

**THE WORKS OF ALFRED,
LORD TENNYSON
POET LAUREATE; IN TEN
VOLUMES, VOLUME FOUR**

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The Works of Alfred, Lord Tennyson Poet Laureate; In Ten Volumes, Volume Four by Alfred Tennyson

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ALFRED TENNYSON

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THE WORKS OF
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LORD TENNYSON

1649 POET LAUREATE

IN TEN VOLUMES

VOLUME FOUR

New York
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THE PRINCESS;

A MEDLEY.

PROLOGUE.

SIR Walter Vivian all a summer's day
Gave his broad lawns until the set of sun
Up to the people: thither flock'd at noon
His tenants, wife and child, and thither half
The neighbouring borough with their Institute
Of which he was the patron. I was there
From college, visiting the son,—the son
A Walter too,—with others of our set,
Five others: we were seven at Vivian-place.

And me that morning Walter show'd the house,
Greek, set with busts: from vases in the hall
Flowers of all heavens, and lovelier than their names,
Grew side by side; and on the pavement lay
Carved stones of the Abbey-ruin in the park,
Huge Ammonites, and the first bones of Time;
And on the tables every clime and age

Jumbled together; celts and calumets,
 Claymore and snowshoe, toys in lava, fans
 Of sandal, amber, ancient rosaries,
 Laborious orient ivory sphere in sphere,
 The cursed Malayan crease, and battle-clubs
 From the isles of palm: and higher on the walls,
 Betwixt the monstrous horns of elk and deer,
 His own forefathers' arms and armour hung.

And 'this' he said 'was Hugh's at Agincourt;
 And that was old Sir Ralph's at Ascalon:
 A good knight he! we keep a chronicle
 With all about him '—which he brought, and I
 Dived in a hoard of tales that dealt with knights,
 Half-legend, half-historic, counts and kings
 Who laid about them at their wills and died;
 And mixt with these, a lady, one that arm'd
 Her own fair head, and sallying thro' the gate,
 Had beat her foes with slaughter from her walls.

'O miracle of women,' said the book,
 'O noble heart who, being strait-besieged
 By this wild king to force her to his wish,
 Nor bent, nor broke, nor shunn'd a soldier's death,
 But now when all was lost or seem'd as lost—
 Her stature more than mortal in the burst
 Of sunrise, her arm lifted, eyes on fire—

Brake with a blast of trumpets from the gate,
And, falling on them like a thunderbolt,
She trampled some beneath her horses' heels,
And some were whelm'd with missiles of the wall,
And some were push'd with lances from the rock
And part were drown'd within the whirling brook:
O miracle of noble womanhood!

So sang the gallant glorious chronicle;
And, I all rapt in this, 'Come out,' he said,
'To the Abbey: there is Aunt Elizabeth
And sister Lilia with the rest.' We went
(I kept the book and had my finger in it)
Down thro' the park: strange was the sight to me;
For all the sloping pasture murmur'd, sown
With happy faces and with holiday.
There moved the multitude, a thousand heads:
The patient leaders of their Institute
Taught them with facts. One rear'd a font of stone
And drew, from butts of water on the slope,
The fountain of the moment, playing, now
A twisted snake, and now a rain of pearls,
Or steep-up spout whereon the gilded ball
Danced like a wisp: and somewhat lower down
A man with knobs and wires and vials fired
A cannon: Echo answer'd in her sleep
From hollow fields: and here were telescopes

For azure views; and there a group of girls
In circle waited, whom the electric shock
Dislink'd with shrieks and laughter: round the lake
A little clock-work steamer paddling plied
And shook the lilies: perch'd about the knolls
A dozen angry models jettted steam:
A petty railway ran: a fire-balloon
Rose gem-like up before the dusky groves
And dropt a fairy parachute and past:
And there thro' twenty posts of telegraph
They flash'd a saucy message to and fro
Between the mimic stations; so that sport
Went hand in hand with Science; elsewhere
Pure sport: a herd of boys with clamour bowl'd
And stump'd the wicket; babies roll'd about
Like tumbled fruit in grass; and men and maids
Arranged a country dance, and flew thro' light
And shadow, while the twangling violin
Struck up with Soldier-laddie, and overhead
The broad ambrosial aisles of lofty lime
Made noise with bees and breeze from end to end.

Strange was the sight and smacking of the time;
And long we gazed, but satiated at length
Came to the ruins. High-arch'd and ivy-claspt,
Of finest Gothic lighter than a fire,
Thro' one wide chasm of time and frost they gave