themselves of their own accord, knocking together by chance,
clashed in all sorts of ways, heedless, without aim, without
intention, until at length those combined which, suddenly
thrown together, could become in each case the beginnings of
mighty things, of earth and sea and sky and the generation
of living creatures If you hold fast to these
convictions, nature is seen to be free at once and rid of
proud masters, herself doing all by herself of her own
accord, without the help of gods. (II.1058-63,1090-92)

By his invocation of Lucretius's Epicurean Gods Tennyson confirms that his mariners -- as types of nineteenth-century spiritual voyagers --

find themselves abroad in a world where it seems nature alone constitutes the governing principle of existence. It is this metaphysic that differs from the dualistic framework of thought and belief (according primacy to the spiritual over the material order) informing the work of Spenser and Milton. It is a metaphysic which defines the dissolution of a traditional spiritual system -- together with the pattern of ethics underpinned by that system -- in the early nineteenth-century.

To have said this much, however, is not to say that Tennyson endorses in 'The Lotos-Eaters' the Lucretian view of nature as a school of virtue. The Roman poet's overall conception of nature is of a power that is in essence far from unkindly: this notwithstanding her blindness and her sometimes harsh appearances at the level of the natural cosmos inhabited by man. In the third book of De Rerum Natura Lucretius takes up the problem of what he sees as the special disturbances and perversions infecting human experience. We learn that the origin of many evils is to be sought primarily in the human fear¹ of death and of the possibility of spending a spiritual after-life amid the pains and torment of Acheron. For example:

avarice and the blind lust of distinction ... these sores of life in no small degree are fed by the fear of death. For in general degrading scorn and bitter need are seen to be far removed from sweetness and stability of life, and a lingering as it were before the gates of death; from which men desiring to escape afar and to remove themselves far away, driven by false terror, amass wealth by civil bloodshed and greedily multiply riches, piling murder upon murder

(III.59,63b-71)

Lucretius seeks to affirm Epicurus's argument that the fear of death, like fear of the Gods, is based on the false premise that there is

something more to man and the universe than purely material existence. If nature is not seen to be in any way divine, if the human mind and soul are seen to be wholly corporeal and to be broken down with the body at death, then death 'is nothing to us, it matters not one jot' (III.830):

if by chance anyone is to have misery and pain in the future, he must himself also exist then in that time to be miserable. Since death takes away this possibility ... we may be sure that there is nothing to be feared after death, that he who is not cannot be miserable (III.862-64,866-67)

To purge the mind of unjustified fears and of the excessive and unsatisfiable (and hence potentially painful) desires born of those fears will allow nature to express herself to man in her most kindly aspect. The springs of virtue indeed are released with the attempt to fulfil only such desires as are natural and necessary. If this is realised there is available to man 'a life worthy of the gods' (III.322b) with nature supplying all that is needed for a satisfying and tranquil existence:

O pitiable minds of men In what gloom of life ... is passed all your poor span of time! not to see that all nature barks for is this, that pain be removed away out of the body, and that the mind, kept away from care and fear, enjoy a feeling of delight! (II.14a,15a,16-19)

When he came to publish his poem 'Lucretius' in Macmillan's Magazine for May 1868, Tennyson showed he was happy neither with Lucretius's denial of a duality to human nature nor with the Latin poet's willingness to found an ethical system on a materialistic physics. 'Lucretius' is based on the story given in Jerome's version of Eusebius's Chronica (fourth century AD), which tells that Lucretius

was driven mad by a love-philtre.¹ Tennyson's poem moves quickly into an adumbration of Lucretius's view of Venus (De Rerum Natura, I.1-20), a view which seems to involve an idea of this particular God as, on the one hand, a literal entity and, on the other, no more than a personification of the energies of great creating nature. Tennyson has his Lucretius put it thus:

I meant not her,
Whom all the pines of Ida shook to see ...
Nor her that o'er her wounded hunter wept
Her Deity false in human-amorous tears
Rather, O ye Gods,
Poet-like, as the great Sicilian called
Calliope to grace his golden verse --
Ay, and this Kypris also -- did I take
That popular name of thine to shadow forth
The all-generating powers and genial heat
Of Nature ... (85-86, 89-90, 92-98)

In Tennyson's poem the stimulus of the love potion imbibed by Lucretius brings him to an appalled -- rather than affirmatory -- vision of the ceaseless, inane flow of matter. In a reversion of the philosophy by which he has hitherto ordered his life Lucretius feels the inadequacy of any quasi-pastoral image of natural felicity and harmony and acquires a horrified insight into the natural depravity of man. No longer able to reconcile natural and moral law and without a compensating vision of a higher order of reality transcending nature Lucretius is derelict and desperate. Asking 'What is duty?' (l.280) he kills himself.

No more than in 'Lucretius' does Tennyson accept in 'The Lotos-

1. cf. Eversley, II, 362-63.

Eaters' that nature alone can provide an adequate support for mortal life. But there is neither an endorsement of regressive (even suicidal) impulses nor a final comic discovery of a saving spiritual order. In De Rerum Natura, as we have seen, Lucretius suggests that men would find a form of emancipation through recognising that the gods have no interest in the affairs of nature and the human world. In 'The Lotos-Eaters' Tennyson constructs a situation in which the carelessness of the gods is actually assumed by the mariners. But it is indicated that this is by no means a liberating assumption: indeed the fact of the carelessness of the gods constitutes the very grounds for their indignation and protest at the prevailing order of things. To the extent that they are indignant at the careless gods the mariners are indignant at the carelessness displayed by nature towards the human condition. The quality of the mariners' insight into an imperfection in the frame of things precludes the possibility that they could find sufficient an explanation of human suffering which accounted for that suffering in terms of the fears born of human illusions about a realm of being beyond nature. Their perception of the indifference of the universe at large has brought them no insight into duty. Behind their indignation lies a profound frustration at the absence of any higher court of appeal.

Mixed with their active indignation there is, of course, the mariners' apparent desire to 'sink to peace', to pass into forgetfulness of all that feeds their indignation. It is at root a yearning for a vegetable existence, a desire for a return to the state of nature. If the enemy cannot be beaten, it might as well be joined. The carelessness of the life of nature is presented in a special way in the third strophe of the 'Choric Song':

Lo! in the middle of the wood,
 The folded leaf is wooed from out the bud
 With winds upon the branch, and there
 Grows green and broad, and takes no care ...
 The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,
 Drops in a silent autumn night.
 All its allotted length of days,
 The flower ripens in its place,
 Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no toil,
 Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

(70-73, 78-83)

This account does not seek to deny the facts of process in the natural world, the cycle of birth, growth, decay and death. What is enviable for the mariners is a condition where unselfconsciousness precludes any sense of alienation from proper place, where the deployment of energy is neither interrupted and complicated by questions of choice nor experienced as labour, and where death is not experienced as a radical discontinuity in the pattern of things. It may be thought that the recognition of the facts of process in this passage stands at odds with the description of Lotos-land itself and with Tennyson's account of the Hesperidian Garden. Both of these, as we have seen, are characterised by a suspension of all ordinarily recognisable laws of change and development. The mariners' picture of natural life in strophe three seems more appropriate to the ordinary world they have left behind them than to Lotos-land. But there is no real contradiction here. Tennyson introduces the account to direct us quite specifically to the way in which the representation of a drugged suspension of ordinary terms of reference in Lotos-land may be read as the human psychological correlative for the unselfconscious life of

nature. In its psychological implications Lotos-land functions as an image of the human mind attempting to disburden itself of the self-consciousness which painfully distinguishes it from the rest of the natural world.

And yet it is interesting that the mariners, whatever their stated desire for escape, never actually move beyond desire and never cease to care. As we have seen F.E.L. Priestly observing, even at the end, 'the lassitude is not that of the drugged pleasure-seeker, but of the exhausted and toil-worn sufferer'. The mariners always speak of bliss in the future subjunctive. They imagine delights but retain something of a self-conscious distance. As W. David Shaw has written:

The mariners' analytic intelligence is constantly at work; their rhetorical skill denotes an intellectual power that could never be exercised if the 'land of streams' had already been possessed as their rightful home.¹

The mariners never actually forget. This alone points to their return. Perhaps the gap between the mariners' consciousness and that of the narrative voice is not, after all, going to be that difficult to bridge. But more than this, Tennyson not only establishes that the mariners do not ever forget, he suggests through his representation of the Epicurean gods as governing spirits of the island, that the mariners are constitutionally unable to forget the 'sharp distress' (l.58) of mankind and to become one with nature. If, in 'The Hesperides', man has no access to the joy of the Garden, we should not fail to recognise in 'The Lotos-Eaters' the ironic contradiction inherent in the mariners' comparison of life in Lotos-land to the life of the Epicurean gods. This comparison may help to define the metaphysical limits of their universe. It may tell us that nature

1. op.cit., p.67.

rules all and that what the mariners think they want is to be absorbed into nature. But while, at one level of the poem, the mariners are seen as literally successful in landing on their western isle beyond the sea of history, at another level, through the mariners' identification of the island with what is technically (even in Lucretius) the humanly unattainable condition of the gods, we find Lotos-land connoting an order of being from which man is in reality forever excluded. It is a foregone conclusion that the mariners will not stay in Lotos-land.

The predicament of man as defined in 'The Lotos-Eaters' is different from the predicament of Cymochles when faced with Phaedria's temptations in The Faerie Queene. There man has the problem of deciding between the higher and the lower as substantive alternatives. The question of choice is real and so too is the principle of dilemma as a structural principle for the poem in which the episode is set. But the predicament of the mariners in 'The Lotos-Eaters' is that they have no real choice. If as human beings they are detached from and cannot find a home in nature, then they find it difficult to identify a home elsewhere. They do not belong to the earth and there is no heaven available to accommodate them. In a world where distinctions between higher and lower have been erased, 'The Lotos-Eaters' is not structured around a dilemma. Its central note is one of protest at the lack of alternatives. The human situation in the poem is cast as the potentially tragic one of permanent exile and homelessness.

iii

The discontinuities between the secret joy of the Garden and the troubled world of human experience in 'The Hesperides', and between the unselfconscious bliss of nature and the realm of human suffering in 'The Lotos-Eaters', carry considerable implications for these poems viewed as statements about the grounds of poetic vision. As a prelude to a consideration of these implications, we should remember Tennyson's 'Timbuctoo' bears a complex of imagery associated with a paradise in the West comparable to that in both 'The Hesperides' and 'The Lotos-Eaters'.

The importance of 'Timbuctoo' is twofold: in the first place, the identification of the Western Isles of the Blest with the sphere of the imagination directs us to the Romantic possibilities of meaning in Tennyson's symbolic geography of West and East and his preoccupation with Blessed Isles in 'The Hesperides' and 'The Lotos-Eaters'. Secondly, the anticipation in 'Timbuctoo' of a failure in the sustaining and cohering power of the imagination prepares us for the dubiety with which the principle of imaginative life is regarded in the two later poems. The 'Thrones of the Western wave, fair islands green' in 'Timbuctoo', with their 'cedarn glooms' (l.42), 'blossoming abysses' (l.43), and 'flowering Capes' (l.44), prefigure the initial description of the West in 'The Hesperides'. In the blank-verse prologue to the poem we are told that Zidonian Hanno, voyaging off the West coast of Africa did not hear the warbling of the nightingale 'Blown seaward from the shore' (l.8) but heard voices, 'like the

voices in a dream,/Continuous' (ll.12-13), coming

from a slope

That ran bloombright into the Atlantic blue,

Beneath a highland leaning down a weight

Of cliffs, and zoned below with cedarshade ... (8-11)

The arena of the imagination explicitly enunciated for the Western Isles and their 'infinite ways' in 'Timbuctoo' is imaginatively realised by Tennyson in respect of the Garden of the Hesperides through placing that Garden within what Robert Stange has called the 'framework of vision poetry'.¹ We do not, of course, fail to recognise the interior orientation of this 'vision'. Issuing from a region for which there are effectively no literal spatial equivalents the voices of the Garden are heard as 'in a dream' -- essentially enclosed within the space of Hanno's own consciousness. The textures of language and imagery in the 'Song' are themselves accommodated to the inwardness defined by the opening framework of the poem. Thus, for example, we find a subliminal intensity in the description of the western seawind 'Arching the billow in his sleep' (l.85).

In 'Timbuctoo' the 'Thrones of the Western wave' are associated with an image of the organic life of the 'vine of Fable' which provides a refuge for man (at least until the closing lines of the poem) amid its 'complicated glooms,/And cool impleached twilights' (ll.223-24). There is a correlation between these motifs and the imagery of western sea, of darkness, and of vegetative generation in 'The Hesperides'. Certainly, the central figure of 'The Hesperides', by which, as Stange has put it, 'the burgeoning of the fruit depends on the charmed music of the Hesperides and they, in turn, draw their vitality and find the source of their song in the root and the tree',²

1. Kilham, p.100.

2. ibid., p.103.

is characteristic of Romantic coalescent metaphors of mind which emphasise the primacy of unconscious genius and organic growth in the creative life of the artist. The qualities of timelessness and trance which distinguish the Garden also invite comparison with the Romantic interest in these states as conditions associated with the functioning of the creative imagination. These are the states associated, for example, with Shelley's visionary island of the mind in Epipsychidion, that island where

all the place is peopled with sweet airs ...
And every motion, odour, beam, and tone,
With that deep music is in unison:
Which is a soul within the soul ... (445, 453-55)

The word 'wisdom' mentioned in 'The Hesperides', has in Tennyson a special connotation. As Stange remarks: 'In "The Poet", and indeed in all Tennyson's early descriptions of the vatic nature, the qualities of the poetic charism are termed "wisdom"¹. The word is, of course, sanctioned in Romantic usage. '[A]ncient Wisdom' is used in Wordsworth's Excursion (IV.957) to describe the intuitive insights of the mythopoeic imagination and to identify that mode of feeling intellect which is to be distinguished from mere rational understanding:

... wisdom, not to be approached
By the inferior Faculty that moulds,
With her minute and speculative pains,
Opinion, ever changing! (IV.1129-32)

An emphasis on an unapproachable wisdom appears in 'The Poet's Mind'. Tennyson's use in 'The Hesperides' of the image of the enchanted garden, fertile, remote, its integrity protected by the

1. Killham, p.102.

eternal singing of the Sisters, may be compared with the final image of 'The Poet's Mind', where the poetic spirit is likened to a garden which must be preserved from questionable rational processes of thought:

Dark-browed sophist, come not anear;
 All the place is holy ground ...
 In the heart of the garden the merry bird chants.
 It would fall to the ground if you came in.

In the middle leaps a fountain ...

And it sings a song of undying love ... (8-9, 22-24, 33)

G.H. Ford has observed¹ that an important influence on 'The Poet's Mind' is the end of Keats's Lamia: 'Do not all charms fly/At the mere touch of cold philosophy?/ ... the stately music no more breathes; /...Lamia breathed death-breath; the sophist's eye,/ Like a sharp spear, went through her utterly' (II.229-30, 263, 299-300). The Keatsian influence here serves to remind us of Tennyson's general indebtedness -- discernible in such poems as 'A Dream of Fair Women' (1832, 1842) and 'Recollections of the Arabian Nights'(1830) -- to the entire world of Keatsian gardens. This is the world of sleep, poetry, and dream-vision epitomised in the music-haunted bower of Adonis in Endymion, where the 'feathered lyrist' (II.432) who watches over the sleeping Adonis welcomes Endymion as he descends far 'past the scanty bar/To mortal steps' (II.124-25):

'Though from upper day
 Thou art a wanderer, and thy presence here
 Might seem unholy, be of happy cheer!
 For 'tis the nicest touch of human honour
 When some ethereal and high-favouring donor
 Presents immortal bowers to mortal sense ...

1. Keats and the Victorians (Yale, 1944), p.34.

here is manna picked from Syrian trees,

In starlight, by the three Hesperides...' (II.433-38, 452-53)

In Endymion Keats is, of course, to be found in his most idealistic mood. It is in the Odes, above all, that we find him expressing a sense of conflict, a sense that there may be no easy and untroubled meeting between the world of sleep, dream and poetry on the one hand, and the 'real' world of fever and fret on the other. The tensions of the Odes foreshadow and define some of the fundamental preoccupations of Victorian poetry. As I have shown, the early Tennyson has often been understood to refuse these tensions and to commit himself either implicitly or explicitly to aesthetic withdrawal from the world. In Robert Stange's view of 'The Hesperides' as a poem concerned with the source of the life of art, the desire of the Hesperidian maidens to preserve inviolate their Garden in the West is seen as Tennyson's belief that the integrity of the life of the imagination must be maintained over and against the demands of the world of social and moral responsibility symbolised in the poem by the forces of the East. Stange thus isolates the basic impulse of the work as regressive and says of the work that 'its assertion of a desire to retreat from purposeful moral activity suggests the doctrine of the Beautiful that Arthur Hallam formulated in his influential review of Tennyson's Poems, Chiefly Lyrical.¹

An interpretation closely related to Stange's view of 'The Hesperides' has frequently been applied to 'The Lotos-Eaters'. Of the commentators who have found Tennyson revealing in this poem his own regressive impulses, many have spoken of those impulses in terms of Tennyson's desire for a life of artistic detachment, a life of indulgence in private aesthetic reverie. The grounds for viewing the

1. Killham, p.111.

presentation of Lotos-land and the lotos-eating life as, among other things, an 'emblem of the imagination',¹ are clear enough. There is, as I have said, the extrinsic evidence of Tennyson's association of Isles of the Blest with the realm of the imagination in 'Timbuctoo'. Then there is the essential correlation between the life of Lotos-land and the introverted life of the mind which is emphasised by the mariners themselves when they ask

why should we toil alone ...

Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm;

Nor harken what the inner spirit sings ... (60, 66-67)

As in 'The Hesperides' the emphasis in 'The Lotos-Eaters' on music, enchantment, timelessness, and the special value placed on organic and unconscious life and on the sanctity of sleep and dream, recall Romantic emphases and valuations regarding the creative life of the mind. Tennyson also invokes traditional symbols of the mythopoeic imagination:

propt on beds of amaranth and moly,

How sweet (while warm airs lull us, blowing lowly)

With half-dropt eyelid still,

Beneath a heaven dark and holy,

To watch the long bright river drawing slowly

His waters from the purple hill ... (133-38)

Tennyson himself observed that amaranth is 'the immortal flower of legend' and moly 'the sacred herb of mystical power'.² These traditional and public symbols are included in a landscape description strongly reminiscent of the more personal symbolic construct denoting the high status of poetic inspiration in 'The Poet's Mind'. In that poem, at the very centre of the garden of the poet's mind,

1. W.E.Buckler, *op.cit.*, p.111.

2. Eversley, I, 374.

leaps a fountain
 Like sheet lightning,
 Ever brightening
 With a low melodious thunder;
 All day and all night it is ever drawn
 From the brain of the purple mountain
 Which stands in the distance yonder:
 It springs on a level of bowery lawn,
 And the mountain draws it from Heaven above,
 And it sings a song of undying love ... (24-33)

E.D.H. Johnson has observed that

The discrimination between two ways of life, the one of artistic detachment, the other of emotional involvement, is construed ... in 'The Lotos-Eaters' The restless dark-blue sea which environs lotos-land reminds the mariners of ... all the strenuous claims of social existence. Within the charmed circle, however, there is surcease from care The fruit of the lotos induces a dream-like state of irresponsibility in which 'the inner spirit sings'.¹

For Johnson, there is nothing to qualify the mariners' (and through them Tennyson's own) impulse to retreat from 'social existence':

after the swooning magic of the seventh stanza has taken the senses captive, the metre of the last stanza changes (following the introductory invocation to the lotos) to express the final troubled moment of decision when the mariners make their choice not to return to the outside world.²

1. The Alien Vision of Victorian Poetry: Sources of the Poetic Imagination in Tennyson, Browning, and Arnold (Princeton, 1952), pp.9-10.

2. ibid. , p.10.

If, however, 'The Hesperides' and 'The Lotos-Eaters' are concerned with the nature of reality itself, the nature of Tennyson's allegiance to the respective interests of the West and the East or of island and sea has to be reinterpreted. Far from sympathising with the powers of the Garden or the Lotos-isle, and far from expressing a desire to retreat from purposeful moral activity, Tennyson may be seen in these works to be recording anger and moral outrage at the conditions under which mankind is forced to live. As poems about the imagination 'The Hesperides' and 'The Lotos-Eaters' reveal a more complex attitude than that which Tennyson expressed in 'The Poet' or in 'The Poet's Mind'. There is in neither poem an argument for retreat into private aesthetic reverie or a portentous claim for the comprehensiveness of the poet's insight. The poems constitute a deeper examination into the problems foreshadowed in the conclusion of 'Timbuctoo'. For we find that the criticism of the eternal principle in 'The Hesperides' and 'The Lotos-Eaters' involves at centre a questioning of the status and limitations of the life of the imagination.

The Romantic concern with areas of experience lying beyond or deeper than the ordinary realm of consciousness was not, of course, developed at the expense of rationality. The special claim for the principle of imagination was that it synthesised conscious and unconscious, willed and unwilled dimensions of the mind. A higher organ of perception, it was thought to subsume and contain rather than merely to oppose the rational faculty. Imaginative experience was for the Romantics a valid means of insight into the human situation, something that brought coherence and meaning to the wide span of daily consciousness and life. Keats was to sum up Romantic attitudes when, in The Fall of Hyperion, he pointed out that the only way of distinguishing the true merit of poetic dreams from those of fanatics

or savages is that there is a level at which poetic reverie is rationally accessible:

... Poesy alone can tell her dreams,
 With the fine spell of words alone can save
 Imagination from the sable charm
 And dumb enchantment. (I. 8-11)

By contrast with the Romantic stress on the possibilities for some form of rational transcription by the poet of supra-normal experience, the emphasis in Tennyson's poem is that that area of experience lying beyond the rational (imaged in the life of the Hesperidian Garden) is entirely unusable in earthly terms. The 'wisdom' whispering in a corner (l.28), which the Sisters insist must not be opened up to the scrutiny of the world, is presented under a different light from that celebrated in 'The Poet'. There the poet 'saw through life and death' (l.5), the 'marvel of the everlasting will,/An open scroll,/Before him lay' (ll.7-9), and with such 'WISDOM' (l.46) he 'shook the world' (l.56). In 'The Poet' the infinite mysteries are translated into legible characters and the poet's wisdom is justified as a meaningful transcendental vision which engages and can enlighten the world. But while Tennyson's Garden of the Hesperides is not strictly one of dumb enchantment, there are essentially no intelligible sounds in Hanno's dream voices (we hear only ritual utterances -- the gnomic impenetrability of the truth of the absolute is suggested through the indecipherable code of the number symbolism in which the Sisters deal: 'Five and three/ ... make an awful mystery', ll.28-29). As the Sisters maintain their secret of 'All things' Hanno is provided with no language by which to relate the truths of the Garden to his conscious life or to interpret the mystery to the world. Likewise, the Sisters' song of hate ('Hesper hateth Phosphor, evening hateth morn', l.82) is to be contrasted with that

'song of undying love' which is heard in the interior garden in 'The Poet's Mind'. What the energies of Tennyson's Hesperidian Garden tell us about the everlasting will as manifest in the human mind and personality is that it is an enemy to those self-consciously formulated values by which man strives to mould a sensitive and a moral universe. Identification with the root and spring of imaginative life is not presented in 'The Hesperides' as something which, while involving a modification of ordinary consciousness and will, nevertheless constitutes an expansion and fulfilment of identity. For we see only an obliteration and negation of recognisable human meaning in the mindless, amoral drive of the Sisters' incantation. Draining the sea of time and space off the top of the mind is not in this poem a necessarily energising process. Hanno cannot return to the world as Endymion from the Bower of Adonis, regenerated with manna plucked by the three Hesperides, and enlightened by a loving interpreter who gives him proper knowledge of the immortal things around him.

A comparable view of the bases of the mind is exhibited in 'The Lotos-Eaters'. It is true the Romantics tended to view the deeper, creative life of the mind on analogy with the unselfconscious life of nature. But that nature tended always to be stirring with a spiritual reality that was at once larger than nature. Sympathy with natural life could contribute to an enhancement of man's higher self. But in 'The Lotos-Eaters' there are no leavening spiritual instincts in nature whatsoever. As an image of the deepest levels of the mind the dream-like world of Lotos-land suggests little which could be deemed enlivening. Approaching these levels the mariners approach an abandonment of ordinary consciousness and personality without gaining insight into meaning of any kind. Tennyson's poem makes an anti-Romantic identification between the matrix of the imagination and sub-

human, sub-rational incoherence and mindlessness. The lotos-eating life is not available to the mariners as human beings, and, the poem implicitly tells us, the idea of a tension or contradiction between the moral sense and the interior life of the imagination is not an idea which means anything in human terms.

CHAPTER 3

BURNING FIRE: 'OENONE'

To no lesser extent than in commentary on 'The Hesperides' and 'The Lotos-Eaters', the theme of the dichotomy between the poet's private interests and his public responsibilities has directed critical discussion of 'Oenone'. E.D.H. Johnson has seen the poem, with its clear concern with moral issues, demonstrating Tennyson's acceptance that 'the imagination could not be allowed to remain a law unto itself, but must be submitted to a higher tribunal'.¹ D.J.Palmer adopts a similar position but also sees a basic contradiction in the work when he argues that the 'moral fable' is not assimilated to the 'poetry of feeling': 'the moral weighting of the poem works against its sensuous feeling'. Palmer accepts that the moral theme of 'Oenone' consists of a conventional allegory of choice between 'the wisdom of Pallas and the sensual passion of Venus'.² Valerie Pitt holds a related view and also considers the legend of the Judgement of Paris to be an unsuitable vehicle for the kind of moral point she assumes Tennyson to be making: 'the stiffness and unsubtlety of the overt moral hinders ... the other, the latent meanings of the story, from coming to the surface'. She sees the work concerned with the typically Tennysonian, but in itself not 'particularly Victorian', theme of the conflict between Sense and Conscience.³ In other words, she finds the poet endorsing in 'Oenone' an essentially Christian view of the moral life: the view that man -- although tainted with the sin of the Fall and assailed by the promptings of his lower nature -- retains the

1. op.cit., p.10.

2. op.cit., pp.38-40.

3. Tennyson Laureate (London, 1962), pp.71,53.

freedom of will to control his natural appetites and to act in the direction of purity through obeying the dictates of conscience, understood as the authoritative source of moral imperatives that are grounded in absolute spiritual truth and law. The 'overt moral' of 'Oenone' thus consists of a ruling that Paris is morally at fault in choosing Aphrodite because, in so doing, he acts not according to law but according to impulse.

It is certainly true that definite moral polarities are introduced into the poem in the form of the gifts offered to Paris by the three disputant goddesses. Herè is committed to working solely within the term of nature ('Power fitted to the season', l.121). Douglas Bush has noted 'the parallel between the substance and language of Herè's offer to Paris and *Paradise Regained*, III. 255 ff'.¹ The passage echoed by Tennyson is that in which Satan tempts Christ with a prospect of temporal power, an offer which Christ rejects as 'ostentation vain of fleshly arm'. Aphrodite, unmistakeably, is associated with all that tempts man to abandonment in the life of the senses. Pallas, however, insists that it is only through the exercise of "Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control" (l.142) that true power, the power to live in accordance with ethical rule, is achieved. Asserting that the will is a pure moral force which can remain uncompromised by active involvement in the world, she rests with the belief that the human will is free to bring itself into the "perfect freedom" (l.164) of harmony with absolute law.

But it seems to me that this highly traditional scheme of values is not imported uncritically into 'Oenone'. Rather, the basic features of an ethical system founded on the idea of a strict dichotomy between

1. Mythology and the Romantic Tradition in English Poetry (Cambridge, Mass., 1937), p.204.

the flesh and the spirit are adumbrated in the poem only in order that important questions may be put regarding the adequacy or validity of such a system. Far from being obscured in Tennyson's treatment, some of what Valerie Pitt referred to as the 'latent meanings' of the original story of the Judgement of Paris have a considerable bearing on the moral and metaphysical issues raised in 'Oenone'. In the first section of my discussion I shall begin some preliminary observations on the poem with reference to one of the poet's most important classical sources, the Heroides of Ovid,¹ before going on in the second and third sections to my main consideration of the work.

i

In the sixteenth epistle of the Heroides Paris, writing to Helen after the Judgement has taken place, declares to her the unquenchable fire of his love. He stresses how unavoidable was this love through invoking the dream of his mother Hecuba while he was still in the womb:

I am in love Thus have the fates decreed ... Listen to words told faithfully and true. I was still in my mother's bosom It seemed to her in the vision of a dream that she put forth from her full womb a mighty flaming torch. In

1. For a full inventory of the sources and classical allusions -- 'in particular Ovid's Heroides and Theocritus' -- see the commentary on 'Oenone' in Ricks, pp.384 -98.

terror she rose up, and told the dread vision of opaque
 night to ancient Priam; he told it to his seers. One of the
 seers sang that Ilion would burn with the fire of Paris --
 that was the torch of my heart, as now has come to pass!

(Heroides, XVI. 40b,41a,42-43a,45-50)

The irony here and throughout this epistle is that despite Paris's preoccupation with fire he insists on remaining blind to the more disturbing implication of Hecuba's dream: that the fire of his love will also prove the fire of war consuming Troy. In Oenone's own address to Paris, she describes his inconstancy -- again in terms which foreshadow the burning of Troy -- as the lightness of dried leaves or the 'tip of the spear of grain, burned light and crisp by ever-shining suns' (Heroides, V. 111b-112). But it remains very clear that Ovid's Oenone 'remains chaste' (Heroides, V.133), that she has not succumbed to a dangerous passion in the manner of Paris. In Ovid, fire as a conventional metaphor for the heats of love is used with specific reference to Paris, and through Paris is built a strict and limited application of the image to the literal fires of Troy.

Tennyson's poem does not, of course, forget the basic story of the fateful passion of Paris and the conflagration of Troy --

the wild Cassandra ... says

A fire dances before her, and a sound

Rings ever in her ears of armed men (259-61)

-- but in 'Oenone' the principal and distinctive function of the imagery of fire is to define not the situation of Paris or of Troy but rather Oenone's experience of herself after the Judgement:

fiery thoughts

Do shape themselves within me ... (242-43)

Not only does Tennyson's Oenone burn after the Judgement but, at

certain points, the poem presents the landscape in which she is set as being withered and consumed along with her. Stopford Brooke wrote in 1894 that 'we can no more divide Oenone from the Nature in which she is placed than we can separate the soul from the body of a friend'.¹ In a more modern idiom Gerhard Joseph has spoken of the way in which 'the peculiarly Tennysonian talent, that ability to charge the landscape with the ~~psyche~~ ^{psyche} of a speaker, controls the structure' of both 'Mariana' and 'Oenone'.²

It is, indeed, true that the landscape functions in 'Oenone' as a kind of 'objective correlative' of Oenone's state of mind and feeling. At this level there is no formal symbolic procedure involved in the presentation of landscape. The peculiar achievement is that the psychological and emotional significations are contained within and are indistinguishable from the literal representation of natural detail. But whether Tennyson's technique in this respect can be said to control the structure of 'Oenone' in the same way as can be said of 'Mariana' is doubtful. 'Oenone', unlike 'Mariana', can be seen to be structured more fundamentally around a set of ideas. In speaking of ideas in the poem I am not referring to the easy moral sentiments which David Palmer sees as yoked merely by violence to a poetry of feeling. The ideas I have in mind enter and exercise themselves in the poem through Tennyson's 'calculated and willed' use of symbolism, his 'deliberate mental translation of concepts into illustrative ... sensuous terms'.³ Throughout 'Oenone' there may be discerned a series of distinct image-motifs or patterns of symbolism. These occur, predominantly, within the representation of landscape in the poem. There is, as we shall see, a significantly close connection between

1. Tennyson: *His Art and Relation to Modern Life* (London, 1894), p.117.

2. *op.cit.*, pp.46-47.

3. René Wellek and Austin Warren, *loc.cit.*

literal and symbolic dimensions in the presentation of landscape. But it should be noted that the symbolic values of the poem also exist on their own terms and appear, at certain points, independently of the landscape descriptions. In 'Mariana' the objectification of mind in terms of literal landscape detail operates within a purely psychological or emotional frame of reference. While there is a comparable frame of reference in 'Oenone', the specifically symbolic elements embedded in but which also extend beyond the landscape descriptions enable Tennyson to signify not only Oenone's state of mind and feeling but also her spiritual and moral condition. It is only by taking into account the special symbolic register in 'Oenone' that we can approach some of the deeper meanings of the poem.

ii

The distinguishing physical characteristic of Oenone's world on the dawn of the Judgement day is a pristine coldness -- specifically that of frozen water:

I waited underneath the dawning hills ...
 Far up the solitary morning smote
 The streaks of virgin snow. (46, 54-55)

The account of this landscape introduces us to one of the primary symbolic features of the poem: the signification of a state of spiritual innocence and purity through an imagery of cold. The spiritual and moral connotations of such an imagery become clear when we note that of the three goddesses who arrive to be judged it is Pallas who is associated with coldness:

Pallas where she stood
 Somewhat apart, her clear and bared limbs

O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed spear
 Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold,
 The while, above, her full and earnest eye
 Over her snow-cold breast and angry cheek ...

(135-40)

Throughout 'Oenone' the cold and snow identified with Oenone's virginal morning world and with the august and upright Pallas are set against an imagery of heat and fire. This imagery is related to a particular phase of the time scheme observed in the poem. It is when the sun has reached its zenith on the day of the Judgement -- in the 'deep midnight' (l.90) when the goddesses manifest themselves -- that the element of fire first appears in association with the landscape:

Naked they came to that smooth-swarded bower,
 And at their feet the crocus brake like fire ...

(93-94)

The fire in this last line connects with the fire that dances before Cassandra and with the fiery thoughts of Oenone herself on the afternoon of the day on which she sings her song. The specifically moral connotations of the motif of heat and fire in 'Oenone' are apparent when we consider the representation of one other of the three goddesses who arrive at midnight to be judged. In direct contrast with the fixity of Pallas's 'snow-cold breast', Aphrodite is presented in terms of warm, sunlit, watery flow:

Idalian Aphrodite beautiful,
 Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian wells,
 With rosy slender fingers backward drew
 From her warm brows and bosom her deep hair
 Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat
 And shoulder: from the violets her light foot

Shone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded form
 Between the shadows of the vine-bunches
 Floated the glowing sunlights, as she moved.

(170-78)

As I have noted, the peculiar function of the imagery of heat and fire is to define Oenone's experience of herself after the Judgement. While we may know that Paris falls prey to Aphrodite's warm sensuality, we can hardly fail to notice that on the afternoon of her song Oenone herself becomes an intense, vibrantly anguished extreme of Aphrodite as elements of heat and water combine in the description of her desire for Paris:

Most loving is she?

Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that my arms
 Were wound about thee, and my hot lips prest
 Close, close to thine in that quick-falling dew
 Of fruitful kisses, thick as Autumn rains
 Flash in the pools of whirling Simois.

(197-202)

As it develops during the course of her song we find that the imagery of fire and heat indicates more than a conventional emotion of sorrow on Oenone's part; rather, it defines the way in which she is seriously distorted and undermined by unmanageable energies of hate, envy, jealousy, and sexual desire. Tennyson's Oenone may not find another lover, but neither can she be said to remain spiritually chaste. Oenone's abandonment to her passion during the afternoon of her song stands in pointed contrast with the virginal frigidity of her dawn world on the day of the Judgement and with the sympathy she expresses for the ideals of self-knowledge and self-control when, in the course of the midnight Judgement scene, she appeals to Paris to award the

fruit to Pallas.

The moral theme of 'Oenone' is usually considered solely with reference to Paris's behaviour. But it seems to me that Tennyson is concerned to explore the basic moral issue concerning the failure of self-control primarily in terms of Oenone herself. Indeed, Tennyson's representation of Paris's behaviour may be seen to raise more questions than it answers about the moral issue at stake in the poem. Rather than being able to identify in Paris's actions the cause and explanation of Oenone's predicament after the Judgement, there is an important sense in which we are forced by Tennyson's handling of the story to look directly at Oenone's experience for insights into both her own and Paris's condition. This point may best be approached through a consideration of the manner in which Tennyson's Judgement of Paris conceived as moral drama serves at once as an emblem of the Fall (or fall) itself.

The contrast marked out in the poem between Oenone before and after the Judgement is essentially that between a state of innocence and one of experience. The overall contrast is given detailed expression in the poem in Tennyson's transformation of a small item in Ovid. After the Judgement Tennyson's Oenone complains that the pines of her valley were cut down. 'The germ' of this complaint, Paul Turner has observed, comes from the Heroides (V.41-42) where Oenone tells how her 'firs were felled, the timbers hewn'. In Ovid, Turner notes, 'Oenone's only objection to the felling of the pines is that it provides transport for Paris and Helen'. Tennyson, says Turner simply, gives Oenone 'a more poetical attitude to trees'.¹ But the matter is more interesting than that. In Tennyson's passage Oenone laments the loss as the passing of an early, unchartered world and of the

1. 'Some Ancient Light on Tennyson's "Oenone"', Journal of English and Germanic Philology, LXI (1962), pp.66-67.

integrity of being associated with that world:

They came, they cut away my tallest pines,
 My tall dark pines, that plumed the craggy ledge
 High over the blue gorge, and all between
 The snowy peak and snow-white cataract
 Fostered the callow eaglet -- from beneath
 Whose thick mysterious boughs in the dark morn
 The panther's roar came muffled, while I sat
 Low in the valley. Never, never more
 Shall lone Oenone see the morning mist
 Sweep through them; never see them overlaid
 With narrow moon-lit slips of silver cloud,
 Between the loud stream and the trembling stars.

(204-15)

Oenone's account of the environment which remains, and it is a notable example of Tennyson's talent for projecting a 'disturbance within the human psyche onto a crumbling landscape',¹ potentially suggests a condition of violated innocence, a condition of profound spiritual aridity and deprivation:

I wish that somewhere in the ruined folds,
 Among the fragments tumbled from the glens,
 Or the dry thickets ... (217-19)

The lapsarian connotations of Oenone's experience in Tennyson's version of the Judgement of Paris appear to be highlighted during the course of the Judgement scene itself when Oenone describes Paris's response to Herè's offer:

She ceased, and Paris held the costly fruit
 Out at arm's length ... (133-34)

1. Gerhard Joseph, op.cit., p.47.

No doubt the costliness of the fruit refers at one level merely to the fact that it is made out of 'pure Hesperian gold' (l.65), but there is in the phrase a reminiscence of Christian metaphors concerning the price or wages of sin, the spiritual cost to man of eating the Forbidden Fruit. Tennyson would appear to be drawing on a traditional identification of the Apple of Strife with the fatal fruit of Eden. He appears further to underline the importance of his Judgement of Paris as a type of fall, and also directs us to the lapsarian significations of the imagery of fire in his poem, precisely at that point in the narrative when the goddesses arrive to be judged:

It was the deep midnight ...
 Naked they came to that smooth-swarded bower,
 And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,
 Violet, amaracus, and asphodel,
 Lotos and lilies: and a wind arose ...

(90, 93-96)

Christopher Ricks compares these lines with Paradise Lost, IV, lines 700-702, which deal with the bower of Adam and Eve:

underfoot the violet,
 Crocus, and hyacinth with rich inlay
 Broidered the ground ...

Ricks also notes that a draft version (in a holograph manuscript fragment of 'Oenone' now in the Henry E. Huntington Library, California) of Tennyson's lines 94-95 above 'included a further allusion to Milton':¹

1. Ricks, p.390. The Huntington MS. draft of 'Oenone' constitutes a stage in Tennyson's revision of the poem between the text published in Poems, 1832 and that published in Poems, 1842. Tennyson's MS. alterations of the work between 1832 and 1842 afford a number of important insights into his poetic intentions and in the course of this chapter I refer on a number of occasions to draft revisions from this period. The place of the Huntington MS. draft in the sequence of revision has been identified by Philip Gaskell in his discussion of

That darkened all with violets underneath
 Thro' which like fire the sudden crocus came,
 Amaracus, immortal asphodel, ...

Ricks observes the correspondences between Tennyson's lines and the pre-lapsarian bower in the fourth book of Paradise Lost, but there would also seem to be a close, if not a closer, allusion in Tennyson to Adam and Eve's post-lapsarian condition in a bower in Paradise Lost, IX. 1036-41:

... Eve, whose eye darted contagious fire.
 Her hand he seized, and to a shady bank,
 Thick overhead with verdant roof embowered
 He led her nothing loth; flowers were the couch,
 Pansies, and violets, and asphodel,
 And hyacinth, earth's freshest softest lap.

It is the breaking out of a metaphorical fire amid a paradisaal nature that is important and which distinguishes the account of this bower in Book Nine from the original bower of Adam and Eve in Book Four. That the fire in Milton may be compared with the element of fire which appears in Tennyson's bower and then goes on to define Oenone's spiritual decline, the transformation of her ideal pastoral world, and beyond that the destruction of Troy, can be appreciated if we remember how in Paradise Lost fire is something associated precisely with the change that takes place in the nature of human experience as a result of the Fall. Before the Fall man was 'Guiltless of fire' (IX.392) in

the textual development of 'Oenone' in From Writer to Reader: Studies in Editorial Method (Oxford, 1978), pp.118-41. In his survey, however, Gaskell fails to notice three stages (one of major importance) in the development of the work between 1832 and 1842. In Appendix C I have provided an account of these three stages in relation to the seven stages of revision between 1832 and 1842 described by Gaskell. For details on the various documents and on the relative positions in the textual development of 'Oenone' of draft material cited in my critical discussion, readers are referred to Appendix C.

both a literal and figurative sense. As in the passage from Book Nine above, fire is a symbol of man's lower drives, a symbol of lust, the precursor of all those unruly forces which shake the mind of man after the Fall: 'high passions, anger, hate,/Mistrust, suspicion, discord' (IX.1123-24). Fire does have a more positive aspect in Paradise Lost and is associated with the technology employed by post-lapsarian man in order to cope with a hostile natural environment so different from the benign pastoral world of Eden. But since the establishing of civilisation is itself necessitated only as a consequence of the Fall, fire, as an image of man's constructive abilities, inevitably retains a demonic and destructive aspect. Thus, when Adam is granted a vision of future human history before his expulsion from the Garden, he sees it afflicted with the pains of war and with the 'sulphurous fire' of besieged cities (XI.658).

If there are Miltonic possibilities in the metaphorical fire which appears in the 'bower' at the 'deep midnight' (ll.92,90) of Tennyson's Judgement day, we should not forget Milton's specification of the time of temptation on the day of the Fall:

Mean while the hour of noon drew on, and waked

An eager appetite ... (IX.739-40)

Similarly, just as the stable world of Eden begins to suffer 'change' in Paradise Lost (X.213; XI,193), the herald of those many changes which will affect the state of man and creation as a consequence of the Fall, so Oenone complains of the 'change' (l.223) from her experience of the world before the Judgement. Oenone's complaint brings us to the root complexity of Tennyson's poem. She wishes she could find Eris, goddess of strife or discord:

I wish that somewhere in the ruined folds,

Among the fragments tumbled from the glens,

Or the dry thickets, I could meet with her
 The Abominable, that uninvited came
 Into the fair Peleian banquet-hall,
 And cast the golden fruit upon the board,
 And bred this change; that I might speak my mind,
 And tell her to her face how much I hate
 Her presence, hated both of Gods and men.

(217-25)

In Milton, neither Adam nor Eve would have sanction to make such a protest. They are themselves both clearly responsible for failing to observe the Divine injunction against eating the Forbidden Fruit. For Oenone, however, while she has experienced a change in both inner and outer worlds, she cannot locate a cause of that change in some morally and religiously culpable act of her own will. If there were nothing more than a straightforward problem of an altered human relationship and a simple moral drama in the poem then we should expect Oenone to trace the origin of her discomfort simply and directly to Paris. The fact that she does not do this returns us to the special aspects of Tennyson's treatment of the story of the Judgement of Paris. In the first place there is, as I have shown, an important sense in which qualitative distinctions between Paris's behaviour and Oenone's are obscured as we see Oenone herself capitulating to Aphrodite's mode of being on the afternoon of her song. By the absolute moral standards of a Pallas, it is clear that Oenone fails in a manner comparable to Paris and that there is an area of her experience after the Judgement for which he cannot be held simply and directly responsible. Secondly, the question of the nature and origin of Oenone's pain is affected by the other point I have already touched on: that Tennyson's representation of Paris's behaviour raises more questions about the

issue of moral responsibility than it answers. Tennyson's treatment of the events of the Judgement scene itself raises a doubt as to how far Paris may really be held accountable for his actions during that scene. As I propose to show, the poet effectively removes Paris from consideration as the primary cause of Oenone's pain. These two special features of the poem are an integral part of Tennyson's casting of the whole affair of the Judgement as a type of fall, and of his insistence that we should look to the record not of Paris's but of Oenone's experience for an understanding of both their situations after the Judgement.

A. Dwight Culler has spoken of the way in which Paris's will 'caves in' when it comes to Aphrodite's tempting offer.¹ Such a precise picture of the motions of Paris's will has to be assumed if the reader is to see a straightforward moral statement in the poem. But we are not, in fact, shown the details of any decision-making process on Paris's part. While there is detail of a certain kind in the scene as Oenone recounts it, there is an extraordinary lack of clarity at critical points of the drama. Paris, we hear, was so taken with Herè's offer that he 'held the costly fruit/Out at arm's length, so much the thought of power/Flattered his spirit' (ll.133-35). The gesture of proffering the fruit in this manner would seem to represent a positive response to Herè. We might be forgiven for thinking that it represents a decision to award the fruit to her. Apparently this is not so. Oenone's speech moves directly into an account of Pallas's words: 'but Pallas where she stood .../... made reply' (ll.135,41). We are left entirely in the dark concerning the resolution of Paris's action of holding out the fruit. If it did not signify a ruling in favour of Herè then we are not shown the route by which Paris decides against his initial thought to hold the fruit out to her. We might

1. op.cit., p.77.

assume that he is simply waiting to hear all three offers before coming to a decision and that his action of stretching out his arm is insignificant in itself. It will be seen, however, that such a reading is not entirely satisfactory. After the conclusion of Pallas's speech we are told that Paris 'pondered' (l.165). But here Oenone intrudes with her plea to Paris to grant the fruit to Pallas. In her report Oenone raises the possibility that Paris deliberately refused to heed her call. This would be first and foremost a decision to disregard Oenone rather than a direct refusal of Pallas. Moreover, it is not certain that Paris did decline to listen to her ('he heard me not,/Or hearing would not hear me', ll.166-67). Following Oenone's appeal Aphrodite moves immediately into the picture. As in the case of Here, events progress in the absence of any definite and explicit refusal to grant the fruit to Pallas. Once again, Paris may just be waiting to hear all three offers before reaching conclusion. Here, however, there is the matter of Oenone's acute apprehension regarding Aphrodite. Oenone relates that she shut her sight 'for fear' when Aphrodite 'spoke and laughed' (l.184). An interpretation of this reaction might be that Paris has already definitely denied the fruit to Here and Pallas. Otherwise, if the issue is still genuinely open, it is not entirely clear why Oenone should have such forebodings concerning Aphrodite. But even if we suppose either that Paris has already made up his mind, or that he is deferring judgement, there remain further complications in the granting of the fruit to Aphrodite. Oenone says:

I shut my sight for fear:

But when I looked, Paris had raised his arm,

And I beheld great Here's angry eyes,

As she withdrew ...

(185-87)

Paris no more than raises his arm and the drama is suddenly over. If we are to take this gesture as evidence of a decision in favour of Aphrodite we might well ask why Paris's positively outstretched arm to Herè should not have denoted just such a decision. There may have been a stage of deliberation accompanying the presentation of the fruit to Aphrodite which distinguishes this gesture from the earlier one. But, again, no details of it are presented. At no point in the Judgement scene are we presented with an unmistakeable and unambiguous act denoting a decision. (Given the curious manner in which Paris maintains a complete silence throughout the scene we cannot underestimate the importance of outward, physical gesture as a token of decision.) We have, in effect, a drama of judgement presented so indirectly as to force us at all times to assume or infer choice. The opacity of the fundamental processes of the Judgement scene gives rise to a sense of unreality about Paris's involvement with and responsibility for the developing pattern of the action, an impression that his supposed freedom of choice may in fact be something of a fiction.

It is, after all, a central idea of the original legend that Paris's career is a fated one, a theme we have already seen expressed in the story of Hecuba's dream before his birth. (In the Epitome of Appollodorus, for example, we find the notion that the Trojan war had long been planned by Zeus and that the events leading up to it, including the Judgement of Paris, all had a predetermined character.) This feature of the original story should in itself alert us to the possibility that Tennyson's moral statement in 'Oenone' may not be entirely straightforward. There are obvious difficulties attending the use of a story of 'fate' as the setting for a moral drama based on the idea of free-will. The writer who would make of the story a

conventional allegory of choice must suppress any hint that the outcome of the Judgement of Paris may have been decided in advance. James Beattie, for instance, undertook such a suppression when he wrote 'The Judgement of Paris', a poem which is sometimes compared -- in details of 'description, phrasing and moralising'¹ -- with Tennyson's work. But it seems that the idea of fate was not far from Tennyson's mind in his conception and composition of 'Oenone'. In the 1832 version of the poem Paris, showing the golden apple to Oenone before the Judgement, seems to have some prefigurement of the way things will turn out:

70 Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind ingrav'n
 71 "For the most fair," in aftertime may breed
 72 Deep evilwilledness of heaven and sere
 73 Heartburning toward hallowed Ilion;
 74 And all the colour of my afterlife
 75 Will be the shadow of today ...

Alterations to this passage inscribed by the poet in a copy of the 1832 Poems now in the Tennyson Research Centre (Lincoln B copy) show an attempt to strengthen the implication that a disastrous issue to the Judgement is in some sense a foregone conclusion. Making minor changes in lines 71 and 72 of the 1832 text, Tennyson inserted a line between lines 73-74 and substituted 'That' for 'And' at the beginning of line 74 so that the speech reads:

Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind ingrav'n
 "For the most fair," in years to come may breed
 Deep sense of injury from heaven and sere
 Heartburning toward hallowed Ilion;
 And in my mind I certainly foreknow

1. Douglas Bush, op.cit., p.203.

That all the colour of my afterlife
Will be the shadow of today ...

In his later revisions of Paris's speech Tennyson omitted any such direct reference -- as perhaps rather clumsily subversive of the overt drama of moral choice -- to the dark fatefulness of Paris's career. But in a draft revision of the opening lines of the speech in a manuscript notebook now at Trinity College, Cambridge (T. Nbk.26, f.29^r) Tennyson drew attention to the inherent complexities in Paris's position as arbiter through reminding us of the manner in which he is -- by virtue of the gods' own inability to decide -- the heir of original strife in heaven. Tennyson emphasises, in other words, that the very grounds of Paris's new found freedom are infected with discord and confusion and that the apparent gift of a power to choose may in itself constitute a kind of curse:

Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind engrav'n
'For the most fair' among the happy Gods
Breeds question & perplexeth Heaven with feud
And unto me, selected arbiter
To judge betwixt them, Here comes to-day ...

By the time he came to publish the revised version of 'Oenone' in 1842 Tennyson had resolved upon the following, more subtle indication of the fateful determination of Paris's life:

Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind ingraven
'For the most fair,' would seem to award it thine,
As lovelier than whatever Oread haunt
The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace
Of movement ... (70-74)

Paris's observation that Oenone would seem to be the rightful recipient of the fruit raises by implication the question of why it cannot be awarded to her. More clearly than at any point in the Judgement scene, Paris expresses in these lines a preference regarding the person to whom he would award the fruit. But Paris cannot make the award to Oenone since such a course of action has no place in the divine plan of which he is a part. By putting these words into Paris's mouth Tennyson quietly draws attention to the fact that while Paris may have been allotted a role which appears to open up a realm of ethical choice, there are conditions attached to the dispensation which limit the scope and nature of his freedom.

In essence, Tennyson's handling of the Judgement scene allows for a level of meaning in the poem at which both Oenone and Paris may be seen to be caught up in a development which is not entirely of their own making. It is wholly consistent with the larger meanings attached to the story of the Judgement of Paris in this work that Oenone should direct the thrust of her protest not at her erstwhile lover but at Eris. The predicament Tennyson constructs for Oenone is one in which she enters a world of impurity and pain but is without an adequate explanation of the origins of that condition. We are invited by the poet to look at Oenone's experience after the Judgement as imaging specifically the problems of a fallen world. Yet behind the presentation of this world there is no supporting Christian fable: no conception of evil as stemming from a personal rebellion against a personal rule, no God of absolute goodness and love, and no scheme of redemption. Behind the story of the Judgement of Paris lie only the capricious divinities of Greek mythology. The basic story of the Judgement of Paris recounts that all was well at the marriage-feast of Thetis and Peleus until Eris, seeking revenge for not having been

invited to the ceremony, cast among the attendant gods the golden apple inscribed 'To the most fair'. Dispute broke out in heaven as to whom it should be awarded and since, for his own reasons, Zeus declined to arbitrate, it was agreed to delegate the decision to Paris. Stopford Brooke observed of Tennyson's Oenone: 'Her common sorrow is lifted almost into the proportions of Greek tragedy by its cause and its results. It is caused by a quarrel in Olympus, and the mountain-nymph is sacrificed without a thought to the vanity of the careless gods'.¹ 'Oenone' may not be Greek tragedy, but it would seem to express a nineteenth-century sense of the difficulty of living in a world unprotected by a Christian vision of divine justice and providence.

The gods in 'Oenone' are important, of course, insofar as they reflect, in their fundamental anthropomorphism, qualities within the human condition itself or insofar as the powers and forces with which they are associated represent powers or forces in nature. This is evident not only in the presentation of Pallas, Herè and Aphrodite, but also in the treatment of Eris.

The particular human significance of the first three goddesses emerges in the manner that they are associated, as we have seen, with an imagery of water -- the contrasting affiliations of the two most important figures, Pallas and Aphrodite, being with cold and with warm water respectively. This links them with the primary association that is made in the poem between Oenone and water. Tennyson's Oenone affirms that she is 'the daughter of a River-God'(1.37) and that her mother is 'many-fountained Ida' (1.22). Throughout the poem water and the modifications of water constitute a symbolic motif through which Oenone's identity and changing experience are explored. Her spiritual

1. op.cit., p.119.

development is symbolically registered as a movement from landscapes characterised by cold and frozen water to those characterised by warmth and flowing water; or, more simply, as a movement from moist to dessicated landscapes (the 'dry thickets', l.219, after the Judgement stand in simple contrast with the landscape on the morning before the Judgement, when: ' the mountain lawn was dewy-dark,/And dewy dark aloft the mountain pine' and when 'Far-off the torrent called me from the cleft', ll.47-48, 53). In their accommodation to the terms of the motif of water the goddesses complement the use of landscape in the symbolic representation of tendencies of Oenone's own being. And if, at a dramatic level, the goddesses define the overt terms of the moral drama as it relates to Paris, then through the imagery of water they involve Oenone in that drama. The peculiar assumption of Tennyson's poem is, as I have maintained, that the problems of the Judgement scene are problems of Oenone's experience of herself. The demonstration at a symbolic level of Oenone's engagement with the issues and tensions of that scene is reinforced by the manner in which she does in some measure actively participate in the drama. There is the instance of her intrusion in support of Pallas, but more than this we notice the prevailing tone of her account of Aphrodite (ll.170-78, quoted above, pp.108-109). In this passage, Oenone's nervous apprehension concerning the charms of Aphrodite combines with and perhaps springs from the fact that she is herself clearly deeply affected by the sensual beauty of the goddess. The entranced, admiring rhythms of her description may tell us little about Paris's reaction to Aphrodite, but they quite directly betray Oenone's own reaction. If we are looking for evidence of a tension between the claims of Pallas and those of Aphrodite within Oenone herself, evidence of a shift in her disposition away from the frigid purity

associated with the dawn and with Pallas before her afternoon display of the exaggerated features of an Aphrodite, then it is here that we find it, although there is no question of her response being presented as something which involves a freely willed decision to change allegiance.

With regard to the treatment of Eris in lines 217-25 (quoted above, pp. 114-15), we find that at the same time as the literal, dramatic terms of the story are preserved, Eris's distinct identity as a personification of Strife is broken down so that she may appear simply a fact of human experience, a reality inherent in the order of things. It is not because Eris has literally entered Oenone's world and then literally disappeared again that Oenone cannot find her to accuse her to her face. Nor⁵ is it merely that she is unavailable because she began a chain of events which led to Oenone's sorrow in some place quite removed from Ida. As Oenone says, Eris is immediately at hand in her world, but only in the sense that she is a 'presence' (l.225) diffused temporally and spatially throughout that world. The point of Oenone's complaint, a point perhaps emphasised by the fact that Oenone never actually addresses her by name, is that Eris is inscrutable in personal terms. Discord may be a pressing reality of Oenone's experience after the Judgement but she is destined to be frustrated in her attempt to identify any individual first cause of the phenomenon. As an ineluctable presence the most that discord is allowed in Oenone's song is the status of a capitalised abstraction: 'The Abominable' (l.220). It is as such a presence that Eris is 'hated both of Gods and men' (l.225). A detail of the classical story, the exclusion of Eris from the list of wedding guests, acquires a special significance in the context of Oenone's metaphysical complaint: for her use of the word 'uninvited' (l.220) to describe Eris at once contains the literal meaning of the classical story and points to the

absence of any willing invitation to evil on the part either of men or of gods as men.

If the portrayal of the actual events of the Judgement scene leaves us uncertain as to the precise nature of the process by which both Oenone and Paris fall into a corrupt reality, then there is some indication, in the presentation of the midnight landscape, that the forces and energies which characterise their experience after the Judgement are derived by an organic process of evolution out of their pre-Judgement world. It will be necessary to return to several passages already quoted in order to trace this development.

As we have seen, the spiritual focus of Oenone's dawn world is indicated through its association with water and especially with frozen water: 'the solitary morning smote/The streaks of virgin snow' (11.54-55). Here the symbolic connotations of spiritual and moral purity combine with suggestions of a natural form of stability and firmness of definition, although our attention is called to the threat presented to the cold fixity of that state by the rising of the sun. In Oenone's later account of her beloved dawn world (11.204-15, quoted above, p. 111) water and snow appear again: 'all between/The snowy peak and snow-white cataract/Fostered the callow eaglet' (11.206-208). In the same passage we also note Oenone's fond regard for the 'narrow moon-lit slips of silver cloud' (1.214). At the noon of the Judgement day one of these clouds appears again, no longer moon-lit, but held in the glare of the ascendant sun:

It was the deep midnight: one silvery cloud

Had lost his way between the piney sides

Of this long glen. Then to the bower they came,
 Naked they came to that smooth-swarded bower,
 And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,
 Violet, amaracus, and asphodel,
 Lotos and lilies: and a wind arose
 And overhead the wandering ivy and vine,
 This way and that, in many a wild festoon
 Ran riot ... (90-99)

Martin Dodsworth has observed that 'The cloud and Oenone are both lost at this moment of the story. The cloud is out of its element in the fire of the sun, as Oenone is out of hers when Paris draws the fiery goddesses to him'.¹ It is true that the cloud is intimately associated through the element of water with Oenone, but the sets of opposition in this scene do not entirely conform to the pattern envisaged by Martin Dodsworth. The important point about this cloud mislaid under the midday sun is that it is not an isolated symbol of Oenone but that it belongs, as has been seen, to a dawn landscape. It is essentially Oenone's cold and watery dawn landscape which is out of place here in the midnoon. The idea that an entire landscape is misplaced and lost at this stage of the day is underlined in the manner that even the ivy and vine are described as wandering. There are, in fact, two landscapes, or conditions of landscape, in this scene. One is astray and out of place at midnoon and looks back through the silvery cloud to the early part of the Judgement day. The other is one where the sun finds an answering fire² in the crocus and where the ivy and vine are

1. op.cit., p.32.

2. The literal fieriness of the sun is a theme which is left implicit in the 1842 version of 'Oenone'. But a cancelled autograph revision of the poem in a further copy of the 1832 Poems in the Tennyson Research Centre (Lincoln A copy) shows that Tennyson once thought of accommodating the sun explicitly to the imagery of fire in the poem. In his alterations in this copy the poet first tried substituting 'far

directed out of their wandering into a riot. (The disturbing mode of re-direction experienced by the ivy and vine serves to endorse and amplify the disturbing significance of the imagery of fire.) The fundamental contrast in this passage is not between the wateriness of the cloud and of Oenone, on one hand, and the fire of the goddesses, on the other, but between two landscapes, both equally symbolic of Oenone's spiritual being. Martin Dodsworth reads the firelike appearance of the crocus as the fieriness of the goddesses. But the arrival of the goddesses is not presented simply as a destructive influx of energy: the active verb 'brake' establishes the impression, rather, of a release of energy. The violent appearance of the crocus is linked with the other manifestation of energy in the scene: the wind which produces the riot of nature. The manner in which this wind arises again points not to a simple invasion but to an eruption of potencies latent within Oenone's pastoral world. That we do not merely have an alien power disrupting the perfect equanimity of an unsuspecting world, but a development intrinsic to that world is evident in the manner in which the cloud, the ivy, and the vine are lost and wandering, pressing for somewhere to go, before the goddesses arrive. There is a delicate restlessness about the little cloud poised and waiting above the valley which indicates that the stillness of the scene before the arrival of the goddesses is to some extent illusory, that it is not a condition of settled tranquillity or of peaceful repletion. There is at the outset suspense as well as suspension in the brooding heat of midnoon. The idea that the fire of the crocus is in some significant measure intrinsic to the landscape

up the rosy fire/Smote all the scarrèd heights' for lines 52-53 in 1832: 'the golden sandalled morn/Rosehued the scornful hills'. Having deleted his first revised reading Tennyson substituted an alternative -- 'The lonely morning smote the scornful hills,/The streaks of virgin snow' -- which more closely approximates lines 54-55 in the 1842 version of 'Oenone'.

should, moreover, be apparent from the fact that the goddesses are not themselves associated indiscriminately with the element of fire. As we have observed, they all share in Oenone's imagery of water. But in terms of the symbolic properties of landscape in this scene it is clear that Pallas's affinities are with the cloud that comes from Oenone's dawn world while it is Aphrodite who is to be associated with the fiery element in the midnoon landscape. Although the landscape with its fire and the arrival of the goddesses are intimately related phenomena, they are related principally in the sense that the goddesses (with their contrasting attributes) and the landscape(s) in which they appear are complementary symbolic embodiments of one spiritual drama. The symbolic cold and heat of Pallas and Aphrodite are paralleled in the contrast between the cloud of Oenone's dawn world and the fire of the crocus. In both the events of the Judgement scene and in the presentation of the landscape at midnoon there is recorded a movement towards the predominance of a symbolic heat over a symbolic cold.

There is a special significance in the enactment at the level of the natural setting of the movement from the coldness of purity to the heat of impurity. The maintenance throughout the poem of a close relationship between literal and symbolic dimensions of landscape description, together with Tennyson's representation of forces breaking out of (rather than simply being imported to) the landscape at midnoon, have one major effect. This is to establish a fundamental correlation between the principle of development governing the transition from spiritual purity to impurity and the principle of natural development which determines the unfolding of the natural day. We have seen that the warmth of midday is carefully anticipated in the account (ll.54-55, quoted above, p.125) of the sun's light striking the

virgin snow of the early morning. (Tennyson's concern to establish a picture of the dissipation of morning coldness is evidenced in a draft version of the lines in the Huntington manuscript: 'Far-up the lonely morning lit the streaks/Of virgin snow'.) It follows, of course, that by the time of its ascendancy in the midnight the sun must have completed its work of dissipating the cold freshness of the morning. And there is the implication that by the same process as the natural chill of the morning is dissolved so the spiritual innocence symbolised by that morning condition is also lost. There is a recapitulation of this development in the midnight scene itself, where we see a conflation of the dawn to noon phase of the diurnal cycle in the way that a morning landscape represented by the lost cloud is displaced by a landscape more appropriate to the midday in its association with the element of fire. Again it appears that just as the midday is the natural crucible in which the cold realities of the morning finally evaporate, so the spiritual bearings of Oenone's dawn world are lost and give way to the more complicated reality represented by heat and fire.

While the element of fire appears in the landscape at midnight it is necessary for fire to combine with water in order that the poem's basic motif involving water may be completed. The realisation of the symbolic movement from frozen water to flowing water occurs, as we have seen, on the afternoon of Oenone's song. Here we find elements of heat and water associated in an image of psychological and spiritual disintegration which involves not only the idea of a flowing of water but also of its draining away. It is the scene of Oenone's intemperate desire for Paris and it deserves some brief analysis:

Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that my arms

Were wound about thee, and my hot lips prest

Close, close to thine in that quick-falling dew
 Of fruitful kisses, thick as Autumn rains
 Flash in the pools of whirling Simois.

(198-202)

The strange and disconcerting quality of this image arises out of its combination of the autumnal (rich, fruitful, culminative) with the meaningless loss of fulness in the river. For Oenone, thought and feeling here no longer exist in a balanced and mutually supportive relation. Instead, an oddly precise intellectual control shapes a passionate loss of control. Although the exaggeration of the images points to the basic disturbance of Oenone's mind, we yet recognise a rational and precisely ordered associative movement from the thought of the pressure of hot lips to the image of fruitful kisses which in turn are seen to be of an autumnal density. What is unusual is that the transition between these images of fulfilment is effected through an imagery of fluid descent and dissipation. The quick-falling dew becomes the thick rains which 'Flash' in the pools of the 'whirling' river. By the incremental development of this motif of drainage, increase becom^e_hs an increase in loss and the rate of change at which the possibilities of stabilisation are undercut is almost dizzying. Amidst all this fluidity the word 'Flash' maintains the theme of consumption by fire through its connotation of the processes of ignition and combustion. From the winding arms of Oenone to the whirling of the Simois the passage brilliantly enacts the vertiginously self-undermining processes of intensely willed and acutely introverted experience.

The manner in which Tennyson points in 'Oenone' to a correspondence between an interior, spiritual development and natural processes of change may be compared with Milton's rendering of the

transition in Eden from the state of innocence to that of experience. In Paradise Lost there is a figurative significance attached to the time of the day at which the Fall occurs. The noon is the hour at which Eve would naturally be most hungry. But as Alastair Fowler has commented, Milton means merely 'to run excitingly close to a tragedy of necessity'.¹ However much Eve's appetitive urge might be greatest at midday, the point of the fable is that over and above her bodily nature she has a spiritual constitution which ought to remain unaffected by natural instincts and processes. In stressing a midnoon hunger Milton connects only Eve's 'lower' nature with the rhythms of the natural world. She remains free to insist on the integrity of her spiritual being. This is demonstrated by the fact that between presenting the initial appeal of the fruit to her senses and his presentation of her act of eating it Milton is careful to interpose a precise and detailed account of the deliberative process through which Eve passes. In 'Oenone' it is of critical importance -- as a poem dealing with the question of the avowedly contradictory demands of law and impulse -- that Tennyson neither presents distinct acts of will on the parts of Paris and Oenone nor leaves room for a clear distinction between a natural and a spiritual reality. The idea that spiritual and moral values of purity have an absolute, objective grounding in a realm transcending the order of nature is called into question as we see a close correspondence established between those values and the relative physical stability of early morning coldness. Given the parallelism between the development of natural phenomena across the natural day and the spiritual development traced in the poem, there is in the image of a state of purity an implication that its integrity may be something which simply cannot be protected inviolate from the

1. Fowler, p.482.

processes of the natural world. As a representation of the dynamic of the fall Tennyson's Judgement of Paris moves very close indeed to a tragedy of necessity as we see an equivalence maintained between the dissolution of innocence and an unavoidable process of natural development. Far from being a conventional allegory of moral choice, 'Oenone' shows Tennyson seriously engaged with the idea that the exercise of the moral faculty may be inextricably bound up with and may be conditioned and limited by the natural man to a degree not allowed for in traditional, particularly Christian, concepts of conscience and free-will.

iii

It remains to be said that Tennyson's use in 'Oenone' of two registers or dimensions of landscape description -- the literal and the symbolic -- enables him to explore a disjunction between Oenone's being and nature's literal rejuvenatory cycle. Whereas we must assume that the natural warmth of the Judgement day midnoon gradually subsides, we find Oenone on the afternoon when she sings her song continuing to burn as evening and darkness draw near. Before the Judgement, we recall, it is the harmony and completeness of Oenone's relationship with the surrounding world which are stressed. The reciprocity between the two is indicated by the highly personal terms in which Oenone describes her pre-Judgement landscape (the torrent calling her from the cleft, the sense of intimacy with her pines). As we come upon her at the opening of her song we find her in the predicament of having to adjust to a profound and distressing self-consciousness, a consciousness of her isolation and estrangement from

the natural world:

The grasshopper is silent in the grass:
 The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,
 Rests like a shadow, and the winds are dead.
 The purple flower droops: the golden bee
 Is lily-cradled: I alone awake.
 My eyes are full^o tears ...
 And I am all aweary of my life.

(25-30,32)

In Tennyson's overall picture of Oenone's loss of pastoral repose and felicity we may discern a characteristically Romantic tendency to conceive of the fall as that loss of innocence which results from man's loss -- through unavoidable processes of growth -- of a state of unselfconscious unity with nature.

We may also, with Paul Turner, note that Oenone's grand appeal --

Hear me, O Earth, hear me, O Hills, O Caves
 That house the cold crowned snake! O mountain
 brooks (35-36)

-- 'echoes that of Prometheus in Aeschylus [Prometheus Bound, 11.88-91], and even more closely Shelley's version of it' in Prometheus Unbound, I.25-29.¹ The Shelleyan echo is entirely apt to 'Oenone' since, as Harold Bloom has written, one of the major meanings of Prometheus's 'cosmic cry' is that he 'describes mankind's (and his own) situation as being a fallen one Nature is fallen and fragmented, man is fallen from himself, experience rules, relationship is nowhere to be seen'.² Prometheus's suffering is, of course, a type of mankind's, whose cause he champions, but there is no simple

1. op.cit., pp.60-61.

2. Shelley's Mythmaking (first published 1959; Cornell paperback edition, Ithaca, N.Y., 1969), pp.100-101.

opposition between Jupiter and Prometheus in Shelley's re-working of the ancient myth. Jupiter, like other actors in the drama, embodies an aspect of Prometheus's own nature. As M.H. Abrams has put it, Jupiter is mankind's own 'worst potentiality'.¹ With Prometheus's gift of knowledge, symbolically associated according to tradition with the gift of fire, came a terrible miscreation of the human will. As the Furies -- the 'torturing and conflicting throngs' sent by Jupiter but 'within' (I.493) Prometheus -- torment the Titan the Chorus sings:

Dost thou boast the clear knowledge thou waken'dst for man?
 Then was kindled within him a thirst which outran
 Those perishing waters; a thirst of fierce fever,
 Hope, love, doubt, desire, which consume him for ever.

(I.542-45)

But if, as Asia says, it is not Jove 'who rains down/Evil' (II.iv.100-101), if Jupiter as an aspect of Prometheus is not himself the evil principle, there is no further explanation offered in the poem concerning the origin of evil. After her impassioned request for an explanation, Asia accepts Demogorgon's assertion that 'the deep truth is imageless' (II.iv.116). The question regarding the cause of the fall cannot be answered, except to know that it is love and not hate which is the one governing power of the universe. Shelley's poem is optimistic. Assuming a fallen world at its very start it is almost entirely concerned with the processes of redemption. We learn that while Prometheus has for ages resisted the tyranny of Jupiter's nature, he has shared in that nature through a resistance founded on a hateful curse. If he has kept at bay the side of himself represented by Jupiter, in his dependence on hate he has also been separated from Asia, who was his original love in the pastoral golden age and who is

1. Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature (New York, 1971), p.302.

associated with all the purely healthy aspects of his being. At the opening of the poem, we come upon Prometheus just at the point when he repents of his curse. This is an act of will, an act of imagination, creative of a transformation in his own state and in the world at large. At the repentance is set in motion the return of Asia to Prometheus and the same hour witnesses Jupiter's consignment to the void, leaving room for 'Love, from its awful throne of patient power' to fold 'over the world its healing wings' (IV.557,561). The point of Shelley's Romantic myth of reintegration is that man possesses the capacity to redeem himself:

Man ...

Whose nature is its own divine control ...

(IV.400-401)

Tennyson's 'Oenone' can hardly be said to function on a scale comparable with Prometheus Unbound, but the Shelleyan echo in Oenone's appeal helps confirm an interpretation of her situation after the Judgement as being that of a consciousness in a fallen world. In his treatment of Oenone's experience Tennyson is also preoccupied with the question of individual responsibility for imposing shape and meaning on the world. At first almost completely overwhelmed by the change in her state, and wishing only to retreat from a confusion worse than death, Oenone nevertheless strives to adjust to a new reality. The slowness of the pace of her song enacts the difficulty she finds in attempting to make the adjustment. Yet the act of singing is itself important. The manner in which Oenone conceives of her song as therapy for her pain --

I will speak, and build up all

My sorrow with my song ...

That, while I speak of it, a little while

My heart may wander from its deeper woe

(38-39,42-43)

-- anticipates Tennyson's reliance in In Memoriam on the use of song or 'measured language' (V.6) as a means of coming to terms with his loss of relationship with Arthur Hallam.

But neither the optimism of Shelley's Prometheus Unbound nor of In Memoriam is felt in 'Oenone' as a whole. Placing Oenone in a fallen and fragmented world and sustaining her with no fable of a sympathetic higher power, Tennyson shows finally no conviction in the idea of the individual mind's capacity to regenerate itself. An area of specifically post-Romantic possibilities in Tennyson's imagery of fire in 'Oenone' can be suggested here. In The Excursion Wordsworth was able to celebrate the self-derived authority and autonomous life of the individual imagination by comparing it to a moon which 'Burns, like an unconsuming fire of light' (IV.1065). But the imagery of fire as a consumptive agent was to become important to writers attempting to cope with the solipsistic plight of the individual consciousness that has lost a sense of participation in the whole, the consciousness that has outgrown the unselfconscious integrity of the primitive or natural state or is bereft of a coherent and inclusive system of thought and belief about the world. We think of Carlyle diagnosing in 1831 the contemporary spiritual malady of his culture as one in which self-consciousness has disrupted the completeness of man's being, and in which human energy is not passing directly into the objective realm of action but impotently consuming itself in thought:

We stand here too conscious of many things

The Thought conducts not to the Deed; but in

boundless chaos, self-devouring, engenders monstrosities,

phantasms, fire-breathing chimeras.¹

1. 'Characteristics', Collected Works, VIII, 331,358.

In the last line of 'Oenone', the tautology 'burning fire' points with intense economy to the manner in which the introversion of the dispossessed mind repeats and undercuts itself to result only in a sense of meagreness and deprivation:

wheresoe'er I am by night and day,
All earth and air seem only burning fire.¹

(263-64)

The last line of the poem is not merely the expression of tortured self-consciousness. It confirms the prevalence of all those unregenerate energies that have been signalled by the imagery of fire since its appearance in the midnight of the Judgement day. In this total vision of fire even the far-off flames of Paris's funeral pyre may be prefigured. But however purgative Tennyson chose to make those flames when, nearly fifty years later, he wrote 'The Death of Oenone' (1892), there is precious little to hint at a potential for purification in the poem of 1842.

* * * * *

1. The association of fire with the pains of self-consciousness receives particularly fascinating treatment in Tennyson's poem 'The Kraken' (1830). D.J.Palmer (*op.cit.*, pp.23-24) sees the movement that takes place in this poem from the unconscious 'deep' (l.13) of the sea to the 'surface' (l.15) -- a movement consequent upon the heating of the 'deep' by the 'latter fire' (l.13) -- as reflecting a Romantic 'creative process of self-realization'. That there is a Romantic basis to the poem is clear enough, but it is 'Victorian' in that the question it puts is surely that full consciousness is too great to bear. The one moment in the work when such consciousness is seen would not appear to constitute any true emancipation -- for the 'roaring' (l.15) and death of the Kraken must qualify any sense of achievement. The pain and sense of futility at least balance, if they do not override, any exhilarations of realisation. The poem acquires its peculiar resonance from the way in which it realises its predictive elements: the effort of imagination that creates the Kraken and prefigures its end, is also that which kills it. By imagining the Kraken we also destroy it.

I want now to turn my attention away from shorter poems by Tennyson in which he recasts public symbols and myths, in order to examine the three long works -- The Lover's Tale, In Memoriam, and Maud -- where he is to be found evolving legends of individual and personal growth. In Memoriam, with its openly autobiographical aspect, raises a number of fundamental and perplexing questions which it will be useful to survey here as a prelude to my discussion of all three works in the course of the following chapters.

There have, of course, always been special difficulties with regard to the meaning of In Memoriam. As Ward Hellstrom has noted, for some critics 'Tennyson is orthodox, for others heterodox'. Most would agree that In Memoriam is in some sense 'a poem of religious affirmation', but whether 'an affirmation of faith, of doubt, of despair, of Christianity, of quasi-Christian transcendentalism, or of what ...'¹ remains a matter of debate and disagreement.

Tennyson gave some general and valuable indication of his own views on the ultimate meaning of the work. His reported comments are interesting for the way in which they raise implicitly what have emerged as the most important critical questions concerning the form of In Memoriam:

'It must be remembered that this is a poem, not an actual biography. It is founded on our friendship, on the engagement of Arthur Hallam to my sister, on his sudden death at Vienna It was meant to be a kind of Divina Commedia, ending with happiness. The sections were written at many different places I did not write them with any view of weaving them into a whole The different moods of sorrow as in a drama are dramatically given, and my

1. On the Poems of Tennyson (Gainesville, 1972), p.26.

conviction that fear, doubts, and suffering will find answer and relief only through Faith in a God of Love."I" is not always the author speaking of himself, but the voice of the human race speaking through him'¹

'It is rather the cry of the whole human race than mine. In the poem altogether private grief swells out into thought of, and hope for, the whole world. It begins with a funeral and ends with a marriage -- begins with death and ends in promise of a new life -- a sort of Divine Comedy, cheerful at the close. It is a very impersonal poem as well as personal It's too hopeful ... more than I am myself'²

On the matter of form there is, firstly, the question of the structural unity of the poem: 'in what sense do the 133 separate sections, ranging in length from 12 lines to 144 lines, constitute a whole, a poetic unity, a poem?'³ The second question, very closely associated with the first, concerns the relation between the personal/autobiographical element in the poem and the larger, universal issues with which it also deals.

The first commentator to address himself at serious length to these problems was Paull F. Baum, who in 1948 decided that there is no structural unity to the poem precisely because it is 'arbitrarily assembled from materials that are incompatible in genre (the personal elegy and the philosophical poem) and style'.⁴ Since Baum's gauntlet

1. Quoted *Memoir*, I, 304-305.

2. Tennyson reported by James Knowles, in 'Aspects of Tennyson:II (A Personal Reminiscence)', *Nineteenth Century*, XXXIII (1893), p.182.

3. Christopher Ricks, *Tennyson*, p.212.

4. This summary of Baum's argument (in *Tennyson Sixty Years After*, Chapel Hill, N. Carolina, 1948) is given by Joseph Sendry in his article, 'In Memoriam: Twentieth-Century Criticism', *Victorian Poetry*, 18,2 (Summer 1980), p.106. Sendry's is a valuable review of twentieth-century critical responses to the poem and I draw from it extensively in my own survey.

was delivered there has been, as Joseph Sendry notes, 'no clear consensus' on the central issue regarding the unity of In Memoriam:

Attempts at formulation tend to gravitate toward one of two poles: In Memoriam as a record of experience (Tennyson's 'Way of the Soul' and Eliot's 'diary of a man confessing himself' fit here) or as a literary artifice. Various terms have been used to designate the opposition: 'process' versus 'product' ... 'developmental' versus 'architectural'....¹

Many of those who have approached In Memoriam as artifact have seen the poet arranging and formalising personal experience in such a way as to produce a coherent overall aesthetic shape, wherein the personal and the local dilates or 'swells out' without hindrance into public and universal themes. As Sendry observes, however, critics have been 'noticeably more reticent' in speaking of the unity of In Memoriam in terms of artifact than they have been in speaking of it in terms of 'process'.² Traditional models and genres can be adduced almost ad infinitum in an attempt to shed light on the organising principle of the poem. But the formal eclecticism of In Memoriam continues successfully to elude efforts at rigid classification or categorisation. Applied in anything like a 'pure' state, traditional forms and conventions stand inert against the elastic vitality of the poem and ultimately fail to account for what can only be felt as the profound subjective motivation of the work.

1.op.cit., pp.108-109. Tennyson is reported by his son Hallam to have sometimes called the poem The Way of the Soul (Memoir, I, 393). T.S. Eliot speaks of In Memoriam as 'a long poem made by putting together lyrics, which have only the unity and continuity of a diary, the concentrated diary of a man confessing himself. It is a diary of which we have to read every word' ('In Memoriam', Selected Essays, 3rd ed., London, 1951, pp.333-34). Eliot's essay was originally published as the Introduction to Poems of Tennyson (Nelson Classics, 1936) and then as 'In Memoriam' in Essays, Ancient and Modern (London, 1936).

2.op.cit., p.110.

Of those commentators who have discovered the unifying principle of In Memoriam in its record of the development of the speaker's consciousness, a number have found no awkwardness in the relation between the treatment of private and personal experience and the treatment of larger, public issues in the poem. Arthur J. Carr writes that

The theme of In Memoriam is loss and the subjective crisis it provokes. For this reason, the poem recapitulates much of Tennyson's previous development: the moods of frustration and longing ... the issues of sceptical doubt, the question of the poet's involvement in the world of affairs, and the issues of social disorder and social inertia encountered in the political songs.¹

But the question of whether the poem should be seen principally either as a document in the history of ideas, a 'philosophical' poem, or as an autobiographical outpouring, remains very much alive.

There are several commentators who have advanced positions which go some way towards resolving the two 'poles' of interpretation and formulation mentioned by Sendry. These attempts effectively build on Tennyson's own important observation that the moods of In Memoriam 'as in a drama are dramatically given'. As Sendry says, the 'more thoroughgoing statements of the "process" position highlight the sense of autobiographical immediacy that the poem often conveys', but a number of critics

have offered interpretations that modify this aspect of the 'process' approach in the direction of artifice Like the 'process' critics this group describes the unity of the poem in terms of the speakers's developing consciousness. Their

1. Killham, p.53.

distinctive note is the dramatisation of the speaker.¹

Thus, for example, Ward Hellstrom distinguishes between 'the persona of the poem and the poet, and between the Hallam of the poem and the real Arthur Hallam'. He stresses the importance of seeing the Hallam of In Memoriam as 'an artistic creation, a vehicle for the persona's spiritual advancement'. Both the persona and Hallam as vehicle for the persona are figures set in 'a work of art rather than conventional autobiography'.²

In my reading of In Memoriam I do not propose to take up all sides of the various issues and questions posed by the work, but I would tend to align myself with this last group of critics who stress the dramatisation of both the speaker and the figure of Arthur Hallam. What I want to contribute is a key to an understanding of the principle of dramatisation that has not been considered before. This 'key' has a wider scope of reference than In Memoriam alone. I am speaking of a deeply rooted imaginative strategy in Tennyson which appears in its earliest significant form in The Lover's Tale, a work first composed well before the death of Arthur Hallam, and which is to be found still operating in Maud, which has no direct reference to the death of Tennyson's friend. Through this imaginative strategy Tennyson explores -- from the perspective of the development of the individual consciousness -- the themes of imagination and scepticism with which he had been concerned in works such as 'The Hesperides', 'The Lotos-Eaters', and 'Oenone'. It is by means of this strategy that in In Memoriam the poet attempts to negotiate and resolve the discontinuities laid out in such a work as 'The Hesperides', and it is by the same strategy that he can redefine those discontinuities and a

1. op.cit., p.109.

2. op.cit., pp.28,36,43.

persisting inability to resolve them in Maud. The Lover's Tale prepares the ground for Tennyson's deployment of this strategy with its double potential, and it is that poem we must now proceed to examine.

CHAPTER 4

THE EMPTY PHANTOM: THE LOVER'S TALE (1832)

My critical discussion of The Lover's Tale in this chapter demands a preliminary account of the principal elements in the extremely complicated story of the composition and publication of the work.¹

i

The Lover's Tale was first published by Tennyson in May 1879. This 1879 version in four parts represents the authorised text of the poem. But Tennyson had begun composition of The Lover's Tale many years before and had originally intended to include early versions of parts I and II of 1879 in his Poems of 1832. These two sections of the poem even went to proof as part of the 1832 volume but at the last minute Tennyson decided against publication of the work. He did, however, cause several copies of this incomplete two-part poem to be made up separately and privately printed (hereafter referred to as the 1832 text of The Lover's Tale). During the 1830s Tennyson continued to revise some of the readings in 1832 but it was not until 1868 that he resumed serious work on the poem. This time he had it privately printed in three parts (hereafter 1868), with the first two parts corresponding to parts I and II in 1832 and 1879 and the third part constituting a version of what was to become parts III and IV in 1879.

1. In the opening paragraphs of section one I have summarised a certain amount of information available in the following sources in order to establish a framework of reference for my own detailed interest in the largely unresearched earlier stages of the poem's development: Ricks, pp.299-301; Wise, I, 25-76; W.D.Paden, 'Tennyson's The Lover's Tale, R.H.Shepherd, and T.J.Wise', Studies in Bibliography, 18 (1965), pp.111-45.

Once more Tennyson decided against publication. In 1869, however, he had the entire poem (without any division into parts) printed up in early sets of proofs for his volume The Holy Grail and Other Poems (The Lover's Tale text in these proofs will be referred to as 1869). On this occasion Tennyson decided against publishing what were to form parts I, II, and III of 1879, but he did manage to include in The Holy Grail volume -- under the title 'The Golden Supper' -- the section which was to form 1879 part IV. Finally, spurred by R.H. Shepherd's pirating of the 1832 Lover's Tale, Tennyson published the whole work in 1879.

An important point must be made with respect to part III of 1879. In his headnote to 1879 Tennyson observed with reference to the 1832 text that 'Two only of the three parts then written were printed, when, feeling the imperfection of the poem, I withdrew it from the press'. For a long time it was assumed that part III of 1879 was not to be confused with the early third part of the poem referred to by Tennyson in his 1879 headnote. But in an article published in 1967 Clarice Short noted that a complete autograph draft -- dateable to the early 1830s -- of what was to become part III in 1879 appears in a manuscript notebook now at Harvard (Harvard MS. Eng.952(12); hereafter H.Nbk.12).¹ Throughout my discussion of the poem, therefore, it will be understood that the 1832 state of The Lover's Tale comprised both parts I and II of the 1832 printed-text and the material which now forms part III of 1879. Even in three parts the 1832 state of The Lover's Tale would not have constituted a complete work and there is no evidence to suggest that Tennyson had written a conclusion by that date. The concluding part IV of 1879 -- 'The Golden Supper' -- was

1. 'Tennyson and "The Lover's Tale"', PMLA, 82, 1 (March 1967), p.79. For further details on H.Nbk.12, see my Appendix D; for further details on the contents of Appendix D, see p.147, n.1 and p.148, n.2 below.

first composed in the period immediately prior to the 1868 printing. It constituted, as Tennyson observed in his 1879 headnote, a work of his 'mature life'.

Even when measured by the long gestation-periods typical of so many of Tennyson's compositions, the thirty or so years between the first 'trial' printing of The Lover's Tale and the writing up of a conclusion represent a remarkably long gap. Commentators have consistently felt that 'The Golden Supper' is an awkwardly contrived ending which -- from just about every stylistic and thematic point of view -- fails to integrate convincingly with the first three parts of the poem. Clarice Short, for example, remarks that it was written 'in a different emotional country It requires such a warping of the setting, such alteration of the social position of the characters that it seems like an excrescence upon the body of the rest of the poem';¹ and A. Dwight Culler has observed: 'it is so little in harmony with the first three parts of the tale that one can hardly believe that this is the way it was supposed to end'.² With certain important qualifications (which I shall deal with later) I would concur with estimates that the completed poem constitutes a false whole.

In this chapter, since I am interested in the work primarily in its relation to In Memoriam and Maud (both published, of course, well before Tennyson had concocted 'The Golden Supper') I intend to speak principally of The Lover's Tale as it stood in 1832; that is, in its earliest coherent, albeit incomplete, form. (The very fact of the incompleteness of the three-part poem of 1832 may itself be something which has significant bearing on the question of the relationship between The Lover's Tale and the poems of 1850 and 1855.) In addition I propose to refer to the actual text of 1832 in my critical

1. op.cit., pp.79-80.

2. op.cit., pp.35-36.

discussion of parts I and II. The reason for this is that the texts of part I and II in 1879 were substantially revised (though without alteration of the basic plots) from the versions in 1832. It appears that most of these substantial modifications appearing in final form in 1879 were initiated in the period immediately prior to the 1868 printing.¹ In other words, they are mostly of a date comparable with Tennyson's 'mature' preparation of a conclusion to the poem and they generally reflect the distinct imaginative and conceptual conditions of that phase of composition (there is one instance of particular importance, noted below pp.156-57, where a meaning that is apparent in certain lines of 1832 is significantly obscured in the equivalent lines of 1868-1879).² Since there are only very trivial textual variations between the draft material in H.Nbk.12 and part III of 1879 I shall in respect of this third part cite the authorised text of the poem.

There is, of course, a special problem involved in attempting to work with 1832. In his edition of Tennyson's poems Christopher Ricks

1. A useful collation of 1832, 1868, and 1879 readings is provided in Wise, I, 30-76. Autograph revisions in a number of the surviving copies of 1832 show that Tennyson tinkered with readings in that text throughout the 1830s. But the principal modifications appearing in 1868 through 1879 are not present in MS. revisions dateable to the 1830s. The earliest surviving evidence of these modifications comprises the autograph draft alterations which are inscribed, in a hand identifiable with the 1860s, in one of Tennyson's copies of 1832 now in the Tennyson Research Centre (see Appendix D for details).

2. Many of the revisions are, of course, no more than attempts to redeem straightforward artistic deficiencies in 1832. In his 1832 headnote Tennyson observed that the poem 'contains nearly as many faults as words I am aware how deficient the Poem is in point of Art'. In his 1879 headnote Tennyson explained, as we have seen, that he had originally withdrawn 1832 from publication because of his sense of the 'imperfection' of the work. Tennyson was, of course, correct in his perception of artistic flaws in 1832. But, as I shall suggest in the course of my discussion, his sense of the limitations in the poem may have defined something more than infelicities (however serious) in style and phrasing.

gives all variant readings from the 1832 printed-text in his presentation of the 1879 Lover's Tale. But there is no plain reading text of 1832 available and hence no system of internal line numbering for that text.¹ Given this situation it has seemed most convenient in the following discussion to quote directly from 1832 (using one of the surviving copies), citing the internal line numbers of that text together with the equivalent line numbers in 1879 (these enclosed in square brackets).²

1. In The Suppressed Poems of Alfred Lord Tennyson, 1830-1868 (London, 1904), J.C. Thompson printed 1832 in a hopelessly inaccurate and, for all practical purposes, useless text.

2. I have used a copy of 1832 now in the British Library (Ashley 2075). In his 1879 headnote Tennyson commented that 1832 was 'marred by the many misprints of the compositor'. In quoting from 1832 I have included the substantive corrections (not revisions) marked up by the poet in the British Library copy (each case is noted). Otherwise, apart from omissions represented by ellipses, I have reproduced 1832 exactly as printed. For information on further surviving copies of 1832, see Appendix D. Of the multiple stages in the growth of The Lover's Tale only the earliest of the extant MS. drafts (in a notebook at Harvard: MS. Eng. 952(8); hereafter H.Nbk.8) contains material which has a significant bearing on my critical reading of the 1832 state of the poem. Appendix D presents a complete transcription of this draft. Apart from H.Nbk.8 only one other major pre-1832 MS. draft of The Lover's Tale survives. This occurs in the same notebook at Trinity College, Cambridge, as contains the draft of 'Armageddon' described in Appendix A: T.Nbk.18. The T.Nbk.18 draft represents a halfway stage in the development of the text of the poem between H.Nbk.8 and 1832. Details on the T.Nbk.18 draft are given in the identifications included in Appendix D of the various MSS. and printed-texts documenting the growth of The Lover's Tale up to 1832. An account of the evolution of the poem from 1832 as far as the first complete version of 1868 is also provided in Appendix D, but I have made no attempt to list all stages in the development of the text between 1868 and 1879.

ii

The bare outline of the plot of The Lover's Tale as it stood in 1832 is worth rehearsing. The speaker or protagonist of the poem ('supposed to be himself a poet' we are informed in Tennyson's 1832 headnote) is nameless ('Julian', 1879). In part I we come upon him as he relates the story of his past life to a group of unspecified companions. He tells how he was brought up with his foster-sister Cadrilla ('Camilla', 1879) near the 'Lover's Bay'. The protagonist's childhood closeness and attachment to Cadrilla grew into a youthful, but undeclared, love for her. We are told how it came as a devastating blow when Cadrilla, entirely unaware of his feelings for her, confided in him as a friend that she was in love with another man -- Lionel. Part II tells of the speaker's withdrawal into solitude and of the unsettling of his mind -- even to the point of delirium -- following Cadrilla's revelation. The unprinted third part of 1832 (part III, 1879) continues with a further account of his mental disturbance.

The purely melodramatic potential of such a plot is obvious enough. Nevertheless, there are some very singular points to Tennyson's treatment of his story. First of all, the protagonist's love for Cadrilla involves an experience of something much greater than mere human affection. A coincidence of the finite and the infinite is asserted as we see the human relationship assimilated to a dimension of what can only be called metaphysical reality. This larger reality is defined throughout the poem in terms of 'Love', a personified abstraction aligned with others such as 'Hope' and 'Life'; each of which finds its antithesis in forces represented by 'Hate', 'Fear', and 'Death'. Sometimes the merely human or mortal aspect of these large realities is denoted by the avoidance of capitalised personification, but the two registers of the human and the local, at

one level, and the more-than-human and the universal, at another, are never wholly distinguishable or mutually exclusive and there is a continual unimpeded movement or interchange between the two. In the following lines Love (or love) and Hope (or hope) appear together as the protagonist recalls his most fulfilled hour with Cadrilla:

my name was borne

Upon her breath ...

in that hour

A hope flowed round me ...

Even that this name ...

In some obscure hereafter, might inwreathe
(How lovelier, nobler then!) her life, her love,
With my life, love, soul, spirit and heart and strength.

"Brother," she said, "let this be called henceforth
The Hill of Hope;" ...

Love lieth deep: Love dwells not in lipdepths ...

Else had the life of that delighted hour
Drunk in the largeness of the utterance
Of Love; but how should earthly measure mete
The Heavenly-unmeasured or unlimited Love ...

Sooner Earth

Might go round Heaven, and the strait girth of Time
Inswathe the fullness of Eternity,
Than language grasp the infinite of Love.

I.435-36[I.433-34], I.440-41[I.438-39],
I.448[I.446], I.450-54[I.448-52], I.457[I.456],
I.462-65[I.461-64], I.472-75[I.471-74]

The picture of a finite world fired with the energy of absolute Love is amplified in the protagonist's recollection of the day on which

occurred his most fulfilled hour:

On that day the year
 First felt his youth and strength, and from his spring
 Moved smiling toward his summer. On that day,
 Love waking shook his wings, (that charged the winds
 With spiced Maysweets from bound to bound), and blew
 Fresh fire into the Sun; and from within
 Burst thro' the heated buds, and sent his soul
 Into the songs of birds, and touched far-off
 His mountain-altars, his high hills, with flame
 Milder and purer. Up the rocks we wound ...

As mountain brooks
 Our bloods ran free ...

looking back, we saw ...
 a land of Love,
 Where Love was worshipped upon every height,
 Where Love was worshipped under every tree --
 A land of promise, flowing with the milk
 And honey of delicious memories.
 Down to the sea, as far as the eye could ken,
 From verge to verge it was a holy land ...

I.304-13[I.297-317], I.315-16[I.319-20],
 I.318[I.322], I.321-27[I.325-30]

The paradoxical blending of past and future orientations suggested in lines 324-25 above ('A land of promise, flowing with .../... memories') prepares us for the protagonist's emphasis on the mythological connotations of his relationship with Cadrilla at its point of greatest fulfillment:

Methought all excellence that ever was

Had drawn herself from many thousand years,
 And all the separate Edens of this earth,
 To centre in this place and time.

I.546-49[I.538-41]

Not that the special day and hour recorded by the protagonist represent the very first experience of a world transfigured by the power of Love. They represent, rather, the culmination of a childhood and youth remarkable for its sensations of 'Life continuous, Being unimpaired'.¹ The protagonist recalls his earliest days in terms of an experience of a universe integrated and sustained by the all-pervading 'Spirit of Love' (I.429[I.427]); an experience stretching back farther than self-consciousness -- almost (to use Shelley's words) 'an antenatal dream'² -- where all inward and outward motions were unified in and through the Spirit of Love:

Ye ask me, friends,
 When I began to love. How should I tell ye? ...
 For young Life knows not when young Life was born,
 But takes it all for granted: neither Love,
 Warm in the heart, his cradle, can remember
 Love in the womb, but resteth satisfied,
 Looking on her that brought him to the light:
 Or as men know not when they fall asleep
 Into delicious dreams, our other life,
 So know I not when I began to love.
 This is my sum of knowledge -- that my love
 Grew with myself -- say rather, was my growth,
 My inward sap, the hold I have on earth,

1. Wordsworth, *The Excursion*, IV. 755.

2. *Epipsychidion*, l.456.

My outward circling air wherewith I breath^e...

I.141-42[I.139-40], I.153-64[I.151-62]

The present tense of the last two lines of this passage, where the speaker's 'love' constitutes 'the hold I have on earth' and the 'air wherewith I breathe', is a matter to which I shall return later in my discussion. For the moment, by way of introduction to the second major peculiarity in Tennyson's treatment of his story in The Lover's Tale, we may concentrate on the phrase in lines 161-62: 'my love/Grew with myself'. Up until the use of this phrase the terms of question and answer in the passage are fairly clear. The protagonist's associates ask him when he first began to love, and we assume the question has a straightforward literal reference to his feelings for Cadrilla. He answers with statements that move into the capitalised usages of 'Life' and 'Love'. But the 'I' employed throughout the passage is then modified in line 161 into 'my love'. At first sight this possessive is a perfectly normal form of self-reference. But we soon discover that it has also a wider scope. A few lines later Cadrilla herself is alluded to:

As Love and I do number equal years,
So she, my love, is of an age with me.

I.191-92[I.189-90]

The 'my love' here in line 192 is, again, at one level a perfectly normal form of reference to a loved one, a literal 'other' person. But the use of 'my love' to denote both the protagonist and Cadrilla is no merely accidental repetition. Rather, it harbours an ambiguity which is fundamental to the whole poem. First of all, we find that the protagonist's description of the growth of his own energies of love, 'my love/Grew with myself', also literally defines Cadrilla's own history:

How like each other was the birth of each!
On the same morning, almost the same hour,
Under the selfsame aspect of the stars,
... we were born.

I.193-96[I.191-94]

The protagonist tells us that 'Before he saw my day my father died' (I.187[I.185]) and likewise Cadrilla's mother (none other than the sister of the protagonist's mother) died giving birth to Cadrilla. Thus it was that the surviving parent of each came together to bring up the two children:

So were we born, so orphaned. She was motherless
And I without a father ...

He that gave
Her life, to me delightedly fulfilled
All lovingkindnesses, all offices
Of watchful care ...

She was my fostersister: on one arm
The flaxen ringlets of our infancies
Wandered, the while we rested: one soft lap
Pillowed us both: one common light of eyes
Was on us as we lay: our baby lips,
Kissing one bosom, ever drew from thence
The stream of life, one stream, one life, one blood ...

I.214-15[I.212-13], I.219-22[I.217-20],
I.229-35[I.227-33]

In the ambiguous play on 'my love'; in the equivalence of ages between the protagonist and Cadrilla; in the highly artificial and stylised symmetrical patterning of the familial circumstances and

relationships; and in the poetically heightened emphasis on a common source of life and experience, we are encouraged to see less a simple closeness and more a total identity or unity between the protagonist and his love.

Such an identity or unity is hardly to be understood solely at the literal level of meaning in the story. In this passage and throughout the poem Tennyson's presentation of the relationship between Cadrilla and the speaker suggests that the order of assimilation of the one to the other is to be understood less in literal than in psychologically symbolic terms. It becomes apparent that Cadrilla functions in an important sense as a dimension or a projection of the protagonist's own being. This is made very clear in a crucial passage (which must be quoted at length) towards the opening of the poem where the protagonist is recalling times when he and Cadrilla would accompany each other --

I.62 Eye feeding upon eye with deep intent;
 And mine with love too high to be exprest,
 Arrested in its sphere, and ceasing from
 65 All contemplation of all forms, did pause
 To worship mine own image, laved in light,
 The centre of the splendours, all unworthy
 Of such a shrine -- mine image in her eyes
 By diminution made most glorious,
 70 Moved with their motions, as those eyes were moved
 With motions of the soul, as my heart beat
 Time to melody of her's. Her face
 Was starry-fair, not pale, tenderly flushed
 As 'twere with dawn. She was darkhaired, darkeyed:
 75 Oh, such dark eyes! a single glance of them

Will govern a whole life from birth to death,
 Careless of all things else, led on with light
 In trances and in visions: look at them,
 You lose yourself in utter ignorance;
 80 You cannot find their depth; for they go back,
 And farther back, and still withdraw themselves
 Quite into the deep soul, that evermore
 Freshspringing from her fountains in the brain,
 Still pouring thro', floods with redundant light
 85 Her narrow portals.

Trust me, long ago
 I should have died, if it were possible
 To die in gazing on that perfectness
 Which I do bear within me ...¹

Once again the use of the present tense in these lines is a feature I shall examine later. What must be noted of the passage at this stage is the manner in which distinctions between the protagonist and Cadrilla are dissolved as, firstly, we comprehend the perfect sympathy existing between them (his image in her eyes, ll.68-70; his heart beating time to hers, ll.71-72) and, secondly, as we notice that the separate pairs of eyes at a literal level have a single ground of motion in 'the soul' (l.71: where the definite article allows the reference to exist between and to subsume the two). Similarly, loss of self (l.79) through gazing on her eyes is not resolved in a state of capitulation to 'another' but in the one undifferentiated reality of 'the deep soul' (l.82). That there is a sense in which the protagonist -- in referring to Cadrilla -- is referring to some potency of

1. This passage is modified very substantially in 1879. There are correspondences between 1832, I.73-88 and 1879 [I.70-85]. But lines I.62-72 of 1832 are completely rewritten in the authorised text (cf. 1879 [I.61-69]).

himself is confirmed in the blatantly self-referential aspects of lines 65-66 ('did pause/To worship mine own image'). It is confirmed also in lines 87-88 where, having spoken of losing himself in contemplation of Cadrilla's eyes, he goes on to speak of 'gazing on that perfectness/Which I do bear within me'. The speaker is gazing as on a mirror and 'Eye feeding upon eye with deep intent' emerges as a metaphor for a process of self-contemplation.¹

The speaker's assertion of a perfectness within himself returns us to the question of the larger significations of love in The Lover's Tale. As I have said, a coincidence of the finite and infinite is claimed for the relationship between the protagonist and Cadrilla. In the further presentation of Cadrilla as an aspect of the protagonist himself we can, accordingly, discern something of that emphasis on self-derived authority -- the claim that absolute values originate within and are projected from the mind itself -- which is to be found in Romantic assertions concerning the constitutive power of the mythopoeic or poetic imagination. It is not insignificant that Tennyson identifies his protagonist as a poet.

The distinctive interiority of the passage in which Tennyson's hero speaks of losing himself in 'the deep soul' through contemplation of Cadrilla's eyes would in itself be sufficient to direct us to Romantic conceptions of (and metaphors for) the workings of the human mind. But Tennyson's use in The Lover's Tale of a female figure to symbolise a potency of the protagonist's own personality calls to mind quite specifically what Carlos Baker has termed the 'psyche-epipsyche strategy' of Shelley:

in Shelleyan terms, the mind (psyche) imaginatively creates or

1. The elements in lines I.62-72 of 1832 which serve to define this process are completely erased in the rewritten lines of 1879 (see p.156 n.1 above), with the effect that much less overt stress is placed across the passage as a whole on the self-referential nature of the protagonist's account.

envisions what it does not have (epipsyche), and then seeks to possess epipsyche, to move towards it as a goal. Therefore the psyche-epipsyche strategy in a nutshell is the evolution by the mind of an ideal pattern towards which it then aspires Although the epipsyche terminology does not appear in Shelley until 1821, the notion of a search for a true mate, a complementary heroine for the Shellyan hero, has been born by 1815 and is well developed by 1817. The relationship is always, at its highest level, a spiritual union. But it must be, as it were, supported from below by other unifications it is a form of idealism, with its roots in the romantic psychology of aspiration, and its branches extending up towards the 'light that never was on sea or land'. Shellyan nympholepsy appears to signify the fulfillment or rounding out of the unfinished self.¹

Alastor and Epipsychidion are perhaps the most obvious of the works in which Shelley draws a female figure as the ideal object of the solitary mind. We have already come across the 'veiled maid' of Alastor who is envisioned by the poet-protagonist of the poem:

He dreamed a veiled maid
 Sate near him, talking in low solemn tones.
 Her voice was like the voice of his own soul ...
 her fair hands
 Were bare alone, sweeping from some strange harp
 Strange symphony, and in their branching veins
 The eloquent blood told an ineffable tale.
 The beating of her heart was heard to fill
 The pauses of her music ... (151-53, 165-70)

Alastor tells how the vision faded and the remainder of the poem is

1. Shelley's Major Poetry: The Fabric of a Vision (Princeton, 1948), pp.53-54.

taken up with the poet's attempt to find the 'veiled maid', a pursuit at one stage conducted in the form of a symbolic voyage through

fearful war

Of wave ruining on wave, and blast on blast
 Descending, and black flood on whirlpool driven
 With dark obliterating course, he sate:
 As if their genii were the ministers
 Appointed to conduct him to the light
 Of those beloved eyes ... (326-32)

In Epipsychidion the poet-speaker addresses Emily: 'Would we two had been twins of the same mother!' (1.45), but the lack of that relationship does not prevent him from calling her 'Spouse! Sister! Angel!' (1.130). Neither does it prevent him from referring to her as the 'soul out of my soul' (1.238) nor from seeking her at 'the height of Love's rare Universe' (1.589). Earl R. Wasserman comments succinctly on Emily's status and function in relation to the poet-speaker when he observes that 'As an act of self-reflection, Epipsychidion ... requires two modes of a single self, the self in existence and the infinite self, under the name of "Emily"'.¹

A model generically akin to Shelley's 'psyche-epipsyche strategy' is also used by Keats in Endymion. In this work we learn that the shepherd Endymion has become divorced from the common sympathies of mankind ('The comfortable green and juicy hay/[Of] human pastures', III.4-5) through his yearning for an ideal beyond the ordinary realities of man and nature, an ideal 'far/... past the scanty bar/To mortal steps' (II.123-25):

'tis no prize,
 That toiling years would put within my grasp,
 That I have sighed for; with so deadly gasp

1. Shelley: A Critical Reading (Baltimore and London, 1971), p.428.

No man e'er panted for a mortal love. (I.523-26)

Endymion's vision of his object -- his vision in an 'airy trance' (I.585), after 'the doors/Of Heaven appeared to open' (I.581-82) -- takes, as in Shelley, a female form. It is Cynthia, moon-sister to sun-Apollo, who in this poem images the finite self's insight into a 'completed form of all completeness' (I.606). There is nothing in nature to compare with her: 'Speak, stubborn earth, and tell me where, oh where,/Hast thou a symbol of her golden hair?' (I.608-9). Cynthia's role as an aspect of Endymion himself is highlighted as he describes how she came

towards me, like a very maid,
Came blushing, waning, willing ...

Madly did I kiss

The wooing arms which held me, and did give
My eyes at once to death -- but 'twas to live,
To take in draughts of life from the gold fount
Of kind and passionate looks, to count and count
The moments, by some greedy help that seemed
A second self ... (I.634-35, 653-59)

Narcissism is undisguised on the second fleeting occasion that Endymion sees Cynthia -- her face 'Smiling in the clear well' (1.896).

Tennyson spends more time than either Shelley or Keats in presenting the state of union between soul and soul-mate. And while his premise in The Lover's Tale is the loss of that union, he places less emphasis than Shelley and Keats on the theme of the desperate search for reunion. It is hard to believe, however, that the basic formula which in The Lover's Tale places Cadrilla as a kind of second self to the protagonist does not owe something (though not in the sense of a slavish imitation) to the poetry of the two younger

Romantics.¹

Tennyson appears to have begun composing The Lover's Tale in his early days at Cambridge (1827-1828) and to have continued major work on the poem right through to 1832 (see Appendix D). In other words, the genesis of the work is to be associated with that period in Tennyson's career when -- as I indicated in the first chapter of this study -- he was responding significantly for the first time to the writings of such poets as Shelley and Keats. Margaret A. Lourie aptly summarises the point when she observes that the Tennyson of the 1830 and 1832 Poems has been 'rightly perceived' for a century and a half 'as the inheritor of much of Keats's epistemology, language, and subject matter'; and when she observes that Tennyson's gleanings from Shelley in these volumes 'run the gamut from superficial verbal echoes to underlying psychic predispositions'.² The Lover's Tale is no exception to these influences. G.H.Ford has remarked that The Lover's Tale is 'so Keatsian in tone it is remarkable how much The Lover's Tale does share with Endymion. There is a similar exuberance of words and descriptive details of landscape, and there is a similar emphasis on "panting love"'.³

1. Edmund Gosse was quickly off the mark when he reviewed the poem in 1879 and saw in it the influence of a 'recent reading of Epipsychidion' (The Academy, XV, 7 June 1879, p.489).

2. op.cit., pp.4,7.

3. op.cit., p.24. Ford is commenting on the authorised text of The Lover's Tale, but what he has to say of the general tone and quality of 1879 applies equally to the 1832 state of the poem and to the drafts in H.Nbk.8 and T.Nbk.18. Ford additionally notes (p.24) that the Lover's Tale passage: 'All the West,/And ev'n unto the middle South was ribbed/And barred with bloom on bloom' (I.406-8[I.404-6]) echoes Keats's expression in 'To Autumn' (l.25): 'While barrèd clouds bloom the soft-dying day'. (1832, ll.I.406-8 are present in the T.Nbk.18 draft.) It is also worth mentioning that the opening lines of The Lover's Tale in H.Nbk.8 and T.Nbk.18, telling of 'A casement braced & traversed with lithe herbs/(Thorough whose woven spice of

The Keatsian influence is by no means absolute, however. The '1832 version of parts I and II' of The Lover's Tale, as Paul Turner has observed, 'is full of Shelleyan echoes'.¹ As far as 'underlying psychic predispositions' inherited by Tennyson from Shelley are concerned, the presence of one very important type in several poems from the 1830 and 1832 volumes (particularly 'Mariana', 'The Lady of Shalott', and 'The Palace of Art') has been discussed by Lionel Stevenson. In an article entitled 'The "High-Born Maiden" Symbol in Tennyson',² Stevenson observes that the concept which appears in the ninth stanza of Shelley's 'To a Skylark', of 'the imprisoned or otherwise isolated maiden, is ... widely pervasive in Shelley's poetry'.³ It appears, for example, in The Revolt of Islam and The Witch of Atlas, and it 'becomes Emilia Viviani's imprisonment in her convent (Epipsychidion)'.⁴ 'Echoes of these poems', says Stevenson,

are to be recognised in the many passages in which Tennyson recurred to the image of an isolated and unhappy maiden with a persistence amounting almost to obsession In his volume of 1830 ... after he had gone to Cambridge and found the literary undergraduates excited about Shelley, she made her first appearance⁵

As is implicit in Stevenson's own reference to Epipsychidion, the figure of the isolated maiden in Shelley is closely related to his

flower & leaf/The fretted noonlight won it's ambushed way ...)' (T.Nbk.18 version; see Appendix D), seem to recall Keats's 'Eve of St Agnes' (208-10, 217): 'A casement high and triple-arched there was,/All garlanded with carven imageries/Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,/... Full on this casement shone the wintry moon'.

1. Tennyson (London, Henley and Boston, 1976), p.57.

2. First published PMLA, LXIII(1948), pp.234-43. All my references are to the essay as reprinted in Killham, pp.126-36.

3. Killham, p.127.

4. ibid., p.127.

5. ibid., pp.127-28.

characteristic use of a female figure to image a part of the poet's own soul. The likelihood that Tennyson was influenced in his creation of his own myth of love in The Lover's Tale by Shelley's 'pysche-epipsyche strategy' is corroborated by his own statement that 'Alastor was the first poem of [Shelley's] I read. I said, "This is what I want!" -- and I still like it the best, though one can't tell how much these first loves are to be trusted' (a statement that must, by the evidence of simple verbal echoes of Shelley in his early Cambridge poetry, refer back as far as 1828).¹

Tennyson's development throughout The Lover's Tale of Cadrilla as an anima figure -- an image or embodiment of his speaker's higher self -- would also seem to share certain significant features in common with the development of the related ideas in Shelley and Keats. Carlos

1. Tennyson's statement, made in conversation with Aubrey de Vere, is recorded in William Allingham's Diary (Introd. by Geoffrey Grigson; Centaur Press: Fontwell, Sussex, 1967), p.295. Frederick Locker-Lampson recorded the poet saying in 1869: 'Nobody admires Shelley more than I once did, and I still admire him. I think I like his "Epipsychidion" as much as anything by him' (Memoir, II,70). Hallam Tennyson, under the date 1883, recalls his father's observations on Shelley: 'I admire his "Alastor", "Adonais", "Prometheus Unbound", and "Epipsychidion", and some of his shorter lyrics are exquisite'. Under the same date Hallam Tennyson also reports the poet's frequently made disclaimer regarding The Lover's Tale: 'As for "The Lover's Tale", that was written before I had ever seen a Shelley, though it is called Shellyan' (Memoir, II, 285). We have to regard Tennyson's 'written' here with a considerable degree of 'honest doubt'. As is shown in Appendix D, the earliest reasonable date that could be set for the inception of Tennyson's composition of The Lover's Tale is 1827. It is just possible he may have begun a version of the poem before going to Cambridge in November 1827. But at the very most Tennyson's 'written' could only be taken to mean 'begun' before he had seen a Shelley. All the evidence shows that he was writing the poem at Cambridge from 1827/28 through 1832. Why Tennyson should have wanted to dissociate his work so completely from Shelley is not entirely clear. It may have been an example of his entirely understandable desire to confound all literary source-hunters. But Tennyson also made frequent apologies for the 'immaturity' of the poem ('the boy's work', he put it in his 1879 headnote). Somewhere, perhaps, in Tennyson's 'mature' reaction against the idea of a relationship between Shelley and The Lover's Tale, there may be an older Victorian's view of the young Romantic as the poet of adolescence -- Matthew Arnold's "'beautiful and ineffectual angel, beating in the void his luminous wings in vain'" (Complete Prose Works, XI, 327).

Baker observes that in Shelley

The separation of epipsyche from psyche produces death, whether actual or symbolic. The lamp is shattered, or at any rate is incapable of giving light because the energising power is not there.¹

The pattern is apparent in Alastor. As I noted in chapter three, the poet-protagonist of that poem finds the natural world empty of significant life, devoid of motivation and direction, once he has lost his vision of the 'veiled maid':

Roused by the shock he started from his trance --
 The cold white light of morning, the blue moon
 Low in the west, the clear and garish hills,
 The distinct valley and the vacant woods,
 Spread round him where he stood. Whither have fled
 The hues of heaven that canopied his bower
 Of yesternight? (192-98)

Typically, in Romantic writing, whatever spiritual energies are at work in nature, and whatever partial revelations of an ultimate spiritual power are afforded by the natural universe, the life of nature considered solely in itself is understood to be no life at all. Perceived in distinction from the absolute continuities of spiritual being the temporal and finite world is apprehended as a universe of death, an endless cycle of generation, decay and meaningless regeneration. The vacuum that the Alastor youth senses beneath the crystalline surface definitions of the natural world is akin to that 'visionary dreariness' which for Wordsworth -- intuiting a reality beyond the appearances of the ordinary world in The Prelude (XI.311, 313-16) -- 'Did ... invest the naked Pool/The Beacon on the lonely

1. op.cit., p.55.

Eminence,/The Woman, and her garments vex'd and toss'd/By the strong wind'. But Wordsworth, characteristically, endeavours to accommodate his perceptions of the 'immortal sea/Which brought us hither' ('Immortality Ode', ll.167-68) to the habitual, mundane rhythms of life in nature.

The problem for the Alastor poet is that the ravishing intimation of the absolute signified by the 'veiled maid' deprives him of any capacity to be satisfied with only partial revelations of spiritual life. He wants the totality of the spirit and he wants it immediately. But his unqualified desire for a completed form of all completeness beyond the imperfections and divisions of human and natural reality can be satisfied only by a lifting of the veil, only by passing himself literally through the 'dark gate of death' (l.211). In this matter, however, he is his own arbiter: the reality of the spiritual ideal he seeks is not demonstrated and guaranteed by any external authority. As I indicated in chapter three, there remains in Alastor a radical uncertainty whether the poet-protagonist's death signifies an assumption into heaven or whether it is to be seen as a mere negation, no more than the natural death of a natural creature suffering from delusions of spiritual grandeur.

Such uncertainty does not govern the resolution of Keats's Endymion. As A.C.Bradley comments, Endymion's 'pursuit of the goddess leads not to extinction but to immortal union with her'.¹ Nevertheless, in Keats's poem, when Endymion's vision of Cynthia has vanished, we witness his sense of a falling away from the pure ideal into a natural world defined by the principle of death:

all the pleasant hues

Of heaven and earth had faded: deepest shades

1. Oxford Lectures on Poetry (Oxford, 1909), p.241.

Were deepest dungeons; heaths and sunny glades
 Were full of pestilent light; our taintless rills
 Seemed sooty, and o'er-spread with upturned gills
 Of dying fish ...

If an innocent bird
 Before my heedless footsteps stirred and stirred
 In little journeys, I beheld in it
 A disguised demon, missioned to knit
 My soul with under-darkness ... (I.691-96, 698-702)

When Endymion has seen the maid once more, her departure is again associated with intimations of death:

A wonder, fair as any I have told --
 The same bright face I tasted in my sleep,
 Smiling in the clear well. My heart did leap
 Through the cool depth. It moved as if to flee,
 I started up -- when lo! refreshfully,
 There came upon my face in plenteous showers
 Dew-drops ...
 Bathing my spirit in a new delight.
 Aye, such a breathless honey-feel of bliss
 Alone preserved me from the drear abyss
 Of death, for the fair form had gone again.

(I.894-900, 902-5)

The theme of death pervades The Lover's Tale. Tennyson's speaker tells his listeners that on his happiest day with Cadrilla the two of them had ascended 'the hill of woe',

so called,

Because the legend ran that, long time since,
 One rainy night, when every wind blew loud,

A woeful man had thrust his wife and child
 With shouts from off the bridge, and following
 plunged
 Into the dizzy chasm below ...

I.363-68[I.365-72]

It was on this hill that the speaker experienced his happiest hour and it was this hill that Cadrilla suggested should be renamed "'The Hill of Hope'"(I.454[I.452]). It is after the experience of the 'delighted hour' (I.462[I.461]) that we are reminded of the deaths of the wife and child:

We trod the shadow of the downward hill;
 We past from light to dark. On the other side
 Is scooped a cavern and a mountainhall,
 Which none have fathomed. If you go far in,
 (The country people rumour,) you may hear
 The moaning of the woman and the child,
 Shut in the chambers of the rock ...
 the cavernmouth,
 Half overtrailed with a wanton weed,
 Gives birth to a brawling stream, that stepping lightly
 Adown a natural stair of tangled roots,
 Is presently received in a sweet grave
 Of eglantines ...

 Lower down
 Spreads out a little lake, that, flooding, makes
 Cushions of yellow sand; and from the woods
 That belt it rise three dark, tall cypresses;
 Three cypresses, symbols of mortal woe,

That men plant over graves.

I.513-19[I.505-11], I.522-27[I.514-19], I.531-36
[I.523-28].

The coincidence of the finite and infinite defined in the speaker's relationship with Cadrilla involves the idea that at the point of his most fulfilled hour the fact of death presented no problem. Assured of spiritual continuity his anxieties regarding the mortality of his natural or finite self were transcended:

Had I died then, I had not seemed to die,
For bliss stood round me like the lights of Heaven,
That cannot fade, they are so burning bright ...
Oh had the Power from whose right hand the light
Of Life issueth, and from whose left hand floweth
The shadow of Death, perennial effluences ...

had he stemmed my day with night, and driven
My current to the fountain whence it sprang, --
Even his own abiding excellence, --
On me, methinks, that shock of gloom had fall'n
Unfelt ...

bearing on thro' Being limitless
The triumph of this foretaste, I had merged
Glory in glory, without sense of change.

I.484-86[I.484-85], I.493-95[I.487-89], I.498-502
[I.492-96], I.510-12[I.504, 505]

Despite Cadrilla's suggestion, however, that the hill of 'woe' be renamed the hill of 'Hope', the speaker recalls: 'Nevertheless, we did not change the name' (I.456[I.454]). This ominous signal, together with the account of the lovers' journey from light to dark past the unfathomable cavern of death, prepare us for the development in the

story where Cadrilla tells the protagonist of her love for Lionel. At the literal level of the tale the speaker is the disappointed lover. But the full significance of his reaction to Cadrilla's confidence can be appreciated only at the level at which she represents his own higher or infinite self, that part of his soul which participates in 'Being limitless'. At this level of the psycho-drama we may say Cadrilla's attachment to another man amounts to the divorce of psyche from the epipsyche. Listening to Cadrilla as they sit near the 'Three cypresses, symbols of mortal woe', the speaker's reaction is cast in terms of a symbolic death -- signifying his initiation into a world apparently bereft of any saving contact with spiritual life. As Cadrilla begins to speak of her love for Lionel the protagonist remembers:

Hope was not wholly dead,
But breathing hard at the approach of Death,
Updrawn in expectation of her change ...

I.590-92[I.573-74]¹

After Cadrilla has spoken:

it seemed as tho' a link
Of some tight chain within my inmost frame
Was riven in twain: that life I heeded not
Flowed from me, and the darkness of the grave,
The darkness of the grave and utter night,
Did swallow up my vision: at her feet,
Even at the feet of her I loved, I fell,
Smit with exceeding sorrow unto Death.

I.598-605[I.583-590]

The protagonist's account of his fall even unto Death alerts us,

1. 1832, I.592 misprinted 'change' as 'charge'. The error was corrected by Tennyson in the British Library copy.

of course, to the manner in which Tennyson, following Romantic practice, is creating in The Lover's Tale an interior, psychological fable to parallel the Biblical theme of the Fall and of the curse of mortality then visited upon man. Not that the configuration of the Biblical myth is exactly reduplicated in Tennyson's construct, but numerous hints of scriptural and Miltonic language serve to emphasise the scope of the psycho-drama. Thus, for example, the protagonist asks 'Who was curst/But I?' (I.621-22[cf.1879, I.597-600]) and his use of the word 'change' in line I.592 quoted above bears the same Miltonic possibilities as when it was used in a parallel context in 'Oenone'. In Milton, at the moment Adam ate the 'fair enticing fruit' (Paradise Lost, IX.996) --

Earth trembled from her entrails, as again
In pangs, and nature gave a second groan,
Sky loured and muttering thunder, some sad drops
Wept at completing of the mortal sin ... (IX.1000-3)

-- while, in The Lover's Tale, as the speaker 'fell/Smit with exceeding sorrow unto Death',

Then had the Earth beneath me yawning given
Sign of convulsion, and thro' horrid rifts
Sent up the moaning of unhappy Spirits
Imprisoned in her centre, with the heat
Of their infolding element; had the Angels,
The watchers at Heaven's gate, pushed them apart,
And from the golden threshold had downrolled
Their heaviest thunder -- I had lain as still,
And blind, and motionless, as then I lay!

I.606-14[I.591-96]

Similarly, just as Milton's Adam, following his transgression,

declares an impulse to retreat into natural obscurity --

O might I here
 In solitude live savage, in some glade
 Obscured, where highest woods impenetrable
 To star or sunlight, spread their umbrage broad
 And brown as evening: cover me ye pines,
 Ye cedars, with innumerable boughs
 Hide me ... (IX.1084-90)

-- so too, does Tennyson's protagonist, deprived of his Eden, desire a covert in nature:

Would I had lain
 Until the pleached ivytress had wound
 Round my worn limbs, and the wild briar had driven
 Its knotted thorns thro' my unpaining brows,
 Leaning its roses on my faded eyes.
 The wind had blown above me, and the rain
 Had fall'n upon me, and the gilded snake
 Had nestled in this bosomthrone of Love,
 But I had been at rest for evermore.

I.631-39[I.606-14]

Tennyson's fable does not attempt to explain the origin of man's 'mortal woe' in the same terms as Milton. The Lover's Tale shares a Romantic tendency to conceive of the fall as a phenomenon for which no individual cause -- in the sense of either an original principle of evil or of an original, distinct and culpable act of will -- can be found. Understood not as a religious alienation but as the loss of integrated consciousness and of a sense of participation in a world of relationship, the phenomenon of the fall tended to be understood in Romantic thought as 'an inevitable access of self-consciousness

resulting from unavoidable processes of growth'.¹ But even when understood as such a self-alienation, the experience might involve a sense of transgression indistinguishable from a sense of moral guilt. 'Long time hath Man's unhappiness and guilt/Detained us', wrote Wordsworth in The Prelude (XI.1-2). He was thus summarising his account of the period in his own life when 'all things' had tended fast 'To depravation' (X.806-807) as a result of the exercise -- without reference to larger human concerns -- of the rational, analytical faculties of the mind.

Defining the fall in terms of a fracture within the mind, Tennyson's psycho-drama also touches on the perplexing manner in which sensations of guilt may arise even in a situation where it is not possible to distinguish an originating, degenerate and morally responsible act of will. Speaking of his grief at losing Cadrilla the protagonist declares:

So Love, arraigned to judgement and to death,
 Received unto himself a part of blame,
 Being guiltless, as an innocent prisoner,
 Who, when the woful sentence hath been past,
 And all the clearness of his fame hath gone
 Beneath the shadow of the curse of man,
 First falls asleep in swoon, wherefrom awaked,
 And looking round upon his tearful friends,
 Forthwith and in his agony conceives
 A shameful sense as of a cleaving crime --
 For whence without some guilt should such grief be?

I.827-37[I.773-83]

Just as Tennyson's poem does not ratify Milton's Christian notion

1. Robindra Kumar Biswas, op.cit., p.252.

of the 'mortal sin/Original' (Paradise Lost, IX. 1003-1004), neither does it, as we shall see, advance the same scheme of redemption as in Milton. But if Milton's Adam cannot deny his state and 'live savage' in 'solitude', neither can fallen man in Tennyson achieve peace through oblivion in nature.

In part II of The Lover's Tale we do indeed see the protagonist retreating to a savage solitude -- living almost as a creature of nature:

From that time forth I would not see her more;
But many weary moons I lived alone --
Alone, and in the heart of the great forest ...

the merry linnet knew me,

The squirrel knew me, and the dragonfly
Shot by me like a flash of purple fire.

The rough briar tore my bleeding palms; the hemlock,
Browhigh, did strike my forehead as I past ...

Which spired above the wood; and with mad hand
 Tearing the bright leaves of the ivy-screen,
 I cast them in the noisy brook beneath,
 And watched them till they vanished from my sight
 Beneath the bower of wreathed eglantines:
 And all the fragments of the living rock ...

in mine agony

Did I make bare of all the deep rich moss ...

So gazed I on the ruins of that thought
 Which was the playmate of my youth -- for which
 I lived and breathed ...

The precious jewel of my honoured life,
 Erewhile close couched in golden happiness,
 Now proved counterfeit ...

II.32-33[II.32-33], II.35-43[II.35-43],

II.49-50[II.46-47], II.70-72, 77-79[II.67]

It is not that the protagonist fails to have visions of Cadrilla during his exile in the wilderness. But in these Cadrilla appears in strangely altered form. The general pattern is as follows:

Oftentimes

The vision had fair prelude, in the end
 Opening on darkness, stately vestibules
 To caves and shows of Death ...

II.129-32[I.122-25]¹

The speaker recounts in detail the several stages of one of his visions:

Alone I sat with her ...

her eloquent eyes ...

1. 1832, II.132 misprinted 'caves' as 'cares'; corrected by Tennyson in the British Library copy.

Filled all with pure clear fire, thro' mine down rained
 Their spiritsearching splendours ...

those fair eyes

Shone on my darkness ...

the light

Which was their life, burst through the cloud of thought
 Keen, irrepressible.

II.145[II.138], II.149[II.142], II.151-52[II.144-45],
 II.162-63[II.155-56], II.168-70[II.161-63]

The dream-vision moves to a room 'Hung round with paintings of the
 sea, and one/A vessel in mid-ocean' (II.172-73[II.165-66]). As the
 protagonist and Cadrilla stare at this vessel, 'each heart/Grew closer
 to the other' (II.190-91[II.183-84]), until 'That painted vessel, as
 with inner life,/Gan rock and heave upon that painted sea' (II.195-
 96[II.188-89]) --

round and round

A whirlwind caught and bore us; mighty gyres
 Rapid and vast, of hissing spray winddriven
 Far thro' the dizzy dark. Aloud she shrieked --
 My heart was cloven with pain. I wound my arms
 About her: we whirled giddily: the wind
 Sung: but I clasped her without fear: her weight
 Shrank in my grasp, and over my dim eyes,
 And parted lips which drank her breath, down hung
 The jaws of Death: I, screaming, from me flung
 The empty phantom: all the sway and swirl
 Of the storm dropt to windless calm, and I
 Down weltered thro' the dark ever and ever.

II.200-212[II.193-205]¹

1. 1832, II.201 misprinted 'gyres' as 'gyves'; corrected by Tennyson
 in the British Library copy.

With Cadrilla transformed into an empty phantom -- divested of spiritual splendour and grotesquely denoting death -- part II of The Lover's Tale concludes.

Again, it is possible to find in Shelley's treatment of the spirit of solitude a suggestive context for reading Cadrilla as she appears under a new, darker aspect in the second part of Tennyson's poem. In Alastor, as we have seen, the poet-protagonist's desire for reunion with the 'veiled maid' necessitates a suicidal pursuit of her beyond the bounds of the phenomenal world. It is to be hoped, as Shelley put it in Queen Mab, that 'Death is a gate of dreariness and gloom,/That leads to azure isles and beaming skies/And happy regions of eternal hope' (IX.161-63). However, in prompting the poet-protagonist of Alastor to a dissatisfaction with temporal experience, a dissatisfaction unassuageable except (possibly) by means of his own natural death, the 'veiled maid' can assume an unattractive aspect. She can signify an appallingly self-tormenting impulse of the mind. In a situation where there is a conflict of interest between the ideal and the earthly affiliations of the individual personality, she can be both deeply desired and deeply resented. As far as the mortal self is concerned, the ideal figure of the Alastor youth's vision is a threateningly destructive power. The problems are increased further with the anxiety that the visionary figure may have no objective status and may be merely a subjective projection, a solipsistic fantasy. If the ideal promise of the veiled maid is illusory or empty, then the annihilation of the finite self that she invites turns her into nothing more than a death-figure. As an impulse of the mind she may denote only the death-wish of the natural creature: a death-wish falsely masquerading under the appearance of an angel of light or of life-through-death. She may be the very agent of the principle of

death infecting the natural universe and as such she can be seen as a haunting demon, a distinctively malevolent force. For all these reasons the Alastor youth's 'veiled maid' can be spoken of in thoroughly ambiguous terms:

He eagerly pursues
Beyond the realms of dream that fleeting shade;
He overleaps the bounds. Alas! Alas!
Were limbs, and breath, and being intertwined
Thus treacherously? Lost, lost, for ever lost,
In the wide pathless desert of dim sleep,
That beautiful shape! ...

At night the passion came,
Like the fierce fiend of a distempered dream,
And shook him from his rest, and led him forth
Into the darkness ...

(205-11, 224-27)

A similar ambiguity with regard to the mind's own absolute aspirations is to be found in the lyric beginning 'Oh! there are spirits of the air' which followed Alastor in the volume published by Shelley in 1816:

Ah! wherefore didst thou build thine hope
On the false earth's inconstancy?
Did thine own mind afford no scope
Of love, or moving thoughts to thee? ...

Thine own soul still is true to thee,
But changed to a foul fiend through misery.

This fiend, whose ghastly presence ever

Beside thee like thy shadow hangs,
 Dream not to chase; -- the mad endeavour
 Would scourge thee to severer pangs.

(19-22, 29-34)

Certain parallels with Shelley's representations of the blighting spirit of solitude can be detected in the dual aspect under which Cadrilla appears in The Lover's Tale. In the protagonist's separation from Cadrilla -- in his discovery of the 'precious jewel of [his] honoured life,/.../Now proved counterfeit' -- she is transmogrified into a ghastly presence grotesquely mocking his desire for the ideal and defining only his entrapment within a universe of death.

Mockery of the protagonist's immortal yearnings also forms the theme of the third part of The Lover's Tale. In the second part of the poem the speaker had, on one occasion, dreamt of Cadrilla as dead and of how he had clasped a figure standing near him in her funeral procession -- only to discover with horror that the figure was Lionel. In part III, against the now familiar setting of the 'moaning cave' [III.2], the speaker has again --

The vision of the bier. As heretofore
 I walked behind with one who veiled his brow

[III.11-12]

This time, however, the tolling of the funeral bell quickens pace and is transformed into 'four merry marriage-bells' [III.21]. Cadrilla rises from her bier to be embraced by Lionel. The vision points (with appropriately orgiastic tonalities) to a celebration of purely naturalistic rebirth. From the point of view of the speaker's spiritual hopes it constitutes a parodic image of resurrection -- and he is left, finally, as bereft as at the end of part II:

A long loud clash of rapid marriage-bells.

Then those who led the van, and those in rear,
 Rushed into dance, and like wild Bacchanals
 Fled onward to the steeple in the woods:
 I, too, was borne along and felt the blast
 Beat on my heated eyelids ...

she from out her death-like chrysalis,
 She from her bier, as into fresher life,
 My sister, and my cousin, and my love,
 Leapt lightly clad in bridal white -- her hair
 Studded with one rich Provence rose ...

the man who stood with me
 Stept gaily forward, throwing down his robes,
 And claspt her hand in his: again the bells
 Jangled and clanged: the stormy surf
 Crashed in the shingle: and the whirling rout
 Led by those two rushed into dance, and fled
 Wind-footed to the steeple in the woods,
 Till they were swallowed in the leafy bowers,
 And I stood sole beside the vacant bier.

[III.23-28, 41-45, 50-58]¹

iii

It is worth pausing to observe that the two manifestations of Cadrilla -- or of an ideal figure closely related to her -- seem to have formed part of Tennyson's basic idea for The Lover's Tale even in the

1. The concluding line 59 of part III in 1879 ('There, there, my latest vision -- then the event') does not appear in the H.Nbk.12 draft of this section. It first appears in 1868 to link with the newly composed material that was to form part IV in 1879.

earliest known draft of the poem in H.Nbk.8. The Lover's Tale material in H.Nbk.8 is not extensive (for full details see Appendix D) and would appear to represent at least one of the very earliest stages in Tennyson's conception of the poem. There is no formal division into parts at this point in the development of the text but it is possible to reconstruct (from the partially damaged manuscript) a complete version, comprising 111 lines, of what was to become part I in 1832. This first 'movement' of the draft poem contains only the most basic elements of the story as it was to be formulated in 1832. The first 64 lines or so are taken up with the unnamed speaker's recollection (there is an implied audience) of the landscape (a coastal landscape with a bay not yet called 'Lover's Bay') of his youth. Apart from much detailed description of the physical appearance of the landscape and the bay we learn in these 64 lines simply that the protagonist suffers pain and sorrow in his present alienation from the state of 'Love' and 'Hope' (l.64) associated with the scenes of his youth. That state was defined by his relationship with Cadrilla. But a mere eleven lines (65-76) deal directly with the very special closeness between the protagonist and his love. In the remainder of the first movement of the draft poem we are given to understand -- in very general terms -- that whatever the speaker may have wished or hoped for in respect of Cadrilla was not realised. Something went badly wrong and it is apparent that the protagonist and his beloved became separated. From the present perspective of the poem the protagonist is understood to spend his time looking back in memory to the period of his youth and the time he spent with Cadrilla. The first movement comes to an end (l.111) with the same line as was to end part I in both 1832 (l.865) and 1879 [l.810]: 'And Memory fed the soul of Love with tears'. Almost none of the narrative detail of part I of 1832 is present in the first

111 lines of The Lover's Tale draft material in H.Nbk.8. Precisely what went wrong in the lovers' relationship is never specified and there is no mention of Lionel.

Immediately following the first 111 lines, however, is a draft passage which apparently constitutes a direct continuation of The Lover's Tale draft in this notebook. The following is intended as a reading text and does not record all the features of the manuscript:

Fair face! fair form [?sole] tenant of a brain
 Peopled with griefs whose blackness cannot mar
 Your lustre, when fatigued with things less fair
 These eyes roll inward, gazing as they gazed
 Upon the archetype in happier hours
 Beautiful permanence! indwelling light
 Unvanishing! which never transient thought
 Supplants or shades, for thou dost glow thro' all
 Intense Idea; though I close the lids
 Of mental vision on thee thou dost burn
 As sunlight, thro' them: Slumber is no veil
 For thou art up and broad awake in dreams
 O deeply lov'd: yet like a cruel foe
 Fast centr'd in the heart thou hast undone
 Which must exist for ever. Can it lose
 Thy presence, when this head is low in dust
 And won unto thyself and sendest thence
 Sharp arrows, from the fort which was mine own

Lover's Tale draft, ll.112-29, H.Nbk.8, f.30^r

As may be seen from the transcription in Appendix D, the text of the last four lines of this passage is difficult to decipher. Even if read as conjectured above, the sense of the lines -- while clearly

developing the idea of the 'fair form' as one not only loved but also experienced as an enemy -- remains slightly obscure. Tennyson himself appears to have been unhappy with the lines and it is possible they do not constitute a fully worked out expression. The manuscript evidence suggests that he began and did not complete a revision of a first reading of the lines. However, while the passage as a whole adds nothing to the narrative already barely present in the first 111 lines of the Lover's Tale draft in H.Nbk.8, it does have the dimension of psychological interiority that was to be so marked in the 1832 poem. It is possible that it may represent an early attempt to establish a direct continuation of the poem beyond the conclusion of the first movement. There is an affinity between the 'fair eyes' we have seen shining on the protagonist's 'darkness' in part II of 1832 and the basic idea of the 'Fair face' burning through the blackness of the speaker's griefs in the H.Nbk.8 passage. The dual aspect of the ideal figure is also treated in the passage.

If the passage is to be regarded as a direct continuation of The Lover's Tale following the first movement (or even as the germ of an idea on the further development of the poem), then it would presumably relate directly to the figure of Cadrilla introduced in the first movement. It would be dealing with the protagonist in the present -- desolated and yet in some sense still possessed by her as a potent force. This would accord in some degree with the theme of part II in 1832, but the present tense of the H.Nbk.8 passage is distinguishable from the past setting of the story in the second part of 1832. On the other hand, the freedom from detailed narrative in the first 111 lines of the notebook draft would allow for the transition to the 'Fair face!' passage in a way that the fully developed narrative of 1832 would not.

There is evidence of further material apparently relating to The

Lover's Tale following the 'Fair face!' passage in H.Nbk.8. But from this point the notebook is badly mutilated and it is impossible to reconstruct a coherent picture of how Tennyson was going to develop his idea of a Cadrilla who is lost to the protagonist. We are left with an indwelling light that is at once loved and seen as a cruel foe and whose role or status after death seems (in the last four lines of the passage on f.30^r) to be the subject of some uncertainty.¹

1. The 'Fair face! fair form' passage in H.Nbk.8 raises further points about the intellectual and imaginative background to The Lover's Tale which may briefly be dealt with here. There is, unmistakeably, a fundamentally Platonic conception at work in the draft passage. As Carlos Baker has observed, the 'basic assumption' of Shelley's 'psyche-epipsyche strategy may be found under explicit discussion in the Symposium and Phaedrus of Plato' (op.cit. p.52). In his study The Platonism of Shelley (Durham, N.C., 1949) James A. Notopoulos notes that Shelley found much in his reading of Plato ('direct Platonism'), as well as in his reading of other writers influenced by Plato ('indirect Platonism'), to supplement his own idealistic bent of mind ('natural Platonism'). Likewise, it is not impossible that Tennyson may have found directly in Plato some inspiration for The Lover's Tale. But the hand of the philosopher is not traceable as a direct, systematic influence in The Lover's Tale or, indeed, in any other work by the poet. A Tennyson notebook at Harvard (MS.Eng.952.4; hereafter H.Nbk.4: watermarked 1828, inscribed 'Trin: College, Cambridge', and including some Lover's Tale draft material) has the following note in the poet's hand (f.2^v): 'A distinguishable power self-affirmed & seen in its unity with y^e Eternal Essence is according to Plato an Idea'. This is Plato via Coleridge: the words are from The Friend (cf. The Friend, ed. Barbara E. Rooke, 2 vols., London and Princeton, 1969, I.492; vol.4:1 of The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, General Editor, Kathleen Coburn). If we were to apply Notopoulos's terms we should probably say that in Tennyson a basic 'natural Platonism' came to find, during the Cambridge period, external stimulus and direction in various forms of 'indirect Platonism', the principle influences being the poetic Platonism and Neo-Platonism of the Romantics themselves and the broad idealist sympathies of many of Tennyson's friends and contemporaries at the university. H.Nbk.4 also contains Tennyson's notes on Italian grammar and a reference to Dante. This reference serves to remind us that Dante's Christian-Neoplatonism, his conception of God as love and his allegorical representation of the operation of Divine Grace in the form of Beatrice, must be considered a possible contributory influence on the themes of The Lover's Tale. The more especially when we consider Arthur Hallam's special interest in Platonic and Neo-Platonic thought in general and Dante in particular. (Hallam's most important

iv

The remarkable thing about The Lover's Tale is that the questions left hanging in the H.Nbk.8 draft of the poem are in certain significant respects never answered in any of the later versions of the poem. The extremes of desolation with which parts II and III conclude in 1832 do not of course represent the final word on the psychological and spiritual condition of the protagonist in this state of the poem. As he speaks in the present in part I we find that Cadrilla has for the protagonist a continuing vital potency. I have already pointed to his present-tense statements -- as he is recalling his past attachment to Cadrilla -- that love constitutes 'the hold I have on earth' and the 'air wherewith I breathe' (I.163-64[I.161-62]). I have also mentioned the movement from his speaking of Cadrilla's eyes as they appeared in the past ('those eyes were moved/With motions of the soul', I.70-71 [not 1879]) to his speaking of

prose contributions on these subjects are to be found in his essays 'On the Philosophical Writings of Cicero', 'On Gabriele Rossetti's Dante Theories', and 'The Influence of Italian upon English Literature'; cf. Writings of Arthur Hallam, pp.142-81, 237-79, 213-34.) While Tennyson would have certainly begun The Lover's Tale by the time he met Hallam, he would have found as he was composing the work up to 1832 that his friend provided at least fit audience for his treatment of the theme of love. There are points of compatibility between themes in The Lover's Tale and the amatory idealism which pervades so much of Hallam's poetry. A number of similarities of expression may even be observed between The Lover's Tale and Hallam's early verse imitation of Dante in 'A Farewell to the South' (Writings, pp.8-26). In this poem Hallam represents his separation from a young woman with whom he is (or fancies himself to be) still in love on analogy with the position of Dante in relation to Beatrice. (It may be stressed, however, that at no stage in its development does The Lover's Tale settle into the complacencies of resolution and consolation that mark 'A Farewell to the South': ll.620-21, 631-40.) But no more than Plato can Dante be seen as a significant formal influence on The Lover's Tale. Behind Dante's cosmic allegory stands a centrally Christian and Trinitarian conception of God that has no place in Tennyson's 'scheme'. In The Lover's Tale, love as both attribute and name of the motivating power of the cosmos, and Cadrilla as a parallel figure to Beatrice, are internalised and psychologised in a manner that suggests the primary influence of a Romantic ontology and epistemology on Tennyson's work.

them as present realities:

She was darkhaired, darkeyed:

Oh, such dark eyes! ...

look at them,

You lose yourself in utter ignorance;

You cannot find their depth ...

I.74-75[I.71-72], I.78-80[I.75-77]

Cadrilla has, indeed, in some sense sustained him through all his years of 'separation' from her:

Thine image, like a charm of light and strength

Upon the waters, pushed me back again

On these deserted sands of barren life.

Tho' from the deep vault where the heart of hope

Fell into dust, and crumbled in the dark ...

Thou didst not sway me upward, could I perish

With such a costly casket in the grasp

Of memory? ...

Thou art light,

To which my spirit leaneth all her flowers,

And length of days, and immortality

Of thought, and freshness ever self-renewed ...

thou didst sit alone in the inner house,

A wakeful portress, and didst parle with Death, --

"This is a charmed dwelling which I hold;"

So Death gave back, and would no further come.

I.90-94[I.87-91], I.97-99[I.94-97],

I.101-104[I.99-102], I.110-113[I.108-111]

It is clear that for the protagonist the memory of Cadrilla is

not just a series of decaying sense impressions. Far from being inert, memory here would seem to define an ineradicable, energising element of the speaker's mind and personality. The high status of this retrospective faculty is indicated in part II when the speaker refers to Cadrilla's 'fair eyes' as

forms which ever stood
 Within the magic cirque of memory,
 Invisible but deathless, waiting still
The edict of the will to reassume
The semblance of those rare realities
Of which they were the mirrors. (my italics)

II.163-68[II.156-61]

A. Dwight Culler has made the following perceptive comments on the presentation of memory in The Lover's Tale:

Parts I-III ... are not properly a tale but a Romantic exploration of the psychology of the teller. They show the speaker in the very process of recalling his past, of re^pre^hexperiencing his narrative even as he relates it ... It is clear that ... Tennyson thought of Memory as the faculty principally ministering to the poetic imagination.¹

But memory in The Lover's Tale is only almost a creative principle. The speaker's recollections of Cadrilla are not quite Wordsworthian spots of time. They may be deathless, even sustaining, but they are not completely revivifying. For all that¹ the speaker's memory of Cadrilla constitutes a 'freshness ever self-renewed', he is still borne down by 'strangling sorrow' (I.24[not 1879]) and cast adrift on 'these deserted sands of barren life' (I.92[I.89]). It is as if the speaker, unable to divest himself of a fundamental commitment

1. op. cit., pp.36-37

to the light that never shone on land or sea, is still conditioned by a sense of Cadrilla as counterfeit, as empty shadow or phantom.

If an imaginative act of will is required for Cadrilla's eyes to reassume their original brilliance, it is clear that the act has not been willed. Memory in The Lover's Tale does not, after all, creatively erase distinctions between the historical past and the present:

Yet is my life nor in the present time,
Nor in the present place. To me alone ...
The Present is the vassal of the Past ...

I.114-15,117[I.112-13,115]

The speaker describes himself as

A portion of the pleasant yesterday,
Thrust forward on today and out of place;
A body journeying onward, sick with toil ...

I.120-22[I.118-20]

It is a strangely mixed state, somehow suspended between a loss of integration and the achievement of a full reintegration, between spiritual death and spiritual regeneration. This is the most up-to-date word on the position of the speaker in The Lover's Tale of 1832. It is also the latest position at which we see him even in the 'completed' text of 1879.

Part IV of 1879, the conclusion of Tennyson's 'maturity', is told in the third person. The premise is that the speaker, unable to continue his story at the end of part III, leaves to a friend -- one of the company he has been addressing -- the task of completing the tale of his past affair with Cadrilla. We hear that when the protagonist emerged from his solitude in the woods he discovered that Cadrilla, eleven months after her marriage to Lionel, had lain three days without a pulse:

All that looked on her had pronounced her dead.

And so they bore her ...

And laid her in the vault of her own kin.

[IV.35-36,39]

The speaker, desiring to see his love one last time, entered her tomb: there to discover she was not actually dead. Taking her to his home, he nursed her back to health, and at a banquet ostensibly given to mark his own final departure from the land of his youth restored her to Lionel. Following this he 'past for ever from his native land' [IV.384] and took up residence in the foreign place where he is found telling his story at the opening of the poem.

'The Golden Supper' is 'founded' as Tennyson acknowledged when he published it in The Holy Grail volume, 'upon a story in Boccaccio' (The Decameron, 10th Day, 4th Tale). The question arises as to how much light is shed on the protagonist's situation in the present at the opening of The Lover's Tale by the continuation of the narrative of his past history in part IV of 1879. The answer would appear to be not a great deal.

As I remarked at the opening of this chapter, many commentators have felt that Tennyson's modification of Boccaccio's story of the resurrected bride does not harmonise with the first three parts of The Lover's Tale. Paull F. Baum was convinced that Tennyson's use of Boccaccio to conclude The Lover's Tale in 1879 had nothing at all to do with the poet's original conception of the work: 'in his usual search for subjects Tennyson found the Boccaccio story, made a poem of it, and then saw that it would do as a conclusion to The Lover's Tale'.¹ Baum's view of the relation between 'The Golden Supper' and The Lover's Tale of 1879 is invalidated by his imperfect knowledge of

1. op.cit., p.319.

the chronology of the poem's composition (the fact that 'The Golden Supper' of the 1869 Holy Grail volume had been written in 1868 specifically as the conclusion to The Lover's Tale). Even so, it remains true that there is nothing in the first three parts of The Lover's Tale to compare with the very obvious links that exist between part IV and the Boccaccio story.

Nevertheless, there are a number of features intrinsic to the first three parts of the poem which appear in some measure to anticipate the principal theme of part IV. There is also evidence extrinsic to the poem itself which suggests that the whole work was conceived with the Boccaccio story in mind. The preoccupation with death in part I is accompanied, predictably enough, by images of burial: 'The darkness of the grave and utter night,/Did swallow up my vision' (I.602-603[I.587-88]). But in part II, as the speaker recalls his dream of Cadrilla's death, he makes an observation which clearly suggests that at the time Tennyson had written the first three parts of the poem he was already thinking of a continuation which would have involved at least the idea of Cadrilla's death. The speaker wonders, with respect to his dream of his loved one's death, whether

the cleareyed Spirit,
Being blasted in the Present, grew at length
Prophetical and prescient of whate'er
The Future had in store ... (my italics)

II.136-39[II.129-32]

In the Tennyson Research Centre there survive proofs of The Lover's Tale text as set for the volume of Poems, 1832 (32p; see Appendix D). These contain a note (AT/32p) to lines II.136-39 inscribed by the poet in what is, as far as is possible to judge, an early hand:

This & some few other passages in the Poem
allude to a circumstance in the sequel, which is
in a great measure founded on the beautiful tale
of Gentil Carisendi in the Decameron.

Tennyson's note would appear to have been intended for inclusion with the text of The Lover's Tale as originally planned for the 1832 Poems. These proofs do include revisions marked by Tennyson before and after both the publication of the 1832 Poems and the 'trial-printing' of the 1832 Lover's Tale. If, however, Tennyson inscribed his note after 1832, it is unlikely he did so any later than the mid-to-late 1830s (see Appendix D for details). Both the note (even if post-dating the 'trial-printing' by a few years) and the speaker's comment in 1832 on his prescience of the future, constitute evidence that a further movement to the poem based on the Boccaccio theme was in Tennyson's mind from a very early stage.¹

There is another important point of contiguity between the first three and the fourth part of The Lover's Tale. This is the theme or motif of resurrection which informs the speaker's dream-vision of Cadrilla's regeneration in part III quite as much (albeit in different terms) as the representation of her restoration to life in part IV. This motif is also implicit in the speaker's description of himself after Cadrilla has told him of her love for another:

I was shut up with Grief;
She took the body of my past delight,
Narded, and swathed, and balmed it for herself,
And laid it in a newhewn sepulchre
Where man had never lain. I was led mute

1. It is important also that the Diary of Mrs Marian Bradley reports Tennyson speaking of the whole poem in relation to Boccaccio at a time (January 1868) when he had apparently neither begun major revision of the 1832 text in preparation for 1868 nor composed the conclusion which was to form part IV in 1879: see Appendix D for details.

Into her temple like a sacrifice ...

I.705-10[I.669-74]

The echoes and allusions in this passage relate, of course, to the Gospels (especially John, XIX. 40-41) and to Isaiah (LIII.7). The identification is with Christ and in this identification we can perhaps discern a prelude to the protagonist's 'raising' of Cadrilla from her tomb in part IV.

The casting of the protagonist of The Lover's Tale as both Adam and Christ is entirely consistent within a fable that interiorises scriptural history and is aligned with -- though it does not necessarily confirm -- the quintessentially Romantic thesis that man's 'nature', however it may have fallen, 'is its own divine control'. But while, in part IV, it may be very noble of the protagonist to restore Cadrilla alive to her husband, it is not entirely clear how -- or, indeed, whether -- this selfless act of renewal may be read as an affirmation of the self-regenerative power of the individual mind of the protagonist. It is not clear how it helps us to place or define his position in the present as he relates his story in parts I-III of the poem.

This uncertainty about the significance of part IV brings us to the point that whatever overt structural or thematic links we may discover between the four parts of the poem, there nevertheless does remain a distinctive lack of harmony between the first three parts and the conclusion. The difference has to do with the fact that the intense interiority of the first three parts is not carried over into the fourth. The shift from a first to a third person narrative is perhaps crucially symptomatic of the difference. As A. Dwight Culler says:

'The Golden Supper' is a purely external narrative of actions, whereas the first three parts of the tale are concerned

exclusively with the world of emotion.

Parts I-III ... are ... a Romantic exploration of the psychology of the teller.¹

While the narrative details may be filled in, the primary psychological and metaphysical levels of interest established in parts I-III are not significantly developed in part IV of 1879. We may speculate that had Tennyson provided in 1832 a conclusion based on the Boccaccio story but written in the same imaginative spirit as the first three parts of the poem, we might have been given a usable and illuminating perspective on the protagonist as he appears in his mixed condition of 'freshness ever self-renewed' and 'strangling suffering' at the opening of the poem.

It appears most likely that Tennyson always intended to leave his hero in an ambiguous, unresolved state. From the H.Nbk.8 draft onwards the protagonist speaks of blissful memories combined with a continuing sense of loss and a conviction of the impossibility of his ever returning to his native land.² A part IV employing roughly the same plot as that in the 1879 conclusion, but imaginatively more in keeping with parts I-III, might have left us with the speaker more vividly occupying a middle-ground of the spirit, a ground that stirred potently with unresolved issues and open questions. The two aspects of Cadrilla might have remained in prominent and actively disturbing contention. The questions at stake, after all, are large ones. 'Was this the end?' asked the speaker in his retreat into solitude:

Was this the end?

Why grew we then together i' the same plot?

1. op.cit., p.36

2. Mrs Marian Bradley's Diary for January 1868 reports Tennyson outlining an overall scheme of the poem in which the lover finally 'rides away & is never more seen'. As noted above, p.190,n.1, Tennyson was recounting this scheme apparently before he had actually written the conclusion to the poem: see Appendix D for details.

Why fed we the same fountain? drew the same sun?

Why were our mothers' branches of one stem?

Why were we one in all things ...

if that same nearness

Were father to this distance, and that one

Vauntcourier to this double?

II.21-25[II.21-25], II.27-29[II.27-29]

'Is this the end/Of this new glorious world' asks Adam (Paradise Lost, X.720-21) as he contemplates the 'growing miseries' (X.715) of the Fall. The answer from Milton's God of Love is well known. But there is no equivalent answer in The Lover's Tale. While the speaker may say that love constitutes 'the hold I have on earth', his present separation from Cadrilla and the shadow of her 'empty phantom' provide the basis for a doubt that Love is indeed the governing principle of the universe. The doubt surfaces as the speaker tells of his tears -- tears shed on the occasion when Cadrilla first told him her secret and shed again as he relates the event:

O Love, if thou be'st Love, dry up these tears

Shed for the love of Love ... (my italics)

I.822-23[I.768-69]

The tensions do survive in the 1879 Lover's Tale, but the neat tying-up of the narrative of the speaker's past in part IV works against the openendedness of his situation in the present at the opening of the poem. 'The Golden Supper' has all the appearance of defining a great spiritual catharsis. Tennyson almost succeeds in creating the illusion that all is well once Cadrilla has been revived and restored to Lionel. The gilded brilliance of part IV not only fails to deepen our understanding of the protagonists's predicament at the opening of the poem, it seriously deflects attention away from

that predicament.

The difference in style and tone between the first three and the fourth parts of The Lover's Tale leaves us with questions about the 'resolution' of the story that are not potent but merely irritating. It is the external conviction of part IV which has raised a question in the minds of several commentators whether the ambiguous position of the speaker is indeed what we should be left with.

On this last point, even Tennyson himself appears to have had a moment of uncertainty about leaving issues open. In the privately-printed text of 1868 the poem concludes not with the speaker passing for ever from his native land, as in 1879, but with the narrator who has been completing the protagonist's story addressing one of his colleagues as follows:

Ever? is it an ever? I bade you here,
 My friend, to meet him in these woods to-day,
 His lovely haunt, that if he could be brought
 At last to tell his story, you might hear
 Both for the strangeness of it, and your mind
 Upon it, after: and I ask you now,
 Whether his not unwillingness to tell it --
 Altho' he ran and left the event to me --
 His heat and his diffuseness -- since for years
 He scarce would touch upon it, even to me,
 And all his tropes and figures may not prove
 The pain of this day, not the pain of that,
 But changed and loosening. If you think with me,
 The time is nearly come for his return,
 Then will I take him to this land of love,
 And he shall see his lady once again;

Break from his dream, and play with all her boys.¹

Possibly Tennyson was aware that the concluding section of his maturity seemed to invite a prospect for the speaker less ambiguous than is suggested in the earlier stages of the work and accordingly ended, in the first instance, with these lines.

We cannot, however, afford to dismiss out of hand the possibility that he always meant to show or to hold out the promise of a reintegration for his hero. The potential for such a resolution is perhaps contained in the comparison of the protagonist with Christ in part I. But to have attempted such a resolution would have involved Tennyson in a number of problems. It is all very well to have decided upon dramatising a psychic split in his protagonist by showing the loved one in love with another man. The strong development of the theme at the literal level of the story, however, means it is no mere pedantry to suggest that in order to demonstrate -- or symbolise -- the reintegration of his hero Tennyson would have to show him literally reunited with Cadrilla. Something closely akin to this is, indeed, what is proposed in the unadopted passage of 1868 quoted above. But then there would remain the problem of what to do with Lionel. To suggest that the speaker is to relate happily with both Cadrilla and Lionel might be to suggest a reintegration at a finer spiritual level than that of the original state of unity with Cadrilla

1. There is an equivalent of these lines in The Lover's Tale text of 1869, but the passage was omitted from 'The Golden Supper' as published in The Holy Grail volume. It is worth recalling, of course, that Tennyson's 1879 idea of the lover finally leaving his native land differs from the conclusion of the Boccaccio story. In Boccaccio, it will be remembered, the lover does not exile himself but stays to live with the reunited husband and wife.

-- a kind of higher synthesis accommodating the experience of dislocation and suffering and constituting a profounder understanding of the nature of love (or rather of Love). Yet it is difficult to see how Tennyson could maintain the simultaneously literal and psychological significations that he had dealt with in his representation of the speaker's relationship with Cadrilla before the advent of Lionel.

Somewhere in The Lover's Tale the development of the literal story seems to diverge radically from and to become unmanageable as far as the psychological plane of reference is concerned. Tennyson may have discovered, when it came to the later stages of his story, that he was working with a fable untenable for his symbolic purposes. It may have been such a discovery which prevented him from finishing the poem in the 1830s and which caused him to 'complete' it in purely external terms in the late 1860s. The unadopted concluding passage of 1868 probably represents a late, subsequently reversed, decision to point to a resolution of things that had originally been left open. It is just possible it may represent a late and desperate attempt to point to a resolution always anticipated, but which could not be successfully realised given inherent problems in the fabric of the legend Tennyson himself had constructed. Either way, the formal completion of the narrative in 1879 in terms which do not fulfil the psychological and metaphysical orientations of the first three parts of the poem has obscured the relevance of those orientations to In Memoriam and Maud. It was in these two works rather than in the text of 1879 that some of the principal themes of the incomplete Lover's Tale of 1832 were to be successfully developed.

CHAPTER 5

THE ARCHETYPE THAT WAITS: IN MEMORIAM

The Solitary may also be said to create his own, peculiarly Romantic genre of poetry. In 'Tintern Abbey', or 'X Revisited', the poet looks back at a transcended stage and comes to grips with the fact of self-alienation. The retrospective movement may be visionary ... or deeply oblique In every case, however, there is some confrontation of person with shadow or self with self. The intense lyricism of the Romantics may well be related to this confrontation. For the Romantic 'I' emerges nostalgically when certainty and simplicity of self are lost. In a lyric poem it is clearly not the first person form that moves us (the poem need not be in the first person), but rather the 'I' toward which that 'I' reaches. The very confusion in modern literary theory concerning the fictive 'I', whether it represents the writer as person or as persona, may reflect a dialectic inherent in poetry between the relatively self-conscious self, and that self within the self which resembles Blake's 'emanation' and Shelley's 'epipsyche'.

Geoffrey Hartman, 'Romanticism and Anti-Self Consciousness'¹

'We do not profess perfectly to understand the somewhat mysterious contribution of Mr Alfred Tennyson, entitled "Stanzas" declared the Edinburgh Review for October 1837. The stanzas thus referred to -- those of the lyric beginning 'Oh! that 'twere possible' -- had been published in The Tribute (London, 1837), an anthology 'projected by Lord Northampton to raise money for the indigent and deserving Reverend Edward Smedley'.² The obscurities of 'Oh! that 'twere possible' are worth investigating at the opening to this chapter, for they conceal an important connection between The Lover's Tale of 1832 and both In Memoriam and Maud.

1. Quoted from Romanticism and Consciousness: Essays in Criticism, ed. Harold Bloom (New York, 1970), pp.51-52. Hartman's essay, first published in Centennial Review, VI,4 (Autumn 1962), was revised and expanded for inclusion in Bloom's anthology.

2. Cf. Edgar F. Shannon Jr., Tennyson and the Reviewers, pp.28-29.

i

The stanzas from The Tribute read in numerous respects like a concentrated version of The Lover's Tale. There is, of course, none of the elaborate narrative of the earlier poem. We have only the fundamental underlying plot-structure of a speaker in the present preoccupied with the problem of a lost union with a loved one. But some of the basic psychological and metaphysical formulae of The Lover's Tale re-emerge, shorn of narrative complications and encumbrances, in the lyric published in 1837.

Oh! that 'twere possible,
 After long grief and pain,
 To find the arms of my true-love
 Round me once again! (1-4)

"Oh! that 'twere possible": but why isn't it possible?' asks Christopher Ricks, before going on to observe that 'The poem does not at first say that the loved one is dead. In line 11, "A shadow flits before me": and the shadow becomes a ghost'.¹ Yet shade is never finally distinguished from shadow in the lyric. There are two 'ghosts' and neither amounts to a spirit which has broken 'the band/That stays' it 'from the native land/Where first' it 'walked when claspt in clay' (In Memoriam, XCIII.2-4). If there is a haunting, it is entirely from within. The 'shadow' which 'flits' (l.11) -- the 'abiding phantom cold' (l.35) -- is explicitly distinguished from the figure of the past. 'Not thou, but like to thee' (l.12), it defines a present potency of the speaker's mind:

Mix not memory with doubt.
 'Tis the blot upon the brain
 That will show itself without. (68-70)

1. Tennyson, p.141.

The speaker's doubt, the blot within the brain, casts its own shade. But a doubt about what? That the perfection imaged in memory ever existed? Or that, once lost, it may never be regainable? That death may be an empty nothingness, leading on to no regions of 'light' and 'golden gates'? (l.108). Such a doubt would account for the further load of meaning carried by the 'blot'. A life in which the meaning of death is doubtful may not be worth living at all. The speaker imagines the 'beauteous face' (l.78) that has been lost in order to protect himself from himself -- from 'the thing I hold in scorn,/... a dull mechanic ghost/And a juggle of the brain' (ll.82-84). The thing so resisted is, as Christopher Ricks has put it, 'a suicidal wish for oblivion'.¹ Hence the impression of guilt which is interwoven with the shadow of anguished doubt and which turns it into a stain, a blot:

It crosseth here, it crosseth there --
 Through all that crowd, confused and loud,
 The shadow still the same;
 And on my heavy eyelids
 My anguish hangs like shame.

(44-48)

If one side of the speaker's spirit casts its own dark reflection, then it is his imaginative will which must generate an alternative. The ghost of the blessed loved one does not manifest itself:

Would the happy Spirit descend
 In the chambers or the street ...

But she tarries in her place ...

(71-72,77)

1. Tennyson, p.143.

Instead:

... I paint the beauteous face
Of the maiden ...

I can shadow forth my bride
As I knew her fair and kind ...
'Tis a phantom of the mind.
'Tis a phantom fair and good;
I can call it to my side,
So to guard my life from ill,
Though its ghastly sister glide
And be moved around me still
With the moving of the blood,
That is moved not of the will. (my italics)
(78-79,85-86,90-97)

Tension remains high at the end of the lyric. Not merely two shadows but two wills remain in contention. One is the unregenerate will of the natural creature: the moving of the blood may not be moved by the higher will, but nevertheless the blot upon the brain 'will show itself without'. In the last lines of the poem the potentially regenerative power of the imaginative will does not finally exorcise the questions posed by the unwilling dark will:

Let it pass, the dreary brow,
Let the dismal face go by.
Will it lead me to the grave?
Then I lose it: it will fly:
Can it overlast the nerves?
Can it overlive the eye?
But the other, like a star,

Through the channel windeth far
 Till it fade and fail and die,
 To its Archetype that waits,
 Clad in light by golden gates --
 Clad in light the Spirit waits
 To embrace me in the sky.

(98-110)¹

It is not so much any literal death of a loved one which makes it impossible for the speaker to meet her. That union, or reunion, is precluded by the split in the speaker's mind between his capacity to apprehend imaginatively an ideal pattern on one hand, and his sense that the ideal so imaged may be totally illusory on the other. The difference between the speaker in the present and in the time before the loved one had 'died' is that before that death there existed no doubt or fear that the mind's own highest imaginings might be questionable. The death of the loved one involves at centre the symbolic death of the speaker's old, unfractured, untroubled self:

In the shuddering dawn behold,
 By the curtains of my bed,
 That abiding phantom cold ...

Pass and cease to move about --
 Pass, thou death-like type of pain ...

(33-35,66-67)

Even in the past the status of the loved one as a literal 'other' is

1. Interestingly, certain elements in this passage from 'Oh! that 'twere possible' recall elements in the 'Fair face! fair form' passage on f.30^r of The Lover's Tale draft material in H. Nbk.8. Most particularly, in both passages, use is made (unknown in Tennyson except in these two instances) of the word 'archetype'.

subservient to her role as a token of the speaker's unbroken relationship with the ideal pattern that precedes all phenomenal reality, human or otherwise:

We stood tranced in long embraces,
Mixt with kisses sweeter, sweeter,
Than anything on earth.

(8-10)

Most obviously there are affinities between what G.O. Marshall has called 'the dual aspect of the spiritual presence of the dead loved one' in the stanzas from The Tribute¹ and the spiritual presence of Cadrilla after the cessation of the protagonist's immediate relation with her in The Lover's Tale. The positive aspect of the imagined loved one in 'Oh! that 'twere possible': the 'phantom fair and good' with her 'beauteous face', recalls Cadrilla as she appears (with 'face/... starry-fair' and eyes which govern life 'with light') in part I of The Lover's Tale, and as she appeared with 'fair eyes', 'forms' shining on the 'darkness' of the bereft speaker in part II. Conversely, the 'shadow' that is associated with death in the 1837 lyric -- the 'phantom cold', 'ghastly sister' of the 'phantom fair and good' -- recalls Cadrilla as the 'empty phantom' identified with the 'jaws of Death' in The Lover's Tale.

As we have seen, the speaker at the end of part II of The Lover's Tale flings the 'empty phantom' from him -- although in his dream that action alone does not prevent him from falling down 'thro' the dark ever and ever'. This concluding image of part II, where the speaker discovers himself in a love-embrace with the spectre of Death, highlights an important feature of The Lover's Tale. Throughout the poem there is a sense in which the speaker is half in love with death.

1. George O. Marshall, Jr., 'Tennyson's "Oh! that 'twere possible": A Link between In Memoriam and Maud', PMLA, LXXVIII,3(June 1963), p.229.

The impulse towards suicide is treated more indirectly in The Lover's Tale than in 'Oh! that 'twere possible'. But the idea of suicide shadows the following lines in The Lover's Tale:

... Time and Grief abode too long with Life,
 And, like all other friends i' the world, at last
 They grew aweary of her fellowship:
 So Time and Grief did beckon unto Death,
 And Death drew nigh and beat the doors of Life;
 But thou didst sit alone in the inner house,
 A wakeful portress, and didst parle with Death, --
 "This is a charmed dwelling which I hold;"
 So Death gave back, and would no further come.

I.105-13[I.103-11]

From his 'farthest lapse', his 'latest ebb', Cadrilla's 'image, like a charm of light and strength' pushes the protagonist back towards life (I.89-90[I.86-87]). In her positive aspect in The Lover's Tale the image of Cadrilla foreshadows the 'phantom fair and good' which the speaker in 'Oh! that 'twere possible' conjures to protect himself from the 'ill' of the good phantom's 'ghastly sister'. But in neither poem is the tension between the two images or potencies relaxed. The speaker in The Lover's Tale is restored by the positive image of Cadrilla to a life that is yet 'deserted and barren'. The speaker in 'Oh! that 'twere possible' is not certain of his chances of exorcising the abiding 'phantom cold'. In both poems it is intimated that some act of will is required for reintegration to be effected. In neither poem has the reintegrative power of the will been fully affirmed. 'Oh! that 'twere possible' presents overall a very interesting parallel with the situation of the protagonist as we find him at the opening of

The Lover's Tale. In the lyric published in 1837 there is vividly expressed the same principle of a continuing failure of complete restoration -- a continuing uneasy negotiation between the dark and the light -- as seems to lie at the root of the speaker's position as we have it in the texts of part I of The Lover's Tale in both 1832 and 1879.

Negotiation between the dark and the light does not cease in either In Memoriam or Maud. But in these two poems Tennyson was to push beyond the more equally distributed oppositions of The Lover's Tale and 'Oh! that 'twere possible'. In In Memoriam he tilted the scales in favour of the light. In Maud he was to reverse the affirmations of the poem of 1850 and emphasise instead the darker directions of the solitary imagination.

It is well known that 'Oh! that 'twere possible' was 'the "germ" of Maud'¹ and that the 1837 lyric was partially incorporated into the poem of 1855 (II.141-238). But, as Christopher Ricks has noted, 'Oh! that 'twere possible' also 'has many links with In Memoriam'.² The lyric was first written in 1833-1834, following the death of Arthur Hallam. In its original form (as it appears in two drafts in the commonplace book of Tennyson's friend J. M. Heath) it is usually taken to represent 'Tennyson's immediate poetic response to the death of Arthur Hallam'.³ Christopher Ricks writes that 'the poem is plainly precipitated by the death of Hallam'.⁴

The links between 'Oh! that 'twere possible' and In Memoriam range from correspondences in verbal and imagistic detail to parallels between the larger themes of the two works. Joyce Green, for example,

1. Ricks, p.598.

2. *ibid.*, p.598.

3. George O. Marshall Jr., *op.cit.*, p.228. Full details on the version of 'Oh! that 'twere possible' in the Heath Commonplace Book (Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge) may be found in Marshall's article.

4. Ricks, p.598.

has noted how the imagery of the city in 'Oh! that 'twere possible' is 'closely akin' to that throughout section VII of In Memoriam.¹ But the most comprehensive discussion of the parallels has been undertaken by George O. Marshall, whose observations include the point that

Such affectionate expressions as 'the arms of my true love/Round me once again' and 'tranced in long embraces' [11.3-4,8] are matched in In Memoriam by 'A little while from his embrace' [CXVII.3] and 'That yet remembers his embrace' [LXXXV.111]. 'The hand, the lips, the eyes' [1.25] is paralleled by 'Sweet human hand and lips and eye' [CXXIX.6]²

On the affinities between the overall themes of the two poems, Marshall comments that in the 1837 lyric the lover's 'contemplation' of the 'good spirit' and his 'hope for a reunion with its archetype that waits to embrace him in the sky' --

suggests the hope Tennyson expressed in In Memoriam for a reunion with the spirit of Hallam after death ...

By expressing his own despair in 'Oh! that 'twere possible' in terms of the grief of a lover over a dead woman, and not of a man for a man as in In Memoriam, Tennyson sought an emotional release by objectifying his emotions. Even so, the expressions of love in the early lyric are hardly more passionate than those in In Memoriam.³

'Let go by the paraphernalia of the two ghosts, and the heavenly

1. 'Tennyson's Development during the "Ten Years Silence" (1832-1842)', PMLA, LXVI,5 (September 1951), p.671.

2. op.cit., p.228. Not included among the numerous correspondences of detail listed by Marshall, pp.228-29, is the similarity of idea between the expression in the early lyric: 'I paint the beauteous face/Of the maiden, that I lost' (11.78-79) and In Memoriam, LXX.2-3: 'When on the gloom I strive to paint/The face I know'.

3. op.cit., pp.227,228.

hopes', says Christopher Ricks of 'Oh! that 'twere possible'. Instead, let us remember only 'what is here effortlessly memorable' of Tennyson's reaction to the death of his friend: 'a broken cry, a suicidal wish for oblivion, for dissolution, for dissolving into tears'.¹ The poetic intensities of the two ghosts are not, I think, as spurious as Christopher Ricks suggests. There is more than a vapid energy in these hauntings. The affinities between The Lover's Tale and 'Oh! that 'twere possible' further suggest that the two ghosts and the heavenly hopes are no mere paraphernalia but constitute principal elements in a deeply wrought imaginative structure. Most important, these affinities tell us that this imaginative structure predates the death of Tennyson's friend. 'Oh! that 'twere possible' may represent a response to the loss of Hallam, but the work shows Tennyson interpreting the fact of that loss according to pre-formulated imaginative categories.

What is true of 'Oh! that 'twere possible' may also be seen to be true of In Memoriam. The links between The Lover's Tale and 'Oh! that 'twere possible' on one hand, and between the lyric from The Tribute and In Memoriam on the other, invite inquiry into the senses in which Hallam's death and Tennyson's response to it in In Memoriam are, to a significant extent, grafted onto a fundamental conceptual and imaginative strategy that had been developed several years before the 'disastrous day' (In Memoriam, LXXII.26) of 15 September 1833. We may begin our inquiry by reviewing, even at the risk of re-covering some extremely well-trodden ground, the basic metaphysical and epistemological orientations of In Memoriam.

1. Ricks, p.143.

ii

In Memoriam asks, of course, perennial questions about the significance and status which can be ascribed to human life and human love in the face of death. The questions are asked against a background of doubt concerning the existence of an eternal, unchanging spiritual reality beyond the transient forms of the material world. The doubt is intensified by (and, indeed, often appears entirely under the aegis of) the hauntingly disturbing and disorienting discoveries and speculations of contemporary geological and biological science: the vast evolutionary perspectives of which shattered traditional views of the time-scheme of history and undermined traditional assumptions about the place of man in the cosmos. Yet the anxiety in the poem does not centre solely on the question of the existence of God. At points in In Memoriam, even when the reality of a transcendent power is taken as given, the poet recognises the potentially alien nature of such a power. In section XXVI, for example, he pictures an absolute (Tennyson glossed 'that eye which watches guilt' in line 5 as 'The Eternal Now. I AM'¹) which guarantees the spiritual essence and immortality neither of earthly life nor of earthly love. In the face of an amoral and nihilistic God, the poet declares he would prefer to cease to be:

And if that eye which watches guilt
 And goodness, and hath power to see
 Within the green the mouldered tree,
 And towers fallen as soon as built --

Oh, if indeed that eye for^esee
 Or see (in Him is no before)
 In more of life true life no more

1. Eversley, III, 231.

And Love the indifference to be,

Then might I find, ere yet the morn

Breaks hither over Indian seas,

That Shadow waiting with the keys,

To shroud me from my proper scorn. (XXVI.5-16)

At points in In Memoriam, however, even when the nature of the absolute is not in doubt, even when the poet can associate God with love and can perceive an intimate connexion between earthly being and a principle of life higher than that of merely natural generation, there is still a reaction against the idea of the loss of individual personality at death. We may take, for instance, section XLVII:

That each, who seems a separate whole,

Should move his rounds, and fusing all

The skirts of self again, should fall

Remerging in the general Soul,

Is faith as vague as all unsweet:

Eternal form shall still divide

The eternal soul from all beside;

And I shall know him when we meet:

And we shall sit at endless feast,

Enjoying each the other's good:

What vaster dream can hit the mood

Of Love on earth? He seeks at least

Upon the last and sharpest height,

Before the spirits fade away,

Some landing-place, to clasp and say,
 'Farewell! We lose ourselves in light.' (1-16)

Tennyson explained the progression of thoughtful dreaming in this lyric as follows: 'The individuality lasts after death, and we are not utterly absorbed into the Godhead. If we are to be finally merged into the Universal Soul, Love asks to have at least one more parting before we lose ourselves'.¹ T.S. Eliot objected to what he took to be the form of Tennyson's preoccupation with the question of personal immortality:

the renewal craved for seems at best but a continuance, or a substitute for the joys of friendship upon earth. His desire for immortality never is quite the desire for Eternal Life; his concern is for the loss of man rather than for the gain of God.²

But Eliot's 'at best' is not good enough. There is more in In Memoriam than a craving for an infinite prolongation of earthly satisfactions. In section XLVII, after all, the poet first rejects as unpalatable the idea of a loss of individuality at death. But by the end of the lyric, although he stresses his yearning for some penultimate meeting of distinguishable souls, the image of the ultimate loss of self in absolute light readmits as in some sense acceptable the very possibility which has been declared unacceptable a few lines earlier.

Harry Puckett, in a stimulating and perceptive discussion, has shown how there is a recurrent basic procedure in In Memoriam by which the poet posits subjunctively an image which he then rejects in favour of another, significantly modified or quite new image. Puckett describes Tennyson's poem as 'primarily an affirmation of will. And by means of the repeated construction and overthrow of imagined worlds, it involves the perfecting of that will through a perfected imagination'.³ We can discern across In Memoriam as a whole a process

1. Eversley, III, 239.

2. *op.cit.*, p.334.

3. 'Subjunctive Imagination in In Memoriam', Victorian Poetry, 12(Summer 1974), p.98.

in which the poet contrives not only to neutralise the power of images of despair but also to pass beyond certain badly flawed images of hope, including such crude imaginings of personal reunion with Hallam as T.S. Eliot resented. Comparing the earlier with the later stages of the poem we can see that it is not only the quantity of hope which changes but also the quality.

By section CXXX the over-literal or concrete images of personal reunion have given way to 'a pervasive though elusive sense of human immortality in which the spirit of Hallam is mingled with all the world in every moment'.¹ It is a love union which accommodates but is larger than the strictly individual and personal relationship imagined earlier; a union which involves 'not merely the unseen Absolute but also this world, Nature, and the spirit of the dead [The] tantrum-like insistence on personal immortality as a precondition of love, has been transformed into a sense of perpetual union, a sense even of Eternal Life ... achieved through love, and not merely love of Hallam but love of God and Nature':²

Thy voice is on the rolling air;
 I hear thee where the waters run;
 Thou standst in the rising sun,
 And in the setting thou art fair.

What art thou then? I cannot guess;
 But though I seem in star and flower
 To feel thee some diffusive power,
 I do not therefore love thee less:

My love involves the love before;

1. Harry Puckett, 'Subjunctive Imagination in In Memoriam', p.101.

2. ibid., p.118.

My love is vaster passion now;
 Though mixed with God and Nature thou,
 I seem to love thee more and more.

Far off thou art, but ever nigh;
 I have thee still, and I rejoice;
 I prosper, circled with thy voice;
 I shall not lose thee though I die. (CXXX.1-16)

The vision of the loss of Hallam's mortal self as somehow constituting no loss at all is obviously a vision that cannot be reduced to logical explication. It belongs to a category of mystical apprehension and its appropriate language, insofar as it has a language, is the language of paradox ('Far off ... ever nigh'). Tennyson's sense of what the dead and dispersed Hallam may be is, of course, related to and illuminated by the poet's famous comments on his experience of what he called 'waking trance[s]'.¹ In his chapter on In Memoriam in the Memoir Hallam Tennyson reports his father's remembrance that what might seem at the level of ordinary consciousness an extinction of individual personality can appear, at the pitch of trance apprehension, to be no real extinction:

as it were out of the intensity of the consciousness of individuality, the individuality itself seemed to dissolve and fade away into boundless being, and this is not a confused state but the clearest of the clearest, the surest of the surest, the weirdest of the weirdest, utterly beyond words, where death was an almost laughable impossibility, the loss of personality (if so it were) seeming no extinction but the only true life.²

1. Eversley, III, 217.

2. Memoir, I, 320.

Tennyson's vision in section CXXX of In Memoriam is presented as something less bounded by the sea of time and space than the fulfilments of his private trance experiences. But this does not disqualify an association of the modes of apprehension involved in the two affirmations.

We should remark the fact that while a lack of differentiation may define the one spiritual reality that lies behind the manifold appearances of the phenomenal world, Tennyson grants a singular plurality of names to this reality in both In Memoriam itself and in his notes to the poem. We have come across 'Him' (who is also 'The Eternal Now. I AM') in section XXVI; there is the 'general soul' (also the 'Godhead' or the 'Universal Soul') of section XLVII; and we have had, conventionally, 'God' in section CXXX. Elsewhere in In Memoriam the poet speaks of the 'Power' which 'makes the darkness and the light,/And dwells not in the light alone' (XCVI.18-20), and frequently 'Love' appears as both the attribute and the name of God. One of the most important nominations occurs in the famous vision sequence of section XCV. Here the poet tells of how, 'whirled/About empyreal heights of thought' (ll.37-38), he came on 'that which is' (l.39). The source of this formula has long been identified in Plato. Hallam Tennyson glossed the phrase: "'Τὸ ὅν", the Absolute Reality';¹ while Churton Collins noted: 'Ultimate reality, the Platonic Τὸ ὅντως ὄν'.² Alan Sinfield has observed that three passages from Plato's Phaedo and Symposium are 'precisely recalled'; the contexts of these passages in Plato's two great treatises on love being particularly relevant to In Memoriam.³

Not that there is any strict allusion to Platonic thought in

1. Eversley, III, 252.

2. In Memoriam, The Princess and Maud (London, 1902), p.104.

3. "'That which is": The Platonic Indicative in In Memoriam XCV', Victorian Poetry, 14 (Autumn 1976), p.249.

Tennyson's phrase. It barely needs restating that In Memoriam does not concern itself with arguing a formal philosophical or theological position. Throughout the poem Tennyson asserts the futility of attempting to prove what cannot be proven. In questions relating to God Tennyson was ever doubtful of the final value of rational argument. He commented to James Knowles: 'I think of adding another [lyric] to [In Memoriam], a speculative one, bringing out the thoughts of "The Higher Pantheism" [written 1867; published 1869], and showing that all the arguments are about as good on one side as the other, and thus throw man back more on the primitive impulses and feelings'.¹

It is not, however, simply a matter of the poet preferring in In Memoriam to subscribe to a position on purely emotional grounds rather than through a rigorously structured intellectual inquiry. Above all, what the poet does not subscribe to in the poem is any form of external spiritual authority. It is known that lines 5-8 of section CXXIV (beginning 'I found Him not in world or sun') indicate Tennyson's rejection of 'arguments [notably propounded in 1802 by William Paley in his Natural Theology] for the existence of God, based on design in the natural world'.² At the same time it is commonly recognised that there is no significant incorporation of a Christian theological machinery in In Memoriam.³ Tennyson advances in the poem neither a conception of nor a faith in an external source of divine revelation. What we do find is a preoccupation with the idea that

1. James Knowles, op.cit., p.182.

2. Ricks, p.973.

3. Sir Charles Tennyson writes (Six Tennyson Essays, London, 1954, p.81): 'In In Memoriam, although two of the most moving sections (XXXI and XXXII) are founded on the raising of Lazarus, there is a marked absence of dogma, and the emphasis seems throughout to be on the humanity of Christ. There is only one passage, outside the Lazarus sections (and possibly the introductory stanzas ...), in which his

there resides within the individual human psyche an organ of cognition which may grant insights into ultimate reality. There are metaphysical and epistemological assumptions and orientations, if not arguments, in In Memoriam, and these bear witness to Tennyson's background in Romantic attitudes and ideas. The very plurality of names ascribed to God is itself symptomatic of the autonomous imagination at work. At centre, it is a self-derived spiritual authority which sanctions the poet's eclectic appropriation of names or terms from a variety of traditional philosophical and theological systems.

In his chapter on In Memoriam in the Memoir Hallam Tennyson reports several comments made by the poet on his conception of a God of love and on his conception of the nature of the relationship between this ultimate reality and man. Hallam Tennyson rather misrepresents the case in his tendency to equate his father's conceptions with a total, confidently unchanging faith. But if Tennyson's faith in a God of love was ~~was~~ by no means constant, his conception of such a God does seem to have remained relatively unchanged from at least the period of his composition of In Memoriam.
divinity seems to be necessarily implied -- that is in section LXXXIV, where Tennyson imagines that he and Arthur might die together and:

Arrive at last the blessed goal,
And He that died in Holy Land
Would reach us out the shining hand,
And take us as a single soul. [41-44]

-- a curiously unreal and romantic conception'. But as J. C. Maxwell once remarked, it is 'Not clear' how section LXXXIV, 'apart from the conventional capitalisation of "He", implies more than that Christ is a spirit of high repute' (MS. note in my copy of Six Tennyson Essays). And while, in sections XXXI and XXXII, Tennyson makes no overt attempt to demythologise the Gospel story, he makes of the raising of Lazarus his own parable on the limitations and insufficiencies of the idea of revealed truth as much as he implies an orthodox Christian notion of the divinity of Christ. On the teasingly apologetic and ambiguous formulations of the introductory stanzas of In Memoriam, it is perhaps best to quote T.S. Eliot, who observed that Tennyson's 'Strong Son of God, immortal Love' (l.1) has 'only a hazy connection with the Logos, or the Incarnate God' (op.cit., p.334).

through to the end of his life. Some of the comments reported by his son, even when dating from a late period in the poet's career, thus have a relevance to In Memoriam and may on occasions usefully be considered -- together with Tennyson's own direct notes on his work -- in conjunction with the poem.

Tennyson is, for example, reported by his son as saying that human awareness of a God of love cannot possibly derive from observation of the external phenomena of 'Nature or the world. If we look at Nature alone, full of perfection and imperfection, she tells us that God is disease, murder and rapine'. The awareness derives, rather, 'from ourselves, from what is highest within us'.¹ The conception of an innate faculty of cognition, something that is 'highest within us' appears under various terms in In Memoriam. One of the most celebrated formulations is to be found in section CXXIV, where the poet speaks of man's apprehension of the one spiritual reality in which all finite and merely apparent distinctions between self and other, between internal and external, are resolved:

He, They, One, All; within, without;
The Power in darkness whom we guess;

I found Him not in world or sun,
Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye;
Nor through the questions men may try,
The petty cobwebs we have spun:

If e'er when faith had fallen asleep,
I heard a voice 'believe no more'

1. Memoir, I, 314.

And heard an ever-breaking shore
That tumbled in the Godless deep;

A warmth within the breast would melt
The freezing reason's colder part,
And like a man in wrath the heart
Stood up and answered 'I have felt.'

No, like a child in doubt and fear:
But that blind clamour made me wise;
Theⁿ was I as a child that cries,
But, crying, knows his father near;

And what I am beheld again
What is, and no man understands;
And out of darkness came the hands
That reach through nature, moulding men.

(3-24)

Feeling is the concept Tennyson chooses in this lyric to designate the individual human capacity for communion with the divine. Taken by itself Tennyson's elevation of the status of feeling has a curiously naive resonance. Yet there is no straightforward distinction between thought and feeling in these lines. Tennyson's 'reason' here indeed defines the common analytic intellect. In Coleridgean terms we would be talking of the mere Understanding. But the meaning of Tennyson's 'feeling' is not what is meant by the word in common usage. A. C. Bradley has commented on the special significations that the concept of feeling has, in certain specific contexts, in Tennyson:

When King Arthur says that there are moments when he feels he cannot die ['The Holy Grail', l.912]; when God is said to be felt through what we feel within ourselves is highest ['The Ancient Sage', ll.87-88;1885]; these feelings are not merely what we generally call emotions, since a certainty of God and immortality is conveyed in them; and ... the assurance they convey is direct or immediate, not dependent on reasoning or 'proof'. Such phrases, in the descriptions of the trance-like state, as 'came on that which is', 'beheld what is' ... are evidently meant to indicate this same immediate certainty.¹

In In Memoriam Tennyson does not always specify feeling when he refers to an innate human faculty of insight into spiritual realities. As A.C. Bradley indicates, in section XCV the poet speaks only of his soul coming on 'that which is'. And this only after it has been 'whirled/About empyreal heights of thought' (where thought is clearly not to be confused with rational understanding). But the connection between this apprehension and the faculty of feeling is emphasised by Tennyson's use in section CXXIV of a phrase which parallels the one used in XCV. Through feeling, says the poet, he 'beheld again what is'. Nor does the metaphor of the child in the fifth stanza of CXXIV, which replaces that of the man of wrath in the fourth stanza, undermine the affirmation of feeling. Tennyson rejects the negative connotation of adult unreason and in the image of the fifth stanza the individual human soul is placed in a more appropriate relation to the Universal Soul. The blind clamour as of a child is the basis, moreover, of wisdom. In section CXIV, 'Knowledge'

is earthly of the mind,

But Wisdom heavenly of the soul. (21-22)

1. A Commentary on Tennyson's In Memoriam, 3rd ed. (London, 1915), pp.62-63.

The faculty which Tennyson identifies with what is 'highest within us', and which he labels under such headings as 'feeling' or 'wisdom', is of the same order as the faculty which Wordsworth spoke of as the 'feeling intellect', 'reason in her most exalted mood' (The Prelude, XIII.205,170), or what Coleridge spoke of as 'pure REASON, which dictates unconditionally',¹ which 'affirms truths which no sense could perceive, nor experiment verify, nor experience confirm'.² Both Wordsworth and Coleridge would also have spoken of the imagination. Tennyson's use of the word 'Wisdom' in section CXIV of In Memoriam would seem itself to allow something of the Romantic meaning of the term imagination. We have already seen, in chapter two, how 'wisdom' in Tennyson's 'The Poet's Mind' and 'The Hesperides' has a significance which may be related to Wordsworth's use of the word (in The Excursion) to refer to the intuitive insights of the mythopoeic or poetic imagination. Hallam Tennyson once recorded that his father 'never allowed that the higher imagination might bow down before the dogmatic despotism which claims supremacy for the mere reasoning intellect'.³ But Tennyson also explicitly used the term in In Memoriam. I shall take up the theme of imagination and poetic utterance in In Memoriam a little later, but it may be remembered here that in section CXXII of the poem the poet speaks of the visionary experience of coming on 'that which is' in section XCV in terms of

[feeling] once more, in placid awe,

The strong imagination roll

A sphere of stars about my soul,

In all her motion one with law ... (5-8)

1. Letter to Sir George Beaumont [circa 14 December 1808], in Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ed. Earl Leslie Griggs, 6 vols (Oxford, 1956-71), III, 146.

2. Aids to Reflection (London: Bell, 1913): Aphorism VIII.

3. Manuscript note printed in Tennyson: In Memoriam, ed. Susan Shatto and Marion Shaw (Oxford, 1982), pp.283-84. Details of the textual development of In Memoriam and all variant readings from the manuscript drafts of the poem referred to in the course of this chapter are taken from the Shatto and Shaw edition.

There is, of course, a glibness, a sense of commonplace and debased words used without restoration of significant meaning, in Tennyson's lines on 'Wisdom' and 'Knowledge' in section CXIV. This glibness can be related to the naiveté which colours Tennyson's designation of a higher faculty of mind in terms of 'feeling'. Throughout In Memoriam, and indeed throughout much of his work, Tennyson's attempts to evolve or deploy an explicit, quasi-formal terminology in his exploration of epistemological matters is notably inept. This is not merely a matter of the matters in question lying beyond the scope of a rational, discursive language. The rhetoric Tennyson uses to assert the rational inexplicability of the object of certain visions and of the modes of apprehension involved in those visions is itself often inept. The higher mode of vision and the ultimate object of vision with which Tennyson is concerned is no doubt to be confused neither with the deliberations of the speculative intellect nor with the conclusions of such deliberations. But such vision may nevertheless be open to and, for its successful articulation, may require a measure of abstract, formulaic determination. Wordsworth, like Tennyson, was conscious of the limitations of the common rational faculty and of the language of common reason. Neither Wordsworth nor Tennyson were philosophers or original thinkers. And no more than in the case of Tennyson do we value Wordsworth's poetry for the cogency with which it advances a philosophical theory. But Wordsworth was conspicuously more successful than Tennyson in creatively accommodating an element of abstract language and terminology to his poetic statement of supra-rational experience (though we have only to compare The Excursion with The Prelude to remember that Wordsworth's achievement in this respect was not consistent). I suggested in chapter two that Tennyson's poetry may

often be judged successful in proportion as it eschews a language of direct statement. Tennyson's failure to establish an adequate terminology for his metaphysical and epistemological assumptions in In Memoriam resides in this frequently demonstrated inability to work creatively with anything other than a language of indirection. It is primarily, however, a failure of poetic resource rather than an intellectual or conceptual failure. It is ^a poetic failure which may compromise the poetic quality of entire works such as 'The Ancient Sage' or 'The Higher Pantheism'. But such failures in In Memoriam are merely local: they do not detract from, say, the consistent and superbly paradoxical achievement of a poetic timbre in which the poet gives the impression of being able to speak about dispossession and waste, as it would seem, for ever. Edward Fitzgerald said that In Memoriam 'has that air of being evolved by a Poetical Machine of the highest order'.¹ But so often the mechanical note introduces us to the reality of a cadence of loss and attrition. No less, though in different terms, than in symbolically resonant poems such as 'The Hesperides' or 'Oenone' Tennyson evolves in In Memoriam a mode in which the sensuous satisfactions of the verse are frequently mocked by the insights presented in the verse. 'Imagination', asked Keats in 'Sleep and Poetry', 'Has she not shown us all/From the clear space of ether to the small/Breath of new buds unfolding?' (ll.164, 167-69). In Tennyson the potent imaginings of the ear can be imaginings even of impoverishment:

But I should turn mine ears and hear

The moanings of the homeless sea,

1. Letter to Frederick Tennyson, 31 December 1850: The Letters of Edward Fitzgerald, ed. A.M. and A.B. Terhune, 4 vols (Princeton, 1980), I,696.

The sound of streams that swift or slow
 Draw down AEonian hills, and sow
 The dust of continents to be ... (XXXV.8-12)

Much of the control of In Memoriam works actively towards discovering and confronting areas of bleak desperation. It is a command which time and time again rescues the work from a slack dissolution into melancholy. In the first stanza of section XI we are taken to the edge of grammatical completion only to find through the rest of the lyric that it is a desperate artistry, a last defence against the formlessness implied in (and the inchoate fear of) death:

Calm is the morn without a sound,
 Calm as to suit a calmer grief,
 And only through the faded leaf
 The chestnut pattering to the ground ...

Calm on the seas, and silver sleep,
 And waves that sway themselves in rest,
 And dead calm in that noble breast
 Which heaves but with the heaving deep. (1-4, 17-20)

Even the naiveté colouring Tennyson's designation of a higher faculty of cognition in terms of 'feeling' cannot be regarded as a wholly negative feature. Throughout In Memoriam appeals are made even as the paucity of their basis is registered. The need for such a basis is confessed with (to twentieth century taste, at least) an almost embarrassing directness -- but the confession is countered by a recognition of the frailty, often even the impossibility, of such a basis. '[B]ut what am I?/An infant crying in the night' (LIV.17-18) is naked but necessary. T.S. Eliot said that Tennyson's 'surface' is 'intimate with his depths'.¹ The apparent superficiality of much of

1. op.cit., p.337.

Tennyson's 'formal' or 'theoretical' terminology in In Memoriam does not detract from the finer textures of the principal body of verse, nor should it deflect our attention away from the deeper conceptual patterns at work in the poem.

In In Memoriam, the crucial point about the interior human faculty by which ultimate reality is apprehended is that the faculty partakes of the very nature of that which is apprehended. Tennyson sets up in the poem an identification at an ontological level between the ultimate spiritual principle of the universe and man (or that which is highest in man). The individual human energy of love is seen as an expression of and as participating directly in the divine energy of love. In the earlier stages of the work the poet is assailed by a doubting inability to sustain faith in such a conception, but it is this conception which constitutes the underlying metaphysical and epistemological model of the poem. It is the model which informs Tennyson's reported idea of God as both 'transcendent' and 'all-pervading' and his reported 'feeling of a spiritual harmony existing between ourselves and the outward visible Universe, and of the actual Immanence of God in the infinitesimal atom as in the vastest system'.¹

The idea of 'The Eternal Now. I AM' as the ground of the individual human soul and of man's highest cognitive faculty is suggested by Tennyson in such small details as the conjunction of the two indicatives in lines 21-22 of section CXXIV: 'And what I am beheld again/What is, and no man understands'.² In section LV of the poem

1. Memoir, I. 314,319.

2. In the Lincoln Manuscript draft of In Memoriam line 21 read: 'And the inner eye beheld again'. In the first through to the seventh editions of the poem the line read: 'And what I seem beheld again', a reading which A.C. Bradley suggests (A Commentary on Tennyson's In Memoriam, p.229) 'was in antithesis to "is" in [line] 22, and implied that "I" is phenomenal'. It was presumably to avoid the possibility of such an implication that Tennyson changed 'seem' to 'am' in the eighth edition.

Tennyson put the point explicitly (although still, at this stage in the poem, interrogatively):

The wish, that of the living whole
 No life may fail beyond the grave,
 Derives it not from what we have
 The likest God within the soul? (1-4)

Tennyson glossed the last line of this verse: 'The inner consciousness -- the divine in Man'.¹

An interiorisation of divine reality surfaces even in Hallam Tennyson's general statements on his father's conception of the relationship between man and God. In the following passage the very word revelation is displaced from a conventional Christian context and carries a meaning different from its orthodox Christian significations. Hallam Tennyson speaks of his father's notion of

an Omnipotent, Omnipresent and All-loving God, Who has
 revealed Himself through the human attribute of the highest
 self-sacrificing love; in the freedom of the human will; and
 in the immortality of the soul.²

God, love, will, immortality, and man are all in significant respects as interchangeable here as they are in In Memoriam. Consistently with the absence of an organising Christian theology in the poem, Tennyson nowhere posits in the work the need for any intermediary between God and man other than the individual himself. As in high-Romantic thought each individual is potentially his own paraclete and his own christ, since each individual himself constitutes an incarnation of ultimate spirit. As A.C. Bradley has observed, most often in Tennyson and 'in In Memoriam probably always' the human soul is

1. Eversley, III, 240.

2. Memoir, I, 311.

figured as coming from the 'deep' of a larger spiritual being, or as detaching itself, or being detached, from the 'general soul'. This process is coincident with, or the spiritual complement of, certain changes in matter which issue in the body of the soul; and later, through experience gained by means of this body, the soul develops into self-consciousness or personality That which is deepest and most real in it is sometimes spoken of as will or free-will, to Tennyson the 'main-miracle, apparently an act of self-limitation by the Infinite, and yet a revelation by Himself of Himself'.¹

It is not surprising that the will is the subject of the concluding numbered section of In Memoriam:

O living will that shalt endure
 When all that seems shall suffer shock,
 Rise in the spiritual rock,
 Flow through our deeds and make them pure,

That we may lift from out of dust
 A voice as unto him that hears,
 A cry above the conquered years
 To one that with us works, and trust,

With faith that comes of self-control,
 The truths that never can be proved
 Until we close with all we loved,
 And all we flow from, soul in soul. (CXXXI.1-12)

1. A Commentary on Tennyson's In Memoriam, p.51.

In his Key to In Memoriam Alfred Gatty explained 'living will' as a reference to 'the Deity'.¹ In his own copy of the Key, however, Tennyson wrote alongside Gatty's explanation: 'free will in man'.² It seems that Tennyson was not so much excluding the meaning of 'the Deity' as drawing primary attention to the human dimension of the reference. Hallam Tennyson reports his father's explanation of section CXXXI:

'O living will that shalt endure' he explained as that which we know as Free-will, the higher and enduring part of man. He held that there was an intimate connexion between the human and the divine³

Tennyson also wrote of this intimate connexion -- associating free-will with the 'Platonic indicative' he had used in section XCV of In Memoriam -- in a prose passage quoted by Hallam Tennyson:

Man's Free-will is but a bird in a cage; he can stop at the lower perch, or he can mount to a higher. Then that which is and knows will enlarge his cage ... and at last break off the top ... and let him out to be one with the Free-will of the Universe.⁴

1. A Key to Tennyson's 'In Memoriam', 2nd ed. (London, 1882), p141.

2. TRC, Campbell 4572.

3. Memoir, I, 319.

4. ibid., I, 318-19.

In section CXXXI itself the large spiritual dimension of the 'living will' is emphasised in the assertion of its capacity to survive the failure of 'all that seems' (the appearances of the phenomenal world and the antithesis of 'that which is'). The higher than mortal status of the will is suggested also by Tennyson's phrase 'spiritual rock'. As has often been noted, this directly recalls Corinthians, X.4: 'for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ'. In Tennyson's deployment of the Biblical reference the attributes of Christ are internalised in the will of man and not only the divine ground but also the self-regenerative potential of the human will are thus stressed. A comparable scope of reference is implied in Tennyson's words --

A voice as unto him that hears,
A cry above the conquered years
To one that with us works ...

-- which includes an allusion to Mark, XVI.20: 'And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them'. Tennyson's expression here, as unto 'him that hears' and as unto 'one that with us works' does not qualify the affirmation of this last section. It is but an evidence of Tennyson's allowance that while earthly notions of personality may be inappropriate when applied to the Universal Soul or Will, man nevertheless still naturally inclines to think of God in terms of the kind of personal relationships experienced on earth. Hallam Tennyson reports his father on this matter:

He would allow that God is unknowable in 'his whole world-self, and all-in-all', and that therefore there was some force in the objection made by some people to the word 'Personality', as being 'anthropomorphic', and that perhaps 'Self-consciousness' or 'Mind' might be clearer to them: but

at the same time he insisted that ... our highest view of God must be more or less anthropomorphic: and that 'Personality', as far as our intelligence goes, is the widest definition and includes 'Mind', 'Self-consciousness', 'Will', 'Love' and other attributes of the Real, the Supreme
¹

In his commentary on section CXXXI A.C. Bradley usefully reminds us that throughout In Memoriam 'the divine will is regarded as ... working in man', and that 'the poet's "Free-will in man"' is elsewhere 'regarded by him as "Heaven-descended"' ('Will', 1.11;1855).² Bradley concludes his commentary by observing that 'in the region' of the 'final poems and of the Prologue' of In Memoriam, 'it is abundantly evident' that "'human" and "divine" are not regarded as mutually exclusive terms'.³

The extent of the reciprocity between the human and the divine in the final sections of In Memoriam is well discussed by Harry Puckett and his observations are worth quoting at length. Of section CXXXI he comments that

A sense of the poet's having found himself alive in eternity now exists. If Hallam is 'mixed with God and Nature' ... the poet, too, or his consciousness, is mixed with that same God and Nature, and will be (like Hallam) when he dies

But what stands out as particularly interesting is that, when Tennyson sees himself and Hallam as ultimately mixed with God and Nature, diffused as force into 'star and flower', he essentially sees them as returning to that from which they emerged; and this idea is made explicit in the final line of the

1. Memoir, I, 311-12.

2. A Commentary on Tennyson's In Memoriam, p.236.

3. ibid., p.237.

final section (CXXXI). Hallam's personal identity is mixed not merely with God but with Nature as well. Mingled with the world, he becomes a 'diffusive power', a part of that energy which originally willed him out of the earth, willed man himself from out of the fire and rock. 'God and Nature' is the rubric under which this energy moves, but it is the energy itself, the will, that Tennyson addresses in the final section. It is the will, 'the higher and most enduring part of man', of Hallam and of Tennyson, that still survives in spite of death, and would presumably survive even the obliteration of the species That will which had been embodied in Hallam lives still in that from which Hallam arose; that from which he arose will go on willing new men, new races of men, new beings superior to men. It lives, too, in the poet. And just as that will once drove through rock to make a man, so it continues to drive through Tennyson ... the will must forge its way to higher being, and at the same time the foundation of all being.¹

In Tennyson's closing panentheistic vision of unity in In Memoriam all divisions and oppositions -- finite and infinite, material and spiritual, atemporal and temporal, universal and local, objective and subjective -- are reconciled. Commentators have spoken of the apotheosis of Hallam in these closing stages of the poem. But the cosmic vision, in which the consciousness that sees simultaneously partakes of the nature of that which is seen, involves an apotheosis of the poet's own self. By the final stages of In Memoriam the poet has transcended his early yearning for a literal personal reunion with Hallam. That yearning has emerged as an impulse dictated by the interests of the mortal self. By the stage that the

1. op.cit., pp.118,119.

poet celebrates his own free-will he has purged himself of limited and limiting definitions of personality. He has, as Harry Puckett suggests, attained recognition that at the highest level there is not and never was a distinction between himself and Hallam. On earth both were modalities of one Will, one Spirit, one absolute power of Love. In the closing stages of In Memoriam the absolute itself emerges as the true object of the poet's subjective desire. Yet inasmuch as that absolute indwells in the poet it further becomes apparent that there is a very special sense in which the fundamental focus of the poem is the poet himself. The poet's self is a subject that has at once the capacity of being its own object. At this level of meaning the reunion or reintegration affirmed at the end of In Memoriam defines a reintegration of the poet's self. It is a reintegration composed of a re-cognition, or even a re-recognition, of that highest dimension of himself that is a portion of and has a continuity of being with absolute reality. Re-cognition is the key term here. The highest self of the poet, as an atom of the eternal, has never actually been 'lost'. But recognition of the 'highest within us' by what is 'highest within us' may have been in abeyance. Puckett speaks of the moments of recognition as presented in Tennyson as moments when man is 'most fully alive':

At death, and at those moments in life when he is most fully alive, man flows back to that from which he came. Or, more precisely, that 'higher and enduring part of man', his will, flows back to reunite with the primal will¹

It is the abeyance of the higher self in its potency as an active, self-reflective faculty of insight into ultimate reality which marks the subjective crisis of the poet at the opening of In Memoriam.

1. op.cit., p.120.

Not that the idea of an apotheosis of Hallam is a complete misreading of elements in the later stages of In Memoriam. I have said that the poet has passed beyond a yearning for reunion with the literal individual personality of Hallam. Yet Hallam, even in section CXXX, is still addressed as if he were the personal figure Tennyson had known on earth. This form of address, however, is of the same order as the voice lifted 'as unto him that hears' in section CXXXI. The personal address to Hallam involves the same kind of concession to the human need for a 'more or less anthropomorphic' view of the spiritual whole. The figure of Hallam has become, in essence, a token of 'that which is' and in which Hallam 'himself' now coheres. Hallam has become a symbol of the absolute. And inasmuch as the absolute is immanent in the poet's own being, it follows that Hallam apotheosised serves also as a figure of the poet's own highest self.

This last symbolic function of Hallam, evident in the latter stages of In Memoriam, is in fact also apparent in the early stages of the work. It is through this particular symbolic role of Hallam that we see most clearly the development in In Memoriam of fundamental themes of The Lover's Tale; and it is to a comparison of elements in each of these poems that we must now turn.

iii

We remember that in The Lover's Tale, on the day of the protagonist's most fulfilled hour with Cadrilla, 'the year/First felt his youth and strength, and from his spring/Moved smiling toward his summer .../Love waking shook his wings' --

and blew

Fresh fire into the Sun; and from within

Burst thro' the heated buds, and sent his soul
 Into the songs of birds ...

Up the rocks we wound ...

As mountain brooks

Our bloods ran free ...

looking back, we saw ...

a land of Love

Where Love was worshipped upon every height ...

We recall that Tennyson's speaker in The Lover's Tale represents his time of harmony and integrity -- a time when death itself seemed transcended -- in mythical, specifically Edenesque terms: the whole experience summed up in the talismanic triad of words, 'Love', 'Life', and 'Hope'. The general configuration and several details in the image of the speaker's fabulous past in The Lover's Tale anticipate the poet's account (across sections XXII-XXV of In Memoriam) of his relationship with Hallam on earth:

The path by which we twain did go ...

Through four sweet years arose and fell ...

And we with singing cheered the way,

And, crowned with all the season lent,

From April on to April went,

And glad at heart from May to May ... (XXII.1, 3,5-8)

And all we met was fair and good,

And all was good that Time could bring,

And all the secret of the Spring

Moved in the chambers of the blood;

And many an old philosophy
 On Argive heights divinely sang,
 And round us all the thickets rang
 To many a flute of Arcady. (XXIII.17-24)

And was the day of my delight
 As pure and perfect as I say? ...

If all was good and fair we met,
 This earth had been the Paradise
 It never looked to mortal eyes
 Since our first sun arose and set. (XXIV.1-2,5-8)

I know that this was Life, -- the track
 Whereon with equal feet we fared ...

Nor could I weary, heart or limb,
 When mighty Love would cleave in twain
 The lading of a single pain,
 And part it, giving half to him. (XXV.1-2,9-12)

In lines 2-3 and 5-8 of section XXII the poet characterises his life with Hallam as having been exempt from any experience of a breach in the frame of things. The cycle of nature is resolved into a blithe progression from spring to spring, as if the travails of winter had then been suspended. The pastoral allusions in lines 21-24 of section XXIII serve to highlight the representation of a condition exempt from the ordinary terms of human experience. But there is a kind of wilful obviousness, almost a crudeness, about these pastoral allusions which is both the product of and appears designed to emphasise the extreme

self-consciousness with which the poet is using them. Our attention would seem to be drawn deliberately to the element of artifice involved in this image of the past and we would seem to be directed not to take it over literally.

In being thus directed, however, we are also encouraged to see that it may be in more than purely literal or personal terms that we are to understand the function of Hallam at this stage in Tennyson's representation of him. In the lines quoted from section XXIV Tennyson appears explicitly¹ to admit the dangers of confusing life in nature with Arcadian dreams. Yet the purpose of Tennyson's qualification here is not to demythologise but merely to avoid attributing to Hallam the force only of a literary convention. The large terms of the pastoral image of XXIII are not in any simple sense rescinded. Rather, the terms are re-phrased -- outside of any specific context of traditional and literary association -- in section XXV. Here, for all the gesturing towards daily burdens and single pains, the capitalisations 'Life' and 'Love', echoing The Lover's Tale, effectively assume at least quasi-mythic proportions. The point was not missed by the reviewer of In Memoriam in The Times for 28 November 1851:

We seem to hear of a person unlike ourselves in failings and virtues. The real fades into the legendary. Instead of a memorial we have a myth Nature and identity are wanting. The lost friend stalks along a giant of 11 feet, or moves a spiritual being, with an Eden-halo, through life.¹

The whole process of mythologisation is treated (as of course it had to be, given the biographical plane of reference in the poem) more self-consciously in In Memoriam than in The Lover's Tale. Nevertheless, in In Memoriam Tennyson may be discovered converting the

1. Cited from Tennyson: In Memoriam. A Selection of Critical Essays, ed. John Dixon Hunt (London, 1970), pp.103-104.

literal fact of his relationship with Hallam into a metaphor for a state of ideal unity and integrity. It is a state that is comparable with the symbolic construct of the speaker's original relationship with Cadrilla -- a relationship signifying an uninterrupted exchange between being and Being -- in The Lover's Tale.

If sections XXII-XXV show Tennyson beginning to present his life with Hallam on earth in terms which are larger than those of merely mortal life, then they also show him beginning to weave out of the death of his friend something like a fable of the fall. The protagonist of The Lover's Tale was displaced from his Eden after he and Cadrilla had 'trode the shadow of the downward hill'. The poet of In Memoriam relates his loss of 'pastoral' felicity as follows:

But where the path we walked began
 To slant the fifth autumnal slope,
 As we descended following Hope,
 There sat the Shadow feared of man,

Who broke our fair companionship ... (XXII.9-13)

Now, sometimes in my sorrow shut ...
 Alone, alone, to where he sits,
 The Shadow cloaked from head to foot ...

I wander, often falling lame,
 And looking back to whence I came,
 Or on to where the pathway leads;

And crying, How changed from where it ran
 Through lands where not a leaf was dumb;

But all the lavish hills would hum
The murmur of a happy Pan ...

(XXIII.1,3-4,6-12)

As we have seen, the fall into chaotic, fragmented experience in The Lover's Tale is presented in terms of a psychological crisis, with the separation between speaker and loved one signifying a division within the speaker's mind, a dissociation from his own highest self and his own direct participation in the energy of absolute love. There is a similar meaning involved in Tennyson's presentation of his separation from Hallam in In Memoriam. At a literal level in the poem Hallam's death belongs, of course, to Hallam and not to Tennyson. But we have noted something of Tennyson's tendency to mythologise his past life with his friend. With his status and significance so expanded Hallam may be seen to be serving a purpose that belongs to Tennyson alone. Some further insight into Tennyson's purpose and into the special role Hallam is allotted in the early stages of In Memoriam may be gained through a consideration of section IV of the poem. Here the poet says:

To Sleep I give my powers away;
My will is bondsman to the dark;
I sit within a helmless bark,
And with my heart I muse and say:

O heart, how fares it with thee now,
That thou should'st fail from thy desire,
Who scarcely darest to inquire,
'What is it makes me beat so low?'

Something it is which thou hast lost,

Some pleasure from thine early years.

Break, thou deep vase of chilling tears,

That grief hath shaken into frost! (1-12)

A certain amount of attention has been paid to the striking image in lines 11-12 of this section. Tennyson himself commented: 'Water can be brought below freezing-point and not turn into ice -- if it be kept still; but if it be moved suddenly it turns into ice and may break the vase'.¹ 'The same fact', Elaine Jordan has noted, was used by Goethe in Dichtung und Wahrheit, Book XIII:

While my thoughts were thus employed, the death of young Jerusalem took place The plan of Werther was instantly conceived. The elements of that composition seemed now to amalgamate, to form a whole, just as water, on the point of freezing in a vase, receives from the slightest concussion the form of a compact piece of ice.

The circumstances of both uses of the image are significantly similar -- the unexpected death of a young friend of promise shocks the author out of a prolonged mood of inactive melancholy into composition. Tennyson's extension of the image -- freezing water expands as it turns to ice so that its container may be broken -- leaves its metaphorical meaning more vague. It could suggest suicide, or the mere relief of weeping, or the relief ...
of giving grief some sort of expressive form, in elegy²

The implications of the questions proposed and answered by Tennyson in section IV are as striking as the image used in the last two lines of the third stanza. Here, at the opening of In Memoriam A.H.H., the poet

1. Eversley, III, 226.

2. 'Tennyson's In Memoriam -- An Echo of Goethe', Notes and Queries, n.s.XV (November 1968), p.414.

asks himself what it is that has cast him so low. The answer is perfectly clear: 'Something it is which thou hast lost'. But this something is not Arthur Hallam. Tennyson is quite definite, if unspecific, on this point. The loss is of 'Some pleasure from thine early years'. Early years plainly denotes a phase of the poet's life before he had met Hallam. This is corroborated in lines 11 and 12 of the lyric. The loss of a pleasure of the 'early years' is there equated with the 'chilling tears' and both the loss and the tears are distinguished from the 'grief' that defines Tennyson's feelings at the death of his friend. Hallam's death may be the source of grief and it may be the event which gives occasion for an active, artistic expression of painful, fractured experience. But it is stated unambiguously that underlying and informing the theme of the death of Hallam in In Memoriam is something which precedes and subsumes Tennyson's loss of his friend. Whatever prominence the loss of Hallam may be given in the poem, it is emphasised in this lyric that it is at a fundamental level a secondary loss.

As I have said, Tennyson does not go into great detail about the dimension of 'pleasure' belonging to his early years but which is missing from his present experience of himself. The large scale of the loss is, of course, suggested not only by the image of the vase of chilling tears. The broad context of Tennyson's reference also establishes that the condition defined by the pleasure is the very antithesis of the condition in which we find the poet at the opening of In Memoriam. In the previous section we have seen Tennyson imaging, in terms of the words whispered by Sorrow, his present sense of a universe of death, a universe devoid of spiritual organisation and meaning:

'The stars', she whispers, 'blindly run;

A web is woven across the sky;
 From out waste places comes a cry,
 And murmurs from the dying sun ...' (III.5-8)

'In my boyhood I had intuitions of Immortality' Tennyson declared to William Allingham in 1866.¹ As the antithesis of the poet's present condition the dimension of pleasure associated with his 'early years' in In Memoriam is no doubt to be connected with such things as intuitions of immortality.

But Tennyson does not develop the reference to the condition of his early years. In dealing with 'The inner consciousness -- the divine in man' Tennyson never worked, in the manner of Wordsworth, with a myth of his own childhood. In The Lover's Tale he constructed a fable entirely without literal, autobiographical points of reference. In In Memoriam, however, the working myth is the period of his friendship with Hallam. Not that we are to doubt that it was, in literal terms, an exceptional friendship and that the poet suffered exceptional grief at his friend's death. But Tennyson's motivation in speaking of his life with Hallam across sections XXII-XXV in quasi-mythological terms is illuminated by the reference in section IV. Just as the loss of the 'pleasure' of the poet's early years is effectively accommodated to the experience of the loss of Hallam, so the image Tennyson creates out of the literal fact of his relationship with Hallam incorporates the meaning of the lost pleasure of his early years. Within such a construct the literal, personal reality and significance of Hallam is reduced. At an important level Hallam functions as a kind of emblematic figure or touchstone for areas of experience which have a reference solely to the poet. I have said that by the concluding stages of In Memoriam it is apparent that,

1. William Allingham's Diary, p.137.

considered at the level of a simultaneously transcendent and immanent ultimate spiritual reality, there is no essential distinction between the poet's self and that of Hallam. Hallam as a portion of and a symbol of the divine serves at once as a symbol of the 'likest God within the soul' of the poet himself. The poet's reunion with Hallam in the closing stages of the poem, his seeing, hearing, and feeling of a Hallam diffused in God, defines a re-union or re-cognition of his own highest self, a re-apprehension of that part of himself which partakes of the nature of the absolute spiritual power in which Hallam is now merged. The re-union with Hallam as a symbol of the poet's re-integration with his own highest self is anticipated in the image -- an image which incorporates a reference to the poet's native dimension of higher, unfallen being -- which Tennyson constructs out of the literal fact of his friendship with Hallam in the early stages of In Memoriam. The figure of Hallam mythologised at the opening of the poem serves, in its own terms, as a symbol of the poet's higher self in the same manner as the figure of the apotheosised Hallam at the closing of the poem. It is as such a figure that the Hallam of In Memoriam may be seen to be generically descended from the figure of Cadrilla in The Lover's Tale.

Just as the separation of the protagonist from Cadrilla signified a division within the mind of the protagonist, a 'death' of an old self, so the loss of Hallam serves to define the problem of the poet's self-alienation in In Memoriam. Thus it is we find, in the first section of the poem, that the literal death of the friend is indistinguishable from the symbolic death of the poet himself:

I held it truth, with him who sings
 To one clear harp in divers tones,
 That men may rise on stepping stones
 Of their dead selves to higher things.

But who shall so forecast the years

And find in loss a gain to match? ...

Let Love clasp Grief lest both be drowned ...

(I.1-6,9)

From the very outset of In Memoriam Tennyson signals that Arthur Hallam is a figure around which he is going to cohere a theme of the loss of the 'certainty and simplicity' (to use Geoffrey Hartman's words) of his own self. If, however, there is a sense in which the Hallam towards which the 'I' of In Memoriam reaches is a lost dimension of the poet's self, we should not fail to notice one important difference between the poem of 1850 and its precursor The Lover's Tale. Though In Memoriam is soaked in nostalgia, the consciousness of the poem does not lay moribund in reminiscence in the same manner as the speaker of The Lover's Tale. As in Shelley's 'Alastor' and 'Epipsychidion' the motivating principle of In Memoriam is the mind's desperate search for reintegration, for reunion with the lost archetype or epipsyche.

The figure of Hallam as a type of Cadrilla is suggested in a number of minor ways in In Memoriam. In the first place, Hallam occasionally appears under a language strongly reminiscent of that used in respect of Cadrilla. For example, section LXX of In Memoriam ends (ll.15-16) with the poet declaring: 'through a lattice on the soul/Looks thy fair face and makes it still'. (A draft reading of line 16 in the Lincoln Manuscript had: 'Look thy fair eyes & make it still'). The reviewer of In Memoriam in The Times disliked what he termed 'the tone of -- may we say so! -- amatory tenderness' pervading the poem: 'Very sweet and plaintive these verses are; but who would

not give them a feminine application?'.¹ In the lovers' language and in the 'reiterated metaphor of man and wife'² in In Memoriam it is not impossible to trace vestiges of the male-female orientation of Tennyson's prototypical study of the theme of separation and loss in The Lover's Tale.

There is also an ambiguity of reference in Tennyson's expression 'My love' (In Memoriam, XCVII.1) which recalls the use of the same expression -- with double reference to both the speaker and Cadrilla -- in The Lover's Tale. Distinctions between the lover and the loved one are suspended in the opening stanza of section XCVII:

My love has talked with rocks and trees;
 He finds on misty mountain-ground
 His own vast shadow glory-crowned;
 He sees himself in all he sees. (1-4)

Tennyson glossed these lines: 'Like the spectre of the Brocken'.³ A.C. Bradley observed that 'the "spectre" is the observer's shadow thrown on a bank of mist'.⁴ An empirical account of the phenomenon does not, of course, release the full significance of Tennyson's lines. We gain a better sense of that when we remember Coleridge's allusion to the phenomenon in the poem which he entitled 'Constancy to an Ideal Object':

The woodman winding westward up the glen
 At wintry dawn, where o'er the sheep-track's maze
 The viewless snow-mist weaves a glist'ning haze,
 Sees full before him, gliding without tread,
 An image with a glory round its head;

1. Cited from John Dixon Hunt, ed., Tennyson: 'In Memoriam'. A Selection of Critical Essays, p.104.

2. Christopher Ricks, Tennyson, p.216.

3. Eversley, III, 253.

4. A Commentary on Tennyson's 'In Memoriam', p.194.

The enamoured rustic worships its fair hues,
Nor knows he makes the shadow, he pursues!

(26-32)

One of the differences between Coleridge's enamoured rustic and the love-lorn poet of In Memoriam is, of course, that Tennyson is fully aware of the extent to which he 'makes' the shadow he pursues. This awareness is most apparent in his self-conscious preoccupation, manifest throughout In Memoriam, with questions concerning the status and significance of his imaginative activity in writing the poem. I have noted that imagination is one of the terms Tennyson uses in In Memoriam to identify the 'highest within us'. Imagination is not explicitly invoked in the poem as frequently as other terms: feeling, wisdom, or will. But it is at the level of imagination and of the poet's preoccupation with the utterance of imagination that is In Memoriam itself, that we may best perceive Tennyson's treatment of the 'divine in man' in its potency as a creative, self-reflective faculty of insight into absolute reality. Throughout In Memoriam, Tennyson displays a characteristically Romantic awareness that his own poetic utterance, as an expression of imagination, has a vital role to play in the generation of the vision that is pursued and ultimately achieved in the poem. Whatever evidences there may be of the influences on In Memoriam of certain classical forms and genres -- for example, paraclausithyron (in sections VII and CXIX), propemptikon (in IX, XIV and XVII), genethliakon (in CXVII), not to mention epicedion (the whole poem)¹ -- it is only when considered against the background of Romantic poetic theory and practice that the organising psychological principle and true life of In Memoriam emerge.

Albert Gerard has observed that in Romantic notions of poetic

1. cf. In Memoriam, ed. Shatto and Shaw, pp.26-32.

form we tend to find

the two great lines of reference along which the whole body of romantic thought develops: the poetic experience and the philosophy of creativity. For the finished work is the outcome of a genuine act of creation by which the idea shapes itself organically into adequate sensuous forms. And this idea, in its turn, is nothing other than the vision conveyed by the poetic experience.

No doubt, the romantic poets were fully aware that it is impossible for the poet totally to transmit his experience in words. They have elaborated instead a theory of form based on the notion that in the processes of poetic creation art becomes auxiliary to vision.¹

Through an examination, in the following section of this chapter, of the manner in which the poet of In Memoriam perceives his art as an auxiliary to vision we may appreciate a fundamental aspect of his self-referential treatment of the figure of Arthur Hallam.

iv

The question of the function of his art is established by the poet as a theme in his poem as early as section V, where poetic utterance is allowed only a minimal value: 'The sad mechanic exercise,/Like dull narcotics numbing pain' (ll.7-8). Words are also the subject of section XXXVI:

And so the Word had breath, and wrought
With human hands the creed of creeds
In loveliness of perfect deeds,

1. Essays in Criticism VII, 3 (1957), p.270. Gerard's essay was translated by George Watson from the original which had appeared in L'Athenee, XLV (1956).

'On the Logic of Romanticism',

More strong than all poetic thought ... (9-12)

The allusion in these lines to the notion of the divinely-inspired word of the Gospels introduces us to a key word ('breath') in the 'key word complex' that Peter Allan Dale has described (in an essay to which I shall refer in some detail in the following pages) as central to the meaning of In Memoriam. This word complex is associated 'with the concept of spiration and ... involves primarily the words "breath" and "spirit" and, secondarily, cognate words such as "whisper", "blow", "wind", and "voice"¹. For Dale, there is a fundamental contrast set up in In Memoriam between the metaphorical significance of the word 'breath' in Biblical usage, where it means 'divine or immortal presence or "spirit"', and the meaning ascribed to the word by Nature when in section LVI she says: 'The spirit does but mean the breath' (l.7), Nature, of course, reduces 'the meaning of "breath" from "spirit" back to the merely physical event'. Tennyson's problem in In Memoriam 'is to overcome Nature's literalism and reaffirm the metaphorical and mystical content of the word "breath", to show that the word "breath" has a God-imparted significance'². In section XVIII the poet had thought of being able himself to impart life to his friend:

Ah yet, even yet, if this might be,
I, falling on his faithful heart,
Would breathing through his lips impart
The life that almost dies in me ... (13-16)

According to Dale, 'it is evident', in section XVIII, 'that Tennyson's imagined effort to breath life into Hallam is futile. His breath, unlike God's or Christ's, is not immortal spirit'³. Whether or

1. "'Gracious Lies": The Meaning of Metaphor in In Memoriam', Victorian Poetry, 18 (Summer 1980), p.157.

2. ibid., pp.157-58.

3. ibid., p.160.

not such futility is really evident in section XVIII, it is certainly true that across sections XXXVI-XXXVII the poet does draw a contrast between the inspired word of sacred scripture and his own poetic utterance. Following his apparent acknowledgement of the superiority ('More strong than all poetic thought') of inspired scripture, Tennyson, as if he had indeed aspired to speak with the authority of sacred text, or at least with the authority of those poets who have taken the scriptures as inspiration, has himself put down in section XXXVII for presuming too far:

Urania speaks with darkened brow:

'Thou pratest here where thou art least;
This faith has many a purer priest,
And many an abler voice than thou ... '

And my Melpomene replies,
A touch of shame upon her cheek:
'I am not worthy even to speak
Of thy prevailing mysteries;

'For I am but an earthly Muse ... '

(1-4, 9-13)

Dale sees Tennyson's retraction in this section as definitive and final. He asserts that Tennyson does indeed find in In Memoriam a force of spiritual life, but that he finds it issuing from a source outside himself. He argues that once Tennyson has accepted, in section XXXVII, Urania's rebuke --

all that is left for him is to brood on the dead Hallam and, in particular, on the words of Hallam, on what he said:

And all he said of things divine,

(And dear to me as sacred wine

To dying lips is all he said).

[XXXVII.17-20]

The words of Hallam have become here metaphorically the wine of communion, which is itself metaphorically (for an Anglican at least) the saving blood of Christ. Hallam's words, like the Logos of St John ... have become life-giving, the source of spiritual regeneration It is now Hallam ... who is breathing ... new life into the poet, as opposed (I think pretty explicitly) to the earlier fruitless attempt on the part of the poet to breathe new life into Hallam. This is the beginning of communion between the living man and the dead friend. The ... disjunction between 'breath' and 'spirit' ... is ... on its way to being overcome.¹

Dale proposes that the breath/spirit disjunction is completely overcome in section XCV. Following the famous 'vision' sequence of that section 'a breeze begins to move over the landscape ... gathering into a powerful wind that brings all nature to life This virtual reproduction of a Biblical visitation from God ... marks [for the poet] his final release from doubt'.² The epiphanic experience of section XCV begins with the poet's reading of Arthur Hallam's letters, a point which Dale sees as confirming his view that Hallam's words are 'somehow' the source of spiritual regeneration for Tennyson. Asking how it is that Hallam is to be credited with such power, Dale recalls Hallam's imitation of Dante in 'A Farewell to the South' and suggests that Tennyson

has quite self-consciously created in In Memoriam the same saving spiritual relationship between himself and the dead Hallam as he had seen Hallam create, in imitation of Dante, between himself

1. op.cit., pp.153-54, 160.

2. ibid., pp.161-62.

(Hallam) and his absent 'Beatrice' Dante's Beatrice is the embodiment of Christian love or caritas. This love proceeds eternally from the Father and the Son and is, specifically, the attribute of the Holy Ghost. Beatrice, then, is the vehicle of the Holy Ghost.¹

Accordingly, for Dale, there is a parallel identification in In Memoriam between Hallam and the third person of the Christian Trinity. In In Memoriam, says Dale, Hallam is represented as 'the medium of the Holy Ghost'.² Such a view -- which uses traditional, essentially pre-Romantic terms to interpret the operation of spiritual agencies in In Memoriam -- shares much in common with the arguments of a commentator such as Ward Hellstrom, who opts for another person of the Trinity when he speaks of the 'fusion' of Hallam and Christ in Tennyson's representation of his friend in In Memoriam.³

Using only a Biblical model, however, Dale has failed to take account of the special appearance of pentecostal breezes in Romantic and post-Romantic texts. M. H. Abrams has observed how well-ventilated

1. op.cit., p.164.

2. ibid., p.164. Encouraged, no doubt, by Tennyson's own observation that his work 'was meant to be a kind of Divina Commedia, ending with happiness', several commentators before Dale have attempted to propose both the Divine Comedy and La Vita Nuova (which Arthur Hallam translated and in which translation Tennyson took some interest; cf. Memoir, I.44-45) as models for In Memoriam (the most comprehensive discussion is undertaken by Gordon D. Hirsch in 'Tennyson's Commedia', Victorian Poetry, 8, 1970, pp.93-106). But Tennyson's 'a kind of' and his stress on the matter of a happy ending probably best express the relation between his own work and Dante. Dante's Beatrice no doubt hovers somewhere behind the figure of Hallam in In Memoriam as behind the figure of Cadrilla in The Lover's Tale. But no more than The Lover's Tale does In Memoriam purvey the Christian doctrines of the Trinity and of Divine Grace which inform the theological structure of Dante's allegory. As I have suggested (and as I shall continue to suggest as I speak in the following pages of the importance of the principle of imagination in the poem), the inwardness of In Memoriam implies a Romantic base to the epistemology and metaphysic that can be abstracted from the work.

3. op.cit., p.44.

are Romantic poems and comments as follows on the wind as a Romantic metaphor:

the wind is not only a property of the landscape, but also a vehicle for radical changes in the poet's mind. The rising wind ... is correlated with a complex subjective process: the renewal of life and emotional vigor after apathy and a deathlike torpor, and an outburst of creative power following a period of imaginative sterility symbolic equations between breeze, breath, and soul, respiration and inspiration, the reanimation of nature and of the spirit, are not peculiarly Romantic the use of the wind in Romantic poetry had ample precedent in myth, religion, and the poetry of religious meditation. Yet the correspondent breeze, like the guilt-haunted wanderer and the Promethean or Satanic figure of the heroic rebel, can justly be identified as a distinctly Romantic image, or icon.¹

The Romantic wind, observes Professor Abrams, is 'typically a wild wind and a free one'.² Functioning above all as 'an emblem of the free ... spirit'³ the metaphorical wind of Romantic literature is associated at source with Romantic assertions concerning the self-sufficient, self-originating spiritual power of the self-predicated imagination. Typically in Romantic literature, the traditional breath of God is appropriated by the individual imagination which, as an active agent of (rather than as passive recipient of stimuli from) the one great mind, does not require to be inspired by the Holy Ghost. When the wind blows it is not ultimately blowing from without but from places of power within the soul.

1. 'The Correspondent Breeze: A Romantic Metaphor', English Romantic Poets: Modern Essays in Criticism, ed. M. H. Abrams (Oxford, 1960), pp.37-38,44,51. Abrams's essay first appeared in The Kenyon Review, XIX (1957), pp.113-30.

2. ibid., p.52.

3. ibid., p.52.

Such a model is, I believe, more appropriate to the metaphor of breath in In Memoriam than the more traditional model referred to by Dale. Nature's reduction of the idea of spirit to denote only the literal physical breath is, indeed, opposed in the poem, but the opposition is not founded in the poet's dependence on an external agency of grace. The reaffirmation of a spiritual breath in In Memoriam constitutes a reaffirmation of the energy of the poet's own imagination.

In order to see how this may be so we must trace the development in In Memoriam of the themes of the poet's own imaginative activity in writing the poem. We have of course to remember that there is in the work no simple pattern of progression from position to position. Much that is in the poem is both tentative and honestly provisional. The long, slow, overall 'advance' from darkness to light is marked by numerous local regressions. It would be tedious, however, to attempt to examine every stage of development and redevelopment in the poem. I shall take such instances as seem sufficient to substantiate a view of the evolution of the 'key word complex' and of the theme of the poet's art that differs in crucial respects from the interpretation provided by Dale.

v

I have already noted the minimal value ('In words, like weeds, I'll wrap me o'er') ascribed by Tennyson to his own poetic utterances in section V. In chapter three I have also referred to the uncertainties of section XVI:

What words are these have fallen from me?

Can calm despair and wild unrest

Be tenants of a single breast ...

Or has the shock, so harshly given,
Confused me ...

(1-3,11-12)

We may observe that the questions of section XVI mark a shift away from the poet's earlier conviction in section V that his words would serve simply as 'dull narcotics numbing pain'. As the poet is confused about his emotional and intellectual states, so he is confused about the standing of the words he uses to describe those states. This very confusion opens up possibilities for the role of poetic utterance that had not been allowed in section V. The confusion of XVI is followed suddenly and notably in section XVII (a lyric not discussed by Peter Allan Dale) by the poet's conceit that his own utterance is somehow intimately involved in the process of returning Hallam from Trieste. The literal reference is to the ship bearing the body of the friend, but the metaphorical potential of the lines is not lost on us:

Thou comest, much wept for: such a breeze
Compelled thy canvas, and my prayer
Was as a whisper of the air
To breathe thee over lonely seas.

(1-4)

The full potential metaphorical range of the word 'breathe' is introduced when, as we have seen, in section XVIII the poet hopes that he 'might be' able, 'breathing through his lips', to impart 'life' to the dead Hallam. Dale puts it too strongly when he declares it 'evident' in this lyric that Tennyson's 'imagined effort' to breathe life into Hallam is 'futile'. It is evident only that what is posited subjunctively has not yet been realised. That the poet is unable at this point to realise his desire does ^{not} denote a recognition of the futility of the desire. At the end of this lyric we know only the

distance between what is and what might be.

As if unwilling to test his desire the poet tries himself out in section XXI on the idea that his song can be justified as a merely natural activity: 'I do but sing because I must,/And pipe but as the linnets sing' (11.23-24). By section XXXIV, however, Tennyson shows himself appalled by the idea of a universe devoid of spiritual life and by the idea of the nihilistic poet who celebrates only the spiritually meaningless beauty of the natural world: '... this orb of flame,/Fantastic beauty; such as lurks/In some wild Poet, when he works/Without a conscience or an aim' (11.5-8). There is no crudely moralistic condemnation of such a poet. Lessons have not necessarily been learned, they only should have been, and Tennyson registers in this lyric his own susceptibility to the mesmerically self-negating attraction of absolutely finite, amoral beauty:

'Twere best at once to sink to peace,
 Like birds the charming serpent draws,
 To drop head-foremost in the jaws
 Of vacant darkness and to cease. (13-16)

Tennyson is not sure at this stage that he is not the poet that he (or a part of him, at least) would censure. But the need implied in section XXXIV for there to be a higher order in the universe and a higher value to poetry prepares the ground for section XXXVI and its allusion to the inspired Word of sacred scripture. Tennyson's allowance in section XXXVII that his is but an 'earthly Muse' (1.13) may be considered on a par with his expression of a desire as yet unrealised in section XVIII. Section XXXVII is interesting for what it betrays of Tennyson's aspirations, and his extreme caution in respect of those aspirations. It does not necessarily define, as Dale asserts, a final position. It is true that Hallam's words are spoken

of as if they have a sacramental significance. But this is not in itself evidence of Tennyson's discovery of a fund of inspired utterances distinct and separable from his own poetic utterances. It is worth considering again the context in which Tennyson's statement about Hallam's words occurs:

Urania speaks with darkened brow:

'Thou pratest here where thou art least ...'

And my Melpomene replies,

A touch of shame upon her cheek ...

'... I am but an earthly Muse ...

'But brooding on the dear one dead,

And all he said of things divine,

(And dear to me as sacred wine

To dying lips is all he said),

'I murmured, as I came along,

Of comfort clasped in truth revealed;

And loitered in the master's field,

And darkened sanctities with song.'

The reference to the sacredness of Hallam's words forms an integral part of Tennyson's apology for having presumed too much in his own song. Hallam's words -- as an exemplary model -- are incorporated in the body of Tennyson's enterprise. They are identified with, rather than distinguished from, his own over-ambitious (as he is prepared to concede at this point) song. The poet's admission in XXXVII that he might be guilty of spiritual pride does not, however, prevent him from making a very telling point in the following lyric. Here he makes a

definite distinction between the gratifications of merely natural renewal and another kind of possible life that he identifies explicitly with his poetry:

No joy the blowing season gives,
 The herald melodies of spring,
 But in the songs I love to sing
 A doubtful gleam of solace lies.

(XXXVIII.5-8)

This is not the larger lay apparently (and presumptuously) aimed at two sections earlier, but the poet is declaring, albeit tentatively, that there may indeed be more than merely natural energy and significance in his own imaginative activity. In sections XLVIII and XLIX Tennyson says explicitly that he dare not trust the larger lay. His 'Sorrow' (XLVIII.1), we are told,

 holds it sin and shame to draw
 The deepest measure from the chords:

Nor dare she trust a larger lay,
 But rather loosens from the lip
 Short swallow-flights of song, that dip
 Their wings in tears, and skim away.

(XLVIII.11-16)

 The slightest air of song shall breathe
 To make the sullen surface crisp ...

Beneath all fancied hopes and fears
 Ay me, the sorrow deepens down,
 Whose muffled motions blindly drown

The bases of my life in tears.

(XLIX.7-8,13-16)

These lines do not simply repeat the retraction of section XXXVII. While the poet's sorrow resists the idea of a larger lay, the possibility that song may have the capacity for such a lay is not denied. What is most important in the lines is the idea of depths of being which the poet's sorrow insists remain untouched by the play of art. In setting up these terms of contrast between 'fancied hopes and fears' and the 'bases' of his life, the poet is preparing the way for an eventual dissolution of the contrast. There comes, as we shall see, a stage in the poem when distinctions between surface and depth, words (poetic utterance) and Being are erased.

There is still, however, much to be worked through before that stage is reached. Section LVII, for example, marks a serious regression:

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

Come; let us go: your cheeks are pale;
 But half my life I leave behind:
 Methinks my friend is richly shrined;
 But I shall pass; my work will fail.

(1-8)

Immediately, however, this is countered in the following lyric with the poet rebuked (in a reversal of the pattern of section XXXVII) by 'The high Muse' (my italics) for his failure of nerve and underestimation of his art:

In those sad words I took farewell:

Like echoes in sepulchral halls,
 As drop by drop the water falls
 In vaults and catacombs, they fell;

And, falling, idly broke the peace
 Of hearts that beat from day to day,
 Half-conscious of their dying clay,
 And those cold crypts where they shall cease.

The high Muse answered: 'Wherefore grieve
 Thy brethren with a fruitless tear?
 Abide a little longer here,
 And thou shalt take a nobler leave.'

(LVIII.1-12)

(A draft version of section LVIII,9-12 in the Lincoln Manuscript of In Memoriam includes the lines: 'The high Muse answer'd Wherefore grieve/A speechless child can move the heart/But thine my friend is nobler art'.) As there is a rejection in section LVIII of the idea that the poet's art is nothing but an earthly song, so there is a rejection of the image of that art as a sepulchral echo with no higher life of its own. The theme of spiritual regeneration in In Memoriam cannot be considered in isolation from the suggestion latent in this section that the body of Tennyson's poetry itself is to rise from the tomb.

It is after the stern encouragement from the high muse in section LVIII that the poet begins -- across sections LXVII-LXXI -- to penetrate those depths of being he had gestured towards in sections XLVIII and XLIX, but which were then obscured and rendered inaccessible by the 'muffled motions' of sorrow. Now, the poet begins to discriminate recognisable -- if still ill-defined -- patterns and directions in the 'bases' of

his life through an exploration of the world of dream and night-time reverie. It is in this interior world that Tennyson discovers a special principle of life. In section LXVIII he observes that the boundary between life and death seems to be dissolved in the realm of sleep:

When in the down I sink my head,
 Sleep, Death's twin-brother, times my breath;
 Sleep, Death's twin-brother, knows not Death,
 Nor can I dream of thee as dead ...

(1-4)

Careful attention must be paid, however, to the specialised sense in which Tennyson is using the ideas of death and (by implication) of life in this lyric. The poet cannot dream of his friend as dead, but all that this means is that distinctions between past and present experience are suspended in the dream state:

Nor can I dream of thee as dead:

I walk as ere I walked forlorn,
 When all our path was fresh with dew,
 And all the bugle breezes blew
 Reveillé to the breaking morn. (4-8)

'Life', in this lyric, signifies an encounter with remembered experience as if it were the vital (albeit dream-enclosed) present. Conversely, the idea of death comes to have less a literal scope of reference than to define the speaker's sense of present estrangement from a past experience of himself and the world. Overcoming death in sleep amounts to a reconciliation of an opposition within the mind of the poet. What is signified is the revitalisation of an inert dimension of the poet's experience of himself. To the extent that time is thus 'transcended', the transcendence does not involve the idea of

an encounter with a ghostly 'other' presence who intrudes upon the speaker's consciousness from a realm absolutely unconditioned by time and memory. Needless to say, such reintegration as is achieved in the dream state of section LXVIII is not easily maintained. The lyric goes on to record a failure of confidence in the power of dream:

But what is this? I turn about,
 I find a trouble in thine eye,
 Which makes me sad I know not why,
 Nor can my dream resolve the doubt ...

(9-12)

By section LXXI, however, the potencies of sleep are forcibly restated:

Sleep, kinsman thou to death and trance
 And madness, thou hast forged at last
 A night-long Present of the Past
 In which we went though summer France.

Hadst thou such credit with the soul?
 Then bring an opiate trebly strong,
 Drug down the blindfold sense of wrong
 That so my pleasure may be whole;

While now we talk as once we talked
 Of men and minds, the dust of change,
 The days that grow to something strange,
 In walking as of old we walked

Beside the river's wooded reach,
 The fortress, and the mountain ridge,

The cataract flashing from the bridge,
The breaker breaking on the beach.

(1-16)

There remain important qualifications and reservations in Tennyson's account in this lyric of the syntheses of dream experience. They may, after all, be no more than aberrations of the mind ('Sleep, kinsman ... to .../... madness'). On balance, however, the credit that sleep and dream has with the soul is not dismissed as intrinsically unsound. It is more that the poet is surprised by and unsure of the scope of the new funds at his disposal. Throughout sections LXVII-LXXI, as the poet finds it possible in his dreams to inhabit the past as if it were the present, we see him slowly coming to an awareness of a possible resource of renovative energy within himself. The poet's apprehension of the living continuities of dream experience marks a fundamental step in the direction of overcoming his sense of fracture and of present alienation from a past condition. In section LXXI, as Tennyson recollects the sleeping state itself, we see him slipping back in the third and fourth stanzas into something approximating the continuous present of the dream experience. It is apparent that the healing power of dream exercises some hold even over the waking consciousness. It is a tenuous hold, however. Whatever forces may be stirring in the unconscious, in the 'bases' of his life, the poet consciously acknowledges the incompleteness of the process of reintegration when he has to appeal to sleep to 'Drug down the blindfold sense of wrong/That so my pleasure may be whole'. But the tentative definition of new life in terms of a vital fusion within the poet's own being of past and present experience forms a significant prelude to the spiritual affirmation that is to come in section XCV.

What is also crucial in this sequence of dream lyrics is that

Tennyson makes a familiar Romantic identification between the reserves of the world of reverie, dream, and trance and the foundations of his life as an artist. The poet's recognition of a principle of life in his night-time reveries and dreams involves some recognition of a creative principle in the imaginative activity that is his poem. There is no longer any insistence that his words touch only the surface of things. This point is implicit in section LXVII, where we hear:

When on my bed the moonlight falls,
 I know that in thy place of rest
 By that broad water of the west,
 There comes a glory on the walls;

Thy marble bright in dark appears,
 As slowly steals a silver flame
 Along the letters of thy name,
 And o'er the number of thy years.

The mystic glory swims away;
 From off my bed the moonlight dies;
 And closing eaves of wearied eyes
 I sleep till dusk is dipt in gray ...

(1-12)

The pentecostal possibilities in the 'flame' which appears in the second stanza anticipate elements in the supra-normal experience recounted in section XCV. Likewise, section LXVII raises the same fundamental question as is raised by the later lyric. In what sense are we to understand the nature of 'mystical' experience in Tennyson's poem? With respect to section LXVII, it is obviously absurd to think of the poet gaining an insight into some local paranormal event

affecting Hallam's tomb in the church of Clevedon. There is nothing to suggest that we have in this lyric -- any more than in sections LXVIII-LXXI -- the record of a spiritual visitation deriving from a source beyond the poet himself. No external authority is cited to justify the conviction of 'I know' in the second line of LXVIII. The whole experience is contained within the speaker's consciousness, and that consciousness alone appears to constitute the ground of the energy celebrated in the mystic light which shines upon Hallam's tomb. The image of more-than-natural life appears to define nothing more (or less) than the life of imaginative reverie. It is notable that the mystic glory is here attributed not to the figure of Hallam as such, but to the memory of him denoted by his tomb, and not merely to his tomb but to the words that there spell his name. As I have already suggested, with particular reference to the imagery of section L VIII, Tennyson is preoccupied in In Memoriam with the idea of his work as a poetic memorial, a kind of monumental inscription to the memory of Hallam. It is possible to see, in section LXVII, a correlation implicitly drawn between Hallam's tomb as artefact and the artefact that is Tennyson's poem. Up to this point in his work the poet has frequently feared that he might be doing no more with his words than inertly entombing his dead friend. But section LXVII -- with its imaginative projection of an inspired light shining upon the words that articulate Hallam's name on the tomb -- hints at a mystic potency in the imaginative activity by which the memory of Hallam is articulated in In Memoriam itself. Implicit in the image of LXVII is a perception that memory and imaginative memorialising may contain, for the one engaged in remembering if not in any necessarily literal sense for the one who is remembered, a regenerative capacity.

The deeper significance of the poetic endeavour is more directly the subject of the dream-vision of a renewal of life in section LXIX:

I dreamed there would be Spring no more,
 That Nature's ancient power was lost:
 The streets were black with smoke and frost,
 They chattered trifles at the door:

I wandered from the noisy town,
 I found a wood with thorny boughs:
 I took the thorns to bind my brows,
 I wore them like a civic crown:

I met with scoffs, I met with scorns
 From youth and babe and hoary hairs:
 They called me in the public squares
 The fool that wears a crown of thorns:

They called me fool, they called me child:
 I found an angel of the night;
 The voice was low, the look was bright;
 He looked upon my crown and smiled:

He reached the glory of a hand,
 That seemed to touch it into leaf:
 The voice was not the voice of grief,
 The words were hard to understand.

(1-20)

Tennyson commented on line 12 of this lyric: 'To write poems about death and grief is "to wear a crown of thorns"'.¹ The Christological equation points unmistakeably to the poet's dream intimation of a

1. Eversley, III, 243.

regenerative potential in his role as artist and of a sacramental dimension to his poetic words.

But 'intimation' and 'potential' remain the important words here. As I observed in chapter 2, a cardinal feature of Romantic conceptions of the imagination was that it was a faculty which comprised a synthesis of conscious and unconscious, willed and unwilled dimensions of the mind. There is a sense in which Tennyson, although discovering across sections LXVII-LXXI the rich potential of the realm of sleep, remains in the position of being unable to use his dreams. In section LXIX the words of the voice projected by the dreamer-poet, the words beyond grief, are hard to decipher. It is as if the energies and insights associated with the dream-vision cannot be translated, cannot be carried over intact into the world of ordinary, waking consciousness; as if there were still a fundamental disharmony or imbalance between conscious and unconscious levels of the mind. Such an imbalance is certainly the theme of section LXX. Here the conscious effort at imaginative recreation of the lost loved one is associated only with an increased disturbance and confusion. The willed attempt to harness resources that in part lie beyond the will is largely ineffective:

I cannot see the features right,
 When on the gloom I strive to paint
 The face I know; the hues are faint
 And mix with hollow masks of night ...

Dark bulks that tumble half alive,
 And lazy lengths on boundless shores;

Till all at once beyond the will
 I hear a wizard music roll,

And through a lattice on the soul
Looks thy fair face and makes it still.

(1-4,11-16)

It is emphasised that the stabilising 'vision' of the last stanza is only a partial one: glimpsed through the interstices of the lattice. The suspension of will that is the condition of this dream-vision also establishes the limitations of such visions. To the extent that they remain unusable in terms of daily consciousness and will a complete revivification of the poet's self cannot be affirmed. So long as the spontaneous energies of dream and trance cannot in any sense be directed, there can be no full affirmation of the creative, re-integrative principle of imagination. The dream continuities of sections LXVII-LXXI are circumscribed by darkness. They disintegrate in the wakeful light of day. Thus the coherence of the 'night-long Present of the Past' achieved in LXXI is shattered in the dawn -- the dawn of the day that marks the first anniversary of Hallam's death -- of section LXXII:

Risest thou thus, dim dawn, again,
And howlest, issuing out of night,
With blasts that blow the poplar white,
And lash with storm the streaming pane?

Day, when my crowned estate begun
To pine in that reverse of doom,
Which sickened every living bloom,
And blurred the splendour of the sun ...

(1-8)

The poet has yet to carry the reconciliation of past and present out of the night-time into the day: the darkness and light, depth and

surface, centre and circumference of the poet's experience have yet to be brought into meaningful relationship. There is little question, however, of the Holy Ghost descending and touching and entering the poet in sections LXVII-LXXI. These lyrics, all dealing with experiences contained within and circumscribed by sleep and night-time reverie, mark a fundamental advance in the poem as they show the poet coming to an awareness of places of power hidden within himself. The realisation of that power comes, of course, in section XCV, and it is directly to a consideration of that lyric that we may now turn.

Peter Allan Dale treads alarmingly close to speaking of an actual ghost when he argues that XCV shows complete spiritual recovery for the poet coming in a 'moment of vision ... in which Hallam's spirit or ghost actually appears to him'.¹ Even allowing that it is impossible to allocate any single, exclusive meaning to many of Tennyson's expressions in this lyric, the terms of Dale's formulation seem hard to justify.

Section XCV is concerned for the most part with a night-time trance that at once recapitulates and develops further the preoccupations and orientations of sections LXVII-LXXI. The poet relates how, left alone out-of-doors one summer night, he read his friend's old 'letters', which he metaphorically associates with fallen leaves:

17 But when those others, one by one,
 Withdrew themselves from me and night,
 And in the house light after light
 20 Went out, and I was all alone,

A hunger seized my heart; I read
 Of that glad year which once had been,

1. op.cit., p.160.

In those fallen leaves which kept their green,
The noble letters of the dead:

25 And strangely on the silence broke
The silent-speaking words, and strange
Was love's dumb cry defying change
To test his worth; and strangely spoke

The faith, the vigour, bold to dwell
30 On doubts that drive the coward back,
And keen through wordy snares to track
Suggestion to her inmost cell.

So word by word, and line by line,
The dead man touched me from the past,
35 And all at once it seemed at last
The living soul was flashed on mine,

And mine in this was wound, and whirled
About empyreal heights of thought,
And came on that which is, and caught
40 The deep pulsations of the world,

AEonian music measuring out
The steps of Time -- the shocks of Chance --
The blows of Death ...

The terms of the vision in lines 33-36 are complicated. In the first place, we

note that the climactic moment is approached by the poet turning his thoughts to a consideration of a past condition. And it is from the past that the poet is then 'touched'. What is coming alive here is the poet's memory of the past. The passage into that which lies beyond time is opened up through a retrospective movement in time. The faculty of memory we are speaking of here escapes, of course, empiricist definition merely as a series of decaying sense-impressions. The remembered condition is recreated and vitally reinhabited. Simple, inert recollection of Hallam as the 'dead man' is replaced by a living sense of the living soul and the poet is delivered for a moment from 'the long, meaningless attrition of time'.¹ But the vehicle of the deliverance is no external spiritual agent. Neither the dead man nor the glad year with which he is identified are posited as having a self-sufficient existence independent of the poet's memory. They come alive from the past only by virtue of a faculty of the poet's mind.

'[T]hat glad year' recalls the language used by Tennyson to describe his relationship with Hallam in sections XXII-XXV of In Memoriam, and the expression is normally taken to signify the whole period of their friendship. I have spoken earlier of the sense in which this period images a state of the poet's own mind, a state in which the absolute spiritual significance of the cosmos and of his own being were not obscured to him. I have also spoken of the way in which we may trace, beneath the overt theme of the friend's death, an exploration of the poet's experience of self-alienation, his own loss of psychological and spiritual wholeness. Here in section XCV the coming alive of both Hallam and the 'glad year' in the poet's mind images Tennyson's recovery of a 'lost' dimension of his own being. At the

1. Frank Kermode, The Sense of an Ending (Oxford, 1967), p.169.

centre of the 'meeting' between the poet of the present and the Hallam of the past lies a reassertion of that higher self of the poet not merely associated with but imaged by Hallam. This reassertion necessarily implies a reapprehension of the ultimate reality in which the 'likest God within the soul' of the poet is grounded. We are presented in XCV not so much with a visitation as a revisitation, a creative self-return on the part of the poet, a healing of the fracture within his mind.

To say that Hallam's coming to life from the past images a reawakening of the highest potency of the poet's own being is not to assert that Tennyson's apprehension of 'that which is' excludes an affirmation of Hallam's continuing spiritual existence. The finer part of the dead friend, no less than the divine within the poet himself, is to be identified with the ultimate reality which Tennyson celebrates.¹ But to say that such an affirmation of Hallam's spiritual survival¹ is involved in the vision sequence of XCV is not the same thing as saying that Hallam invades the poet's consciousness as a spiritual entity from another world. The vision is not structured or ordered in the manner, as we have seen Peter Allan Dale arguing, of 'a Biblical visitation from God'. It is ordered according to the terms of a Romantic epistemology and metaphysic, whereby the mind by its own power may recover its own original capacity to

1. Tennyson took a deliberate step to avoid an implication of the personal spiritual presence of Hallam, and to stress instead the identity of the dead friend with ultimate reality, when, in an edition of *In Memoriam* separately published in 1872, he introduced the present reading of line 36 in section XCV: 'The living soul was flashed on mine'. Previously the line had read 'His living soul ...'. Tennyson explained -- 'The first reading troubled me, as perhaps giving a wrong impression', and Hallam Tennyson observed -- 'With reference to the later reading, my father would say: "Of course the greater Soul may include the less"' (*Eversley*, III, 252-53).

participate in 'the eternal, the infinite, and the one'. Tennyson's friend Franklin Lushington was in no doubt that the poet had made entirely plain the essential dynamic of the visionary experience in lines 33-43 of section XCV. Commenting on the vision in a review (Tait's Edinburgh Magazine, August 1850) of In Memoriam, Lushington quoted from Tennyson's poem 'The Gardener's Daughter' (ll.233-34):

The hunger for a nearer intercourse ... grows with the growth of
the summer, to an intensity which, at last, we are told,

By its own energy fulfilled itself,
Merged in completion.¹

The self-fulfilling energies of section XCV may be identified, as I have intimated, with the principle of imagination. Within the terms of such an identification, the enlivened Hallam, insofar as he signifies potencies within the poet himself, becomes a figure of the reborn imagination. Tennyson's attempt to impart life to Hallam has not been futile. Peter Allan Dale argues that Hallam functions in In Memoriam as an emblem of the third person of the Trinity. Accordingly, he speaks of Hallam's words in section XCV as the 'medium' of vision. It is certainly true that there is a stress on utterance in the approaches to the climactic moment of vision. There are several distinguishable, though interrelated, references to utterance. The 'words' of Hallam's letters (ll.24-26) become a 'cry' (l.27) which becomes a statement of faith proving itself through 'wordy snares' (ll.29-32). The series of allusions to utterance is summed up in the poet's -- 'So word by word, and line by line ...' (l.33). This emphasis on utterance implies recognition of the role played by language and expression -- specifically artistic expression -- in the generation of the vision that words are ultimately unable to contain.

1. Quoted from Tennyson: In Memoriam. A Selection of Critical Essays, ed. John Dixon Hunt, p.82.

An interesting correlation is maintained throughout the vision sequence between the cosmic order that is apprehended and the formal, ordered measure of artistic expression. The rhythmic patterning of 'word by word, and line by line' leads into an apprehension of the 'deep pulsations' of the world, which in turn are represented in terms of 'AEonian music measuring out/The steps of Time' (ll.41-42).

In what sense, however, is it possible to think of Hallam's words as the 'medium' of vision? Those words would remain dead words, dead letters, but for the mind which reads them. Just as there is no apparent origin other than the poet's imaginative reverie for the 'silver flame' that 'steals' along the 'letters' which spell Hallam's name on his tomb in section LXVII, so the energy that kindles Hallam's letters into life in XCV stands in no way extrinsic to the processes of the poet's consciousness. To the extent that Hallam's words and lines speak, they speak because the poet makes them speak. The letters provide the occasion for the creative act of memory, the act of imagination, which brings them to life. Hallam's voice is, in effect, indistinguishable from the poet's voice. The essential identification of the two voices is highlighted in lines 25-27. Having spoken of Hallam's 'silent-speaking words' breaking 'strangely on the silence' the poet continues: 'and strange/Was love's dumb cry defying change'. If Hallam's words are here assimilated to the cry of love, we have to ask whose love is this and whose cry? The reference is unplaced and there are no grounds for discriminating between the voice of the living friend and the dead loved one. As the poet's utterance the expression of line 27 invokes the cry of love defying change that is In Memoriam itself. The use of the word 'cry' recalls, in detail, earlier usages in the poem where crying is equated with the poet's poetic articulations. A good example occurs in section LXXV, where

Tennyson is saying that he does not want to use his poetry merely to extol the earthly virtues of Hallam:

I care not in these fading days
 To raise a cry that lasts not long,
 And round thee with the breeze of song
 To stir a little dust of praise. (9-12)

Throughout In Memoriam Tennyson shows himself preoccupied with the idea that the imaginative effort of writing the poem constitutes in itself an activity by which 'to prove/No lapse of moons can conquer love' (XXVI.2-3). Just as he doubts whether love can survive the deprivations of time and change so he doubts that his poetry can lay claim to anything more than an earthly and merely ephemeral status. But as he seeks to prove that human love participates in the nature of absolute Being and is not, in an ultimate sense, subject to change and loss, so he seeks to affirm a sense in which his poetry, breathing with a higher principle of life, 'redeems from decay the visitations of the divinity in man'.¹ The vision sequence of section XCV involves at centre an affirmation of the spiritually regenerative capacity of his own imaginative will and of the expressions of that will. In the way that Hallam's words are brought to life by an act of the poet's imagination we may see a reflex-image of the process by which Hallam comes to life and the poet achieves a self-renovation in and through the words of In Memoriam itself.

In section CXXII Tennyson explicitly associates the visionary experience recounted in section XCV with the workings of the imagination:

Oh, wast thou with me, dearest, then,
 While I rose up against my doom,

1. Shelley, Defence of Poetry, ed.cit., p.55.

And yearned to burst the folded gloom,
To bare the eternal Heavens again,

To feel once more, in placid awe,
The strong imagination roll
A sphere of stars about my soul,
In all her motion one with law;

If thou wert with me, and the grave
Divide us not, be with me now,
And enter in at breast and brow,
Till all my blood, a fuller wave,

Be quickened with a livelier breath,
And like an inconsiderate boy,
As in the former flash of joy,
I slip the thoughts of life and death ... (1-16)

A. C. Bradley has pointed out that this section raises two important questions: '(1) The poet refers to some former occasion when his friend appeared to be with him. What is this occasion? (2) In referring to it, he speaks of a time or occasion still earlier ('again', [1.4] 'once more' [1.5]). What is this earlier time?'¹ The 'obvious answer', as Bradley himself put it, to the first question is that the poet 'refers ... particularly to the trance of XCV'.² In that section, for example, the poet did 'perceive the agreement of the motions of the worlds with law' (lines 7-8 of CXXII may be compared with lines 39-43 of XCV),³ and in the 'flash of joy' mentioned in line 15 of CXXII there

1. A Commentary on Tennyson's In Memoriam, p.219.
2. ibid., pp.219-20.
3. ibid., p.220.

is a distinct verbal echo of the 'living soul flashed' on the soul of the poet in XCV. On the second question Bradley concluded that the poet 'is thinking of his youth before his friend's death'.¹ Bradley's reading of section CXXII seems eminently reasonable and there does not seem, nor ever has seemed, cause to take issue with him.

Thus interpreted, the first point of interest to emerge from Tennyson's lyric is not only that the poet associates the vision of XCV with the untrammelled power of the imagination, but also that he associates the working of the same power with the condition defined by the 'glad year' of his friendship with Hallam. (A condition located even further back in time than the period of the friendship -- to be identified, perhaps, with the 'pleasure' of the poet's 'early years' -- is possibly also signified.) We notice also that Hallam is addressed in section CXXII as if he were a literal, 'personal' spiritual entity. But here again Tennyson seems to be doing no more than allowing himself an anthropomorphic conception of that which essentially transcends earthly limits and definitions of personality. Tennyson both indulges himself in the form of personal address and makes clear that it is a purely notional figure who is thus addressed. The question of Hallam's personal presence or otherwise is not something which materially affects Tennyson's affirmation of the substance and significance of the vision(s) alluded to. That they happened, that Tennyson then felt he had slipped thoughts of life and death in coming on that which is, is not in doubt. Hallam may or he may not have been 'with' the poet, but the experiences took place anyway. The point serves only to emphasise the extent to which the experience recorded in XCV is to be identified with a reaffirmation of the poet's own imaginative capacities and the extent to which Hallam,

1. A Commentary on Tennyson's In Memoriam, p.222.

insofar as he appears in the vision, appears as a token of faculties within the poet himself.

Section XCV clearly constitutes an enlarged statement on those inner constitutive resources tentatively acknowledged and identified with the principle of artistic life in sections LXVII-LXXI. At that earlier stage the poet had been unable to translate the syntheses of dream experience into the realm of waking consciousness. The differences between the visionary experience of XCV and the experiences recounted across LXVII-LXXI are plain enough. Firstly, although the climactic moment in XCV takes place at night and is characterised as a 'trance' (l.43), it is approached deliberately from a waking state. There is no discontinuity between the wilful reading of the Hallam letters and the trance 'encounter' which follows. The scope and authority claimed for the visionary experience of lines 33-34 of XCV is far greater than was or could have been claimed for the dream experiences of sections LXVII-LXXI. Nevertheless the trance itself is not sustained:

At length my trance

Was cancelled, stricken through with doubt. (43-44)

Tennyson commented: 'The trance came to an end in a moment of critical doubt'.¹

I have said that the language used by Tennyson in describing the approaches to and the climax of the moment of vision is rich in connotations of artistic order and form. I have suggested that the correlation drawn between aesthetic order and the apprehension of cosmic order implies a recognition of the creative role of artistic expression in the attainment of vision. It is a recognition which at once defines the poet's awareness of the degree to which his own artistic activity in writing In Memoriam is actively involved in the

1. Eversley, III, 252.

process of regeneration charted in the work, even though many of the states of mind recorded are, literally speaking, past states of mind. It is impossible in In Memoriam to draw a clear line between the poetic record of an experience and the experience itself. In section XCV, although the moment of vision described is a past moment, the poetic language directly enacts, or re-enacts, the vision itself.

The poet first renders the preternatural intensity of the night and the natural setting which formed the background to vision:

And calm that let the tapers burn
 Unwavering: not a cricket chirred:
 The brook alone far-off was heard,
 And on the board the fluttering urn ...

The white kine glimmered, and the trees
 Laid their dark arms about the field.

(5-8,15-16)

As the poet recounts his reading of Hallam's letters he uses the language of paradox to account for that which lies beyond logic: 'silence' is 'broken' by words that speak silently; love's 'cry' is 'dumb'; and a 'dead' man is able to touch. Then, a little later, paralleling the original moment of doubt which cancelled the height of vision, the poet expresses (ll.45-48) a doubt about the capacity of language ('matter-moulded forms of speech', l.46) to express vision. Not that such a vision could ultimately be contained by words. But the poet's 'ah, how hard to frame ...' (l.45) does not sufficiently admit the success of his earlier, vitally metaphoric language in suggesting the more than rational and material nature of the visionary experience. Tennyson's language as he describes his original and his present doubts is appropriately bare of metaphorical resonance. It is

the language of direct statement, the language of critical reflection.

Section XCV does not, however, end with the record of the cancellation of the poet's trance. Tennyson relates how, following his moment of critical doubt, his attention was returned to the natural setting described in the opening stanzas of the section. '[T]he doubt was dispelled by the glory of the dawn of the "boundless day"' was Tennyson's gloss on the concluding movement of section XCV:¹

Till now the doubtful dusk revealed
 The knolls once more where, couched at ease,
 The white kine glimmered, and the trees
 Laid their dark arms about the field:

And sucked from out the distant gloom
 A breeze began to tremble o'er
 The large leaves of the sycamore,
 And fluctuate all the still perfume,

And gathering freshlier overhead,
 Rocked the full-foliaged elms, and swung
 The heavy-folded rose, and flung
 The lilies to and fro, and said

'The dawn, the dawn,' and died away;
 And East and West, without a breath,
 Mixt their dim lights, like life and death,
 To broaden into boundless day. (49-64)

Neither the original moment of doubt nor the language of direct statement used to describe it survive this breeze and this dawn. Nor

1. Eversley, III, 252.

can we separate the original processes of mind or imagination by which the doubt was dispelled from the metaphorical language in which the creative reminiscence of the process is couched.

It is often observed that the landscape described in the last four stanzas of section XCV has at once a literal and a metaphorical dimension. As the poet's 'doubt' of line 44 is assimilated in line 49 to a property of the natural scene (the 'doubtful dusk'), so the natural light of dawn which ultimately disperses the literal dusk is correlated with a significant development in the poet's mind. The boundless day acknowledged by the poet at the end of the lyric signifies his reappréhension of the one principle of spiritual life in which all finite oppositions and divisions are reconciled, and in the light of which mortality itself may be seen to be but an appearance of the phenomenal world. Tennyson draws attention to this ground of meaning in his celebration of the ascendant day when he likens the merging of the lights of the East and West, the different aspects of the light of the one sun, to the merging of life and death. Apart from this simile there is no explicit reference to the metaphysical or spiritual significance of the scene described. Tennyson's verse provides a near perfect instance of the typical structure of Romantic nature imagery; a structure in which, as W. K. Wimsatt has shown, the meaning of 'the spirit or soul of things -- "the one life within us and abroad" was summoned out of the very surface of nature itself. It was embodied imaginatively and without the explicit religious or philosophic statements which one will find in classical or Christian instances'.¹

The breeze which blows through the last stanzas of section XCV of Tennyson's poem and which actually announces the arrival of dawn

1. W. K. Wimsatt, The Verbal Icon: Studies in the Meaning of Poetry (Kentucky, 1954), p.110.

suggests simultaneously the motions of the one spirit abroad in the world and the motions of the same spirit within the poet. It defines the resurgence of his synthesising power of imagination following his moment of critical doubt and represents a culminating development of the metaphor used throughout the poem to define the creative energy issuing from within himself and informing his poetic utterances. As Richard J. Dunn has written:

Through the final four stanzas senses mix easily with scenery, feeling flows on the breeze, and language comes as naturally as the wind itself, recalling implicitly the etymological association of breath, spirit, and articulation Tennyson uses the details both as setting for and image of the glimmering imagination, and, understanding this, we should not be troubled either by his employment of the pathetic fallacy or by his insistence that a message comes to him on the wind The poet who hears and sees is also he who speaks¹

In the sections following XCV the poet will continue to address Hallam personally. But at this stage in the poem it is, as I have suggested, essentially a notional form of address superimposed over an awareness and an acceptance of the fact that the spirit of Hallam is to be thought of as diffused throughout the natural and divine cosmos. The disappearance of the figure of Hallam from the affirmation of imagination and of the spiritual unity of the universe in the last four stanzas of section XCV anticipates the poet's subsequent awareness and acceptance of a friend mixed with God and Nature. Above all, the implicit syntheses of the last four stanzas of XCV -- the merging of internal with external, perceiver with perceived, finite with infinite, nature with spirit, even movement with stasis (the

1. 'Vision and Revision: In Memoriam XCV', Victorian Poetry, 18 (Summer 1980), pp.141,143.

dying away of the wind does not denote a loss of the power manifest in its rising) -- look forward to the syntheses adumbrated in section CXXX of the poem. The importance of section XCV in preparing the ground for the final, affirmatory movement of In Memoriam should not be underestimated. The point had been summarised admirably by Dolores Ryback Rosenblum:

Section XCV presents one of the clearest models of the excursion out and back, the expansion from the present moment into the atemporal, and the return to the phenomenal world transformed -- in standard Romantic fashion -- by the visionary experience into a 'new' world, stirred into life by an inspiriting breeze. What happens is that the speaker merely stops looking forward anxiously into the distance, and begins to describe a different experience of himself and the world. The world is transformed for him in that Hallam ceases to be an absent something to be strained for, and is simply a constant present. He will become a 'finer light in light', a 'voice' on the 'rolling air' (CXXX), a felt influence as Tennyson goes about the business of living. Section XCV ends with a mixture of lights of East and West, rising and setting sun, that suggests the immortal-mortal, eternal-temporal mix that Tennyson longs to feel as immanent. For this moment, at least, there are no bounds. The horizon seems to open up indefinitely as the two 'spheres' coalesce and 'broaden into boundless day' This light will illuminate the onward track and allow Tennyson to see even now, without waiting for eternity, its true shape and direction.¹

The manner in which Tennyson uses in section XCV the metaphor of the fusion of the lights of East and West to signify the conciliation

1. 'The Act of Writing In Memoriam', Victorian Poetry, 18 (Summer 1980), p.130.

of finite and infinite, human and divine, contrasts with his use of the imagery of East and West in 'The Hesperides'. There Tennyson had represented a fundamental divorce of interest between the absolute imaged by the Garden in the West and the world of time and change represented by the forces of the East. Tennyson's hostile view of the cosmic will in 'The Hesperides' at once involved a negative view of the individual principle of imagination. As East and West meet in section XCV of In Memoriam, however, as even the pains of mortality and the evil appearances of the world are assimilated to a vision of cosmic love, and as the energising power of the imagination is affirmed, the poet suspends the oppositions and allays the scepticism he had set out in the earlier poem.

vi

I have argued that the resolutions and affirmations of In Memoriam are founded on a treatment of the figure of Arthur Hallam that can be related to a conceptual and imaginative strategy which Tennyson had first used in The Lover's Tale and which can also be seen at work in 'Oh! that 'twere possible'. I have suggested that the theme of the poet's reunion with Hallam in In Memoriam -- as the image of a healing of the division within the mind of the poet himself -- develops and realises a potential theme of reintegration in The Lover's Tale and 'Oh! that 'twere possible'. In In Memoriam there is a sense in which the figure of Hallam stands in relation to the poet as Cadrilla and the ghost of the dead loved one stood, in their positive aspects, to the speakers of The Lover's Tale and 'Oh! that 'twere possible'. But the speakers in the two earlier poems never finally

arrived at the In Memoriam poet's recovery of his own highest or archetypal self, his reaffirmation of 'That type of Perfect in his mind' ('The Two Voices', l.292) imaged in his reunion with Hallam. The self-regenerative potential of the individual imagination in The Lover's Tale and the lyric from The Tribute is held in unresolved tension with a potential of an opposite order. The phantoms fair and good in both poems are matched with shadows of a contradictory significance. It is not that dark shadows entirely disappear from In Memoriam. I have mentioned that the poet speaks in section XCVII of 'My love' seeing 'himself in all he sees'. But if the reflection of XCVII is 'glory-crowned', we should not fail to observe that there remain hints in the poem of the blighting spirit of solitude. A momentary fear that the ideal object of the self-predicated imagination may be no more than -- as it was put in The Lover's Tale -- an 'empty phantom' surfaces in section CVIII. Here the spectre of solipsism provokes the anxiety that there may be no more than a mortal meaning to all projections of the imagination:

What find I in the highest place,
 But mine own phantom chanting hymns?
 And on the depth of death there swims
 The reflex of a human face. (9-12)

Such anxieties do not, however, govern the overall statement of In Memoriam. The poem as a whole lays primary emphasis on the positive side of the dual aspect of the phantom as it had appeared in The Lover's Tale and 'Oh! that 'twere possible'. It is only by laying such an emphasis that the poem of 1850 is able to move to a definite resolution.

But does the resolution of In Memoriam mean that the dark ghosts of the earlier two poems have definitely been laid? The doubtful

phantom of section CVIII appears, after all, at a relatively late stage in the proceedings of the work. Read as an entity in itself the idea of CVIII is quite at odds with the overall movement of thought in the poem. The lyric presents the poet's decision that he will not seek for spiritual fulfilment in a universe that is perhaps incapable of delivering such fulfilment:

What profit lies in barren faith,
And vacant yearning ...

What find I in the highest place...?

I'll rather take what fruit may be
Of sorrow under human skies:
'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise,
Whatever wisdom sleep with thee.

(5-6,9,13-16)

The anxiety registered in CVIII may be regarded as one of those occasional regressions in the general spiritual advance of the poem which I spoke of earlier. The decision of CVIII is thrown over in succeeding lyrics. But the position advanced in CVIII is unqualified within the context of that section. Both the position and the formal unit of verse in which it occurs have a curious internal coherence and self-sufficiency. The point raises the question of the structural unity of In Memoriam.

In what sense do the 133 separate sections of In Memoriam constitute a poetic whole? As I noted at the end of chapter three, Tennyson himself spoke of writing the sections 'at many different places I did not write them with any view of weaving them into a whole'. Those commentators are surely right who have felt that even as

woven into a whole the poem does not constitute an organic or structural unity. As I observed at the end of chapter three, the question of the unity of In Memoriam may be approached through a consideration of the formal aspects of the work (the poem as 'artifice' or 'product') or through a consideration of the work as a record of experience (the poem as 'process'). Neither approach, however, has yielded clear demonstration of a governing principle of artistic unity. It is possible to point to important formal and thematic continuities in the work and these 'do much in the way of "weaving ... into a whole", but it remains weaving, not growing or building'.¹ Even when, as in my discussion in this chapter, the 'process' approach is modified in the direction of 'artifice' through an interpretation which stresses the dramatisation of the speaker and of the figure of Arthur Hallam, we do not transcend the metaphor of weaving. To argue that the figure of Hallam is dramatised according to a conceptual and imaginative strategy which the poet had evolved before the death of his friend is to attempt only to elicit a dominating pattern in the weave. There remains something one-dimensional in the poem's overall chart of a development from darkness to light. It is as if something has been left out in order that the final threads may be tied and the final affirmation made; as if one side of the case has been arbitrarily elected to stand as an entire structure. A part has been taken as evidence of the whole. Tennyson's own awareness of the one-sided nature of the self-dramatisation in In Memoriam is suggested in his comment to James Knowles: 'It's too hopeful, this poem, more than I am myself'. A hint of another side is indicated in section CVIII of the poem. The section is not woven into the broad pattern of affirmation at a deeply organic or structural

1. Christopher Ricks, Tennyson, p.213.

level. Section CVIII can be detached intact without causing irreparable damage to the fabric of the poem sequence in which it occurs. The section raises questions that are more passed over than answered in In Memoriam. In Maud it was the turn of the questionable shadow of CVIII to claim the focus of attention.

CHAPTER 6

THAT ABIDING PHANTOM COLD: MAUD

i

Parallels between In Memoriam and Maud have often been observed by Tennyson's commentators. Clyde de L. Ryals, for example, notes:

There are ... many similarities between Maud and In Memoriam. Both deal with psychic regeneration through love, and both are concerned with the same loneliness and desolate longing. The goal of the speaker in each poem is to find meaning and permanence in a seemingly disordered universe of constant change¹

The universe of change in Maud is defined in terms which frequently recall, extend, and deepen those of In Memoriam. The vision of 'Nature, red in tooth and claw' in the earlier poem (LVI.15) figures largely in the protagonist's perception of the world in the early sections of Maud: 'nature is one with rapine, a harm no preacher can heal;/The Mayfly is torn by the swallow, the sparrow speared by the shrike' (I.123-24). Though Tennyson had alluded to 'The blind hysterics of the Celt' (CIX.16) and to the 'red fool-fury of the Seine' (CXXVII.7) in In Memoriam, Maud extends further the vision of rapine into human social and political contexts: 'Shall I weep if a Poland fall? shall I shriek if a Hungary fail?/Or an infant civilisation be ruled with rod or with knout?' (I.147-48). The main target of the socio-political indictment is the rapaciously exploitative commercial infrastructure of British society. Economic prosperity the hero deems a false peace, a euphemism for

1. 'Tennyson's Maud', Connotation, I (Spring 1962), p.24.

Civil war, as I think, and that of a
 kind
 The viler, as underhand, not openly bearing the sword ...

Peace sitting under her olive, and slurring the days
 gone by,
 When the poor are hovelled and hustled together,
 each sex, like swine,
 When only the ledger lives, and when only not all men
 lie;
 Peace in her vineyard -- yes! -- but a company forges the
 wine. (I.27-28,33-36)

At moments in the early stages of Maud the protagonist affects a detachment from the scenes of plunder and prey which so clearly appal him: 'I have not made the world, and He that made it will guide' (I.149). But there is no passive trust in a benevolent God. The protagonist's perception of a destructive principle of competition in the natural and human realm is partly conditioned, as in In Memoriam, by modern scientific interpretations of the world and involves, as in In Memoriam, a radical doubt that the ultimate principle of the universe is to be associated with a caring, loving, reconciling and unifying power. Just as man, nature's 'last work, who seemed so fair' under the old dispensation is reduced to 'A monster ... a dream,/A discord' under the new order of science in section LVI (11.9,21-22) of In Memoriam, so in Maud the 'sad astrology, the boundless plan' (I.634) that is 'modern astronomy'¹ turns the stars into 'tyrants in ... iron skies':

1. Tennyson's comment on I.634 in Eversley, IV,277.

Innumerable, pitiless, passionless eyes,
 Cold fires, yet with power to burn and brand
 His nothingness into man. (I.635-38)

With the insights of contemporary geological science particularly in mind the protagonist observes:

We are puppets, Man in his pride, and Beauty fair in
 her flower;
 Do we move ourselves, or are moved by an unseen
 hand at a game
 That pushes us off from the board, and others ever
 succeed? ...

the drift of the Maker is dark, an Isis hid by the
 veil. (I.126-28,144)

The phenomenon of discord defines, of course, the relations between the protagonist's family and that of Maud. The protagonist holds Maud's father morally responsible for the violent (apparently self-inflicted) death suffered by his own father following the failure of some 'vast speculation' (I.9). As the Mayfly is torn by the swallow, so the hero can speak of 'The household Fury sprinkled with blood/By which our houses are torn' (I.715-16). For the protagonist the spirit of feud may be observed at work from the largest operations of nature down to the most local human relationship. It is, indeed, the 'spirit of Cain' (I.23) and the protagonist's vision in the opening stages of the poem is a vision of a fallen universe, a universe manifesting at all levels only a principle of division, of hate, despair, and death. This negative principle inheres, of course, not merely in the external world and in the external relations of things but in the hero's own being:

A wounded thing with a rancorous cry,
 At war with myself and a wretched race,
 Sick, sick to the heart of life, am I.

(I.363-65)

A fixation with death is woven into the very tissue of the speaker's consciousness. He remembers the time of his father's destruction:

I remember the time, for the roots of my hair were
 stirred
 By a shuffled step, by a dead weight trailed, by a
 whispered fright,
 And my pulses closed their gates with a shock on my
 heart as I heard
 The shrill-edged shriek of a mother divide the
 shuddering night. (I.13-16)

In I.516-26, lines which image the speaker's introverted state of mind, the thought of death is both involuntary and explicitly elicited from the scene described:

I heard no sound where I stood
 But the rivulet on from the lawn
 Running down to my own dark wood;
 Or the voice of the long sea-wave as it swelled
 Now and then in the dim-gray dawn;
 But I looked, and round, all round the house I beheld
 The death-white curtain drawn;
 Felt a horror over me creep,
 Prickle my skin and catch my breath,
 Knew that the death-white curtain meant but sleep,
 Yet I shuddered and thought like a fool of the sleep
 of death.

Throughout Maud, thoughts of, metaphors for, and associations with death are generated spontaneously in the speaker's imagination. This lack of control defines the deepest level of his obsession where the fixation with death touches a death-wish. Estranged from a world in which he sees nothing but division and annihilation the isolated, self-alienated hero is himself suicidally disposed from the very opening of the poem:

What! am I raging alone as my father raged in his
mood?

Must I too creep to the hollow and dash myself down
and die ...

O, having the nerves of motion as well as the nerves
of pain,

Were it not wise if I fled from the place and the pit
and the fear? (I.53-54,63-64)

We have, of course, only the protagonist's lens of perception in Maud. This does not mean that we would be justified in saying that the universal chaos he speaks of exists only to the extent that he sees it. It is plain enough that not everything is a delusion. We take it as an objective fact that the speaker's father is dead and that the death was in some way related to a financial venture which ruined him while leaving Maud's father to profit all the more. Tradesmen do cheat, the under-privileged are exploited, and creature feeds on creature in nature. We also take it as given that contemporary science has undermined the credibility of the traditional spiritual and ethical systems by which man accommodated a world of transience and imperfection to a vision of ultimate divine benevolence and perfection. At the same time, however, while there may be an objective

ground to the protagonist's vision of disorder, the disorder in himself throws an aspect of his vision into the realm of the subjective and the relative. There may be an element -- even a very large element -- of deluded over-reaction. Yet the speaker is given, in some measure at least, to know this ('am I raging alone ...?'). It is on this glimmering self-knowledge that his attempt to struggle away from the place, the pit, and the fear is based. What makes the attempt desperately difficult is precisely that he is living in a world in which he cannot seek support for a more positive vision in any external structure or framework of belief. Such structures having been undermined, he exists in a world where responsibility for imposing a satisfactory order and meaning upon experience rests entirely with himself. The prospect of his finding a centre, a resting-place either within or without, seems bleak. The confusion of inner and outer disorders, each significantly reflecting and exacerbating the other, seems from the outset a fatal formula. Hallam Tennyson reported his father as saying: "This poem is a little Hamlet", the history of a morbid poetic soul, under the blighting influence of a recklessly speculative age'.¹ The figure of Hamlet was often invoked by Victorians in order to image the contemporary maladie du siècle, the solipsistic subjectivism blighting individual consciousness in a world where traditional, received systems of thought and belief had been eroded. In the 'Preface' to the first edition of his Poems (1853) Matthew Arnold described his portrayal of Empedocles in 'Empedocles on Etna':

I intended to delineate the feelings of one of the last of the Greek religious philosophers ... living on into a time when the habits of Greek thought and feeling had begun fast to change, character to dwindle, the influence of the

1. Memoir, I, 396.

Sophists to prevail. Into the feelings of a man so situated there entered much that we are accustomed to consider as exclusively modern; how much, the fragments of Empedocles himself which remain to us are sufficient at least to indicate. What those who are familiar only with the great monuments of early Greek genius suppose to be its exclusive characteristics, have disappeared: the calm, the cheerfulness, the disinterested objectivity have disappeared; the dialogue of the mind with itself has commenced; modern problems have presented themselves; we hear already the doubts, we witness the discouragement, of Hamlet and of Faust.¹

The Arnold of 'Dover Beach', cheerlessly stranded in a nineteenth century world which has neither 'certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain' (l.34) appeals to love as a kind of last resort against chaos. In so doing he evinces a typically Victorian response, as Walter E. Houghton has noted in The Victorian Frame of Mind (p.388):

At its extreme, the intellectual struggle could result ... in a sick state of skeptical negation. Without a theory of life or action to sustain the will to live, lost in a wasteland of loneliness and despair, the sensitive mind could turn to love as the only value left to hold onto. Here at least was an anchor for the soul and a refuge from cosmic and social isolation.

Whether it was Tennyson's last or his first resort, in Maud it is love which is pitted against cosmic and social isolation.

1. Complete Prose Works, I,1.

ii

The protagonist of Maud reaches a position where he can celebrate 'my love, my only friend': 'her whose gentle will has changed my fate' (I.599,621). The significance of his claim to have found love is large. It is not merely that it is personally refreshing. The love between the hero and Maud involves at centre an idea of the reunion of their families and an implication that the principle of reintegration works its way back up the scales -- through the divisions in society and nature -- to the point where the fracture at the heart of the cosmos itself is healed. A reintegration on this scale is indeed claimed by the speaker at the point at which he celebrates his love. As I have already noted, Tennyson associated the 'sad astrology' referred to by the protagonist of Maud (I.634) with 'modern astronomy'. The poet further observed that 'of old astrology was thought to sympathise with and rule man's fate. The stars are "cold fires" [I.637], for though they emit light of the highest intensity, no perceptible warmth reaches us'. Tennyson went on to explain that once the protagonist has discovered love he finds a 'newer astrology' and describes the stars as "'soft splendours'" (I.677).¹ Through his experiences of love the speaker reaches a position where he can claim not only to have overcome self-alienation and alienation from the world, but where an alien universe is converted into a sympathetic one:

Here will I lie, while these long branches sway,
 And you fair stars that crown a happy day
 Go in and out as if at merry play,
 Who am no more so all forlorn,
 As when it seemed far better to be born

1. Eversley, IV,277.

To labour and the mattock-hardened hand,
 Than nursed at ease and brought to understand
 A sad astrology ...

But now shine on, and what care I,
 Who in this stormy gulf have found a pearl
 The countercharm of space and hollow sky ...

Beat to the noiseless music of the night!
 Has our whole earth gone nearer to the glow
 Of your soft splendours that you look so bright?
I have climbed nearer out of lonely Hell.
 Beat, happy stars, timing with things below ...

(I.627-34,639-41,675-79)

It is in this scene which celebrates an apparently fully achieved love that the protagonist declares he will 'Not die; but live a life of truest breath,/And teach true life to fight with mortal wrongs' (I.651-52). Tennyson said of these lines: 'This is the central idea, the holy power of Love'.¹ As the protagonist speaks of a reconciliation between earth and stars and of 'mortal wrongs' subsumed by 'true life' it might appear that Love as a heavenly or cosmic principle is both asserted by him and affirmed by the poet. Ward Hellstrom certainly discerns such a dual affirmation when he observes that

both In Memoriam and Maud are essentially religious poems about the role of love in spiritual regeneration.

In this regard, Maud is the Beatrice of the piece and plays, therefore, a role similar to that played by Hallam in In Memoriam. As the persona's love for the personal Hallam led him

1. Memoir, I. 404.

to a love for Christ, to wisdom and spiritual regeneration, so does the hero's love for Maud serve in a like way The language with which Maud is described has a religious flavour which suggests a beatification of her, a beatification which culminates in her return to the hero at the end of the poem from 'the band of the blest'. In her role in the hero's regeneration, it is perhaps not surprising that at times she shares the attributes of Beatrice; in addition, as the poem develops she is seen to share those attributes which we normally associate with Christ.¹

I agree that the protagonist claims a regeneration in Maud and that a language connoting regenerative power clusters at significant points around the figure of Maud. I do not, however, concur with Ward Hellstrom in supposing that the poem, or Tennyson, as distinguished from the protagonist, affirm the reality of such a regeneration. Before taking up this issue, however, I need to make some points with regard to the identification of the figure of Maud with Dante's Beatrice.

iii

The Beatrice analogy presumes that there is available in Maud the framework of Christian doctrine and belief available to Dante and which ultimately sustains the Divina Commedia, whatever personal symbols Dante chooses to deploy in the course of telling his vision. But as I have suggested, one of the principal features of Tennyson's poem is that traditional, publicly validated systems of belief are seen as unavailable. The protagonist cannot rely on an autonomous framework of beliefs and values outside himself. There are, certainly,

1. op.cit., p.73.

parallels between the figure of Maud and the figure of Arthur Hallam in In Memoriam; and there are parallels between both these figures and that of Cadrilla in The Lover's Tale. But the parallels are not best appreciated in terms of a direct comparison with Dante's Beatrice. I have noted earlier in this study that Dante's Beatrice may be considered a possible model for Tennyson's representations of Cadrilla and of Arthur Hallam. But only in the sense that they are internalised Beatrices. At fundamental levels of the poems in which they appear they function as symbols of powers within the individual human mind. No less than The Lover's Tale and In Memoriam, Tennyson's 1855 poem finds its most appropriate conceptual and imaginative background in Romantic theories of mind and reality. The work is based on the premise that the individual, rather than conforming to and incorporating an external spiritual authority, must find a centre of order in himself and project it outwards. It is not insignificant that the present subtitle of Maud emphasises that the work is A Monodrama.¹ At the same time as there is a notional literal reality to the protagonist's lover in the poem, and to the story of their relationship and the history of their families, it is also clear that there is a level at which the figure of Maud -- no less than that of Cadrilla or of Arthur Hallam -- serves to dramatise a dimension of the protagonist's own being. The role of Maud as a dramatic projection of potencies within the speaker's own psyche emerges most obviously, of course, in the lines from 'Oh! that 'twere possible' which were incorporated in part II of Maud. I shall discuss these lines, and

1. Edgar F. Shannon, Jr. ('The Critical Reception of Tennyson's Maud', PMLA, LXVIII,3, June 1953, p.412) notes that the subtitle, added in the Author's Edition of 1875, was 'quite possibly' suggested by R. J. Mann's calling the poem a monodrama in his 1856 study Tennyson's 'Maud' Vindicated. Hallam Tennyson records: 'My father liked reading aloud this poem, a "Drama of the Soul" ...' (Eversley, IV,270).

their representation of the ghost of Maud, later in this chapter. The literal insubstantiality of Maud -- even before she has (according to the narrative of the poem) died -- is not something that requires lengthy restatement. The close relation between the psychological motions of lover and loved one is frequently commented upon. Roy Basler has taken up the point with reference to the appropriateness or otherwise of the title of the poem:

It has been observed that Maud is hardly an indicative title for the poem, inasmuch as the heroine is never materialised, but appears only through the hero's highly wrought vision. Yet one who follows Tennyson's theme cannot carp at a title so justly given; for Maud, the object of desire, is most realistically presented (psychologically speaking) as the dominant force in the drama which involves the inner conflict between the phases of the hero's soul From the beginning to the end of the poem, she largely controls ... the hero's psychic quest for the meaning of existence. The hero means nothing intelligible, either to the reader or to himself, except through her.¹

In part I of Maud the protagonist's discovery of someone to be loved by is represented as indistinguishable from a discovery of his own capacity for love. Maud becomes a figure of his seeming discovery of the higher, self-regenerative capacities of his own soul. The speaker claims that Maud's 'gentle will has changed' his 'fate'. But there is in this matter no real distinction between the wills of lover and loved one. It is, for example, out of the love that exists between himself and Maud that the hero agrees to accept Maud's view of her brother as 'rough but kind' (I.753). Previously, the brother has been rankled against as the son of the man responsible for the death

1. 'Tennyson the Psychologist', South Atlantic Quarterly, XLIII (April 1944), pp.147-48.

of the speaker's father. The brother has also snubbed the protagonist and (we are told) resisted Maud's own wish that there should be a reconciliation between the two families. But the protagonist agrees to forgo all resentment and to align himself with Maud's will:

Well, rough but kind; why let it be so:

For shall not Maud have her will? ...

So now I have sworn to bury

All this dead body of hate,

I feel so free and so clear ...

(I.766-67,799-81)

For Maud to have her will is tantamount to an act of will on the part of the speaker. The speaker is (apparently) putting away that part of himself which has been fixated with death and consumed with hatred at least as far back as the death of his father (subliminally recalled in the metaphor of the 'dead body' in line 780). The essential identity of the wills of the protagonist and of Maud -- or the imaging of the protagonist's will through that of Maud -- is suggested by other passages in both parts I and II of the poem. In part I the speaker tells how Maud made him 'divine amends' (I.202) through bestowing upon him 'a smile so sweet' (I.201):

And thus a delicate spark

Of glowing and growing light

Through the livelong hours of the dark

Kept itself warm in the heart of my dreams ...

(I.204-207)

The imagery of this inner spark of light reappears in part II, after the speaker has been separated from any literal contact with Maud, when he speaks of her love as the condition of -- indeed identifies

that love with -- the reality of his own will:

as long, O God, as she
 Have a grain of love for me,
 So long, no doubt, no doubt,
 Shall I nurse in my dark heart,
 However weary, a spark of will
 Not to be trampled out. (II.100-105)

In part III of the poem the speaker is to become again more confident of an ineradicable spark of will which can regenerate his own dark heart and a dark world. As I have intimated, however, it seems doubtful that Tennyson expects us to share in his protagonist's confidence.

iv

The hero claims regeneration twice. Firstly, in his celebration of love for Maud in part I. Secondly, in his commitment to the 'coming wars' in part III. This commitment takes place some time after the protagonist has assaulted Maud's brother in the garden where he last meets Maud (at the end of part I). In his violence against the brother the speaker forfeited his chances of any continuing direct fulfilment in his relationship with Maud. We learn, indeed, that Maud has died in the interval between the event in the garden and our coming upon the hero on the Breton shore in part II. But the prospective war celebrated by the protagonist in part III is connected by him to his love for Maud. A conventional account of the plot and of the connection between the speaker's love for Maud and his concluding assertion of the regenerative potential of war has been given by Robert Bernard Martin:

When her brother discovers Maud and the narrator in the garden at midnight, a duel ensues, and the brother is killed. Maud dies, and the protagonist goes mad, is confined to an asylum in Brittany, and at last is cured of his madness by a purified love of the dead Maud that leads him to a more generalised love of mankind, which finally manifests itself by his going to the Crimea to fight on the side of the right.¹

Putting aside for the moment the hero's claim to regeneration through the direct experience of love, I want to consider certain aspects of his claim to have been remade in his commitment to war. Robert Martin's summary echoes the account of the poem given by Tennyson's son (a part of which we have already quoted). It should be stressed here that Hallam Tennyson gives only the allusion to Hamlet as a verbatim quotation of his father:

As he said himself, 'This poem is a little Hamlet', the history of a morbid poetic soul, under the blighting influence of a recklessly speculative age. He is the heir of madness, an egotist with the makings of a cynic, raised to sanity by a pure and holy love which elevates his whole nature, passing from the height of triumph to the lowest depth of misery, driven into madness by the loss of her whom he has loved, and, when he has at length passed through the fiery furnace, and has recovered his reason, giving himself up to work for the good of mankind through the unselfishness born of a great passion.²

Many commentators, taking this rather pallid and complacent summary as an adequate account of Tennyson's intentions, have assumed that poem and poet endorse the hero's claim to renovation at the end

1. Tennyson: The Unquiet Heart (Oxford, 1980), p.384.
 2. Memoir, I, 396.

of the work. The assumption has made strange bedfellows of Tennyson's hostile and his sympathetic critics. Philip Drew supposes that 'the sentiments attributed to the speaker are not such as Tennyson would himself have repudiated'.¹ The objection to the idea that war may be seen as a cure for a corrupt peace was cogently voiced in the nineteenth century by Goldwin Smith: 'To wage "war with a thousand battles and shaking a hundred thrones", in order to cure a hypochondriac and get rid of the chicory in coffee, is a bathos'.² There are critics who, wishing to give Tennyson the benefit of the doubt, argue that while the poet may be seen to support his hero's glorification of war, this support does not really constitute a failure of moral and political judgement. Ward Hellstrom, for example, sees that the hero's celebration of the war spirit may be accepted because in essence Tennyson is constructing a metaphor to describe

the principle of warring for the good.... What the hero does is enroll himself on the side of the warrior saints, who war in this life for the good. Imagery of war has been widely used to describe the struggle against evil and was of course used even by St. Paul (Eph.6:11-17)³

Even so, as a 'religious' poem about 'the role of love in spiritual regeneration', the conclusion of Maud is remarkably different from that of In Memoriam.

Not all commentators have seen a positive resolution in Maud or an endorsement by Tennyson of his hero's final position. In the nineteenth century (in an analysis much favoured by Tennyson) George Brimley observed that Tennyson had written a work 'which demands to be

1. 'Tennyson and the Dramatic Monologue: A Study of Maud', Writers and their Background: Tennyson, p.137.

2. 'The War Passages in Maud', Tennyson: The Critical Heritage, p.187. Goldwin Smith's article appeared, unsigned, in the Saturday Review, I (3 November 1855), pp.14-15.

3. op.cit., p.84.

judged, not by the intrinsic goodness and beauty of the actions and emotions depicted, but by their relation to character ...'.¹ James R. Bennett holds a related position when, in an essay published in 1980, he argues that there is dramatic irony in the presentation of the protagonist and that his final enthusiasm for war is designed by Tennyson to be judged as the enthusiasm of a still disordered mind. Bennett speaks of the protagonist's 'fabulous fixation that Britain is wholly corrupted by peace but can be wholly reinvigorated by war': 'the final section is one of the great deflationary closures in satiric literature'.² By way of support for this view, Bennett usefully resuscitates 'Henry Van Dyke's quotation and summary of Tennyson's trenchant explanation in 1892 of the distorted and pathological mentality of the speaker':³

'You must remember always, in reading it, what it is meant to be -- a drama in lyrics. It shows the unfolding of a lonely, morbid soul, touched with inherited madness The things which seem like faults belong not so much to the poem as to the character of the hero.

'He is wrong, of course, in much that he says. If he had been always wise and just he would not have been himself. He begins with a false comparison -- "blood-red heath". There is no such thing in nature; but he sees the heather tinged like blood because his mind has been disordered He is wrong in thinking that war will transform the cheating tradesman into a great-souled hero, or that it will sweep away the dishonesties and lessen the

1. 'Alfred Tennyson's Poems', Tennyson: The Critical Heritage, p.196. Brimley's essay first appeared in Cambridge Essays (1855), pp.226-81.

2. op.cit., pp.43,48.

3. ibid., p.36.

miseries of humanity. The history of the Crimean War proves his error. But this very delusion is natural to him: it is in keeping with his morbid, melancholy, impulsive character to seek a cure for the evils of peace in the horrors of war.¹

It is true that this is a second-hand report. Yet the terms are not merely different from, they are also much sharper than Hallam Tennyson's account in the Memoir. It is also true that Henry Van Dyke was talking to the poet long after the publication of Maud and the end of the Crimean War. Tennyson may have been adjusting his explanation with the wisdom of extended hindsight. But we have first hand evidence of Tennyson saying similar things with clear and discriminating conviction, not long after the appearance of Maud (on 28 July 1855) and before the formal conclusion of the war against Russia. In a letter to Archer Gurney of 6 December 1855 Tennyson observed:

now I wish to say one word about Maud which you and others so strangely misinterpret. I have had Peace party papers sent to me claiming me as being on their side because I had put the cry for war into the mouth of a madman. Surely that is not half so wrong a criticism as some I have seen. Strictly speaking I do not see how from the poem I could be pronounced with certainty either peace man or war man. I wonder that you and others did not find out that all along the man was intended to have an hereditary vein of insanity, and that he falls foul on the swindling, on the times, because he feels that his father has been killed by the work of the lie, and that all through he fears the coming madness. How could you or anyone suppose that if I had to speak in my own person my own opinion of this war or war

1. Henry Van Dyke, Studies in Tennyson (New York, 1920), p.97.

generally I should have spoken with so little moderation. The whole was intended to be a new form of dramatic composition. I took a man constitutionally diseased and dipt him into the circumstances of the time and took him out on fire. I shall show this better in a second edition and shall be happy if you will accept a copy from me and judge it more leniently

I do not mean that my madman does not speak truths too: witness this extract from the letter of an enlightened German, quoted in one of our papers about the state of England, and then think if he is all wrong when he calls our peace a war, and worse in some respects than an open civil war -- 'Every day a murder or two or three -- every day a wife beaten to death by her husband -- every day a father or mother starving their children, or pinching, knocking, and kicking them into a state of torture and living putrefaction.' Then he asks 'Has this always been so? or is it only of late?'¹

Tennyson never stopped defending Maud. In her 'Memories of Tennyson' Blanche Warre Cornish recalled one of the poet's innumerable readings of the work:

Whenever lines occurred about war, war the purifier, war the unifier, Tennyson stopped to say that the critics had misunderstood him The poem was a dramatic monologue. The sentiments were in the mouth of a madman. He wished he had called the poem as first planned, Maud or the Madness. 'Anyone can see that the words about war represent a mood. But the critics are nothing'.²

1. Letters, II (typescript).

2. Quoted from Norman Page, ed., Tennyson: Interviews and Recollections (London, 1983), p.115. Blanche Warre-Cornish's 'Memories' were first printed in the London Mercury, V (1921-22).

The various inflexions of 'madness' which emerge in these and other passages where Tennyson refers (or is reported as having referred) to Maud merit some consideration. In the notes on the poem which Tennyson left his son, Tennyson commented that in part III the hero is 'Sane but shattered'.¹ This is not enormously helpful, since it is difficult to know quite what significance to place on the word 'shattered'. The more especially when we recall that, in the variation on these terms reported by James Knowles, Tennyson seems to have used shattered to mean not exactly sane: 'He is not quite sane -- a little shattered'.² Perhaps Tennyson was overstating the case, or Blanche Warre Cornish misrepresenting the precise discrimination he was making, when he told her that the sentiments about war were in the mouth of a madman. In the poem the representation of a complete madness is clearly restricted to section v of part II. Generally speaking, however, in Tennyson's comments on the hero as he appears at other points (particularly at the opening and close) of the poem, the suggestion is that he is not represented as completely sane. It is a disordered mind, placed either somewhere near or on the edge of the clinically definable madness that is specifically represented in section v of part II. It is the representation of the condition of near madness which gives the poem some of its peculiar force. The condition imposes a qualifying, relativist perspective on the hero's utterances at the same time as allowing a special element of truth in his visions. Tennyson can attribute his half-mad hero with insights into psychological and social realities which, for their disturbing and threatening implications, he could not have attributed to a character supposed in all conventional senses to be sane: 'I do not mean that my madman does not speak truths too'.

A seminal psychoanalytical critical assessment of the relativity

1. Memoir, I, 405.

2. Cf. Gordon N. Ray, Tennyson reads 'Maud', Sedgewick Memorial Lecture (Vancouver, 1968), p. 45.

of the speaker's sanity at the end of Maud was delivered by Roy Basler in 1942:

The hero has not in Part III gained a normal psychic balance, although he (and perhaps the unwary reader) may think he has. He is not completely cured of psychic illness, but has merely exchanged one obsession, self-destruction, for another, self-sacrifice in a noble cause. The extent of his sanity in Part III is wholly relative to his new obsession. Although his condition is nowise as acute as it had been in the madhouse scene, it is still psychopathic, and acceptance of what he says and does must be relative to his condition.¹

The imbalance of the speaker's mind is of course demonstrated within the verse itself. It is there in the very opening section of the poem in every poetic effect -- from the obsessive rhythms to the nightmarish colourings (the 'flickering half-light between the sane and the insane')² -- which Tennyson chose to exploit. To Henry Van Dyke Tennyson chose merely to highlight one of the earliest signals of disorder: the detail of the 'false comparison' as the protagonist speaks of the 'blood-red heath' (I.2). It is hard to appreciate aspects of George Eliot's hostility to Maud when we recall how acutely she conveyed the properties of Tennyson's representation of a corroded mind: 'these hexameters, weak in logic and grating in sound, are undeniably strong in expression, and eat themselves with phosphoric eagerness into our memory, in spite of our will'.³ Tennyson told Archer Gurney that he would make plainer the disease of his protagonist in a 'second edition'. Accordingly, among the additions to Maud in the 'New Edition' of the poem published in 1856, Tennyson

1. op.cit., p.154.

2. Harold Nicolson, op.cit., p.125.

3. Essays, ed. T. Pinney (London, 1963), p.193.

included the present lines 53-64 of part I, where attention is drawn to the dramatisation of character in the poem through having the protagonist himself admit the exacerbated, irrational dimension of his own state of feeling and thought ('am I raging alone as my father raged ...', I.53; 'I am sick of the Hall and the hill ...', I.61 -- where the reading 'made sick by ... ' is permissible).

The emphasis on his derangement casts a relative light most significantly on the protagonist's view of war in his castigation of an imperfect peace in the opening section of the poem: 'Is it peace or war? better, war! loud war by land and by sea,/War with a thousand battles, and shaking a hundred thrones' (I.47-48). If we perceive that Tennyson knows the idea of such a waging of such a war in order to get rid of the chicory in coffee is a bathos, then the perception may be applied equally to the hero's glorification of war in the closing passages of the poem. In those passages there appear again not only the same sentiments but the same grating rhythms and the overcolouring to which we were introduced at the outset. Tennyson himself seems to have allowed that a reading of the hero's concluding affirmations may be governed (certainly conditioned) by a reading of the disease at the opening of the poem: 'Take this with the first where he railed at everything -- He is not quite sane ...'.¹ Much has happened, of course, between the opening and closing of the poem which might be thought^t_h to impart a new and distinct status to the final affirmation of war. It is to the question of the hero's experience of love and its relation to his views on war that we must now turn.

In his discussion of Maud James R. Bennett examines the idea of the speaker's irrational enthusiasm for war principally in relation to the figure of Maud. He argues that 'Maud is not, in the speaker's

1. To James Knowles: Tennyson reads 'Maud', p.45.

mind, one person. He perceives her and responds to her in two distinctly different ways'.¹ In part I, Bennett observes, the occasion when the speaker first admits that Maud appeals to him is when he hears her singing a martial ballad:

A passionate ballad gallant and gay,
 A martial song like a trumpet's call!
 Singing alone in the morning of life,
 In the happy morning of life and of May,
 Singing of men that in battle array,
 Ready in heart and ready in hand,
 March with banner and bugle and fife
 To the death, for their native land.

(I.165-72)

This Maud of the martial song, says Bennett, is to be distinguished from the other Maud whose nature and influence predominate in part I of the poem: the Maud of love (or Love), the 'gentle, loving Maud ... restoring the narrator to some inner harmony and true perception'.² In clear distinction from this Maud of love, it is, in Bennett's view, the Maud of the martial song who reappears in part III of the poem. '[I]t is May, the time when Maud sang her song of glorious death in a patriotic cause Having lost the gentle Maud, he now embraces in his typically exaggerated way the Maud of war':³

like a silent lightning under the stars
 She seemed to divide in a dream from a band of the
 blest,
 And spoke of a hope for the world in the coming wars --
 'And in that hope, dear soul, let trouble have rest,

1. *op.cit.*, p.37.

2. *op.cit.*, p.39.

3. *ibid.*, p.42.

Knowing I tarry for thee,' and pointed to Mars
 As he glowed like a ruddy shield on the Lion's breast.

(III.9-14)

The appeal of the Maud of the martial song in part I had been -- as Bennett notes -- to that disordered frame of perception which the speaker displayed in his enthusiasm for war at the very opening of the poem. For Bennett, the resurgence of the Maud of the martial voice in part III serves to confirm that the speaker's concluding affirmation of war is presented as the affirmation of an unbalanced mind.

While, however, as I have indicated, I agree with Bennett that the hero's notion of war as wholly positive is the view of a disturbed mind, I do not concur with his insistence that the reader, if not the protagonist, should make a clear and simple distinction between the Maud of love and the Maud of war. To insist on such a separation seems to me to obscure Tennyson's central concern in the poem with the question of why the direct experience of love celebrated by the speaker in part I fails and has to be redefined by him in part III into an enthusiasm for war. At the level of the plot the immediate relationship between the hero and Maud ceases, of course, with the hero's assault on Maud's brother. But simply to note this event in the story of the poem is not to penetrate the essential dynamic of the process whereby the speaker returns at the end to a preoccupation he had revealed right at the opening of the poem. To separate absolutely the Maud of war from the Maud of love assumes too much the purity of the protagonist's feelings of love. It seems to me that it is precisely because these feelings never achieve real purity -- precisely because the Maud of gentleness and the Maud of violence are never fundamentally separated in the speaker's mind -- that the poem

develops as it does. We can approach the deeper meaning of Tennyson's psychological study only if we see that the 'two' Mauds are intimately related.

v

We may approach the question of the complex interrelationship between the speaker's attitudes towards love and war by tracing the development throughout Maud of the ~~the~~ theme of passion. In the opening stages of the poem the world of feud, rapine, and death perceived by the protagonist is also characterised by him as a world of unregenerate passion. 'Put down the passions', he declares intemperately,

Put down the passions that make earth Hell!
 Down with ambition, avarice, pride,
 Jealousy, down! cut off from the mind
 The bitter springs of anger and fear;
 Down too, down at your own fireside,
 With the evil tongue and the evil ear,
 For each is at war with mankind.

(I.375-81)

The protagonist of course speaks in some measure against himself in these lines. As I have noted, it is not only the external world that is infected and riven. The speaker's own 'dark ... mind' (I.527) would comprise a catalogue of ills: hate, jealousy, lust, envy, fear, pride, violence.

All the corrupt energies which the protagonist apprehends in the world and in himself are focussed in his mind around the image of his father's violent death. It is through this image that we encounter the

deepest level of his fixation with a universe of destruction and death-dealing passion. It is not only that he possesses a capacity to react furiously against violence in the world at large. Such a capacity may partake of the nature of the sin reacted against and the possibilities for the proliferation of evil may be limitless. But at the heart of the speaker's passionate intolerance of passion is a preoccupation with the unreason that dips towards self-violence. Feeding his insistence upon the morbidity of all passion is a shameful sense of the ultimately lonely, self-centred, and self-destructive passion of the suicide. It is consciousness and guilty fear of this dark proclivity which conditions his negative view of nearly all forms or manifestations of passion.

Love itself is inextricably bound up with the protagonist's experience of disorder. He remembers his mother's scream on the night of his father's death: 'I heard/The shrill-edged shriek of a mother divide the shuddering night' (I.15-16). It is a scream of love fused in the speaker's mind with connotations of death and of suicide. Nor does the association of love with self-destruction have a significance solely in relation to the father. It is not insignificant that the hero's query about his own downward impulse should form the prelude to the recollection of his mother's cry of love:

Must I too creep to the hollow and dash myself down
and die

Rather than hold by the law that I made, never more
to brood

On a horror of shattered limbs and a wretched
swindler's lie?

Would there be sorrow for me? there was love in the
 passionate shriek,
 Love for the silent thing that had made false haste to
 the grave --

(I.54-58)

The protagonist's pathetic sense of his own want of love is apparent in these lines. But the dark associations which love has for him account for his initial 'fight', as Tennyson put it, against his 'growing' passion for Maud.¹ As he recounts his first sight of her we find the control he is striving to impose on himself projected onto the figure of Maud:

a cold and clear-cut face ...
 Faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null,
 Dead perfection, no more; nothing more, if it had not
 been
 For a chance of travel, a paleness, an hour's defect of
 the rose ...
 From which I escaped heart-free, with the least little
 touch of spleen. (I.78,82-84,87)

However much the speaker may claim that his desire for 'a calm .../... will never be broken by Maud' (I.76-77), his vulnerability is betrayed by the spiteful temper and the modification in the blood suggested by that last 'least little ^{touch} of spleen'.

The hero's spasm of spleenful feeling towards Maud alerts us to an important difference between the poem and In Memoriam. In Maud, the theme of love involves, as not in In Memoriam, an exploration of specifically sexual love. Not that, in considering the treatment of sexual energy in Maud, we should think of the poem as if it were a

1. Memoir, I, 402.

psychological study constructed simply as an individual case history. Tennyson does, in part, present us with psychological patterns peculiar to the protagonist and he does examine those patterns in the light of the particular circumstances and events of the hero's life. But the case history of the protagonist of Maud, like the archetypal Hamlet's, has more than an individual and local scope of reference. Tennyson is finally concerned in Maud, as in In Memoriam, with large questions concerning 'the holy power of Love'. The incorporation of the sexual dimension in the human experience of love is central to what I see as Tennyson's sceptical attitude in this poem towards the possibility of absolute spiritual regeneration. In Maud Tennyson tends to cohere his larger examinations of a fallen world and a world of fallen energies around the theme of sexual love. The presentation of the darker elements in sexual feeling serves to a significant extent, as we shall see, as a touchstone for an examination of universal issues regarding human nature.

It is impossible to distinguish between individual and universal implications in the representation of the disturbing forces at work in the passage which ends with the speaker's betrayal of his spleenful reaction to Maud. In that passage sexual desire and anger at the heart of such desire, together with a fear of sexual rejection (a fear that generates its own resentments), inform what A. S. Byatt has called the 'perfectly placed strained flippancy' of the lines.¹ In the verse which follows, the 'cold and clear-cut face' of the preceding passage reacts upon the speaker with a passion the imposed image was intended to freeze:

Cold and clear-cut face, why come you so cruelly meek,

Breaking a slumber in which all spleenful folly was

1. 'The Lyric Structure of Tennyson's Maud', The Major Victorian Poets: Reconsiderations, p.82.

drowned,
 Pale with the golden beam of an eyelash dead on the
 cheek,
 Passionless, pale, cold face, star-sweet on a gloom
 profound;
 Womanlike, taking revenge too deep for a transient
 wrong
 Done but in thought to your beauty, and ever as pale
 as before
 Growing and fading and growing upon me without a
 sound,
 Luminous, gemlike, ghostlike, deathlike, half the night
 long ... (I.88-95)

Attempting to repress sexual feeling the protagonist had succeeded in willing only a type of death ('an eyelash dead on the cheek ...'). The immobilised image itself implies the negative power of the energy the image was supposed to discipline. Embarrassment and guilt surface in the speaker's awareness of a 'wrong/Done but in thought to your beauty'. But rage does not disappear even as it is acknowledged. There is still accusation and blame: 'Womanlike ...'. The impulse to destroy is of course fused with the impulse to be destroyed. The dream exposes the proximity of passional desire and a yearning for annihilation. In the closing lines of the dream-passage intimations of the death of the self -- intimations which embrace, but which are not contained by, the memory of the death of the father and of the mother's reaction -- are woven into the speaker's sensory responses to the external world:

Growing and fading and growing, till I could bear it
 no more,
 But arose, and all by myself in my own dark garden

ground,
 Listening now to the tide in its broad-flung
 shipwrecking roar,
 Now to the scream of a maddened beach dragged
 down by the wave,
 Walked in a wintry wind by a ghastly glimmer, and
 found
 The shining daffodil dead, and Orion low in his grave.

(I.96-101)

Desperately aware of the gravity of these morbid colourings and
 cadences the speaker would prefer to be able to nullify all passion in
 himself and to divorce himself from a world of unaccommodated passion:

The passionate heart of the poet is whirled into folly
 and vice.
 I would not marvel at either, but keep a temperate
 brain;
 For not to desire or admire, if a man could learn it,
 were more
 Than to walk all day like a sultan of old in a garden
 of spice ...

Be mine a philosopher's life in the quiet woodland
 ways,
 Where if I cannot be gay let a passionless peace be my
 lot ...

(I.139-43,150-151)

We do not, however, forget that there has been in the opening
 stages of the poem one expression of passion which the protagonist has
not discerned as degenerate. This is open and public war: 'loud war!'

At the end of the poem he abandons himself to the legitimacy of war fever:

'It is time, it is time, O passionate heart,' said I
(For I cleaved to a cause that I felt to be pure and
true),

'It is time, O passionate heart and morbid eye,
That old hysterical mock-disease should die.'
And I stood on a giant deck and mixed my breath
With a loyal people shouting a battle cry ...

And many a darkness into the light shall leap ...
And the heart of a people beat with one desire;
For the peace, that I deemed no peace, is over and
done,
And now by the side of the Black and the Baltic deep,
And deathful-grinning mouths of the fortress, flames
The blood-red blossom of war with a heart of fire.

(III.30-35,46,49-53)

We are entitled to ask what distinguishes the heart-felt desire for war from other, unacceptable, impulses of the passionate heart. The hero is ^Palled by aspects of death in nature and in a society at peace but he does not consciously flinch from death as the central phenomenon of war. He offers the explanation that the passion of war is legitimate because it flows in the service of the just and the good: the 'pure' and the 'true' cause. In thus distinguishing he is repeating the distinction he had made, in the midst of his phase of complete madness following his assault on Maud's brother, between 'lawful' and 'lawless' war. John Killham has discussed the hero's point as follows:

even when he has succumbed to madness he sees clearly what he should have remembered before engaging in the duel: that violence, though never justified in the sphere of personal relations is permissible in the defence of the public good:

Friend, to be struck by the public foe,
 Then to strike him and lay him low,
 That were a public merit, far,
 Whatever the Quaker holds, from sin;
 But the red life spilt for a private blow --
 I swear to you, lawful and lawless war
 Are scarcely even akin. [II.327-33]

From this position it is a reasonably natural development to part III wherein ... he faces the issue of imminent war.¹

But the vantage point of insanity from which the protagonist is speaking surely cannot easily be disregarded. Examined closely, it is not at all clear that a valid distinction is being made. Rather, the hero makes a simple identification of the just and the lawful with the public, and a simple identification of the unjust and the lawless with the private. There appears to be a fundamental confusion in his mind as he establishes a straightforward equation between categories that are not simply interchangeable. There is in these lines no careful discrimination of the many sides to the issue. No sense that publicly authorised violence may be wrong and no sense that private and public may not be clearly separable. In his desire to escape the private the speaker embraces the public without applying critical judgement. John Killham's argument not only fails to take account of this, it is also founded on an acceptance of the hero's view that his capacity to distinguish between lawful and lawless war grows out of -- and is

1. 'Tennyson's Maud -- The Function of the Imagery', Killham, pp. 222-23.

ratified by -- his love for Maud. Killham notes the protagonist's early objection to rapine and violence and, with this objection in mind, observes that Maud's martial song

does not, as might have been expected, create in him a sense of revulsion against her, but rather a recognition that it is his own, and his age's baseness that is highlighted by her confident trust, as expressed by the words of the passionate ballad, that violent death for one's country in the cause of honour is not without positive value. As his love for Maud deepens his attitude towards violence and death changes¹

This, however, is to overlook the speaker's enthusiasm for war at a time before his thoughts had begun to turn to Maud. In that initial praise of 'loud war!' as 'better' than a peace he sees as wholly corrupt he had also made no attempt to distinguish between rightful and wrongful causes for which a war may be fought. There is merely a bald appeal to war as a save-all from the failings of peace. The crudeness of this early appeal by a mind touched with hysteria and paranoia is not refined in the arbitrary and confused distinctions drawn by the protagonist in his state of complete madness in part II. In part III it is convenient for him that he perceives the Czar of Russia as a 'giant liar' (III.45) and Britain as defending the right. But the original, indiscriminating and disordered rage for war remains the fundamental motivation in this section. As Goldwin Smith observed:

To the hero of Maud himself, indeed, the justice of the war is only a parenthesis between more real motives --

And as months ran on, and rumour of battle grew,
'It is time, it is time, O passionate heart,' said I,
(For I cleaved to a cause that I felt to be pure and

1. 'Tennyson's Maud -- The Function of the Imagery', Killham, p.222.

true),

'It is time, O passionate heart and morbid eye,

That old hysterical mock-disease should die.'

The relief of the passionate heart and morbid eye is his first object. What he wants is not a just and necessary war, but war in itself¹

Or, again, as Terry Otten has commented, 'Part 3 is not a martial hymn to the Crimean War: the deed may be public, the meaning is private'². Controlling the protagonist's conception of war in part III is the same essentially simplistic equation between private and lawless and public and lawful as had been apparent in his earlier deliberations. Any war would have served the purpose (a lack of discrimination is implied in the notion of a 'hope for the world in the coming wars', III.11, my italic) if it had fulfilled two primary preoccupations or requirements in the speaker's mind. The need, first of all, for a common public belief and second, no less important, the need for the speaker to fuse his own private attitude with that common belief. Beneath the 'ethical blather'³ in part III, the driving assertions are of the unity of public opinion with regard to the war and the alignment of the speaker himself with that opinion. Both assertions are crucial to the protagonist's equation of the public with the virtuous. It is through the achievement of a common body of opinion and through an identification of the private opinion with the public, essentially irrespective of any matter of principle, that the hero sees a path to salvation.

In his insistence upon a clear pattern of public belief and upon his own accommodation to that pattern, the protagonist is plainly

1. op.cit., p.186.

2. The Deserted Stage (Ohio, 1972), p.88.

3. Roy Basler, op.cit., p.154.

attempting to find compensation for that lack of any cohesive or compelling faith, religious, social or political, which defines the crisis of his culture. The assertion of war, of a common purpose in outward action, as a form of unity contains elements typical of Victorian reactions against the incertitudes of the age. As Carlyle put it in 'Characteristics': 'Action, in [the] old days, was easy ... for the divine worth of human things lay acknowledged'.¹ For Matthew Arnold in the 'Preface' to his 1853 Poems early classical Greek literature reflects, in its 'disinterested objectivity', its emphasis on action and its realisation of clearly delineated narrative harmony and completeness, an age of spiritual and moral health deriving from the fact that mankind then stood in possession of an adequate 'Idea of the world'.² The permanent and universal truths of human life that Arnold sees crystallised in the classical reproduction of grand actions are maintained by him against the subjectivism, the morbid self-consciousness, the Hamlet-like intellectual and moral deliberation and uncertainty of his own times, in which a sense of the whole, a sense of the object, has been lost and in which action is abrogated by the 'dialogue of the mind with itself'. For the Arnold of the 1853 'Preface' Tennyson's Maud, at both thematic and formal levels, would have constituted the antithesis of true poetry. Arnold was not alone in finding in classical Greek literature an image of a more intact and living world than that of the Victorian era. Like the Empedocles of Arnold's 1853 'Preface', the hero of Browning's 'Cleon' (published 1855) is a later Greek of philosophical bent whose state of mind anticipates the disabling self-consciousness of nineteenth

1. Collected Works, 8, 361.

2. The phrase is from a letter to Clough written after September 1848-49: The Letters of Matthew Arnold to Arthur Hugh Clough (Oxford, 1932), p.97.

century man. Browning, realising the inadequacy of theories of integration based on nostalgia, does not follow an Arnoldian insistence on imposing a formal integration onto the modern mind, but Cleon is allowed to register a feeling of the classical heroic age as a time in which human experience was less fragmented than his own:

We of these latter days, with greater mind
 Than our forerunners, since more composite,
 Look not so great, beside their simple way,
 To a judge who only sees one way at once ...
 Compares the small part of a man of us
 With some whole man of the heroic age ...

(64-67, 69-70)

The protagonist of Tennyson's Maud -- looking forward to T. S. Eliot's Gerontion, who was 'neither at the hot gates/Nor fought in the warm rain' (11.3-4) -- yearns for the values and achievements of a past order:

Ah God, for a man with heart, head, hand,
 Like some of the simple great ones gone ...

And ah for a man to arise in me,
 That the man I am may cease to be!

(I.389-90,396-97)

The protagonist's understandable desire to purge himself of the pains of isolated and introverted experience does not, however, redeem the distortions inherent in the cure he proposes. I have already noted that the exacerbated tonalities and imagery of part III point -- as had comparable features in the opening section of the poem -- to an infirmity in the speaker's mind and judgement. Whatever nominal ethical justifications may be presented, beneath the glorification of

the 'deathful-grinning mouths of the fortress' and the 'flames' of the 'blood-red blossom of war with a heart of fire' may be traced the same energies of rage and violence as had been condemned by the speaker in their private and peace-time manifestations. The significant difference is that these energies are rendered respectable through their identification with a publicly-validated action.

In part III the hero's apparent self-possession, his control of what is happening, is too crude to define what has been going on in the earlier stages of the poem. On several occasions in this third part the protagonist enters into merely automatic poetic images of breakdown and madness and the ills of peace. Special confusions emanate from the use of a commonplace, second-hand language. In the following lines the allusion to pastoral activity (or sloth) constitutes an evasion of the true activity, which is commerce:

No more shall commerce be all in all, and Peace
 Pipe on her pastoral hillock a languid note,
 And watch her harvest ripen, her herd increase,
 Nor the cannon-bullet rust on a slothful shore ...

(III.23-26)

Commentators have complained at the language of part III. A. S. Byatt believes that 'the poetic tension, the lyric unity, is ... completely lacking We have blood and light but only an ersatz energy'.¹ Yet the peculiar brittleness and emptiness of much of the language can be seen to be an essential element in the presentation of this phase of the speaker's passion. At the centre of the speaker's desire for a public authorisation of unregenerate private energies lies a demand for the legitimisation of the darkest desire of all. As Christopher Ricks has said: 'the odds are that the hero is going to his death

1. op.cit., p.91.

The honorable suicide of a soldier may redeem the dishonorable suicide'.¹ The womb-oriented, regressive misconfigurations of the hero's death-wish have been exposed in the madhouse scenes at the end of part II. There the language of pathos had prevailed:

I will cry to the steps above my head
 And somebody, surely, some kind heart will come
 To bury me, bury me
 Deeper, ever so little deeper. (II.339-42)

The self-destructive movement does not disappear in part III, even though the language changes. Just as the suicidal impulse is ^uchanelled_h in part III into a public form in the enthusiasm for war, so it moves behind the fossilised surface and stock properties of the language ('My life has crept so long on a broken wing/Through cells of madness, haunts of horror and fear', III.1-2). The very officialness of that language enacts the attempt to render socially acceptable what is privately inadmissible.

Of course, not all the formulations in part III are wilfully conventional. 'Would there be sorrow for me?' the speaker had asked in part I, after he had queried whether, like his father, he too must 'creep to the hollow' and 'dash' himself 'down'. Regret of a kind is granted a place in part III as the hero prepares to embrace 'the doom assigned' (III.59). The deeply regressive impulses involved in that long-wished for embrace, together with a sorrowful sense of the futility of resisting the impulses, are subconsciously (for the speaker; consciously by Tennyson) acknowledged in the image which wells up in lines 27-28:

And the cobweb woven across the cannon's throat
 Shall shake its threaded tears in the wind no more.

1. Tennyson, p.263.

If the passion of war celebrated by the speaker in part III is falsely legitimate, what of the passion of love celebrated in part I? I have suggested that right through to the protagonist's first sight of Maud's 'cold and clear-cut' face certain elements, at least, of the passion of love are shown to be inextricably bound up in his psyche with the unregenerate passions he seeks to legitimise (regenerate) through a commitment to war. The important question is whether the hateful and deathful possibilities evident in the earliest stages of the speaker's response to Maud are exorcised by the time of his celebration of an achieved love for her. I have said that I do not think that they are and that it is not possible to make a clear separation between the Maud of love and the Maud of darker associations -- the Maud of war.

The intimate connexion between the two Mauds is suggested, in the first place, by the crucial position that is occupied by Maud's martial song in the development of the monodrama. Immediately before Maud sings her song we have heard the protagonist declaring that he will 'flee from the cruel madness of love,/The honey of poison-flowers and all the measureless ill' (I.156-57). It is immediately after he has heard Maud sing her song of war that the protagonist begins to relax his overt resistance to the idea of falling in love with her. It is clear that the singing of the ballad enables the hero to associate Maud with martial values. And it is that association which opens the way for his gradual admission that love may be a legitimate expression of passion. Progress is, indeed, slow. Attempting to resist the compellingly fatal combination of love and war, the speaker tries to

separate in his mind Maud herself from her voice and the song (a separation which stresses the prime appeal of the martial note):

Still! I will hear you no more,
 For your sweetness hardly leaves me a choice
 But to move to the meadow and fall before
 Her feet on the meadow grass, and adore,
 Not her, who is neither courtly nor kind,
 Not her, not her, but a voice. (I.184-89)

But however much the speaker may attempt to remind himself that Maud is undesirable her singing of war has already provoked in him an enlivened response quite different from his earlier attempt at denigration:

Maud with her exquisite face,
 And wild voice pealing up to the sunny sky,
 And feet like sunny gems on an English green,
 Maud in the light of her youth and her grace,
 Singing of Death, and of Honour that cannot die ...
 (I.173-77)

It is noticeable that it is in the midst of this account of Maud's 'Singing of Death' that there first emerges the language of beatification ('light ... grace', l.176) which, as Ward Hellstrom has noted, grows ever more intense with the protagonist's growing love for Maud. The same language continues in section vi, which follows Maud's martial ballad and describes the speaker's first actual meeting with her. Here again, it is remarkable that a language of spiritual resonance is integrated with a fire imagery that anticipates both the heats of love and the fires of war at the end of the poem:

Whom but Maud should I meet
 Last night, when the sunset burned
 On the blossomed gable-ends ...

 she touched my hand with a smile so sweet,
 She made me divine amends
 For a courtesy not returned.

And thus a delicate spark
 Of glowing and growing light
 Through the livelong hours of the dark
 Kept itself warm in the heart of my dreams,
 Ready to burst in a coloured flame ...

(I.196-98,201-208)

At both narrative or dramatic and imagistic levels the perception of a Maud of war appears to be the condition of the protagonist's perception of a Maud of love. Far from being clearly distinguishable, the Maud of love is sanctioned by the Maud of war. The early evidence of significant interrelationship between the 'two' Mauds suggests that the spiritual regeneration through love claimed by the protagonist, as he speaks of Maud's will having changed his fate, may be as questionable as the regeneration he claims through war. Further insight into the questionable status of the hero's asserted renovation through love may be gained by examining, first of all, some of the principal image patterns of the poem.

Red is the primary colour of dangerous passion throughout Maud, although there are numerous cognate associations with various kinds of lurid light. Not surprisingly, one of the principal identifications of redness is with blood, while there are frequent identifications of light with different manifestations of fire. The combination of

redness, blood, and death is first apparent in the opening lines of the poem, where the protagonist thinks of the pit in which his father's body was found:

I hate the dreadful hollow behind the little wood,
Its lips in the field above are dabbled with blood-red
heath,
The red-ribbed ledges drip with a silent horror of
blood,
And Echo there, whatever is asked her, answers
'Death.'

(I.1-4)

These opening lines establish the broad context of meaning for the redness which pulses phantasmagorically throughout the lines where the speaker rails against society:

And the vitriol madness flushes up in the ruffian's
head,
Till the filthy by-lane rings to the yell of the trampled
wife ...

While another is cheating the sick of a few last gasps,
as he sits

To pestle a poisoned poison behind his crimson lights.
(I.37-38,43-44)

The peccant possibilities of the imagery of blood and redness reappear throughout the poem in such lines as 'the household Fury sprinkled with blood' (I.715); or when, after the protagonist has assaulted Maud's brother, there is at once an allusion back to the opening lines of the poem and a further anticipation of the imagery of war in part III:

And a million horrible bellowing echoes broke
 From the red-ribbed hollow behind the wood ...
 And there rang on a sudden a passionate cry,
 A cry for a brother's blood:
 It will ring in my heart and my ears, till I die, till I die.

(II.24-25,33-35)

Fire and blood motifs are, however, also an inalienable part of the record of the growth and fulfilment of the protagonist's love. Not only, as we have seen, was the speaker's heart ready to 'burst in a coloured flame' after his first meeting with Maud, but the movement of blood in the passion of love is insisted upon when the two encounter each other again in the 'village church' (I.301). Here there is a reciprocal stimulation of the pulse:

 she lifted her eyes,
 And suddenly, sweetly, strangely blushed
 To find they were met by my own;
 And suddenly, sweetly, my heart beat stronger
 And thicker ... (I.305-309)

With the celebration of achieved love the thickness has become an inexorable tide of blood:

 never yet so warmly ran my blood
 And sweetly, on and on ...
 Full to the banks ... (I.601-602,604)

We are asked by the protagonist and by numerous commentators on Maud to understand the love that is achieved as signifying -- at its highest level -- a spiritual regeneration. But while regeneration is claimed by the protagonist it is not demonstrated in the poem. The important feature of the imagery of blood and fire in its application to love is that it is never clear that it is discharged of the baleful

associations which it has elsewhere in the poem.

Take, for example, the lyric 'Go not, happy day', which forms the prelude to the celebration in section xviii of fulfilment in love:

Go not, happy day,
 From the shining fields,
 Go not, happy day,
 Till the maiden yields.
 Rosy is the West,
 Rosy is the South,
 Roses are her cheeks,
 And a rose her mouth ...
 Pass and blush the news
 Over glowing ships;
 Over blowing seas,
 Over seas at rest,
 Pass the happy news,
 Blush it through the West;
 Till the red man dance
 By his red cedar-tree,
 And the red man's babe
 Leap, beyond the sea.
 Blush from West to East,
 Blush from East to West,
 Till the West is East ...

(I.571-78,581-93)

A. S. Byatt writes that in this lyric 'blood becomes warm, glowing, positive'.¹ This view is surely not entirely wrong. But it is not the only dimension of blood suggested in the lines. At the celebration of

1. op.cit., p.83.

the mysteries of Dionysius, the divinely euphoric Theban women tore their own King Pentheus limb from limb. There is an element of hysteria in the image of a world suffused in red which qualifies any notion of simply positive health in the blood-rhythm of Tennyson's lines. At what point do the energies of a hectic sexual joy become unmanageable and spill into destructive frenzy? We cannot avoid, at least, the implication of violence in Tennyson's line 'Till the maiden yields', and the dividing line between ecstasy and dementia is blurred in the imbecilicly absurd image of the red man dancing and his babe leaping. There is a craziness too in the insistent banality of the rhythm of the verse.

There is apparently no hysteria and certainly no doggerel in the great lyric -- affirming fulfilment in love -- of section xviii:

I have led her home, my love, my only friend.
 There is none like her, none.
 And never yet so warmly ran my blood
 And sweetly, on and on
 Calming itself to the long-wished-for end,
 Full to the banks, close on the promised good.

None like her, none.
 Just now the dry-tongued laurels' pattering talk
 Seemed her light foot along the garden walk,
 And shook my heart to think she comes once more;
 But even then I heard her close the door,
 The gates of Heaven are closed, and she is gone.

(I.599-610)

The contrast seems clear between the protagonist's condition of mind as it appears in 'I have led her home' and his earlier conditions

characterised by a paradoxical tension between a state of acute hypersensitivity and a state of stagnation. In the self-enclosed world of the protagonist described in section v of part I, for example, there had been only a painfully hallucinated and obsessive impinging of sounds and objects:

Living alone in an empty house,
 Here half-hid in the gleaming wood,
 Where I hear the dead at midday moan,
 And the shrieking rush of the wainscot mouse,
 And my own sad name in corners cried,
 When the shiver of dancing leaves is thrown
 About its echoing chambers wide,
 Till a morbid-hate and horror have grown
 Of a world in which I have hardly mixt,
 And a morbid eating lichen fixt
 On a heart half-turned to stone.

(I.257-67)

Towards the end of section xviii the protagonist will assert: 'I have climbed nearer out of lonely Hell' (I.678). But how much nearer? We may compare the 'shiver of dancing leaves ... thrown/About ... echoing chambers wide' (I.262-63) with 'the dry-tongued laurels' pattering talk/Seemed her light foot along the garden walk'in 'I have led her home'(I.606-607). The obvious suffering of the earlier lines has withdrawn in the later. But the distinctive (disturbing and disturbed) hypersensitivity is the same. Nor is it clear that the calmed rhythms and repetitions of 'I have led her home' define anything other than an inward-turned world. It is hard to detect in the passage an excursive, expansive movement which embraces a person, a world, and an order beyond the self. We discern, rather, a world which has been stabilised

but which remains self-enclosed. Painful hallucination has been displaced by gratifying fantasy. The stability is the stability of solipsistic fantasy and not of objective realisation. Connotations of an interior secretion are inherent in the metaphor used by the speaker to define Maud:

what care I,
Who in this stormy gulf have found a pearl
The countercharm of space and hollow sky,
And do accept my madness ...

(I.639-42)¹

Love as a pearl, the protagonist's self-derived fantasy, does not grow out of or towards a universe of Love. Space and hollow sky are neither filled nor turned inside out by the speaker's projections and we need not confuse a concentrated point of stability -- unnatural in its concentration -- with a principle of regeneration. The introvert energies from which the fantasy is generated and on which it is poised are the same as those which had earlier generated and sustained violence and distress.

The precariousness of the fantasy is suggested in different ways throughout the section. There is, for instance, the description of the great cedar:

O, art thou sighing for Lebanon ...
Dark cedar ...
 haunted by the starry head
Of her whose gentle will has changed my fate,
And made my life a perfumed altar-flame;
And over whom thy darkness must have spread
With such delight as theirs of old, thy great
Forefathers of the thornless garden, there

1. Christopher Ricks observes that a pearl is 'a morbid secretion'; Tennyson, p.254.

Shadowing the snow-limbed Eve from whom she

came.

(I.613,616,620-26)

The protagonist may equate his new-made life with an original innocence but the allusion to the lost Eden ominously raises the shadow of the fall and the inherent potential for evil in the garden of 'I have led her home'. The continuing presence, at the root of the hero's supposedly thornless garden, of unaccommodated, unregenerate powers is presented in the swaying, darkly foreboding menace of the closing lines of section xviii:

I have climbed nearer out of lonely Hell.

Beat, happy stars, timing with things below,

Beat with my heart more blest than heart can tell,

Blest, but for some dark undercurrent woe

That seems to draw -- but it shall not be so:

Let all be well, be well. (I.678-83; my italics)

There are things which the protagonist cannot face. The pressure is at once regressive, pointing back to the hellish obsessions of the past, and prophetic, pointing to the future failure of the fantasy.

The 'dark undercurrent woe' admitted at the end of section xviii gives the lie to the protagonist's claim, in section xix, to have found Truth and atonement. So, too, does the protagonist's initial -- subsequently corrected -- classification of his fulfilment in love as a dream:

Her brother is coming back tonight,

Breaking up my dream of delight.

My dream? do I dream of bliss?

I have walked awake with Truth.

O when did a morning shine

So rich in atonement as this
 For my dark-dawning youth,
 Darkened watching a mother decline
 And that dead man at her heart and mine:
 For who was left to watch her but I? (I.684-93)

The vision of Truth, never more than a temporarily successful sublimation, 'is not', as A. S. Byatt has said, 'an atonement, after all: blood must be paid'.¹ The idea of the dead father (and of the self that is dead at centre) returns the hero to his old preoccupations.

The failure of the precarious stability of the sublimation in section xviii is clearly apparent in the last section of the first part of the poem. 'Come into the garden, Maud' is pregnant with the disturbing potentialities of the 'dark undercurrent woe'. The protagonist shows himself constitutionally unable to avoid associating love with death:

For a breeze of morning moves,
 And the planet of Love is on high,
 Beginning to faint in the light that she loves
 On a bed of daffodil sky,
 To faint in the light of the sun she loves,
 To faint in his light, and to die.
 (I.856-61)

George Eliot thought 'exquisite' the manner in which 'the murmur of the verse seems to faint and die like a star'.² But the rhythms are not only those of fainting. Harold Nicolson's quaint sense of 'shock' at finding that the 'haunting music of Come into the Garden, Maud, is based on the rhythm of a mid-Victorian polka³ obscured for him the

1. op.cit., p.89.

2. Essays, p.197.

3. op.cit., p.232

effect which Ruskin noticed when he said: 'The intense anxiety and agitation of the lover's mind is marked by not one of the lines being exactly similar to another in its prosody'.¹

Both the rose and the lily which also appear in this section -- where Maud is 'Queen lily and rose in one' -- are, of course, symbols recurrent throughout Maud. A. Dwight Culler has commented as follows on the connotations of the imagery of rose and lily:

Death is symbolised throughout the poem by the pallor of the lily, as Love is by the ardor of the rose. But both symbols are ambiguous, for the lily also symbolises the purity and spirituality of Maud, as the rose symbolises the blood and passion that unsealed their love.²

It is odd that Culler, who observes that 'Come into the garden, Maud' 'throbs with the frenzy of sexual passion' should also say that 'Maud in her wholeness and balance is "Queen lily and rose in one"'.³ For Maud as these two is inseparable from the aspect of hysteria in the speaker. Tennyson's verse constitutes a perfectly adjusted use of a form to suggest a mind teetering on the edge of the formless. Perversions and distortions of the superficial formal control in the lines betray his rising mania:

And the soul of the rose went into my blood,

As the music clashed in the hall ...

She is coming, my dove, my dear;

She is coming, my life, my fate;

The red rose cries, 'She is near, she is near;'

And the white rose weeps, 'She is late;'

1. 'Elements of English Prosody' (1880), The Works of John Ruskin, ed., E.T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, Library Edition, 39 vols (London, 1903-1912), XXXI, 339-40.

2. op.cit., p.209.

3. ibid., pp.210,209.

The larkspur listens, 'I hear, I hear;'

And the lily whispers, 'I wait.'

(I.882-83,910-15)

The fusion of the rose and the lily in association with the figure of Maud becomes emblematic of the fundamental confusion in the speaker's mind between love and death, spirit and flesh, purity and impurity.

It is not that the hero cannot imagine resurrection. But when he does the powers of revived life are indistinguishable from the passionate impulses that brought about death in the first place:

She is coming, my own, my sweet;

Were it ever so airy a tread,

My heart would hear her and beat,

Were it earth in an earthy bed;

My dust would hear her and beat,

Had I lain for a century dead;

Would start and tremble under her feet,

And blossom in purple and red.

(I.916-23)

We are hardly surprised when we learn in part II that the protagonist has assaulted Maud's brother in the garden. The old destructive forces of anger and hate -- temporarily sublimated in 'I have led her home' -- have been imaged resurging in 'Come into the garden, Maud'. The exploration of love as an agent of spiritual regeneration is terminated, essentially, not because of some arbitrary, local act of violence by the protagonist. The exploration ceases because there has never been a purgation. It is not that the protagonist did not experience stirrings of positive feeling. It is that he was never able to achieve a real separation between the higher and the lower, the pure and the impure. The 'dark undercurrent woe'

was never exorcised. The violence directed against the brother was already evident in feelings directed towards Maud in 'Come into the garden'. It is the same violence as had been apparent at the opening of the poem and which continues, thinly disguised, at the very end. The protagonist's move towards an Edenic love was always fated to a further fall because it was always instinct with the energies of hell. The violence which destroyed the idyll was born of the idyll. Psychologically speaking, Tennyson's purpose in Maud is to show that the fires of love and the fires of war are kindled at the same source:

O dawn of Eden bright over earth and sky,
The fires of Hell brake out of thy rising sun,
The fires of Hell and of Hate ...

(II.8-10)

The protagonist indeed lays claim to having isolated a higher potency of his own being in his love for Maud. A distinction between higher and lower selves informs the idea of the two ghosts of Maud in parts II and III of the poem. There is, first of all, Maud as shade. Following the assault on the brother, Maud is fused with the speaker's own shadow:

Then glided out of the joyous wood
The ghastly Wraith of one that I know ...

Is it gone? my pulses beat --
What was it? a lying trick of the brain?
Yet I thought I saw her stand,
A shadow there at my feet ...

(II.31-32,36-39)

A little later we find the hero --

Plagued with a flitting to and fro,

A disease, a hard mechanic ghost ...

Why should it look like Maud?

Am I to be overawed

By what I cannot but know

Is a juggle born of the brain? (II.81-82,87-90)

Lines II.82 and 90 of this passage were adapted from 'Oh! that 'twere possible' (II.83-84). But the main body of the material incorporated from the early lyric appears in section iv of part II of Maud¹. Here, of course, the shadow continues to make its presence felt:

A shadow flits before me,

Not thou, but like to thee ...

It leads me forth at evening,

It lightly winds and steals

In a cold white robe before me ...

In the shuddering dawn, behold,

Without knowledge, without pity,

By the curtains of my bed

That abiding phantom cold.

Get thee hence, nor come again,

Mix not memory with doubt,

Pass, thou deathlike type of pain,

Pass and cease to move about!

1. For details see Ricks, pp.1037,1082-86. The place of the material incorporated in Maud from 'Oh! that 'twere possible' is discussed by G. O. Marshall in 'Tennyson's "Oh! that 'twere possible": A Link between In Memoriam and Maud'.

'Tis the blot upon the brain
That will show itself without ...

It crosses here, it crosses there,
Through all that crowd confused and loud,
The shadow still the same;
And on my heavy eyelids
My anguish hangs like shame.

(II.151-52,157-59,192-201,210-14)

This manifestation of Maud, as the speaker's own shadow, reflects all the darker aspects of his personality that we have so far seen portrayed in the poem -- including at centre (as centrally in 'Oh! that 'twere possible') suicide.

There is a Maud of more positive, higher association. Again, as in the lyric of 1837, this Maud, this aspect or projection of being, appears reluctant to manifest itself:

Would the happy spirit descend,
From the realms of light and song,
In the chamber or the street,
As she looks among the blest ...

But the broad light glares and beats,
And the shadow flits and fleets
And will not let me be ...

(II.221-24,229-31)

In the context of the poem of 1855, however, this happy and blessed spirit, although descended from the 'Archetype that waits,/Clad in light' in 'Oh! that 'twere possible', is not to be simply equated with that archetype. Neither is it to be simply paralleled with the light

aspect of Cadrilla in The Lover's Tale, nor with the Hallam of the shining face in In Memoriam. The Lover's Tale and 'Oh! that 'twere possible' presented a definite split between the realities of the light and the dark aspects of self. The split was left unresolved but both aspects were seen as real. In Memoriam set out to affirm the superior reality of the higher self. But throughout Maud, while there is still a notion of the dualism of higher and lower, and while the hero pretends to a regeneration of the lower by the higher, the poem does not demonstrate the reality of the dualism. All dualistic distinctions asserted by the protagonist dissolve unfailingly into an inchoate monism. The absence of any clearly distinguished and objectively founded higher potency of self is apparent in the motif of the two ghosts of Maud. The speaker associates the 'happy spirit' of Maud with the moment lost in the past when he had heard her sing her martial song:

Do I hear her sing as of old,
My bird with the shining head,
My own dove with the tender eye? ...

Alas for her that met me,
That heard me softly call ...
In the garden by the turrets
Of the old manorial hall.

Would the happy spirit descend ...

(II.184-86,215-16,219-21)

This much appears similar to the protagonist's association of the 'fair and good' phantom with the 'pleasant ditty' chanted 'of old' by the lost loved one in 'Oh! that 'twere possible'. But there is a major

difference between the recollections of the songs in the two poems. In the context of Maud the song that is remembered is specifically Maud's martial ballad. The appeal of that ballad is, as I have indicated, to those darker areas and impulses in the speaker which he rationalises as a legitimate enthusiasm for war. I have also suggested that the hero's perception of a Maud of love in part I is conditional upon and inextricably entangled with his perceptions of a Maud of war. The same entanglement is evident in the idea of the two ghosts of Maud. The identification of the 'happy spirit' of Maud with the Maud of the martial song suggests there is no separation at a fundamental level between the higher Maud and the 'shadow still the same'. The distinction is false and of the same order as the hero's distinction between private and public violence. Maud as shadow, a juggle of the brain, is the hero's death-wish in its private and shameful aspect. But the 'happy spirit' of Maud, the Maud of martial values, is the same instinct in its respectable, publicly sanctioned form. If this Maud would descend to 'the chamber or the street' from the regions of the 'blest', then the hero would be able to face what he cannot face when privately possessed by Maud as shadow -- the realm of social being: 'the squares and streets,/And the faces that one meets' (II.232-33). The speaker would ask Maud in her 'higher' aspect to 'Take me, sweet,/To the regions of thy rest' (II.227-28). He would be taken to death, but under the shameless banner of the war spirit extolled in Maud's 'passionate ballad gallant and gay'. That the Maud of the shadow of death and of suicide is at root one and the same with the blessed Maud is made clear again in part III of the poem. There it is the higher Maud which recommends officially sanctioned violence: 'She seemed to divide in a dream from a band of the blest,/And spoke of a hope for the world in the coming wars' (III.10-11). But it is,

significantly, Maud as shadow who is presented as taking up the recommendation and seeking refuge in the Baltic theatre of war: 'I saw the dreary phantom arise and fly/Far into the North, and battle, and seas of death' (III.36-37). Tennyson could hardly have been clearer about the assimilation of the protagonist's darkest proclivities to a publicly justifiable action.

The point is underlined also in Tennyson's treatment in Maud of the motif of Narcissus and Echo. As W. E. Buckler has observed:

The myth of Narcissus and Echo, with variations, is one of the subtexts of Maud, as the fiction suggests and as the fourth line ('And Echo there, whatever is asked her, answers "Death"') and the adoration of the 'beautiful voice' in Canto v signal.

Buckler further speculates that 'it may have been to keep his subtext from surfacing too obviously' that in the first edition of Maud Tennyson introduced the readings 'shining daffodil' (I.101 and III.6) in preference to the readings of the pre-publication trial edition of the poem: 'sweet Narcissus'.¹ Tennyson exploits, in his own manner and for his own purposes, the basic elements of the myth of Narcissus and Echo. In the original fable Echo was effectively destroyed by Narcissus's failure to reciprocate her love. She pined away until nothing was left of her but her melodious or beautiful voice. As if this were not enough the Olympian gods, as a warning to other importunate maidens, condemned her forever to repeat the last sounds which fell upon her ears. In the opening sections of Maud the universe of death in which the protagonist is set is suggested by the manner in which he receives the answer Death to whatever he asks. But since Echo only throws back that which is the hero himself the principle of death inherent in his own being is also suggested. The importance of echo as

1. op.cit., p.226, n.16.

a structural image in Maud is considerable. It defines the detailed repetitions and the recurring patterns of the speaker's obsessions throughout the poem. At times the image resurfaces explicitly to suggest the absence of real development in the drama of the speaker's soul: as when, after the assault on Maud's brother, we are recalled to the opening of the poem by the 'million horrible bellowing echoes' which 'broke/From the red-ribbed hollow behind the wood'.

The protagonist is further associated with the figure of Narcissus. The association is highlighted in the 'sweet Narcissus'/'shining daffodil' passages and, as W E Buckler says, 'Like Narcissus' the protagonist 'has long companioned himself and become self-fixated'.¹ In the myth, before Echo finally pined away to nothing, she had asked Venus to punish Narcissus by making him suffer the pangs of unrequited love. The goddess caused Narcissus to fall in love with his own reflection as imaged in a pool. Eventually, unable to possess the object of his desire, he died worshipping his own image. In Maud the first allusion to the 'shining daffodil dead' occurs at the end of a passage (I.96-101; quoted above pp.312-13) which sets out the morbidly introverted condition of the speaker's mind and which I have described as redolent with intimations of the death of the self. It is shortly after this passage that the hero hears Maud singing her martial song. The shining daffodil appears again in the following lines of part III:

My mood is changed, for it fell at a time of year
 When the face of the night is fair on the dewy downs,
 And the shining daffodil dies, and the Charioteer
 And starry Gemini hang like glorious crowns

1. op.cit., p.222.

Over Orion's grave low down in the west,
 That like a silent lightning under the stars
 She seemed to divide in a dream from a band of the
 blest,
 And spoke of a hope for the world in the coming wars ...

(III.4-11)

The passage repeats in miniature the movement that occurs in part I from the first mention of 'The shining daffodil dead, and Orion low in his grave' (l.101) to the protagonist's hearing of Maud's martial song. In both parts I and III, at the same time of year, the speaker hears the voice of the martial Maud. In part III the hero asks us to accept that his mood has changed and that through his love for Maud he has discovered a healthy, outward direction of energy. But I have argued that the condition of the protagonist's love for Maud is her singing of the martial ballad. I have also suggested that the ballad strikes a chord of self-recognition in the speaker. It answers to his own enthusiasm for war as demonstrated in the opening section of the poem. The 'beautiful voice' (l.180) of the martial song is cast, as W. E. B. Buckler points out, as the voice of Echo. In essence Maud's martial song stands as an echo of the speaker's own uttered predilection^e for war. As an echo of the speaker's own self Maud's martial voice gives an answer, both in part I and part III, which is not fundamentally different from the answer Echo had given in the fourth line of the poem. The answer is death, with the questionable difference that the martial Maud offers death in war. The importance of the echo theme is that it links the presentation of the protagonist in the opening lines of the poem with his presentation in part III. There is an implication that the speaker's enthusiasm for war in part III is no more than a re-e-presentation of the morbidly introverted, negative self we have

seen at the very outset of the poem. The hero remains self-fixated. He is still the classical Narcissus, dying out of a deluded commitment to an empty image of himself.

What is important about the representation of the confusion of higher and lower realities in Tennyson's 1855 poem is that the highest aspect attributed by the poet to the figure of Maud -- the highest potency of the speaker's personality demonstrated in the poem -- is that of a socially approved dimension of self. The poem does not affirm the reality of the distinction between -- as Earl R. Wasserman put it in relation to Shelley's Epipsychidion -- 'two modes of a single self. The self in existence and the infinite self'. The hero's claim to have distinguished his own higher self is never shown to have an objective foundation. It is only Maud as shadow, the 'ghastly wraith', which is granted real status in the poem. As a mere public identity, a face prepared to meet the faces that one meets, a rationalisation of negative forces within the personality, the blessed spirit of Maud defines at centre nothing more than the 'abiding phantom cold'. The higher spirit is effectively contained by the lower. Maud constitutes Tennyson's major re-examination after In Memoriam of what I have earlier spoken of as the Romantic emphasis on self-derived authority -- the claim that absolute values originate within and are projected from the mind itself. In this work the poet displays an unrelenting scepticism regarding the spiritual archetype that he had not finally denied in either The Lover's Tale or 'Oh! that 'twere possible' and which he had ultimately celebrated in In Memoriam. In the treatment of the theme of narcissism in Maud there is no idealist synthesis of the subjective and objective, no affirmation of the constitutive, self-renovative power of the individual mind. The

poem offers no relief from the 'shadow of imagination the ... death instinct in every natural man',¹ no exorcism of the spectre of solipsism which haunted Romantic epistemology.

Tennyson portrays in Maud a fallen world. He offers no Christian solutions to the problems of living in such a world and at the same time questions the capacity of the individual mind to achieve its own redemption. Behind the withdrawal of support for a Romantic psychology lies a concomitant refusal to affirm any cosmic principle of love. Nature is rapine and as death echoes throughout the poem the universe appears void of spiritual significance and direction. Maud stands, as J. R. Lowell penetratingly observed, as 'The antiphonal voice to In Memoriam'.² In this development of what had been a potential theme in The Lover's Tale of 1832 it is the 'empty phantom' of Cadrilla which gains ascendancy. In Maud Tennyson returned also to the order of perception, the uncompromisingly sceptical questioning of ideas that there exists a meaningful relation between the real and the ideal, the finite and the absolute, that he had exhibited in poems such as 'The Hesperides' and 'The Lotos-Eaters'.

The special intensity of the poet's thoughts and feelings in Maud, discernible beneath the dramatic presentation of the character of the speaker in the poem, is often put down to the biographical elements which inform (but do not govern) the work.³ As Christopher Ricks has said, 'Maud was an intense and precarious attempt -- compacted and impacted -- to encompass the bitter experiences of four

1. Harold Bloom, 'The Internalisation of Quest Romance' in Romanticism and Consciousness: Essays in Criticism, p.6. Bloom's essay was first published in The Yale Review, LVIII,4 (Summer 1969).

2. Memoir, I, 394.

3. See Ralph Rader, Tennyson's Maud: The Biographical Genesis (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1963).

decades of a life in which many of the formative influences had also been deformative'.¹ But there is another, perhaps complementary, accounting for the intensity. Earlier in this study I observed that there is a dimension of anger, bitterness and protest involved in Tennyson's scepticism which suggests the reaction of a profoundly disappointed idealist. Something of the intensity of Maud may be attributable to the pain with which the poet bore his own insights into a disordered world. It is a pain that meant that Tennyson could never, at any point in his writing, simply embrace the disorder he was able to perceive so acutely. Tennyson never reached a stage where he could present unconditional annihilation as an unqualifiedly positive object of desire. In Tennyson's vision, good and evil and a value system which would seek to impose terms upon death, are never simply transcended. Scepticism in Tennyson could never be a component of nihilism.

* * * * *

Even as an act of bitter self-criticism the writing of Maud did not, of course, mean that Tennyson was never again to express the idealistic tendencies which he had allowed priority in In Memoriam. While I have argued in this study for the existence of an unqualified and uncompromised strain of scepticism in Tennyson's work, I have also intimated that it would be naive to attempt to think in terms of a single or final Tennysonian position. To the end of his career Tennyson was to continue negotiating, in different forms, from

1. Tennyson, p.246.

different points of view, and with differing degrees of poetic success, the issues we have seen him taking up from 'Timbuctoo' to Maud. It is worth suggesting here one general point of contrast between the major enterprise of Tennyson's later years, the Idylls of the King, and the longer works I have been discussing in this study. In developing through both In Memoriam and Maud concerns which had been present in The Lover's Tale of 1832, it is apparent that Tennyson found it most appropriate to express contradictory and apparently mutually exclusive views of the universe in two separate poems. The Lover's Tale, as I have argued, founders on Tennyson's inability to resolve or to cope successfully with the presentation of antithetical positions and directions in a single major work. Across the whole cycle of the Idylls of the King, however, Tennyson was to develop that aspect of reservation which, as I observed at the opening of this study, informs the earliest written of his Arthurian poems: the 'Morte d'Arthur'. Whatever faults it may possess, the Idylls of the King does show Tennyson consistently realising in a long work on a large scale a perspective and a tone which admit simultaneously contradictory possibilities of meaning. At the conclusion of 'The Passing of Arthur' there is potent ambiguity, not merely irresolution, whether the echo heard at Arthur's death reflects a higher world or whether, taking its point of origin in this world, it is a sound signifying nothing:

Then from the dawn it seemed there came, but faint
As from beyond the limit of the world,
Like the last echo born of a great cry,
Sounds, as if some fair city were one voice
Around a king returning from his wars.

(457-61)

APPENDIX A

THE MANUSCRIPT DRAFTS OF 'ARMAGEDDON'

H. Nbk.2 Houghton Library, Harvard University MS. Eng. 952(2).

H. Nbk.2 is the source (as noted above, pp.18-19, 19n.1) of the 1931 text of 'Armageddon'. It has 15ff. surviving (there are numerous stubs) and is watermarked 1824. Commenting on the draft of 'Armageddon' in this notebook Sir Charles Tennyson wrote in Unpublished Early Poems by Alfred Tennyson: "'Armageddon" is evidently very early work and this is probably an early draft, seeming from the handwriting to have been written when the poet was not more than fifteen' (p.15). The notebook appears to have been in use c. 1824-25 and contains, apart from the draft of 'Armageddon', several early prose fragments and early drafts or fragments of drafts of a number of poems known to have been composed by Tennyson c. 1823-25 (for example: The Devil and the Lady, on dating see Ricks, pp. 7-10; 'The Coach of Death', see Ricks, pp.74-75; and 'St Lawrence', see Ricks, pp.298,1767). The long draft of 'Armageddon' which forms the 1931 text of the poem appears on ff.3^v-8^v. The draft, which is incomplete, ends with six lines at the top of f.8^v, the remainder of which is blank (excepting a typically Tennysonian doodle of a face in profile). But Tennyson began each section of the poem in this draft on a new page and since there are a number of leaves missing following f.8 it is possible that the poem continued into a further section or more. It has not been noted before that there are in H. Nbk.2 further fragmentary draft passages from 'Armageddon' (on ff.1^v-3^r). Of these, only one passage of three lines (f.3^r) has a counterpart in the long draft of ff.3^v-8^v (1931,

IV. 28-30). As will be seen from the transcription below, these lines do not appear in T. Nbk.18. However, there are also on ff.1^v-2^v of H. Nbk.2 draft passages totalling 33 lines which do not appear in the long draft of 'Armageddon' in the notebook, but which do appear in the draft of the poem in T. Nbk.18 (these passages will be identified in notes at the foot of the transcription of T. Nbk.18). In addition, there is a draft on f.3^r of H. Nbk.2 of five lines which appear neither in 1931 nor the Trinity draft of 'Armageddon', but which do appear as ll.71-75 of 'Timbuctoo'. All of these fragmentary draft passages of H. Nbk.2, ff.1^v-3^r, seem to be written in a slightly later hand than that of both the long draft of 'Armageddon' and the drafts of other early poems in the notebook. The poet has, indeed, inscribed these lines in the blank spaces left between portions of earlier, unrelated draft material. The passages do not form a continuous sequence and must represent a part of Tennyson's continuing work on the poem -- apparently towards the version that he was to copy out in T. Nbk.18. (There are stubs between ff.1^v-3^r and other such working drafts could have been entered on these or on other of the missing leaves in the notebook.) Both the 3 lines on f.3^r which repeat lines in the long draft of 'Armageddon' (1931, IV. 28-30) but are not found in T. Nbk.18, and the passage on f.3^r of 5 lines which appear only in 'Timbuctoo' (ll.71-75), may represent work done for 'Armageddon' but which were not included (or are no longer extant) in the T. Nbk.18 draft of the poem.

T. Nbk.18 Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. O.15.18.

T. Nbk.18 has 37ff. (with numerous stubs) and is inscribed by Tennyson on the inside front cover: 'A Tennyson/Louth/Jan 10-1828'. The

notebook appears to have been in use principally c. 1828-30. It contains drafts of the sonnets 'Among some Nations Fate hath placed too far' and 'To Poesy: O God, make this age great' (both dated 1828 in the MS. books of Tennyson's friends John Allen and J.M. Heath; see Ricks, pp.166,167). The notebook also contains a draft of 'The Idealist' (dated 1829 in the Allen and Heath MS. books, see Ricks, p.169), together with early drafts of poems published in 1830 (including 'Song: A spirit haunts the year's last hours' and 'Song: I' the glooming light', both of which appear also in Harvard MS.Eng. 952.4, which is watermarked 1828). The draft of 'Armageddon' in T. Nbk.18 appears on ff.1-9^v (f.5^v blank); it is incomplete and ends with one line at the top of f.9^v (the remainder of which is blank except for doodles). But (as in the case of H. Nbk.2) in T. Nbk.18 Tennyson was in the general habit of beginning a new section of 'Armageddon' on a new page and, since numerous stubs follow f.9, the poem in this draft may originally have continued further. The T. Nbk.18 draft of 'Armageddon' is essentially a fair copy with a very few working alterations, and must have been preceded by working drafts of the kind which, as has been noted, occur in H. Nbk.2, ff.1^v-3^r (some of the alterations in the Trinity draft are clearly corrections of errors made simply in the act of copying out lines already fully composed). If the date of 10 January 1828 inscribed by Tennyson on the inside front cover can be considered a guide to his earliest use of the notebook, then it is possible to speculate that the draft of 'Armageddon' (which occurs, even allowing for missing leaves, towards the front of the book) was entered at a date fairly close to the one inscribed by the poet, presumably (given the identification of 'Louth') when he was on vacation in Lincolnshire following his first term at Cambridge. It appears improbable, at least, that the draft

would have been entered much later than 1828 (if only because, as I have noted above, p.17,n.1 , the title for the Prize Poem competition was announced in December 1828 for submission in March 1829 and it seems unlikely, once he had decided to cannibalise 'Armageddon' for 'Timbuctoo', that Tennyson would have spent much time copying out at length a version of the old poem).

In the following parallel text the 1931 'Armageddon' (as printed in Ricks) appears on the left hand pages and the version in T. Nbk.18 is transcribed on the right hand pages. Line numbers in italics in the left hand margin of each text are keyed to the internal line numbering of that text. Section and line numbers in roman type, enclosed in round brackets, and placed in the left hand margin against lines in the T. Nbk.18 transcript refer to the equivalent lines in 1931. Following 1931, II. 50 and T. Nbk.18, VII. 56 the two versions of 'Armageddon' have no further correspondences and from that point cross-referencing between lines in the two texts ceases, although the remainders of the 1931 version and the T. Nbk.18 version continue to be presented on the left and right hand pages respectively. Against all lines in 'Armageddon' that reappear in 'Timbuctoo' I have cited in roman type in the right hand margins to the texts the equivalent line numbers in 'Timbuctoo'. In all but one instance ('Armageddon', 1931, II. 55-60; 'Timbuctoo', ll.185-90: see note (iv) below) the 'Timbuctoo' line numbers appear to the right of the T. Nbk.18 text of 'Armageddon'. The general features of the relationship between 'Armageddon' and 'Timbuctoo' are as follows. The first line of 'Timbuctoo' is from 'Armageddon', while ll.2-27 were written for the new poem. Ricks ('Tennyson: "Armageddon" into "Timbuctoo"', p.24)

suggests that 'Timbuctoo' ll.28-40 are 'a re-working ... of passages which occur early in the Trinity MS. [IV. 4-7; V. 1-5] but not in 1931'. Lines 41-61 of 'Timbuctoo' were written for the new poem. Thereafter, ll.62-190 of 'Timbuctoo' were derived from 'Armageddon', though the following points should be noted: (i) as Ricks observes, ibid., p.23, 'Armageddon' includes 'some extra lines, so that the MSS. do not present us with the uninterrupted sequence of lines "Timbuctoo" ll.62-190' (ii) 'Timbuctoo' ll.71-75 appear neither in 1931 nor in T. Nbk.18; however, as was noted above, they are drafted in H. Nbk.2, f.3^r (iii) 'Timbuctoo' ll.77-80 are, as Ricks says, ibid., p.23, 'a re-writing of the lines that had appeared in the Trinity MS., since there they had referred to the great battle of Armageddon, with which Tennyson was no longer concerned' (iv) 'Timbuctoo' ll.185-90 are the only lines of 'Armageddon' which appear in 1931 (II. 55-60) but not in T. Nbk.18. Lines 191-248 of 'Timbuctoo' were written for the new poem. In the parallel text notes designated by line numbers in italics refer to the text of 'Armageddon' on the page above. Notes designated by line numbers in roman type give information on the text of 'Timbuctoo'. All editorial interpolations in the transcription of the T. Nbk.18 draft of 'Armageddon' are enclosed in square brackets. In transcribing Tennyson's MS. I have retained neither his use of the long 'f' nor the apostrophe which he habitually used in writing 'it's'. [*? afar*] signifies a conjectural reading; *^like^* signifies interlineated matter; *<gaze> ^eyes^* signifies a cancelled reading followed by a substitution.

1931 (H. Nbk.2)

I

... Prophecy whose mighty grasp

... ings whose capacious soul

... illimitable abyss

... bottomless futurity

5 ... giant figures that shall pace

... of its stage -- whose subtle ken

... the doubly darkened firmament

... to come with all its burning stars

At awful intervals. I thank thy power,

10 Whose wondrous emanation hath poured

Bright light on what was darkest, and removed

The cloud that from my mortal faculties

Barred out the knowledge of the Latter Times.

I stood upon the mountain which o'erlooks

15 The valley of destruction and I saw

Things strange, surpassing wonder; but to give

Utterance to things inutterable, to paint

In dignity of language suitable

The majesty of what I then beheld,

20 Were past the power of man. No fabled Muse

T. Nbk.18f.1^r

[I]

Spirit of Prophecy whose ...

Enfoldeth all things, who ...

Can people y^e illimitabl ...

Of vast & fathomless futu ...

(I.5) 5 With all y^e Giant Figur ...Y^e dimness of its stage, ...Can throng y^e doubly-d ...

Of Time to come with ...

At awful intervals ...

(I.10) 10 Whose wondrous emanati ...

Bright light on what ...

Y^e cloud, wh from my ...Barr'd out y^e knowle ...

[rule]

I stood upon y^e moun ...

1

(I.15) 15 Y^e valley of destruction & ...

Things strange, surpassing ...

Utterance to things u ...

In suitable Expression's ...

Y^e Grandeurs of y^e Visible ...20 Of y^e incompassable ma[?j] ...

And unattainable m[?y] ...

(I.20) Were past y^e power of M ...

1931 (H. Nbk.2)

Could breathe into my soul such influence
Of her seraphic nature, as to express
Deeds inexpressible by loftiest rhyme.

I stood upon the mountain which o'erlooks

25 The valley of Megiddo. -- Broad before me
Lay a huge plain whereon the wandering eye,
Weary with gazing, found no resting-place,
Unbroken by the ridge of mound or hill
Or far-off cone of some aerial mount
Varying the horizon's sameness.

30 Eve came down
Upon the valleys and the sun was setting;
Never set sun with such portentous glare
Since he arose on that gay morn, when Earth
First drunk the light of his prolific ray.

35 Strange figures thickly thronged his burning orb,
Spirits of discord seemed to weave across
His fiery disk a web of bloody haze,

T. Nbk.18f.1^r (cont.)

Could breathe into my ...

Of her seraphic Natur...

f.1^v25

... sound

... hadowing forth of words)

... loftiest Rhyme.

f.2^r

II

(I.25)

I stood upon y^e Mountain wh^o oerlooks
 Y^e valley of Megiddo -- Broad before me
 Lay a huge plain whereon y^e wandering eye
 Weary with gazing found no resting place
5 Unbroken by y^e ridge of mound or Hill
 Or far-off cone of some aerial Mount
 Varying th' horizon's sameness.

(I.30)

Eve came down

Upon y^e vallies & y^e Sun was setting
 Never set Sun with such portentous glare
10 Since he arose on that gay Morn when Earth
 First drank y^e light of his prolific ray

(I.35)

Strange figures thickly throng'd his burning Orb:
 Spirits of discord seem'd to weave across
 His fiery disk a web of bloody haze

1931 (H. Nbk.2)

Through whose reticulations struggled forth
His ineffectual, intercepted beams,
40 Curtaining in one dark terrific pall
Of dun-red light heaven's azure and earth's green.

The beasts fled to their dens; the little birds
All winged their way home shrieking: fitful gusts
Of violent tempest shook the scanty palm
45 That clothed the mountain-ridge whereon I stood:
And in the red and murky Even light,
Black, formless, unclean things came flitting by;
Some seemed of bestial similitude
And some half human, yet so horrible,
50 So shadowy, indistinct and undefined,
It were a mockery to call them aught
Save unrealities, which took the form
And fashioning of such ill-omened things
That it were sin almost to look on them.

55 There was a mingling too of such strange sounds
(Which came at times upon my startled hearing)
Half wailing and half laughter; such a dissonance

T. Nbk.18f.2^r(cont.)

15 Thro' whose reticulations struggled forth

His ineffectual intercepted beams

(I.40) Curtaining in one dark, terrific pall

Of dun-red light Heaven's azure & Earth's green

Y^e Beasts fled to their dens, y^e little birds

20 All wing'd their way home shrieking: fitful gusts

Of violent tempest shook y^e scanty Palm

(I.45) That cloth'd y^e mountain ridge whereon I stood

And in y^e red & murky Evenlight

Black, formless, unclean things came flitting by

25 Some seem'd of bestial similitude

And some half-human yet so horrible

(I.50) So shadowy, indistinct & undefin'd

It were a mockery to call them aught

f.2^v

Save unrealities wh^{ch} took y^e form

30 And fashioning of such ill-omen'd things

That it were sin almost to look on them

f.3^r

III

(I.55) There was a mingling too of such strange sounds

(Wh^{ch} came at times upon my startled hearing)

Half-wailing & half laughter -- such a dissonance

1931 (H. Nbk.2)

Of jarring confused voices, part of which
Seemed hellish and part heavenly, whisperings,
60 Low chauntings, strangled screams, and other notes
Which I may liken unto nothing which
I ever heard on Earth, but seemed most like
A mixture of the voice of man and beast;
And then again throughout the lurid waste
65 Of air, a breathless stillness reigned, so deep,

T. Nbk.18f.3^r(cont.)

Of jarring confus'd voices part of wh

5 Seem'd hellish & part heavenly, whisperings

(I.60) Low chauntings, strangled screams & other notes

Wh I may liken unto nothing wh

I ever heard on Earth but most resembled

A mixture of y^e tones of man & beast

10 And bird & reptile blended to one voice

Then these wd cease & all at once wd rise

One deep, loud hiss as from the thirsty throats

Of many dragons in y^e stainless Noon

Or such a thrilling roar as might awake

15 If one great stream of molten flame & one

Equal of y^e opposed Element

Prone gushing down y^e adverse battlements

Of two wall'd cliffs wh o'er a narrow vale

Blot out each others Sun shd clash mid-way

20 With horrible confliktion & y^e spume

Of yeasty conflux & y^e cloudy steam

Of throbbing waves along y^e hollow pass.

Then high & holy harpings sounded through

Y^e firmament & voices like y^e voice

25 Of many torrents singing praise to God.

And then again throughout y^e lurid waste

(I.65) Of air a breathless stillness reign'd so deep

1931 (H. Nbk.2)

So deathlike, so appalling, that I shrunk
Into myself again, and almost wished
For the recurrence of those deadly sounds,
Which fixed my senses into stone, and drove
70 The buoyant life-drops back into my heart.

Nor did the glittering of white wings escape
My notice far within the East, which caught
Ruddy reflection from the ensanguined West;
Nor, ever and anon, the shrill clear sound
75 Of some aerial trumpet, solemnly
Pealing throughout the Empyrean void.

Thus to some wakeful hind who on the heights
Outwatches the wan planet, comes the sound
Of some far horn along the distant hills
80 Echoing, in some beleaguered country, where
The pitiless Enemy by night hath made

T. Nbk.18f.3^r (cont.)

So deathlike --- so appalling that I shrunk

Into myself again & almost wish'd

30 For y^e recurrence of those deadly sounds

f.3^v

Whⁱ fix'd my senses into stone & drove

(I.70) Y^e buoyant life-drops back into my heart.

f.4^r

IV

Nor did y^e glittering of white wings escape

My notice far within y^e East whⁱ caught

Ruddy reflection from th'ensanguin'd West

(Where with wide interval y^e long low moaning

5 Of inarticulate thunder like y^e wail

Of some lost City in its evil day

Rose, mutter'd, deepen'd round y^e verge of Heaven)

Nor ever & anon y^e shrill clear sound

(I.75) Of some aerial trumpet solemnly

10 Pealing throughout y^e Empyrean void

Thus to some wakeful Hind who on y^e heights

Outwatches y^e wan planet come y^e notes

Of some far horn along y^e distant Hills

(I.80) Echoing in some beleagur'd country where

15 Y^e pitiless Enemy by Night hath made

} 28-40

28-40 These lines of 'Timbuctoo' possibly involve a re-working of IV.4-7.

1931 (H. Nbk.2)

Sudden incursion and unsafe inroad.

The streams, whose imperceptible advance,
Lingering in slow meanders, once was wont
85 To fertilize the plain beneath - whose course
Was barely marked save by the lazy straws
That wandered down them - now, as instinct with life
Ran like the lightning's wing, and dashed upon
The curvature of their green banks a wreath
90 Of lengthened foam; and yet, although they rushed
Incalculably swift and fringed with spray
The pointed crags, whose wave-worn slippery height
Parted their glassy channels, there awoke

No murmurs round them - but their sapphire depths
95 Of light were changed to crimson, as the sky
Glowed like a fiery furnace.

T. Nbk.18f.4^r (cont.)

Sudden incursion & unsafe inroad

Y^e streams whose imperceptible advance

Lingering in slow meanders once was wont

(I.85) To fertilize y^e plains beneath, whose course20 Was barely mark'd save by y^e lazy strawsWh^o wander'd down them now as instinct with LifeRan like y^e lightning's wing & dash'd uponY^e curvature of their green banks a wreath

(I.90) Of lengthened foam & yet albeit they rushed

25 Incalculably swift & fring'd with sprayY^e pointed crags whose waveworn slippery heightsParted their glassy channels wh^o shot [? afar]f4^vFrom every curving of y^e salient wave

Red stream of sulph'rous vapour there awoke

30 No murmurs round them but their sapphire depths(I.95) Of light were chang'd to crimson as y^e skyMidway between y^e Zenith & y^e West

Trembling & varying with what well might seem

To sight at least tho' powerless in effect

35 Intensity of burnings of strong heat

Glow'd like a fiery furnace

1931 (H. Nbk.2)

In the East

Broad rose the moon, first like a beacon-flame
Seen on the far horizon's utmost verge,
Or red eruption from the fissured cone
100 Of Cotopaxi's cloud-capt altitude;
Then with dilated orb and marked with lines
Of mazy red athwart her shadowy face,
Sickly, as though her secret eyes beheld
Witchcraft's abominations, and the spells
105 Of sorcerers, what time they summon up
From out the stilly chambers of the earth
Obscene, inutterable phantasies.

T. Nbk.18f.5^r

V

In y^e EastBroad rose y^e Moon -- first [^]like[^] y^e rounded Dome

Of some huge Temple in whose twilight vault

Barbaric Priesthood meditate high things

5 To wondrous Idols on y^e crusted wall

Then with dilated Orb & mark'd with lines

Of mazy red ath[^]w[^]art her shadowy face

Sickly as though her secret eyes beheld

Witchcrafts abominations or y^e spells(I.105) 10 Of sorcerers what time they summon upFrom out y^e stilly chambers of y^e Earth

Obscene unutterable phantasies

From whose pale fronts & white unhallow'd eyes

Y^ewandering of her purity shrinks home15 And taints her bosom with polluted rays.

'Twas in that solemn hour of dying Sun

And nascent Moonlight that I look'd between

Y^e range of Mountain Cones & far away

} 28-40

V.16-25
28-40

A draft of this passage appears on f.1^v of H. Nbk.2.
 These lines of 'Timbuctoo' possibly involve a re-
 working of V.1-5.

1931 (H.Nbk.2)

The sun went down; the hot and feverish night
Succeeded; but the parched, unwholesome air

110 Was unrecruited by the tears of heaven.

There was a windless calm, a dismal pause,
A dreary interval, wherein I held
My breath and heard the beatings of my heart.

T.Nbk.18f.5^r(cont.)Saw y^e great Ocean crusted all along20 And sheeted with unalterable white

Now driving with its million madden'd waves

In dreadful impulse & concurrent slope

Of waters to one goal & now again

With violent reflux to another point

25 Relapsing, as 'twere shaken in a bowlf5^v

[blank]

f6^r

VI

Y^e Sun went down -- y^e hot & feverish NightSucceeded, but y^e parch'd unwholesome air(I.110) Was unrecruited by y^e tears of HeavenSome withering drops fell downward: y^e rare herbs5 Pierc'd thro' & thro' with inky blackening

Sicken'd & shrunk beneath such deadly dew.

There was a windless calm, a dismal pause

A dreary interval wherein I held

My breath & heard y^e beatings of my heart

1931 (H.Nbk.2)

The moon showed clearer yet, with deadlier gleam,
115 Her ridged and uneven surface stained
With crosses, fiery streaks, and wandering lines -
Bloody impressions! and a star or two
Peered through the thick and smoky atmosphere.

Strange was that lunar light; the rock which stood
120 Fronting her sanguine ray seemed changed unto
A pillar of crimson, while the other half
Averted, and whatever else around
Stood not in opposition to her beams,
Was shrouded in the densest pall of night
And darkness almost palpable.

125 Deep fear
And trembling came upon me, when I saw
In the remotest chambers of the East
Ranges of silver tents beside the moon,
Clear, but at distance so ineffable,
130 That, save when keenly viewed, they else might seem
But little shining points or galaxies,
The blending of the beams of many stars.

T.Nbk.18

f.6^r (cont.)

10 Y^e Moon shew'd clearer yet with deadlier gleam

(I.115) Her ridged & uneven surface mark'd

With crosses, fiery streaks & wandering lines

Bloody impressions! & a star or two

Peer'd thro' y^e thick & smoky atmosphere

15 Strange was that lunar light, y^e rock wh^{ch} stood

(I.120) Fronting her sanguine ray seem'd chang'd unto

A pillar of crimson, while y^e other half

Averted & whatever else around

Stood not in opposition to her beams

20 Was shrouded in y^e densest pall of night

And darkness well-nigh palpable.

(I.125) Deep fear

And trembling came upon me when I saw

In y^e remotest chambers of y^e East

Ranges of silver tents beside y^e Moon

25 Clear but at distance so ineffable

(I.130) That save when keenly viewed they else might seem

But little shining points or galaxies

 γ^e blending of γ^e beams of many stars

1931 (H.Nbk.2)

Full opposite within the livid West,
In clear relief against the long rich vein
135 Of melancholy red that fringed the sky,
A suite of dark pavilions met mine eyes,
That covered half the western side of Heaven,
Far stretching, in the midst of which towered one
Pre-eminent, which bore aloft in air
140 A standard, round whose staff a mighty snake
Twined his black folds, the while his ardent crest
And glossy neck were swaying to and fro.

II

A rustling of white wings! The bright descent
Of a young seraph! and he stood beside me
In the wide foldings of his argent robes
There on the ridge, and looked into my face
5 With his inutterable shining eyes,
So that with hasty motion I did veil
My vision with both hands, and saw before me
Such coloured spots as dance athwart the eyes

T.Nbk.18f.6^vFull opposite within y^e livid West30 In clear relief against y^e long rich vein(I.135) Of melancholy red that fring'd y^e sky

A suite of dark pavilions met mine eyes

That cover'd half y^e western side of HeavenFar stretching in y^e midst of wh^h tower'd one35 Preeminent, wh^h bore aloft in air

(I.140) A standard round whose staff a mighty snake

Twin'd his black folds y^e while his ardent crest

And glossy neck were swaying to & fro

f7^r

VII

A curve of brightening, flashing, ebbing light! 62

A rustling of white wings! y^e bright descent 63

Of a young Seraph! & he stood be<fore> ^side^ me 64

There on y^e ridge & look'd into my face 65(II.5) 5 With his unutterable shining orbs 66

So that with hasty motion I did veil 67

My vision with both hands & saw before me 68

Such colour'd spots as flit athwart y^e <gaze> ^eyes^ 69

1931 (H.Nbk.2)

Of those that gaze upon the noonday sun.

10 'O Son of Man, why stand you here alone
Upon the mountain, knowing not the things
Which will be, and the gathering of nations
Unto the mighty battle of the Lord?
Thy sense is clogged with dull Mortality,
15 Thy spirit fettered with the bond of clay -
Open thine eyes and see!'

I looked, but not

Upon his face, for it was wonderful
With its exceeding brightness, and the light
Of the great Angel Mind which looked from out
20 The starry glowing of his restless eyes.
I felt my soul grow godlike, and my spirit
With supernatural excitation bound
Within me, and my mental eye grew large
With such a vast circumference of thought,
25 That, in my vanity, I seemed to stand
Upon the outward verge and bound alone
Of God's omniscience. Each failing sense,

T.Nbk.18f.7^r (cont.)

Of those that gaze upon y^e Noonday Sun. 70

(II.10) 10 'O Son of Man why stand you here alone 76

Upon y^e Mountain knowing not y^e things
 Wh^e will be, & y^e gathering of Nations
 Unto y^e mighty battle of y^e Lord? } 77-80

Thy sense is clogg'd with dull Mortality 81

(II.15) 15 Thy spirit fetter'd with y^e bond of clay 82

Open thine eyes & see[']

I look'd, but not 83

Upon his face for it was wonderful 84

With its exceeding brightness & y^e light 85

Of y^e great Angel Mind wh^e look'd from out 86

(II.20) 20 Y^e starry glowing of his restless eyes 87

I felt my soul grow godlike & my spirit 88

With supernatural excitation <heave> bound 89

Within me & my mental eye grew large 90

With such a vast circumference of thought 91

(II.25) 25 That in my vanity I seem'd to stand 92

Upon y^e outward verge & bound alone 93

Of God's Omniscience. Each failing sense 94

70⁷⁶ A draft of 'Timbuctoo', ll.71-75 (present neither in 1931 nor in T.Nbk.18) appears in H.Nbk.2, f.3^r.
 77-80 These lines of 'Timbuctoo' were recast, avoiding all reference to the last battle, from the lines in 'Armageddon'.

1931 (H.Nbk.2)

As with a momentary flash of light,
Grew thrillingly distant and keen. I saw

30 The smallest grain that dappled the dark Earth,
The indistinctest atom in deep air,
The Moon's white cities, and the opal width
Of her small, glowing lakes, her silver heights
Unvisited with dew of vagrant cloud,

35 And the unsounded, undescended depth
Of her black hollows. Nay - the hum of men
Or other things talking in unknown tongues,
And notes of busy Life in distant worlds,
Beat, like a far wave, on my anxious ear.

T.Nbk.18f.7^v

		As with a momentary flash of light	95
		Grew thrillingly distinct & keen. I saw	96
(II.30)	<u>30</u>	Y ^e smallest grain that dappled y ^e dark Earth	97
		Y ^e indistinctest atom in deep air	98
		Y ^e Moon's white Cities & y ^e Opal width	99
		Of her small glowing Lakes, her silver heights	100
		Unvisited with dew of vagrant cloud	101
(II.35)	<u>35</u>	And y ^e unsounded, undescended depth	102
		Of her black hollows. Y ^e clear Galaxy	103
		Shorn of its hoary lustre, wonderful	104
		Distinct & vivid with sharp points of light	105
		Blaze within blaze, an unimagined depth	106
	<u>40</u>	And harmony of planet girded Suns	107
		And moonencircled planets wheel in wheel	108
		Arch'd y ^e wan Sapphire. Nay -- y ^e hum of Men	109
		Or other things talking in unknown tongues	110
		And notes of busy Life in distant worlds	111
	<u>45</u>	Beat like a far wave on my anxious ear	112

1931 (H.Nbk.2)

40 I wondered with deep wonder at myself:
My mind seemd^e winged with knowledge and the
 ^h
 strength
Of holy musings and immense Ideas,
Even to Infinitude. All sense of Time
And Being and Place was swallowed up and lost
45 Within a victory of boundless thought.
I was part of the Unchangeable,
A scintillation of Eternal Mind,
Remixed and burning with its parent fire.
Yea! in that hour I could have fallen down
50 Before my own strong soul and worshipped it.

II.50 Following this line there are no further
correspondences between the 1931 text of 'Armageddon'
and the text of T.Nbk.18.

T.Nbk.18

f.7^v(cont.)

- (II.40) I wonder'd with deep wonder at myself
 My soul seem'd wing'd with knowledge & y^e strength
 Of holy musings & immense Ideas
 Even to Infinitude. All sense of Time
- 50 And Being & Place was gather'd up & lost
- (II.45) Within a victory of boundless thought
 I was a part of y^e Unchangeable
 A scintillation of Eternal Mind
 Remix'd & glowing with its Parent fire
- 55 Yea -- in that hour I c^d have fallen down
- (II.50) Before my own strong soul & worshipp'd it.

VII.56 Following this line there are no further
 correspondences between the T.Nbk.18 draft of
 'Armageddon' and the text of 1931.

1931 (H.Nbk.2)

Highly and holily the Angel looked.
 Immeasurable Solitude and Awe,
 And solemn Adoration and high Faith,
 Were traced on his imperishable front -
55 Then with a mournful and ineffable smile, 185
 Which but to look on for a moment filled 186
 My eyes with irresistible sweet tears, 187
 In accents of majestic melody, 188
 Like a swollen river's gushings in still night 189
60 Mingled with floating music, thus he spoke. 190

III

'O Everlasting God, and thou not less
 The Everlasting Man (since that great spirit
 Which permeates and informs thine inward sense,
 Though limited in action, capable
5 Of the extreme of knowledge - whether joined
 Unto thee in conception or confined
 From former wanderings in other shapes
 I know not - deathless as its God's own life,

185-90 The only lines of 'Timbuctoo' which appear in 1931 but not in 'Armageddon', T.Nbk.18.

T.Nbk.18f.7^v(cont.)

	A maze of piercing, trackless thrilling thoughts	113
	Involving & embracing each with each	114
	Rapid as fire, inextricably link'd,	115
<u>60</u>	Expanding momentarily with every sound	116
	And sight wh struck y ^e palpitating sense	117
	Y ^e issue of strong impulse hurried thro'	118
	Y ^e riv'n rapt brain, as when in some great lake	119
	From pressure of descendant crags wh lapse	120
<u>65</u>	Disjointed, crumbling from their parent slope	121
	At slender interval, y ^e level calm	122
	Is ridg'd with restless & increasing spheres	123
	Wh break upon each other, each the effect	124
	Of separate impulse but more fleet & strong	125

f.8^r

<u>70</u>	Than its precursor till y ^e eye in vain	126
	Amid y ^e wild unrest of swimming shade	127
	Dappled with hollow & alternate rise	128
	Of interpenetrated arc wd scan	129
	Definite round --	
	I know not if I shape	130
<u>75</u>	These things with accurate Similitude	131
	From natural object for but dimly now	132
	Less vivid than a half forgotten dream	133

1931 (H.Nbk.2)

Burns on with inextinguishable strength),

- 10 O Lords of Earth and Tyrannies of Hell,
And Thrones of Heaven, whose triple pride shall clash
In the annihilating anarchy
Of unimaginable war, a day
Of darkness riseth on ye, a thick day,
15 Palled with dun wreaths of dusky fight, a day
Of many thunders and confused noise,
Of bloody grapplings in the interval
Of the opposed Battle, a great day
Of wonderful revealings and vast sights
20 And inconceivable visions, such as yet
Have never shone into the heart of Man -
THE DAY of the Lord God!'

His voice grew deep

- With volumes of strong sound, which made the rock
To throb beneath me, and his parted locks
25 Of spiral light fell raylike, as he moved,
On each white shoulder: his ambrosial lip
Was beautifully curved, as in the pride

T.Nbk.18f.8^r (cont.)

- Y^e memory of that mental excellence 134
 Comes oer my Spirit & I may entwine 135
80 Y^e indecision of my present mind 136
 With its past clear <ly>ness, yet it seems to me 137
 As, even then, y^e torrent of quick thought 138
 Absorb'd me from y^e nature of itself 139
 With its own fleetness. Where is he, that, borne 140
85 Adown y^e sloping of an arrowy stream 141
 Cd link his shallop to y^e fleeting edge 142
 And muse, midway, with Philosophic calm 143
 Upon y^e wondrous Laws wh^h regulate 144
 Y^e fierceness of y^e bounding Element? 145
90 Past, present, future swept, a mighty host
 Of multiplied & multiplying shapes,
 In fleet review before me, as y^e mind
 In y^e omnipotence of Memory
 Unhesitating judgement & thence force
95 And certainty of Prescience at one glance
 Collated, measured & compar'd & weigh'd
 All fact & speculation, argument,
 Falsehood & truth, minutest History,
 Y^e opposites of will & Destiny

1931 (H.Nbk.2)

And power of his mid Prophecy: his nostril
Dilated with Expression; half upturned
30 The broad beneficence of his clear brow
Into the smoky sky; his sunlike eyes
With tenfold glory lit; his mighty arm
Outstretched described half-circles; small thin flashes
Of intense lustre followed it.

IV

I looked,
And lo! the vision of the night was changed.
The sooty mantle of infernal smoke
Whose blank, obliterating, dewless cloud
5 Had made the plain like some vast crater, rose
Distinct from Earth and gathered to itself
In one dense, dry, interminable mass
Sailing far Northward, as it were the shadow
Of this round Planet cast upon the face
10 Of the bleak air. But this was wonderful,
To see how full it was of living things,
Strange shapings, and anomalies of Hell,
And dusky faces, and protruded arms
Of hairy strength, and white and garish eyes,
15 And silent intertwisted thunderbolts,

T.Nbk.18f.8^r (cont.)

<u>100</u>	Evil & good & worn Despair & Hope	
	Shrinking & trembling betwixt tear & smile	
	And all that makes y ^e wondrous mind of Man.	
	My thoughts wh ^h long had grovell'd in y ^e slime	146
	Of this dull world like dusky worms wh ^h house	147
<u>105</u>	Beneath unshaken waters, but at once	148
	Upon some Earth awakening day of Spring	149
	Do pass from gloom to glory & aloft	150
	Winnow y ^e purple bearing on both sides	151
	Double display of starlike wings wh ^h burn	152

f.8^v

<u>110</u>	Fibred & fanlike with intensest bloom	153
	Even so my thoughts erewhile so low, now felt	154
	Unutterable buoyancy & strength	155
	To bear them upward through y ^e trackless fields	156
	Of undefin'd existence far & free	157

VIII

	Then first within y ^e East methought I saw	158
	Y ^e wilderness of tents & chrystal pile	159

VII 103-114 These lines appear to have been inserted at a later stage than the rest of the draft. Tennyson filled up the blank space at the foot of f.8^r and then squeezed ll.110-114 into the space at the top of f.8^v above the beginning of section VIII.

1931 (H.Nbk.2)

Wreathing and sparkling restlessly like snakes
Within their grassy depths. I watched it till
Its latest margin sank beneath the sweep
Of the horizon.

 All the crimson streaks
20 And bloody dapplings faded from the disk
Of the immaculate Moon.

 An icy veil
Of pale, weak, lifeless, thin, unnatural blue
Wrapt up the rich varieties of things
In grim and ghastly sameness.

 The clear stars
25 Shone out with keen but fixed intensity,
All-silence, looking steadfast consciousness
Upon the dark and windy waste of Earth.
There was a beating in the atmosphere,
An indefinable pulsation
30 Inaudible to outward sense, but felt
Through the deep heart of every living thing,
As if the great soul of the Universe
Heaved with tumultuous throbbings on the vast
Suspense of some grand issue.

T.Nbk.18f.8^v(cont.)

	Of rampart upon rampart Dome on Dome	160
	Illimitable range of battlement	161
<u>5</u>	On battlement & y ^e Imperial height	162
	Of Canopy oercanopied	
	Behind	163
	In diamond light unsprung y ^e gorgeous Cones	164
	Of Pyramids as far surpassing Earth's	165
	As Heaven than Earth is fairer. Each aloft	166
<u>10</u>	Upon its narrow'd Eminence bore globes	167
	Of wheeling Suns or stars or semblances	168
	Of either, showering circular abyss	169
	Of radiance. But y ^e glory of y ^e place	170
	Stood out a pillar'd front of burnish'd gold	171
<u>15</u>	Interminably high if gold it were	172
	Or metal more etherial & beneath	173
	Two doors of blinding brilliance where no gaze	174

VIII.3-6
VIII.7-16

A draft of these lines appears on f.2^r of H.Nbk.2
 " " " " " " at the foot of f.2^r,
H.Nbk.2.

VIII.10-17

A draft of these lines appears at the foot of f.1^v,
H.Nbk.2.

T.Nbk.18f.8^v (cont.)

	Might rest, stood open & y ^e eye cd scan	175
	Thro' length of porch & valve & boundless hall	176
<u>20</u>	Part of a throne of fiery flame wherefrom	177
	Y ^e snowy skirting of a garment hung	178
	And glimpse of multitudes of multitudes	179
	That minister'd around it -- if I saw	180
	These things distinctly for my human brain	181
<u>25</u>	Stagger'd beneath y ^e vision & thick night	182
	Came down upon my eyelids & I fell.	183

f.9^r

IX

	With ministering hand he rais'd me up	184
	And pointed to the lurid West. Then first	
	An unimaginable, unremember'd	
	Visionlike altitude upon my sight	
<u>5</u>	Rose --	
	That wonderful Pavilion borne on high	
	By many a vast & jet-black colonnade	
	Pellucid round whose wreathed ebony	
	Fell curtains of deep sable & between	

VIII.18-23

A draft of these lines appears at the top of f.2^v,
H.Nbk.2 (this section of the draft continues from l.17
 drafted at the foot of f.1^v).

T.Nbk.18f.9^r (cont.)

- 10 Each range a broad & gleaming interval
 Scoop'd into nichesⁱⁿ/whose archèd shade
 All emblems of Satanick imposture
 ^ All superstitions, all Idolatry, ^
 Stood, sat, or mov'd, in lifelike attitudes
- 15 Imperially graceful: Dionys,
 Prime Veneration, his august presence
 Shaded & cinctur'd with the bunchy vine
 Behind him on a carved Ocean
 With semblance of y^e peaky wave engrail'd
- 20 Labour'd an immeasurable keel
 And toward the sloping roof on equal wing
 Mystic Jonah wander'd & y^e gleam

f.9^v

Of Heaven's first arch was on her amber plumes.

APPENDIX B

G.S. FABER AND TENNYSON: A NOTE ON THE
QUESTION OF INFLUENCE

In Tennyson In Egypt W.D. Paden speculated that in Tennyson's 'Morte d'Arthur' (written 1833-34, first published 1842) the 'narrative of Malory was suffused with ... connotations drawn' from George Stanley Faber's The Origin of Pagan Idolatry Ascertained from Historical Testimony and Circumstantial Evidence (London, 1816).¹ Paden also suggested a further number of instances in which Faber's treatise 'may be considered to have inspired concepts or details in Tennyson's poems of 1828-1832'.² Among these he saw the clearest indication of influence in 'The Hesperides' (1832).

No information has come to light to prove that Tennyson owned, or was ever in a position to have read, the Origin of Pagan Idolatry. But, in his edition of Tennyson's Poems Christopher Ricks has noted that there is evidence in the Tennyson Research Centre to show that Tennyson would at least have had access to two other works by Faber. Ricks's interpretation of the evidence is in some measure mistaken, however, and since the question of a Faberian influence in Tennyson is of critical interest, it seems worth offering a few corrections and modifications of his account.

In his headnote to the text of 'The Hesperides' in his edition, Ricks records that 'There was a copy at Somersby [in the Library of Tennyson's father, George Clayton Tennyson] ... of Faber's

1. Page 81. Paden discusses G.S. Faber's ideas and their relationship to Tennyson's 'Morte d'Arthur' on pp.77-88.

2. Page 81. Paden's suggestions concerning Faberian influences in the poems of this period are contained in the notes to pp.79-90 of his text.

Horae Mosaicae (1818 edn)¹. The Horae Mosaicae (first published: Oxford, 1801) contains Faber's basic concept of the myth of the Hesperidian Gardens, although it does not include the elaborate sets of correspondence between the classical fable and the Biblical description of Paradise which he was to advance in the Origin of Pagan Idolatry. Christopher Ricks refers to a copy of the two-volume second edition of the Horae Mosaicae (London, 1818) which is now amongst the holdings in the Tennyson Research Centre. There is, however, no reason to suppose that this copy once formed part of Tennyson's father's library.

The evidence for the contents of that library lies in a number of books housed in the Tennyson Research Centre and in an original manuscript sale inventory (also now in the Centre) of George Clayton Tennyson's possessions, including his books, taken on 'the 8th & 9th days of June, 1831, by Jno. & Thos. Jackson'.² Faber's Horae Mosaicae neither appears amongst the extant books of George Clayton Tennyson's library (which are either autographed by him or are associated with his library through Tennyson family tradition),³ nor is included in the manuscript inventory of his books. The copy of the second edition of the Horae Mosaicae that is now in the Research Centre bears only the autograph (inside the front board of the second volume), and the annotations (throughout both volumes), of Tennyson's brother Charles Turner.⁴ This is housed in the Centre as part of

1. Page 423. Professor Ricks's convention of referring to Somersby in order to indicate the presence of a book in G.C. Tennyson's library is explained on p.xx of the 'Preface' to his edition.

2. For a brief history of G.C. Tennyson's library see the 'Cataloguer's Notes' in Campbell, I, XV.

3. At the inception of the Tennyson Research Centre in 1964 a number of books, not bearing the autograph of G.C. Tennyson and not appearing in the sale inventory of his possessions, were placed amongst the collection of his books on the authority of Sir Charles Tennyson.

4. Charles Tennyson changed his name to Turner in about 1836 on inheriting property in Lincolnshire from a great-uncle.

Charles Turner's Library.¹ One might have speculated as an extremely remote possibility that this was a book which, originally belonging to G.C. Tennyson, passed at some stage into the possession of his son. However, a set of publishers' advertisements (pp.1 2-8) sewn between the front endpapers of the first volume of this copy bears the date 'MARCH, 1850' (p.1).² It seems probable, therefore, that the copy was acquired by Charles Turner himself at some time after the late distribution date indicated by these advertisement pages.

Referring to Paden's assertion that a Faberian influence is discernible in the 'Morte d'Arthur', Christopher Ricks comments, in the headnote to the poem in his edition, that 'Paden's internal evidence alone is not decisive. But two other books by Faber were at Somersby ...: Horae Mosaicae (1818 edn), and The Difficulties of Infidelity (2nd edn, 1833).'³ Ricks is referring here to an unautographed copy of The Difficulties of Infidelity which appears amongst the collection of Tennyson's own books in the Tennyson Research Centre.⁴ Since George Clayton Tennyson died in 1831 there is, of course, no sense in which this copy of the second edition of 1833 is to be associated with his library. More importantly, there is evidence to suggest that this copy of the Difficulties could not have come into Tennyson's own possession until after the publication of the 'Morte d'Arthur' in 1842.

1. Campbell 2465.

2. The 1818 title-pages bear the publishers' names 'F.C. and J. Rivington'. On p.1 and in the head-lines of the later series of advertisement pages the publishers are listed as 'MESSRS. RIVINGTON'. Page 4 of the series carries advertisements for Christopher Wordsworth's Elements of Instruction concerning the Church, and the Anglican Branch of it (London, 1849), and for The English Review, XXIV (January 1850).

3. Page 585. Ricks repeats this note on the presence in Tennyson's father's library of these works by Faber in his headnotes to the texts of 'The Kraken' (p.246) and 'The Lady of Shalott' (p.354).

4. Campbell 917.

Inside the front board of this copy of the Difficulties is the stamp: 'WIGHT & BAILEY/CHELTHENHAM'. Examination of nineteenth-century Cheltenham town guide-books and directories shows that Wight and Bailey were the joint proprietors of the 'Theological Library', a subscription library with premises in Promenade Villas, Cheltenham, from about 1845 to 1862 or 1863. The principal and most reliable record of the ownership of this library from about 1837 is to be found in issues of The Cheltenham Annuaire, a town directory first published for the year 1837 (the only year in which it did not include a trades directory), and subsequently issued annually until 1916.¹ Appearing early in the New Year the information contained in each issue of the Annuaire was up to date approximately to the closing months of each preceding year. It may be noted that the first mention of the 'Theological Library' is in Cheltenham town guide-books of 1834.² Then in the hands of one William Wight the business appears to have remained under his proprietorship until 1838 or 1839. 'Wight, W.' is given as sole owner in the issues of the Annuaire for 1838 (p.103) and 1839 (p.124). Thereafter, yearly entries in the directory show the business passing through a number of different hands until, in the issue for 1846, it appears for the first time under the names 'Wight and Bailey' (p.171). These continue to be entered as owners in all issues of the Annuaire up to and including that for 1863. 'Wight, Miss' is given as sole owner in the issues of the directory for 1864 (p.250) and 1865 (p.250), and after 1865 the business disappears from record.

1. There is a complete set of the Annuaire in the Cheltenham Public Library. Individual volumes in the series are here referred to by year. I am grateful to Mr. Beacham, of the Cheltenham Public Library, for bringing my attention to these and other materials.

2. Cf., for example, Henry Davies, The Stranger's Guide Through Cheltenham, 2nd ed., Cheltenham, [1834], p.96.

The evidence of the Wight and Bailey stamp in Tennyson's copy of The Difficulties of Infidelity should be considered in conjunction with the fact that the Tennyson family moved residence from Boxley in Kent to Cheltenham in the autumn of 1843.¹ Tennyson himself led an itinerant existence during the 1840s but Cheltenham remained his family base, to which he frequently resorted, until his marriage in 1850. It seems not unreasonable to suppose that Tennyson acquired his copy of the Difficulties during one of his sojourns in Cheltenham some time between about 1845 and 1850.

To conclude, it appears that the copies of the Horae Mosaicae and The Difficulties of Infidelity at Lincoln do not in themselves lend external support to W.D. Paden's thesis concerning the influence of Faberian concepts in Tennyson's earlier work.

1. Charles Tennyson, in Alfred Tennyson, p.200, writes that the family left Boxley 'before December' 1843. In a holograph manuscript note (inserted in the second volume of Hallam Tennyson's MS. Materials) Edmund Lushington records that the Tennyson family moved from Boxley in the latter part of 1843 and that he stayed with them in their new home at Cheltenham from 9 October to 22 October 1843. This detail was not used by Hallam Tennyson when he came to print portions of Lushington's manuscript, under the title 'Reminiscences of Tennyson', in the Memoir, I, 201-203.

APPENDIX C

THE TEXTUAL DEVELOPMENT OF 'OENONE' BETWEEN POEMS,
1832 AND POEMS, 1842

As noted above (p.112,n.1), Philip Gaskell identifies in From Writer to Reader (pp.119; 136, n.13) seven stages in the revision of 'Oenone' between its publication in Poems (1832), where it consisted of 256 lines (pp.51-64), and its reappearance in the two-volume Poems of 1842, where it was expanded to 265 lines (I, 118-31). These seven stages, listed in chronological order of the state of development of the poem, comprise: an incomplete copy of the 1832 volume with autograph revisions to the text of 'Oenone', now in the Tennyson Research Centre (hereafter referred to as Lincoln A);¹ a revised copy of 1832 given by Tennyson to J.M.Heath, now in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge (hereafter referred to as Heath);² and five successive holograph draft revisions in a notebook now at Trinity College, Cambridge (MS. 0.15.26; hereafter T.Nbk.26).³ The draft revisions in T.Nbk.26, which appear to be arranged substantially in the order of composition, are as follows:

- a f.1^r ; 37 lines.
- b ff.2^r-4^v; 282 lines. A MS. fragment of 'Oenone' now at the Henry E. Huntington Library, California (HM.19501) constitutes (as Gaskell notes, p.119) a leaf originally removed from T.Nbk.26, where it probably followed the

1. Lincoln A is the copy listed by Sir Charles Tennyson in Unpublished Early Poems by Alfred Tennyson, p.71, as a 'proof copy [sic] of the volume of 1832' containing a 'version written by Tennyson in ink' of 'The Ruined Kiln' (unpublished; first printed by Sir Charles in Nineteenth Century, CIX(1931), pp 503-4).

2. Gaskell, p.119, notes that Heath's copy of 1832 was given to him 'before the spring of 1837'. John Moore Heath (1808-82) seems to have become engaged to the poet's sister Mary in the autumn of 1835. 'Later (1836 or 1837) he broke off the engagement and consequently his friendship with the Tennysons' (Letters, I, 349).

3. Gaskell, p.119, notes that the draft revisions of 'Oenone' in T.Nbk.26 may be dated 1837-42.

present f.2; it contains a further 80 lines of b (hereafter Huntington MS.).

c f.27^r; 15 lines.

d f.28^r; 11 lines.

e ff.28^v-29^r; 90 lines.¹

Gaskell's account of the overall scheme of development of 'Oenone' is correct. But three further stages in the development of the work between 1832 and 1842 must be added to the seven which he describes. There is, firstly, a copy of 1832 with manuscript revisions by Tennyson in the British Library (Ashley 2073). The volume is inscribed by Tennyson to Douglas Denon Heath (1811-97), who was the younger brother of J.M.Heath and a lifelong friend of the poet. The annotations to 'Oenone' in this copy are recorded by T.J.Wise in The Ashley Library: A Catalogue of Printed Books, Manuscripts and Autograph Letters Collected by Thomas James Wise, 11 vols (privately-printed, London, 1922-36), VIII, 203-204. Collation shows that the revised version of 'Oenone' in this copy constitutes a slightly earlier stage in the textual development of the poem than that represented by the altered version in Lincoln A. Secondly, the concluding words of a holograph draft revision of the opening of the poem can be discerned on the fly-leaf, most of which has been torn off, of Tennyson's copy of Rabenhorst's Pocket Dictionary of the German and English Languages, 3rd edition, London, 1829 (now in the Tennyson Research Centre; Campbell 1846). I shall describe this fragment in a postscript to this appendix. Thirdly, and most important, there survives in the Tennyson Research Centre a second copy of 1832 containing manuscript alterations by the poet. The text of 'Oenone' in this copy (hereafter Lincoln B) is considerably more

1. These line counts include repetitions and deletions.

heavily revised than that in Lincoln A, and it contains several significant variants which were never published by Tennyson and which appear neither in the annotated copies hitherto traced nor in the surviving manuscript drafts.¹ In the complicated development of the poem, Lincoln B comes between Heath and the revised states in the Trinity and Huntington manuscripts. This can be demonstrated by examining Tennyson's revisions in Lincoln B of lines 1-13 [1-14] and 90-96 [93-99].²

Tennyson's alterations to the introductory lines of 'Oenone' in Heath and in Lincoln B are shown in figures I and II, respectively. It is important to note that two levels of emendation, in dark ink and in light ink, are discernible throughout the text of 'Oenone' in Lincoln B. Inscribed in dark ink are both first and second revisions of the 1832 text. Inscribed in light ink are alterations substituted in place of first or second revised readings in dark ink, together with a number of alterations to hitherto unrevised lines in the 1832 text. There are no instances of readings substituted in place of, or

1. Neither Lincoln A nor Lincoln B is recorded in Campbell. The copies are listed, however, as items 5 and 6 in the catalogue to a temporary exhibition of Tennyson material held at the Usher Gallery, Lincoln in 1963 (Tennyson Collection: Usher Gallery, Lincoln. With a Foreword and Annotations by Sir Charles Tennyson C.M.G., Lincoln, 1963, p.7). The title page of Lincoln B is inscribed 'M.L.N./London/March 27th/1839'. The dates of this inscription appear to have been corrected, March 27 being possibly substituted for March 28 and 1839 for 1838. However, these apparent 'corrections' are possibly evidences of nothing more than a faulty pen. The initials may be those of Mary Langton Neville, who was a guest of the Tennyson family at High Beech and in London during 1839 (cf. letter from Cecilia Tennyson to Susan Haddelsey of 23 March 1839: Letters, I, 169-70; also Charles Tennyson, Alfred Tennyson, pp.173-75).

2. Throughout the account which follows, line numbers shown outside parentheses key to the 1832 text of 'Oenone'. Line numbers in square brackets refer to the final text of the poem as published in Eversley, I, 158-68 (264 lines). The counterparts in 1842 of all passages cited from 1832, Heath, and Lincoln B are given in the text of this appendix. The variants between 1842 and the final published text are minor, with the exception that 1842 had one line not in Eversley [206/207]. In my transcription of the poet's MS. draft revisions I have not preserved his use of the long 'f'.

which otherwise supersede, alterations made in light ink. The revisions in light ink appear to constitute a distinct final layer of emendation to the text of 'Oenone' in this copy.¹ In the introductory lines, the dash at the end of the revision of line 2, the second revision of line 3, the cancellation of line 9, and the changes in lines 4 and 11 of the 1832 text may be distinguished from the other alterations to the passage by the light ink in which they are recorded.

1. All alterations to the text in Lincoln B which are quoted in this appendix are inscribed in dark ink unless otherwise stated.

FIGURE I

THERE is a dale in Ida, lovelier
 Than any ^{of the} ~~in~~ old Ionian ^{dale} ~~beautified~~
^{Most beautiful with sunny}
 (Made) ~~With emerald slopes of sunny sward~~, that lean
 Above the loud glenriver, which hath worn
 5 A path thro' ^{cunning} ~~steep down~~ granite walls below
 Mantled with flowering ^{S. All at once} ~~tender tresses~~. In front
 The cedarshadowy valleys open wide.
^{Thus these}
~~Far-seen~~, high over all the ~~Godbuilt wall~~ ^{crowned tower}
 And many a snowycolumned range divine,
 10 Mounted with awful sculptures—men and Gods,
 The work of Gods—bright on the darkblue sky
 The windy citadel of Ilion
^{was far}
~~Show, like~~ the crown of Troas. Hither came

Tennyson's alterations to 'Oenone' in the Heath copy of 1832, p.51
 (Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge; original size 78x96mm approximately).

FIGURE II

THERE is a dale in Ida, lovelier
 Than any ~~in old Ionia, beautiful~~ ^{of the old Trojan dale—}
~~With emerald slopes of sunny sword, that lean~~ ^{Most beautiful with gleaming towers when, like a bosom, swell the land}
 Above the loud glenriver, ~~which hath worn~~ ^{while he weared}
 5 A path thro' ~~steep down~~ ^{curving} granite walls below
 Mantled with flowering ~~tendrils twine~~ ^{s, all at once on the plain in front} In front
 The cedarshadowy valleys open wide.
~~Far seen, high over all the Godbuilt wall~~ ^{Thro' these crowded towers}
 And many a snowycolumned range divine,
 10 Mounted with awful sculptures—men and Gods,
 The work of Gods—~~bright on~~ ^{against} the darkblue ~~sky~~ ^{land}
 The windy citadel of Ilion
~~Show, like~~ ^{looms far,} the crown of Troas. Hither came

Tennyson's alterations to 'Oenone' in the Lincoln B copy of 1832, p.51
 (Tennyson Research Centre, Lincoln; original size 78x96mm
 approximately).

On the basis of this distinction it can be seen that the changes initially made in the opening thirteen lines of 'Oenone' in Lincoln B were the same as those in Heath, except that line 3 was changed to read 'Most beautiful with slanting lawns that lean'. Tennyson's second revision of this line ('Where, like a bosom, swell the lawns & lean') is a good example of a reading which was neither retained in 1842 nor occurs in any other known revision of the poem between 1832 and 1842. It is a striking instance of Tennyson's experimentation with the erotic use of landscape which, while not entirely absent from the 1832 version of the poem, was to be managed with more highly charged effect in 1842.

Taken as a whole, Tennyson's final reading of the opening lines of 'Oenone' in Lincoln B represents an elaboration on the emended version of the passage in Heath, and yet it involves no fundamental changes in the structure of the passage as it exists in the 1832 text. These were to be made in the course of the draft revisions of the passage in T.Nbk.26. The first of these drafts (f.1^r) began the process of revision which was to transform the vista described in lines 6-13 of 1832 ('In front Troas.') into the much shorter account in 1842:

There is a dale in Ida lovelier
 Than any dale among Ionian hills.
 There slants the mountains meadowy base to lean
 Above the long glen-river, while he wears
 A pathway, loud with various waterfalls,
 Thro' curves of ivied granite; & in front,
 The shadowed valleys, opening wide, reveal
 Ilion, & Simois, & the summer sea,
 Troas, & Ilion's windy citadel,

The crown of Troas. Hither came at noon

[1-14]

1842 shows the extent of the revisions made in the succeeding drafts in T.Nbk.26. In the closing lines of the passage, Tennyson had made final economies in his description of the distant view of Ilion:

THERE lies a vale in Ida, lovelier
 Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.
 The swimming vapour slopes athwart the glen,
 Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine to pine,
 And loiters, slowly drawn. On either hand
 The lawns and meadow-ledges midway down
 Hang rich in flowers, and far below them roars
 The long brook falling thro' the clov'n ravine
 In cataract after cataract to the sea.
 Behind the valley topmost Gargarus
 Stands up and takes the morning: but in front
 The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal
 Troas and Ilion's column'd citadel,
 The crown of Troas.

Hither came at noon

[1-14]

Tennyson's alterations in lines 90-96 (the account by Oenone of the midnoon landscape through which the goddesses come to arbitration) in Heath are shown in Figure III. Figure IV shows lines 90-96 of the revised text of 'Oenone' in Lincoln B. There^{are} problems in interpreting the cancellations and revisions in this extract from Lincoln B. The evidence suggests that there are, very possibly, three stages of revision.

FIGURE III

- 90 Naked they came to the ^{at} smoothswarded bower,
 Lustrous with lily ^{& hyacinth - myriads-eyed} flower, violet-eyed
^{with violet-hues -}
 Both ~~white and blue~~, with lotetree-fruit thickset,
 Shadowed with singing pine; and all the while,
 Above, the overwandering ivy and vine
 95 This way and that in many a wild festoon
 Ran riot, garlanding the gnarlèd boughs

FIGURE IV

90 Naked they came to ^{that} the smoothswarded bower,
 91 Lustrous with lily flower, ~~violet eyed~~
 92 ~~And all the graft was black with violet~~ *darkened with violet*
 93 ~~Both white and blue, with lotus tree fruit thickset,~~
 94 ~~Shro' which the pointed crocus broke like fire~~
 95 ~~Shadowed with singing pine; and all the while,~~
 96 ~~And ^{the} roses bloomed: but overhead~~ *always overhead*
 97 ~~Above, the overwandering ivy and vine~~
 98 ~~Sang the dark pine tree where the wandering vine~~
 99 This way and that in many a wild festoon
 100 Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs

Tennyson's alterations to 'Oenone' in the Lincoln B copy of 1832, p.56
 (Tennyson Research Centre, Lincoln; original size approximately
 44x98mm).

Tennyson seems at first to have attempted a revision of the passage comparable to that in Heath. Thus, in line 91, it is clear that he must have initially cancelled 'flower' and substituted '& myrtle,' leaving the first part of the line uncanceled. It is possible that at the same time he left 'violeteyed' uncanceled as part of a first revision of the line. According to this interpretation, he would then have deleted 'Lustrous with lily & myrtle, violeteyed' before substituting 'And all the grass was black with violets' as a second revision of the line. If we take it that Tennyson's initial alterations in line 91 were preceded by the substitution of 'that' for 'the' in line 90, we may tentatively propose a first revision of this midnight passage which would involve changes only in lines 90-91, so that the passage would have begun:

A Naked they came to that smoothswarded bower,
 Lustrous with lily & myrtle, violeteyed

It is possible to speculate, however, that 'violeteyed' was never intended to stand as part of a first revision of line 91: Tennyson may simply have begun an alteration of the line, perhaps intending to revise it to agree fully with Heath, but proceeded only as far as cancelling 'flower' and substituting '& myrtle,' before coming up with a completely new idea of how the line might be written. In this case the cancellation of 'Lustrous with lily & myrtle,' and also of 'violeteyed' would still have preceded Tennyson's substitution of a second revision of the line. It is also possible that Tennyson cancelled 'violeteyed' at the same time as cancelling 'flower'. In this case it might again be understood that Tennyson began, but never completed, an alteration of line 91, and that he progressed only as far as substituting '& myrtle,' before changing his mind and cancelling 'Lustrous with lily & myrtle,'. Once again he would then

have proceeded to substitute a second revision of line 91 in the manner I have described.

As a second revision of line 91 Tennyson's substitution of 'And all the grass was black with violets' may be understood to form part of a second stage of emendation which involved changes in lines 91-94 of the 1832 text. Below is a transcript of the whole passage as it would have read in this apparent second stage of revision. Of particular importance is the introduction of that firelike appearance of the crocus in the midnight landscape which was to remain, in slightly varying forms, a permanent part of the text:

B Naked they came to that smoothswarded bower,
 And all the grass was black with violets
 Thro' which the pointed crocus broke like fire
 And many roses bloomed: but overhead
 Sang the dark pinetree where the wandering vine
 This way and that in many a wild festoon
 Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs

At this point it is necessary to indicate a further alternative in respect of the cancellation of 'violeteyed' in line 91 of the 1832 text. Supposing Tennyson deleted 'violeteyed' and 'flower' at the same time, it cannot be discounted as a possibility that what I give as Tennyson's second revision of line 91, together with the succeeding lines of B, originally followed on from 'Lustrous with lily & myrtle,' as part of a first emendation of the text. In this case it should be noted that we cannot simply associate the deletion of 'Lustrous with lily & myrtle,' with the substitution of 'darkened with violets' for 'was black with violets' in the line of revision below line 91. This emendation, together with what I shall describe below as the series of further alterations to B which make up Tennyson's third and final

reading of the midnight passage (C), are to be distinguished from all others in the extract by the fact that they are inscribed in light ink.

It seems most likely that Tennyson's reading of 'Lustrous with lily & myrtle,' in line 91 represents a part of a comparatively conservative first revision which was in the first instance cancelled in favour of a new reading of the line. Not only does it look back towards Heath, but what I have interpreted as the second revision of line 91 looks forward, as we shall also see below, to the version of the midnight scene in the Huntington MS., where the equivalent of this second revision of line 91 follows on directly from the line 'Naked they came to that smooth-swarded bower' with no intervening survival of a reading in Heath. This in itself does not prove that in Lincoln B 'Lustrous with lily & myrtle,' was deleted before the inscription of 'And all the grass was black with violets', but the probability is suggested by the fact that the two revisions appear to be associated with two fundamentally different stages in the development of Tennyson's conception of the passage. In his revision of the midnight scene in Heath Tennyson merely tinkered with the floral ornament of the scene. In Lincoln B, the distinguishing feature of what I have identified as the second revision of line 91, and also of the revision of lines 92-93 in B is the idea of a sudden eruption of sensuous life in the midnight landscape at the moment when the goddesses assemble for the judgement. This remained the characteristic aspect of the scene in 1842, and all of Tennyson's revisions between B in Lincoln B and 1842 show him attempting to refine, but not otherwise to change, this basic idea. It appears that the annotations to lines 90-96 in Lincoln B contain evidence of a crucial imaginative leap on Tennyson's part.

Tennyson made a few further alterations in B, so that the midnight

passage finally reads:

C Naked they came to that smoothswarded bower,
 And all the grass darkened with violets
 Thro' which the sudden crocus broke like fire
 And the rose bloomed: but always overhead
 Sang the dark pinetree where the wandering vine
 This way and that in many a wild festoon
 Ran riot, garlanding the gnarlèd boughs

The first three lines of this revision are comparable to the equivalent lines in the Huntington MS. There, however, Tennyson took his revisions of the passage a step nearer 1842 through his introduction, among other modifications, of amaracus and asphodel to Oenone's account of the scene:

Naked they came to that smooth-swarded bower
 That darkened all with violets underneath
 Thro' which like fire the sudden crocus came,
 Amaracus, immortal asphodel,
 Lotos and lilies: & a wind arose
 And overhead the wandering ivy & vine
 This way & that in many a wild festoon
 Ran riot, garlanding the gnarlèd boughs

[93-99]¹

1. Philip Gaskell's identification of the Huntington MS. as originally probably following the present f.2 in T.Nbk.26 enables us to regard the version of the midnight scene which it contains as constituting a slightly earlier stage of revision than that represented by the earliest revised version in T.Nbk.26 (which now comes on f.3^r). There are, in fact, two draft revisions of the passage on f.3^r. The first, which is uncanceled, involves four lines only [93-6]. These are closer than Huntington MS. to the version of 1842:

Naked they came to that smooth-swarded bower,
 And at their feet the crocus burst like fire,
 Black violet, asphodel, amaracus

In 1842 the text runs:

Naked they came to that smooth-swarded bower,
 And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,
 Violet, amaracus, and asphodel,
 Lotos and lilies: and a wind arose
 And overhead the wandering ivy and vine,
 This way and that, in many a wild festoon
 Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs

[93-99]

In Lincoln B the words 'And the rose bloomed', which in C are substituted for the first part of line 93 in the 1832 text, are of particular interest. Whereas the fiery crocus was incorporated in the midnight landscape of 1842, this image of the rose was not adopted. Nor does the reading have a counterpart in other extant revisions of 'Oenone' between 1832 and 1842. The spontaneous unfolding of the rose directs us, however, to the underlying parallel between Tennyson's presentation in 1842 of forces breaking out at midnight in what is essentially -- as Christopher Ricks has put it -- a 'love landscape',¹ and his presentation of that moment of sexual awakening when the Lady of Shalott first sees Sir Lancelot. The sudden fire of the crocus occurring in conjunction with the flush of the rose may be compared with imagery in 'The Lady of Shalott' (1832, 1842). At the critical moment of her career the Lady, having seen that Lancelot's 'helmet and ... helmet-feather/Burn'd like one burning flame together', impulsively turned from a vicarious experience of the world and 'saw

Lotos and lilies:

Tennyson broke off his revision of the passage at this point, and sixteen lines intervene in the manuscript before he rewrote the four lines of his first draft revision (with accidental variants) and completed the passage in a form identical in all significant readings to the version of 1842.

1. Tennyson, p.86.

the water-lily bloom' (ll.93-94). However, just as the midnight judgement in 'Oenone' preludes a history of deprivation and destruction, so the Lady of Shalott breaks into life to find only death. In both 'Oenone' and 'The Lady of Shalott' the penalties attached to the achievement of a moment of fulfilment are severe.

Philip Gaskell observes (p.136) that the annotated copy of 1832 given to J.M.Heath 'shows the poet's early dissatisfaction with the first published version. But though many alterations were proposed here, they were less thorough-going than what was to come in the later drafts'. The special importance of the emended version of 'Oenone' in Lincoln B is that it provides evidence of a transitional state between the modestly revised text in Heath and the more fundamentally revised drafts in the Trinity and Huntington manuscripts. Tennyson's revisions of lines 1-13 and 90-96 exemplify the overall pattern of emendation in Lincoln B. On the one hand, Tennyson's alteration of certain passages in this copy shows no basic advance over corrections made in Heath. In respect of a number of revisions, however, Tennyson may be seen to have initiated fundamental changes which prepare for the more thoroughgoing revisions in later drafts.

The present description does not seek to record all alterations to the text of 'Oenone' in Lincoln B but the overall pattern of emendation may be further illustrated by citing the changes introduced in lines 70-75 [70-83] and 173-80 [170-76]. These revisions contain examples of readings which were not adopted in 1842 and which, as far as we can tell, are unique to this copy: the addition of a line between lines 73 and 74, together with a deleted first revision of lines 175-78.

In lines 70-75 of 1832, Paris, showing the golden fruit to Oenone before the goddesses arrive, prefigures the disastrous outcome of his

judgement:

70 Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind ingrav'n
 71 "For the most fair," in aftertime may breed
 72 Deep evilwilledness of heaven and sere
 73 Heartburning toward hallowed Ilion;
 74 And all the colour of my afterlife
 75 Will be the shadow of today. Today

Tennyson made the following alterations in lines 71 and 72 of this passage (p.55) in Heath. Words which have been deleted are given in pointed brackets. Carets around a word or words signify an addition or substitution in manuscript:

71 "For the most fair," in <after> time ^to come^ may breed
 72 Deep<evilwilledness of> ^sense of injury from^ heaven and sere

Tennyson did not improve much on this in his revision of Paris's speech in Lincoln B, although an expansion of the passage (p.55) shows him attempting to strengthen the idea of Paris's fore-knowledge. Making minor adjustments in lines 71, 72, and 74, he added a line between lines 73 and 74:

71 "For the most fair," in<aftertime> ^years to come^ may breed
 72 Deep<evilwilledness of> ^sense of injury from^ heaven and sere
 73 Heartburning toward hallowed Ilion;
 73/74 ^ And in my mind I certainly foreknow ^
 74 <And> ^That^ all the colour of my afterlife

The speech was almost entirely rewritten in the course of the later draft revisions, and Paris's explicit forebodings about himself and Troy were withdrawn. In 1842 the passage reads:

Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind ingrav'n
 "For the most fair," would seem to award it thine,
 As lovelier than whatever Oread haunt

The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace
Of movement, and the charm of married brows.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
He prest the blossom of his lips to mine,
And added 'This was cast upon the board,
When all the full-faced presence of the Gods
Ranged in the halls of Peleus; whereupon
Rose feud, with the question unto whom 'twere due:
But light-foot Iris brought it yester-eve,
Delivering that to me, by common voice
Elected umpire, Here comes today

[70-83]

In lines 173-80 of 1832 we hear that:

173 Idalian Aphrodite oceanborn,
174 Fresh as the foam, newbathed in Paphian wells,
175 With rosy slender fingers upward drew
176 From her warm brow and bosom her dark hair
177 Fragrant and thick, and on her head upbound
178 In a purple band: below her lucid neck
179 Shone ivorylike, and from the ground her foot
180 Gleamed rosywhite, and o'er her rounded form

In line 177 of this passage (p.60) in Heath, Tennyson inserted 'Deep,' in the margin before 'Fragrant' and added a period following 'Fragrant'. The words 'and thick ... upbound' are cancelled and interlined above are the words 'dimpled was her chin -- her throat'. Line 178 is deleted. In line 179 he cancelled 'ivorylike' and at first inserted 'Like ivory' in the margin before 'Shone', also adding a comma after 'Shone'. He subsequently deleted 'Like ivory' and, without

cancelling the comma added after 'Shone', interlined 'pure' above the deleted 'ivorylike'. A period, apparently an alternative reading, is interlined below the undeleted comma which in the letter-press follows 'ivorylike'. In the rest of the line Tennyson produced the reading 'the all-flowering ground' by interlining 'all-flowering' above 'the ground' and marking the addition with a caret.

Emending the passage (p.60) in Lincoln B, Tennyson at first enforced an ominous association between the fruit of gold and Aphrodite in his substitution of a new reading of Oenone's description of Aphrodite's hair (lines 175-8). Here '[blank]' signifies a word deleted in the 1832 text ('Shone', line 179), but for which no new reading has been substituted:

173 Idalian Aphrodite <oceanborn,>^beautiful,^
 174 Fresh as the foam, newbathed in Paphian wells,
 175 With rosy slender fingers <upward drew>^backward shook^
 176 From her warm brow and bosom her <dark>^deep^hair
 177 <Fragrant and thick, and on her head upbound>
 ^That <spark>shaken sparkled like the golden ball^
 178 <In a purple band: below her lucid neck>
 ^Which Paris held, so that her dimpled throat^
 179 <Shone ivorylike, and from the ground her foot>
 ^[blank] pure & from the flowering soil her feet^
 180 Gleamed rosywhite, and o'er her rounded form

In a revision marked in light ink Tennyson then cancelled his first revised reading of lines 175-79, together with 'Gleamed rosywhite' in line 180, and in the margin at the foot of the page inserted:

With rosy slender fingers backward threw
 From her warm brows & bosom all her curls
 Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat

And shoulder: in the violets her light foot

Shone rosywhite &c &c

In the later draft revisions Tennyson thus had only a few changes to make in this passage in order to achieve the reading of 1842:

Idalian Aphrodite beautiful,

Fresh as the foam, new-bath'd in Paphian wells,

With rosy slender fingers backward drew

From her warm brows and bosom her deep hair

Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat

And shoulder: from the violets her light foot

Shone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded form

[170-76]

In a letter written to James Spedding in early March 1835, Tennyson expressed concern at the news that J.S.Mill was intending to publish a review of Poems, 1832, and protested:

I do not wish to be dragged forward again in any shape before the reading public at present, particularly on the score of my old poems most of which I have so corrected (particularly Oenone) as to make them much less imperfect which you who are a wise man would own if you had the corrections, which I may very possibly send you some time.¹

The process of revision which grew out of Tennyson's sense of the early imperfection of 'Oenone' was extraordinarily elaborate. The 'corrections' -- essentially working or draft revisions of the text -- in Lincoln B help to document a crucial stage in the detail of textual development.

1. Letters, I.130-31. The proposed review to which Tennyson refers was published in the London Review (July 1835), I,402-24.

At the beginning of this appendix I referred to a torn holograph of the opening of 'Oenone' in Tennyson's copy of Rabenhorst. The title-page of this dictionary is inscribed by Tennyson 'Christmas day/ 1838'. I record this manuscript fragment below alongside the first twelve lines [1-14] of Tennyson's third draft of 'Oenone' in T.Nbk.26 (f.27^r). There are no exact correspondences between the Dictionary fragment and other known revisions of the poem, but this third draft revision appears to stand in fairly close relation to it:

<u>T.Nbk.26, f. 27^r</u>	<u>Dictionary fragment</u>
There is a dale in Ida, known to few,own,
But none is lovelier in Ionian hills.	[line missing as a result of tear?]
For there on either side the mountain slants<side>^hand^
To meadow-bases rich in flowers, & there there
Thro' all the clov'n ravine, in gulfs & grotts,vine) his granite curves
Pouring innumerable waterfalls,	[line missing as a result of tear?]
The long brook foams by many a knoll of pine.of pine
Behind it darkens Gargarus but in frontt in front
The wooded gorges, opening wide, revealreveal
Scamander wed with Simois, Hellespont,el
Troas, & Ilion's column'd citadel	[lines missing as a result of tear?]
The crown of Troas.	
	Hither came at noon

APPENDIX D

NOTES ON THE TEXTUAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE LOVER'S TALE TO 1868, WITH A
TRANSCRIPTION OF THE EARLIEST EXTANT MS. DRAFT.

As noted above, p.148,n.2 , there survive from the period of Tennyson's composition of The Lover's Tale up to 1832 two major manuscript drafts: in H.Nbk.8 and in T.Nbk.18. As far as I have been able to ascertain, there also survive from this phase of composition seven minor MSS. (including the draft in H.Nbk.12 of what was to become part III of 1879) and portions of one set of page-proofs as set for Poems, 1832. I have been able to locate eight copies of the privately-printed 1832 text of the poem. What follows is (i) a checklist of documents to 1832 arranged -- as far as is possible to determine -- in chronological order of the state of development of the text of the poem. With the exception of the draft of the poem in H.Nbk.8 (described and transcribed in full in section (iii) of this appendix) brief notes are provided on the documents and on the Lover's Tale material contained in them (line references are keyed to 1879). MS. drafts are in Tennyson's hand unless stated otherwise; (ii) an account of the development of the text of The Lover's Tale from 1832 through to the first complete version of 1868; (iii) a description and transcription of The Lover's Tale draft material in H.Nbk.8.

(i) Documents in the Textual Development of The Lover's Tale to 1832

H.Nbk.8 MS. Notebook, Houghton Library, Harvard University,
MS.Eng.952(8).

The Lover's Tale draft in H.Nbk.8 appears to date from
c.1828; see (iii) below.

H.Lpr.135 MS. 'Loosepaper', Houghton Library, Harvard University,
bMS.Eng.952.1(135).

Contains draft of lines relating to [1879,I.475-86]. The MS.
(a fragment of a single leaf) is undated and there is no
watermark.

H.Nbk.3 MS. Notebook, Houghton Library, Harvard University,
MS.Eng.952(3).

Contains draft of lines relating to [1879,I.487-504]. The
notebook is watermarked 1823 and is inscribed on the inside
front cover: 'Alfred Tennyson/Somersby/Lincolnsh:'. The
watermark and inscription indicate that the notebook would
have been in use at Somersby but the principle surviving
draft material (there are numerous stubs) comprises versions
of works composed 1828-32.

T.Nbk.18 MS. Notebook, Trinity College, Cambridge, MS.0.15.18.
Contains virtually complete draft of 1832,I[1879,I].
Although there is no formal division into parts in the MS.,
there are also fragmentary drafts of lines which continue
the poem beyond the point that was to form the conclusion of
part I in 1832 and 1879. These drafts, which include many
unadopted passages, include material recognisable as the
basis of 1832,II[1879,II]. T.Nbk.18 appears to have been in
use primarily in the period 1828-30 (see description in
Appendix A).

H.Nbk.4 MS. Notebook, Houghton Library, Harvard University, MS.Eng.
952(4).

Contains drafts of lines relating to [1879,I.139-260, 293-377, 538-85]. The notebook (watermarked 1828 with the verso of the front flyleaf inscribed: 'A. Tennyson/Trin:College/Cambridge') has drafts of poems published in 1830 and 1832.

H.Lpr.133 MS. 'Loosepaper', Houghton Library, Harvard University, bMS.
Eng.952.1(133).

Contains copy in Arthur Hallam's hand of lines relating to [1879,I.139-78].

The MS. (a single sheet) is watermarked 1829.

Allen MS. MS. Book containing copies of Tennyson's poems in the hands of Arthur Hallam and John Allen (who owned the book after Hallam); Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R.7.50.
Contains copy in John Allen's hand of lines relating to [1879,I.139-78]
Inside the front board of the book is the inscription in Hallam's hand: 'Unpublished Poems / by / Alfred Tennyson'. A number of the poems copied by Hallam have dates between 1826 and 1830 attached. The book is also inscribed inside the front board: 'John Allen / Trinity / College / Cambridge', together with the date '1831'.

Heath MS. Commonplace Book belonging to John Moore Heath, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

Contains copies in J.M. Heath's hand of lines relating to [1879,I.44-68, 139-78]. The book is inscribed inside the front board 'J.M. Heath./24. Sept^r. 1832'. The Lover's Tale passages are undated, but of the other poems by Tennyson copied in the book, most have a date between 1829 and 1833 attached.

H.Nbk.12 MS. Notebook, Houghton Library, Harvard University, MS.Eng. 952.(12).

Contains complete draft of [1879,III]. The notebook is

watermarked 1830. The Lover's Tale material is followed in the notebook by early drafts of 'The Gardener's Daughter' (written 1832-34; cf. Letters, I, 71, n.6, and Ricks, pp.507-508).

32p Portions of page-proofs (pp.177-94, 207-208, 211-22) for Poems, 1832; TRC, Campbell 4114.

Texts relate to [1879, I.202-534, 731-63, 801-10; II.1-194]. The proofs are postmarked 10 November 1832. It is unclear whether this date is to be associated with Moxon's mailing of the proofs to Tennyson or with Tennyson's return of them, after correction, to Moxon.

A portion of the same set of page-proofs (pp.195-206) is held in the Beinecke Library, Yale University.

Text relates to [1879, I.535-730].

AT/32p Tennyson's autograph corrections and alterations in the 32p printed-text.

NB. -- 32p contains accidental and substantive alterations entered both before and after the private-printing of the 1832 Lover's Tale. Throughout his career it was often Tennyson's practice to use proof-sheets in order to enter 'working' or draft revisions of a text already either published or printed up to a later stage.

1832 Two-part poem [1879, I-II] privately-printed from the text set up in proofs of Poems, 1832; separately made-up (pp.1-60); dated 1833; subtitled 'A FRAGMENT'.

(Tennyson formally withdrew The Lover's Tale from inclusion

in the 1832 volume of Poems in a letter to his publisher Moxon written on 20 November 1832; cf. Letters, I, 84.)

In 'Tennyson's The Lover's Tale, R.H. Shepherd, and T.J. Wise', p.112, n.5, W.D. Paden noticed six surviving copies of the 1832 text. The following list records the locations (or, in the case of item (2), such information as is available on the known whereabouts) of eight copies:

- (1) British Library (Ashley Library)
- (2) Ex-Rowfant Library copy sold at Parke-Bernet Galleries in the W.P. Chrysler, Jr., sale (#344) on 26 February 1952; identified by W.D. Paden as 'present location unknown'. A letter from Alfred C. Berol of New York to Sir Charles Tennyson dated 28 February 1963 (TRC) includes a census of copies of 1832 in which Berol identifies himself as the purchaser of (2) in 1952.
- (3) Huntington Library
- (4) University of Virginia Library (Crocker Collection).
- (5) New York Public Library (Berg Collection).
- (6) Harvard University Library (Widener Collection)
- (7) Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.
- (8) Tennyson Research Centre.

(ii) The Development of The Lover's Tale from 1832 to 1868.

Of the surviving copies of 1832 listed above, copy (7) has accidental corrections made by Tennyson while (1) contains both accidental corrections and a number of substantive alterations in the poet's hand. The changes in (1) were 'made by T[ennyson] in 1835.

T[ennyson] began revising at least as early as this' (Ricks, p.300). The extent of the revisions in (1) are modest compared with those in (8). The case of (8) is complicated. The copy (Campbell 4115) is interleaved (interleafs watermarked 1829) and MS. revisions^{appear}/on both the pages of the printed text and the interleafs. It is possible to distinguish two main phases of revision. The first is associated -- as in the case of the revisions in copy (1) -- with Tennyson's continuing (but in general, it would seem, slight and intermittent) work on the poem in the years immediately following the printing of the 1832 text. The alterations madeⁱⁿ this phase, entered on the pages of the printed text, are more extensive than those of 1835 in copy (1) and represent a later stage in the textual development of the poem. (The post-1832 revisions of the Lover's Tale text in the portions of proofs for the 1832 volume of Poems -- referred to under AT/32p above -- stand in closer relation to the first phase revisions in (8) than to the alterations in (1).) It is impossible to determine exactly a terminus ad quem for the first phase revisions in (8). It may be suggested that they date mainly from the mid- to late-1830s and that Tennyson may have left off work on The Lover's Tale by the time he was preparing in earnest for the publication of Poems, 1842. What is certain is that the relatively early hand of the first phase revisions is clearly distinguishable from the much later hand of the second phase alterations. Those alterations and the hand in which they are inscribed are associated with Tennyson's work on the poem in the period immediately prior to the second trial-printing of 1868.

There are two principal sources of information on the background to Tennyson's preparation of the 1868 text. These comprise entries for 1868 in Emily Tennyson's Journal¹ and in the Diary of Mrs G.G. Bradley

1. The MS. Journal of Emily Tennyson, bound in two volumes, is now in the Tennyson Research Centre.

(British Library MS. Eg.3766).¹ Hallam Tennyson's quotations from both these sources in Materials (III,72-76) and Memoir (II,50-52) are confused and confusing. For example, in both Materials and Memoir information from Mrs Bradley's Diary is included as part of a quotation from an entry in Emily Tennyson's Journal. That entry is dated 11 January -- which in itself is a mistake, since (as the MS. shows) there is no entry for that date in the Journal. It has seemed best therefore to cite the following excerpts from entries in the Journal and Diary directly from the original manuscripts.²

Emily Tennyson's first mention of The Lover's Tale in 1868 occurs under her entry for 23 January:³

Mr & Mrs Bradley. Welcome guests Mrs Bradley ... read
The Lover's Tale.⁴ Allowance must be made for the redundancy

1. Mrs Bradley (née Marian Philpot; 1831-1910) was the wife of George Granville Bradley (1821-1903). In 1868 G.G. Bradley was headmaster of Marlborough College, where Hallam Tennyson was a pupil. Mrs Bradley and her husband travelled to Freshwater (whence they visited, but did not stay at, Farringford) on 23 January 1868. Mrs Bradley notes in her Diary: 'Thurs -- 23 -- To Freshwater -- Hallam met us in the carriage -- went to Farringford for the evening'.

2. The Journal has been edited and published by James O. Hoge as Lady Tennyson's Journal (Charlottesville, Virginia, 1981). Hoge's edition is appallingly inaccurate and is quite unusable for all purposes of scholarly reference.

3. All ellipses in quotations from the Journal and the Diary are mine.

4. It is not certain the form in which Mrs Bradley read The Lover's Tale. Several passages from part I of the poem are transcribed by Mrs Bradley in the Diary immediately preceding her entry for 24 January 1868. These passages are prefaced: 'Extracts from an unpublished Poem of A. Tennyson's lent by him -- Jan 24. 1868 -- called The Lover's Tale -- A Fragment written in his 19th year'. As evidence cited below in the text of this appendix shows, Tennyson apparently had not at this point begun the task of substantially remodelling The Lover's Tale in preparation for 1868. Nor do the passages in the Diary incorporate any of the new readings which were to appear in 1868. At the same time, however, substantive variants in the passages transcribed by Mrs Bradley show that she was not copying from the 1832 printed-text. The variant readings in her transcriptions conform to readings in the passages copied in Heath MS. It would seem the poet lent her either the actual MS. originally used by J.M. Heath or a MS. version of the poem closely related to that seen by Heath. Whichever the case, the autograph MS. is apparently no longer extant. There is perhaps a slight discrepancy between Mrs Bradley's note that she was lent The Lover's Tale on 24 January and Emily Tennyson's Journal entry identifying 23 January as the day on which Mrs Bradley read the poem.

^{1a}
[sic] of youth in [?the] words but it does seem to me the
very health of pure young love which should strike a new
pulse thro' the world grown rather old in love. I fear, if
old mean cold. But what know I here?

Mrs Bradley's Diary entry for 24 January has:

At dinner at Farringford ... AT asked me ... what I thought
of his publishing it [The Lover's Tale] 'Someone is sure to
do it some day' he said. I said I thought it very full &
rich, with gems scattered up & down naming the pieces I have
copied¹ but that the parentheses were long & the form would
require altering to make it generally understandable &
readable, & there was some that could be cut out with
advantage -- He said 'Oh I can't pick it to pieces & make
it up again, it is not worth that, -- but I think it is very
rich & full -- but there are mistakes in it' -- I said I
liked the page about the camel 'That is an instance of a
mistake' he replied 'In the middle moonlit nights there
could have been no crimson colouring --'².... He then told
me that it would not be easy to understand the allusions
unless I knew the Tale in Boccaccio from which it was taken
& that it was the tale of a Lover whose mistress became the
wife of another man, fell ill & was buried, the old lover
went to her tomb & on opening the coffin found her heart

Both the Journal and the Diary are redactions made later in life of
earlier journals and diaries. It is possible that either Emily
Tennyson's or Mrs Bradley's entry was mistaken -- in the copying out
-- by one day.

1. See p.420, n.4 above.

2. 1832, I.133-37, has: 'Even as the all-enduring camel, driven/Far
from the diamond fountain by the palms,/Toils onward thro' the middle
moonlit nights/Shadowed and crimsoned with the drifting dust;/Or when
the white heats of the blinding noons'. Line 136 of this passage was
deleted in 1868 through 1879 [I.132-35].

1a. In her entry for 24 January Mrs Bradley records Tennyson saying: 'Allowance
must be made for abundance of youth....' (my italics).

beating, took her home to his mother's house where she soon gave birth to a child -- Afterwards the lover invites all his friends and neighbours to^a great feast, amongst them the husband of the lady -- in the middle of the feast, he brings in a veiled figure & says 'To whom would belong by right a dog whose Master throws him out to die, & who is rescued & restored to life & health by another' -- The unanimous opinion is that the man who saved the dog has a right to him -- The Lover upon that unveils the lady with her babe & says to the husband 'but I restore you your own' & rides away & is never more seen.

Under 25 January Mrs Bradey records:

A long afternoon before dinner talking with Emily Tennyson two chief topics -- her boys & her desire to get 'The Lover's Tale' re-written. She says an Oxford man really a stranger to them got the MS. from the Publisher by representing himself as a very intimate friend of AT's -- then [?said] he had lost it & confessed he had let a lady friend copy it -- Nothing more could be made out about it --
A most outrageous proceeding.¹ I hope AT will throw

1. The passage about an 'Oxford man' presumably involves a reference to Lewis Carroll. In a letter to Tennyson of 3 March 1870 Carroll wrote (The Letters of Lewis Carroll, ed. Morton N. Cohen, 2 vols., London and Basingstoke, 1979: I,150-51): 'There is a certain unpublished poem of yours called "The Window" [privately-printed, 1867; published December 1870] which it seems was printed for private circulation only A friend, who had an MS copy given to him, has in his turn presented me with one. I have not even read it yet, and shall do so with much greater pleasure when I know that you do not object to my possessing it.... Some while ago, as you may remember, I had a copy lent me of your "Lover's Life," [sic] and a young lady, a cousin of mine, took a MS copy of it. I wrote to you about it, and in accordance with your wish prevailed on her (very reluctantly, I need hardly say) to destroy the MS. I am not aware of any other copies of that poem in circulation -- but this seems to me a different case. MS copies of "The Window" are already in circulation, and this fact is unaffected by my possessing, or not possessing, a copy for my own enjoyment'. Morton N. Cohen (Letters of Lewis Carroll, I,151,n.1) observes that in 'what appears to be an autograph draft of a reply to

himself into it -- he was telling us how much better he feels mentally, spiritually & bodily when engaged on some long Poem he told us this at Winchester I took the opportunity of urging him to lose no time in beginning 'The Lover's Tale' -- he said 'Oh no, it is a poem written at 19 -- I'm past that now -- besides it's pirated'¹ -- ET thought he might re-set the poem & add to 'The Fragment' 'a sequel as heard from other lips in after years' -- something of the sort.

Dodgson, Mrs Tennyson wrote (MS:Yale,n.d.): "It is useless troubling Mr. Tennyson with a request which will only revive the annoyance he has already had on the subject and add to it. No doubt 'The Window' is circulated by means of ~~the same~~ unscrupulous person whose breach of confidence placed 'The Lover's Tale' in your hands". Mrs Bradley's Diary entry for 25 January 1868 shows that the Tennysons blamed the original breach of confidence over The Lover's Tale on 'the Publisher'. The episode forms part of the saga of Tennyson's deteriorating relations with the firm of Edward Moxon, Son & Co. As Morton N. Cohen notes (Letters of Lewis Carroll, I, 152, n.1): 'After Edward Moxon's death in 1858, Tennyson grew increasingly dissatisfied with Edward Moxon, Son & Co. as publishers. He disapproved of various policies practised by James Betrand Payne, who managed the firm on behalf of Mrs. Moxon and her son, Arthur Henry, and took particular umbrage at the firm's notions of publicity and presentation'. Charles Tennyson (Alfred Tennyson, p.376) records that by the middle of 1868 Tennyson 'had made up his mind to end on December 31st the thirty-seven years' alliance ^{with} Moxon's'. On 7 March 1870 Carroll wrote to Tennyson (by way of reply to Mrs Tennyson's letter answering his own of 3 March) and referred to the matters of both The Lover's Tale and The Window. The letter does not clear up the truth about his own role in the affair over The Lover's Tale: 'First let me express my sincere sympathy with you in all the annoyance that has been caused you by the unauthorised circulation of your unpublished poems. Whoever it was that thus wantonly betrayed the confidence you had reposed in him, he has, in my opinion, done a most dishonourable thing. Next, as to your conclusion that Mr. Moxon is to blame for this new instance of such circulation ... so far as I know, he has had nothing to do with it' (Letters of Lewis Carroll, I, 151-52).

1. Mrs Bradley's account of Tennyson's comments made 'at Winchester' constitutes an interpolation -- made in the course of copying out her original diary -- of a conversation which took place on 30 January 1868. Entries in both the Diary and in Emily Tennyson's Journal make clear it was on that day that Tennyson and the Bradleys went to Winchester.

A number of points emerge from these entries. Firstly, it seems clear that while the idea of substantially rewriting The Lover's Tale may have been on Tennyson's mind (certainly on Emily Tennyson's) in January 1868, he had not begun the task by that date. The second point concerns the question of Tennyson's motivation in taking up his old poem. That his wife was keen for him to do so is in no doubt and he seems himself to have been casting around for a long work to be engaged upon. But there is also the matter of the poet's concern that 'Someone' would publish The Lover's Tale in its early form. This fear was presumably related to the problem of the unauthorised circulation of the poem mentioned in Mrs Bradley's Diary entry for 25 January (presumably Tennyson was also thinking of this when he spoke 'at Winchester' of the poem having been 'pirated').¹

The third point concerns Tennyson's account in the Diary entry for 24 January of the relation between The Lover's Tale and Boccaccio's story of Gentil Carisendi in the Decameron. The important feature of Tennyson's account is the fact that he is reported as having spoken -- at a time before his composition of the present part IV -- of the whole of The Lover's Tale as finding its source in the Boccaccio story. Tennyson's summary of what was to be the basic plot of part IV may owe something to current thoughts and projections as to the conclusion of The Lover's Tale, but the terms of the explanation suggest that Mrs Bradley's Diary record may be taken as further evidence (supplementing the evidence I have described on pp.189-90 above) that Tennyson's poem was originally conceived with the

1. R.H. Shepherd's piracies date from 1870 and 1875; cf. W.D. Paden, 'Tennyson's The Lover's Tale, R.H. Shepherd, and T.J. Wise'.

Boccaccio story in mind.¹ Mrs Bradley's report, in her Diary entry for 25 January, of Emily Tennyson's notion that Tennyson might re-set the incomplete Lover's Tale, adding 'a sequel as heard from other lips in after years', does not conflict significantly with the evidence that The Lover's Tale had always found a source in Boccaccio. Emily Tennyson's reported statement, although it might be read to suggest that the conclusion of the poem with the Boccaccio story was her idea, seems to refer more to the question of the form in which the conclusion was to be presented than to its narrative content.

Whether or not Emily Tennyson did suggest the form of the 'sequel', she successfully kept up the pressure on her husband to rework his old poem. An entry in her Journal for 4 and 5 February 1868 reads: 'These days I copy The Lover's Tale & send what is done to A'. Exactly what this reference means is uncertain. If Tennyson had not begun reworking the poem by 30 January (see above p.423 n.1) it is unlikely that Emily Tennyson could have been referring to a copy of a new draft. The reference is perhaps explained by a manuscript copy of The Lover's Tale in Emily Tennyson's hand now in the Houghton Library, Harvard University (MS. 'Loosepaper', bMS. Eng.952.1(136); undated; hereafter H.Lpr.136). This manuscript consists of fragments of a transcription of part I of the 1832 text of The Lover's Tale. The transcription incorporates corrections of misprints in 1832. It seems possible that, as preparation for rewriting the poem, either Tennyson

1. There is a syntactic ambiguity in Mrs Bradley's Diary entry for 24 January ('He then told me that it would not be easy to understand the allusions unless I knew the Tale in Boccaccio from which it was taken & that it was the tale of ') which makes it slightly unclear whether Tennyson was describing the original Boccaccio story or his own conception of the story. The conclusion described by Tennyson, in which the lover 'rides away & is never more seen', fits his own rendering of the conclusion of the tale in the present part IV of The Lover's Tale.

or his wife (or both) felt it desirable to have a clean copy of 1832 made up. There are in H.Lpr.136, however, a few emendations to the 1832 transcription, entered in Emily Tennyson's hand, which introduce new readings adopted in 1868. The status of these alterations is difficult to determine. They may represent the result of Tennyson's early thoughts on reworking the poem, but H.Lpr.136 would not seem to represent a significant or seminal stage in the textual development of the poem. The alterations to 1832 which it bears are to be found entered in Tennyson's hand in what I have described as the second phase revisions in copy(8) of 1832. In addition to the alterations that appear also in H.Lpr.136 the second phase revisions that appear in copy(8), entered mostly on the interleafs, initiate a large number of the new readings which distinguish the Lover's Tale text of 1868 onwards from that of 1832. Unquestionably the main work of revision for 1868 was undertaken in this copy. But the second phase alterations in copy(8) cannot be classified simply as working or draft revisions, although a large number of them are solely of this kind. Portions of copy(8) bearing second phase revisions were used by Tennyson as printers copy for 1868 in conjunction with another manuscript now among the Tennyson 'Loosepapers' at Harvard (bMS.Eng.952.1(132); undated; hereafter H.Lpr.132). Cross references, serving as instructions to the printer on how to make simultaneous use of the revised printed-text and the fair-copy manuscript, are marked up in copy(8) and H.Lpr.132 (which has sections in Tennyson's, Emily Tennyson's, and another, unidentified, hand; among the sections copied out by Tennyson himself is the material that was to form part IV of 1879). Pages 41-42 of copy(8) are to be found still with H.Lpr.132. Pages 5-6 of copy(8) are to be found bound in with a copy of 1868 bearing the bookplates of Frederick Locker and John A. Spoor now in

the Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas, Austin. Copy(8) also lacks pages 2-3, but I have not been able to determine whether these pages are extant.

It was a combination of portions of copy(8) and H.Lpr.132 which Tennyson referred to on 23 November 1868 when, in his letter-diary to Emily Tennyson, he wrote from London: 'I have sent the whole of "The Lover's Tale" to the press and am to have it back on Thursday'.¹

(iii) The H.Nbk.8 Draft of The Lover's Tale

H.Nbk.8 has 32 ff. surviving (there are numerous stubs) and is watermarked 1825. Work proceeds inwards from both ends of the notebook and inside the back cover (according to the present foliation) appears the inscription: 'Tennyson A./Trinity Coll.' The 1825 watermark provides us with a possible terminus a quo for the poet's use of the MS. But Tennyson's inscription, together with the evidence of the surviving draft material, suggest 1828-30 as the main period of use.² The notebook contains drafts of 'Song: The Lintwhite and the Throstlecock' and 'Song: Every day hath its night', both published in the 1830 Poems, Chiefly Lyrical. It also contains the 'Sonnet: Salve Lux Renata!', first published from H. Nbk.8 by Sir Charles Tennyson (Nineteenth Century, CIX(1931), pp.505-506) as 'written probably about the Cambridge period'. Curiously, neither Sir Charles nor Ricks in his edition mention that the poem in H.Nbk.8 is in the hand of Arthur Hallam (who, as we noted earlier, entered Trinity in October 1828).³

1. Letters, II (Typescript).

2. There is a small mistake in Ricks, p.1790, where H.Nbk.8 is dated '1832'. A correct identification is given on pp. 277,280: 'watermarked 1825 ... and including poems of 1830'.

3. Since, as far as I am aware, there is no other evidence to positively identify the poem as Tennyson's, some question arises as to whether the sonnet may actually be Hallam's own composition.

The period of use, 1828-30, suggested by the internal evidence of the draft material other than The Lover's Tale in H.Nbk.8 accords well with Tennyson's own statement in his headnote to the 1832 text that the poem was 'written in my nineteenth year'. This is presumably to be interpreted as signifying the period August 1827 - August 1828 (Tennyson was born on 6 August 1809). Tennyson's 'written' must, of course, be taken to read 'began' since, as the evidence of the various MS. stages shows, he certainly had not completed the poem in 1828 (Ricks, p.300, notes: 'Since T[ennyson] was manifestly dissatisfied, he must have worked at it until 1832'). Tennyson's reference to his nineteenth year helps to identify the period of his initial composition of the work as roughly contemporary with his early days at Cambridge. It is just possible that he may have begun a version of The Lover's Tale before he went up to Cambridge in November 1827. '[M]y nineteenth year' would cover a period just prior to that date and in the Memoir, I, 48, Hallam Tennyson refers to The Lover's Tale as 'written 1827'.¹ It seems unlikely, however, that Tennyson would have advanced very far with the poem before going up to Trinity. The draft in H.Nbk.8 clearly represents a very early, if not the earliest, stage in the textual development of the poem. Taking this fact into account, together with both the internal evidence of the main period of use of the notebook² and Tennyson's own statement about having 'written' the poem in his nineteenth year, then 1828 would seem to emerge as a nodal

1. F.T. Palgrave, in Memoir, II, 498, also speaks of "'The Lover's Tale" of 1827'. It is not known on what authority Palgrave gives this date. Hallam Tennyson's authority is itself suspect, since in the Memoir, II, 239, he also makes the manifestly erroneous observation that The Lover's Tale was 'written' when his father 'was seventeen' (i.e., 1825-26).

2. H.Nbk.8 also contains a version of 'Sonnet: I lingered yet awhile to bend my way' (unpublished). Tennyson returned to an old notebook in order to copy out this sonnet, which is to Rosa Baring and dates from the period of his affair with her, 1835-36.

date for the inscription of the draft in H.Nbk.8.¹

Of the 32 intact leaves in H.Nbk.8 only two, ff.31^r-30^r, present drafts of The Lover's Tale (these proceed inwards from the present back of the notebook). However, there is draft material relating to the poem on several stubs around ff.31^r to 30^r. A significant number of the half-lines still discernible on these stubs can be completed from the draft version of The Lover's Tale which appears on ff.20^v-35^v of T.Nbk.18. Using T.Nbk.18 it is, indeed, possible to reconstruct from H.Nbk.8 a complete early version, comprising 111 lines (including repetitions and deletions), of what was to become part I (865 lines) in 1832 (the version of 1832 part I in T.Nbk.18, ff.20^v-32^v, comprises 665 lines, including repetitions and deletions). There is also less complete, but nevertheless important, evidence in H.Nbk.8 of Tennyson's early attempt to continue the poem beyond the point at which part I in 1832 concludes. At no stage in H.Nbk.8 are sections actually numbered. Certain passages are followed by a short rule. These sometimes appear to mark the conclusion of one stage of composition and sometimes appear even to designate the conclusion of a formal structural 'stage' of the poem. But Tennyson was drafting The Lover's Tale across pages of the notebook which in some instances already contained other, unrelated, draft material or notes, so that the Lover's Tale composition progresses by filling in the blank spaces between portions of earlier draft material. On some occasions, then, a rule is used merely to separate off this earlier material from the Lover's Tale work. Below is a detailed account, followed by a table arranged in sequence of composition, of the locations on stubs and

1. It is worth noting that inside the front cover (according to the present foliation) of H.Nbk.8 is inscribed in Tennyson's hand: 'Thursday/19th/June'. 19 June fell on a Thursday in 1828: prior to that year not having fallen on a Thursday since 1788 and not doing so again until 1856.

leaves of holograph lines and half-lines of The Lover's Tale in H.Nbk.8.

Three stubs appear between ff.32^r(blank) and 31^v(which contains notes on Aristophanes's Frogs). The second of these carries evidence of lines drafted for The Lover's Tale, lines which form the opening of the poem in this version (as also in T.Nbk.18). I have designated this stub a and all following stubs to the end of The Lover's Tale material in H.Nbk.8 are designated in alphabetical order (ordered and foliated in reverse sequence to that of the present leaf foliation). The draft of The Lover's Tale runs in continuous sequence from the opening on stub a^r through to the last line of f.30^v, a sequence constituting the early 111-line version of what was to form part I in 1832. Folio 30^r has a passage of 18 lines beginning 'Fair face! fair form'. In her article 'Tennyson and The Lover's Tale' Clarice Short made no reference to the T.Nbk.18 draft of the poem and was thus not in a position to know that a complete early draft can be reconstituted from H.Nbk.8. She did, however, suggest (p.79) that the 'Fair face! fair form' passage on f.30^r is 'identifiable by tone and substance' with the Lover's Tale draft material in H.Nbk.8. In his edition Christopher Ricks includes the passage under an appendix of 'Fragments' and prefaces it with the following note (p.1790): 'Clarice Short associates this fragment with The Lover's Tale ... which follows it in H.Nbk.8'. (In the original draft sequence in the notebook the principal body of Lover's Tale material does, of course, precede rather than follow the passage.) I would concur with Clarice Short in identifying the 'tone and substance' of the passage with The Lover's

Tale. The draft passage also clearly shows the handwriting style and other physical characteristics of the Lover's Tale draft sequence in this notebook (the passage is, for example, preceded by a short rule of the kind Tennyson used in H.Nbk.8 to punctuate his Lover's Tale composition). The passage would appear to follow on directly from the draft material on f.30^v. As I have indicated, the draft lines on f.30^v bring the poem to the point at which part I was to end in 1832. As I have suggested on pp. 181-83 above, the central theme of the 'Fair face! fair form' passage on f.30^r can be related to the theme of part II of 1832. The tone, the theme, the physical characteristics, and the position in the notebook of the passage on f.30^r are compatible with its being interpreted as a further movement, or as the germ of an idea on a further movement, to the Lover's Tale draft. Following f.30^r there are a number of leaves torn out before the appearance of stub d, which carries evidence of further lines apparently drafted for The Lover's Tale, although, presumably as a result of the preceding leaves having been torn out, stub d does not stand in continuous sequence with the draft passage on f.30^r. Evidence of draft lines apparently related to The Lover's Tale continues through stub e^v. Thereafter mutilation of the notebook is so great that it becomes impossible to identify Lover's Tale material with any certainty, although evidence of writing on succeeding stubs may point to an original continuation of the draft poem.

Table of Locations:

stub a ^r	<u>Lover's Tale</u>
stub a ^v	<u>Lover's Tale</u>
stub b ^r	<u>Lover's Tale</u>

stub b^v Lover's Tale
 f.31^v Notes on Aristophanes's Frogs
 f.31^r Lover's Tale
 stub c^r Fragments of lines of unidentified verse
 stub c^v " " " " " "
 f.30^v Lover's Tale
 f.30^r Lover's Tale
 evidence of a number (?) of leaves torn out
 stub d^r Lover's Tale
 stub d^v Lover's Tale
 stub e^r Lover's Tale
 stub e^v Lover's Tale

In the following transcription the first 70 half-lines of the Lover's Tale draft in H.Nbk.8 (stubs a^r-b^v) can be completed from lines in the T.Nbk.18 draft. In respect of these lines I have presented the H.Nbk.8 material on the left hand pages and the lines from T.Nbk.18 on the right hand pages. (Thereafter the H.Nbk.8 draft appears in sequence on the right hand pages.) I have included only such lines from T.Nbk.18 as correspond to lines in H.Nbk.8 (omissions of lines from the T.Nbk.18 draft are marked by a row of asterisks). Line numbers in arabic to the left of each transcription refer to the internal line numbering (including repetitions and deletions) of the manuscript. Arabic line numbers enclosed in round brackets in the left hand margin of the T.Nbk.18 transcription key to the line numbers in the H.Nbk.8 draft. Section and line numbers in the left hand margin of the H.Nbk.8 transcription refer to the text of The Lover's Tale in 1832 and 1879 (the 1879 references enclosed in square brackets). I

have retained neither Tennyson's use of the long 'f' nor the apostrophe which he used in writing 'it's'.

- [?won] = conjectural reading
- [?] = illegible word
- [-? -] = illegible word deleted
- ~~Speak~~^{Rain} = word deleted with interlineated substitute

H.Nbk.8stub a^r

- †
- 1 A casement brac'd ...
 - 2 (Thorough whose wrea ...
 - 3 The fretted noonlig ...
 - 4 Though well-nigh s ...
 - 5 Half-clasp'd let i ...
 - 6 The measur'd moan ...
 - 7 Wh slept in mur ...
 - 8 Rising & falling ...
 - 9 Of some hush'd ...
 - 10 Pales on his unvex ...
 - 11 To all his littl ...
 - 12 From gleaning of f ...
 - 13 And even breathing ...
 - 14 Fall on the wakef...
 - 15 The stillest night ...

[rule]

- 16 It was a rust ...
- 17 And nested on ...
- 18 Wh straightway ...

† The Lover's Tale opens in both H.Nbk.8 and T.Nbk.18 with a 15 line description of the casement of a summerhouse, followed by 20 lines on the summerhouse. The lines describing the summerhouse were reduced as 1832, I. 41-43; 1879 [I. 39-41]. The first five lines of the poem in 1832 and 1879 do not appear in the H.Nbk.8 draft.

T.Nbk.18f.20^v

- 1 A casement braced & traversed with lithe herbs
 2 (Thorough whose woven spice of flower & leaf
 3 The fretted noonlight won its ambushed way
 4 Though wellnigh softened to its pale decline[†]
 (5) 5 Halfclasped, let inward from the lower air
 6 The measured moan of summer-swellings seas
 7 Wh_h slept in murmur & in motion
 8 Rising & falling like the placid breast
 9 Of some hushed infant, when y^e pendant lamp
 (10) 10 Pales on his unweary features deeply lost
 11 To all his little [?] & sweetly stayed
 12 From gleaning of fresh thought when his suppressed
 13 And even moanings from an inner room
 14 Fall on y^e wakeful mother's ear, what time
 (15) 15 The stillest night is rung out from y^e clocks.

[rule]

- 16 It was a rustic summerhouse perched high
 17 And nested on the manypeaked cliff
 18 Wh_h straightway from the slumbrous Element

[†] The parenthesis is not closed, presumably as a result of Tennyson's hasty transcription, at the end of l. 4.

stub aVH.Nbk.8

19

Pine

... undecaying ~~Pine~~ [-?]

20

where highest plac'd

... ose odorous deeps ~~upprung~~

21

... f ~~the~~ a cone

22

... the vast unstirr'd

23

... ~~unseen~~

24

the Sea
~~not far~~

... mountain bloom: [-?]

25

blasts

... 'd ~~winds~~ so rudely here

26

slender stems & pale

... their ~~vivid~~

27

... : but if ever voice

28

... gh them it was light & clear

29

... f rich perfume

30

... land vallies: yellow bees

... polish'd boles &

31

... the hours

32

... dible & merry birds

33

... ter of their lavish plumes

34

... nce of exceeding joy

35

... such a goodly dwelling-place

T.Nbk.18f.20^v(cont)

- 19 Rose cinctured with y^e undecaying Pine
 (20) 20 From out whose odorous deeps where highest placed
 21 Started the sloping lustre of a cone
 22 Its lower bedded in the vast unstirred
 23 Of leaves & secret intercourse of boughs
 24 Wh^h shrouded many a mountainbloom: y^e Sea
 (25) 25 Rolled not his gathered blasts so rudely here
 26 With power to snap their slender stems or pale
 27 Their bright expressions: but if ever voice
 28 Of wind sung thro' them it was light & clear

f.21^r

- 29 And shrill & warm & full of rich perfume
 (30) 30 Rapt from the inland valleys: yellow bees
 31 Stole by the polished boles & wore the hours
 32 In musings audible & ^{merry}~~little~~ birds
 33 With thrilling flutter of their lavish plumes
 34 And rapid utterance of exceeding joy
 (35) 35 Praised God for such a goodly dwelling place

stub b^r H.Nbk.8

[rule]

I.6 [I.6] 36 Oh! pleasant brea ...
 37 (Where the chafed ...
 38 Sank powerless, ...

And withers on the ...

I.10 [I.10] 39 Upon
 40 Even now the s ...
 41 Her well-remem ...

I.22 [I.22] 42 I come, great M ...
 43 ~~Borrow thy [-?]~~...

Oh

44 ~~To [-?]~~ Lead me ...

Rain

45 ~~Speak~~ thro' mine ...

~~*Mine*~~

46 ~~The~~ utterance with ...
 47 Have hollow'd o ...
 48 Betwixt the Sp ...
 49 A little momen ...
 50 Shall waft me o ...

T.Nbk. 18f.21^r (cont)

* * * * *

- (36) 41 Oh pleasant breast of waters quiet bay
 42 (Where the chafed billow of the outer sea
 43 Sank powerless even as anger falls aside
 44 And withers on the breast of quiet Love)
- (40) 45 Even now the subtil Memory hath unrolled
 46 Her wellremembered chart of wave & hill
 47 I come great Mistress of the ear & eye
 48 Oh lead me delicately lest y^e mind
- (45) 49 Rain thro' mine eyes & strangling sorrow weigh
 50 Mine utterance with lameness: the long years
 51 Have hollowed out a valley & a gulf
 52 Betwixt the Springtide of my Love & me
 53 A little moment & thy faery sail
- (50) 54 Shall waft me onward & the Alchemy

† What were to become 1832, I.1-5 and 1879 [I.1-5] are
 drafted in T.Nbk.18, ll.36-40.

stub b^vH.Nbk.8

- 51 ... ^{erve} [?] & fashion my worn frame
... & love —
- 52 Permit me, prithee
- I.32 [I.30] 53 ... hand across mine eyes & muse
- 54 ... s wh nevermore shall meet
- 55 ... & aches beneath my touch
- 56 ... t a heart in either eye
- 57 ^[-?]
^{lights} ... are darken'd thus
- I.37 [I.35] 58 ... ision hath a keener edge
- 59 ^{the semicircle}
^{narrow fringe [-?]} of
... ow — the ~~curving beach~~
- 60 ^{dripping}
... [-?] wreathes of green
- 61 ... the pleasure-boat wh rock'd
- 62 ... keel to keel, ~~light green~~
- 63 ... of the dappled wave
- ... ^{its} ~~his~~ side —
- I.46 [I.44] 64 Oh Love! oh Hope
- 65 ... the darkness of my brain
- 66 ... the moon-lit nights
- 67 ... aks & the amber Eves
- I.54 [I.51] 68 ... drilla, thou & I
- 69 ... nd the little bay, or moor'd
- 70 ... brow'd cavern, where the tide

57-58 These lines are not in I.Nbk.18 but reappeared as
1832, I.36-37 and then as 1879 [I.34-35]: 'For when
the outer lights are darkened thus,/ The memory's
vision hath a keener edge.'

T.Nbk.18f.21^r (cont)

- (51) 55 Of thought shall nerve & fashion my worn frame
 56 To strength & youth & Love.

Permit me prythee

f.21^v

- 57 To pass my hand across my eyes & muse
 58 On those dear hills wh_h never more shall meet
 (55) 59 The sight that throbs & aches beneath my touch
 (56) 60 As tho' there beat a heart in either eye
 (59) { 61 It grows upon me now — the semicircle
 62 Of darkblue waters & the narrow fringe
 (60) 63 Of curving beach — its wreathes of dripping green
 64 Its pale pink shells — the pleasureboat wh_h rocked
 65 Lightgreen with its own shadow keel to keel
 66 Upon the crispings of the dappled wave
 67 Which blanched upon its side.

Oh Love oh Hope

- (65) 68 They flash athwart the darkness of my brain
 69 The many pleasant days, the moonlit nights
 70 The gorgeous daybreaks & the amber Evens
 71 When thou & I Cadrilla, thou & I
 72 Borne round & round the little bay or moored
 (70) 73 Beneath some lowbrowed cavern where y^e wave

* * * * *

H.Nbk.8

- I.57/ ^{f.31r} [I.54/] 71 ~~Plash'd~~, sapping its worn ribs, spoke pleasantly
 72 As youth might speak with fearless interchange
 73 Of words, nor words alone, for every thought
 74 Embrac'd its brother, ~~thought~~ & every hope ^{was woven}
 75 ~~Was woven~~ with its ^{own} likeness & gave ^{back} itself
 76 Unalter'd ~~there~~ in the mirror of our speech
 77 Ah! turn the telescope, one hope, one wish
 78 Was thrown to utter distance, brotherless
 79 Unanswered, like a stranger in a land
 80 Of enemies, a weary bird on wing
 81 Curs'd never to alight; no resting-place
 82 No stay — no shrouding of the weary head
 83 Beneath the weary plume, but onward still
 84 Sustaining with no pleasant balm of thought
 85 That inner fire wh_eats into the soul
 But will not [?wear] the framework —
 86 — Some light hearts
 87 Held by strong cables of unbroken Hope
 I.846 [I.793] 88 ~~Even~~ On the sharp ridge of utmost doom, ride highly
 89 Above the perilous seas of Chance & Change
 90 ^{Nay, more} ~~And even~~ hold out to others far away
 91 Bright lights of [?solace] unto safety

f.30^v

H.Nbk.8

[rule]

I.849 [I.796] 92 As ~~some~~ ^{the} tall ship thro' many a varied year
 93 Knit to some dreary sandbank far at sea
 94 ~~Secure in its own lightness~~ ^{buoyancy}
 95 All thro' the livelong hours of utter dark
 96 Showers slanting light upon the dolorous wave
 97 For me, all other hope did sway from that
 98 Wh hung the frailest: falling, they fell too
 99 Crush'd, link on link, into the beaten Earth
 100 ~~She [-? -] And Love & Hope smil'd farewell~~

101 And Love ~~relaxed~~ ^{did walk} with banish'd Hope no more
 I.857 [I.802] 102 It was ill done to part ye, sisters fair
 103 ~~For ye were [-? -] [-? -] the breath~~ ^{For Love [-? -] [-? -]}
 104 Love's arms were wreath'd about y^e neck of Hope
 105 And Hope kissed Love & Love drew in her breath

I.860 [I.805] 106 In that close kiss & ~~turn'd her~~ ^{drank} her whisper'd tales
 107 They said that Love wd die when Hope was gone
 108 ^{And Love mourn'd long & sorrow'd after Hope}

^{At last she sought}
 109 ~~But love did search~~ out Memory & they trod
 110 The same old paths where Love had walk'd with Hope
 I.865 [I.810] 111 And Memory fed the soul of Love with tears

108 This line was inserted by interlineation. It forms part of the revision of l. 109 which at first followed directly from l. 107.

f.30^r

H.Nbk.8

[rule]

112 Fair face! fair form [~~?sole~~ ~~?ead~~] tenant of a brain

griefs

113 Peopled with ~~thoughts~~ whose blackness cannot mar

114 Your lustre, when fatigued with things less fair

[e

115 Thⁱse eyes roll inward, gazing as they gazed

116 Upon the archetype in happier hours

117 Beautiful permanence! indwelling light

118 Unvanishing! wh never transient thought

119 Supplants or shades, for thou dost glow thro' all

120 Intensely Idea; ~~like~~ though I close the lids

121 Of mental vision on thee thou dost burn

122 As sunlight, thro' them: Slumber is no veil

123 For thou art up & broad awake in dreams

124 O deeply lov'd: yet like a cruel foe

125 Fast centr'd in the heart thou hast undone

~~must exist for ever~~126 ~~Wh cannot~~ [~~?pass~~] ~~Can it lose~~127 ~~Thy presence when this~~ head is low in dust

128 And won unto thyself & sendest thence

129 Sharp arrows, from the fort wh was mine own

115 This eye rolls 1st reading126 cannot [~~?pass~~] altered to must exist for ever followed
by cancellation of entire line

H.Nbk.8
stub d^r

[rule]

† His hand was wreath'd ...
 His head bent sideways ...
 Fix'd on an unread s ...
 That he was then ...
 Without a shelter ...
 Of thought wh bent ...
 His cheek was flus ...
 His lips apart & ...
 And fever'd as n ...
 Like physical de ...
 The Spirit, not ...
 Of triumph & ...
 In its most des ...
 In that most ...
 Wh colours & ...
 No matter wha ...
 Or ~~bright~~ gay ...
 Of its ^{own} leaden tin ...
 Oh such dark ...

† As noted above, p.431, there are a number of leaves missing between f.30^r and stub d^r and the half-lines on stubs d^r-e^v, although apparently a continuation of the Lover's Tale draft material in H.Nbk.8, do not stand in continuous sequence with the draft passage on f.30^r. With the exception of two lines on stub e^r (see note below, p.447) the half-lines on stubs d^r-e^v cannot be completed from any known version of The Lover's Tale.

stub d ^{H.Nbk.8}

... d night to shower
 ... solace: nay — 'twere shame
 ... ~~hearts~~ medicable hearts enow
 ... es of thy dovelike eyes
 ... hy: for those
 ... love-like fashioning
 ... accents so akin
 ... they do loathe thy presence
 ... contrast: who wd lend
 ... of bright wine
 ... entrails are self-dragg'd
 ... e are those wd wreathe
 ... s blooms for one
 ... leapt into the crimson dark
 ... ? It were all too vain
 ... the [?stirless] eye~~e~~
 ... of ~~its~~ thanks — unless
 ... , blood forsaken lips
 ... te bliss —

Yet never

... shrin'd more delicately
 ... whose eloquent eyes
 ... t for utterance
 ... — Oh! never sunshine
 ... [?] arched flames

H.Nbk.8

stub e^r

Blithe Hope! upon the s ...

Whilom I wander'd o ...

Of sophist doubts wh ...

Of black annihilation ...

And close above ...

And shook its earthy ...†

stub e^v

... l! O sav'd yet lost & I

... er — Have I not

skeleton's embrace?... the ~~black embrace of Death~~

... e arm was round thee thrown

... shrouded jaw was press'd

... th? Did I not pluck thee back

... known land, the valley of dreams

... ness of the inner tomb

... ded locks & charnel-damps

... that exquisite brow

†

These two half-lines, apparently unconnected with the sequence of lines drafted towards the top of stub e^r, constitute a draft of what were to become 1832, I.58-59: 'And close above us, sang the windtost pine,/And shook its earthy socket, for we heard,'. These lines did not reappear when 1832, I.57-73 were rewritten as 1879 [I.54-70].

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Ph.D Thesis Abstract. University of Leicester. 1983

The Sceptical Strain: Readings in Tennyson's Poetry, 1829-1855

Aidan Day

The thesis examines the place in Tennyson's poetry, in the period from his undergraduate career at Cambridge to the publication of Maud in 1855, of Romantic idealist concepts and traditional Christian ideas.

The study concentrates, first of all, on examples of shorter works composed between 1829 and 1842 which are characteristically rich in sensuous impact and mythological resonance. It is argued that these poems do not -- as is often asserted -- show a retreat into a conceptually bankrupt lyricism on the part of a Romantic imagination dispossessed of any comprehensive scheme of thought and belief about the world. Nor is it sufficient to claim that the only real achievement in Tennyson's poetry of this kind lies in its occasional anticipation of Symbolist poetic technique. Rather, Tennyson is conducting through a poetic style inherited from the Romantics a profoundly sceptical inquiry into cardinal tenets of Romantic ideology and Christian doctrine.

Secondly, Tennyson's longer poems In Memoriam (1850) and Maud (1855) are considered in relation to The Lover's Tale, a work first published in 1879 but originally composed in the late 1820s and early 1830s. Tennyson's treatment of the relationship between the protagonist and his female lover is discussed in a study of the text as it stood in 1832. This relationship is considered in the light of the frequent representation of a female figure as a projection of a male protagonist's own personality in the writings of Shelley and Keats. What has been termed, with particular reference to Shelley, the 'psyche-epipsyche strategy' is seen to inform not only The Lover's Tale but also the fundamental conceptual and imaginative structures of both In Memoriam and Maud. Following Tennyson's attempted optimism in In Memoriam, Maud demonstrates the poet's failure of confidence in the epistemological and metaphysical idealism implied in this distinctively Romantic strategy.

Throughout the thesis extensive use is made of unpublished poetical draft material.
