LONGMANS' ENGLISH CLASSICS. TENNYSON'S: THE COMING OF ARTHUR, THE HOLY GRAIL AND THE PASSING OF ARTHUR

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ALFRED TENNYSON & SOPHIE CHANTAL HART

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IDYLLS OF THE KING

DEDICATION

Flos Regum Arthurus.-Joseph of Exeter

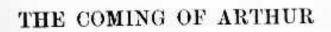
These to His Memory—since he held them dear, Perchance as finding there unconsciously Some image of himself—I dedicate. I dedicate, I conscerate with tears— These Idylls.

And indeed He seems to me	5
Scarce other than my king's ideal knight,	
"Who reverenced his conscience as his king;	
Whose glory was, redressing human wrong;	
Who spake no slander, no, nor listen'd to it;	
Who loved one only and who clave to her-"	10
Her-over all whose realms to their last isle,	
Commingled with the gloom of imminent war,	
The shadow of His loss drew like eclipse,	
Darkening the world. We have lost him: he is gone:	
We know him now: all narrow jealousies	15
Are silent; and we see him as he moved,	
How modest, kindly, all-accomplish'd, wise,	
With what sublime repression of himself,	
And in what limits, and how tenderly;	
Not swaying to this faction or to that;	20
Not making his high place the lawless perch	
Of wing'd ambitions, nor a vantage-ground	
For pleasure; but thro' all this tract of years	

Wearing the white flower of a blameless life, Before a thousand peering littlenesses,	25
In that fierce light which beats upon a throne, And blackens every blot: for where is he,	20
Who dares foreshadow for an only son A lovelier life, a more unstain'd than his?	
Or how should England dreaming of his sons	30
Hope more for these than some inheritance	7.7
Of such a life, a heart, a mind as thine,	
Thou noble Father of her Kings to be,	
Laborious for her people and her poor—	
Voice in the rich dawn of an ampler day—	35
Far-sighted summoner of War and Waste	
To fruitful strifes and rivalries of peace—	
Sweet nature gilded by the gracious gleam	
Of letters, dear to Science, dear to Art,	
Dear to thy land and ours, a Prince indeed,	40
Beyond all titles, and a household name,	
Hereafter, thro' all times, Albert the Good.	
Break not, O woman's-heart, but still endure;	
Break not, for thou art Royal, but endure,	
Remembering all the beauty of that star	45
Which shone so close beside Thee that ye made	
One light together, but has past and leaves	
The Crown a lonely splendor.	
35 713	

May all love, His love, unseen but felt, o'ershadow Thee, The love of all Thy sons encompass Thee, The love of all Thy daughters cherish Thee, The love of all Thy people comfort Thee, Till God's love set Thee at his side again!

50



THE COMING OF ARTHUR

LEODOGRAN, the King of Cameliard, Had one fair daughter, and none other child; And she was fairest of all flesh on earth, Guinevere, and in her his one delight.

For many a petty king ere Arthur came	5
Ruled in this isle, and ever waging war	
Each upon other, wasted all the land;	
And still from time to time the heathen host	
Swarm'd overseas, and harried what was left.	
And so there grew great tracts of wilderness,	10
Wherein the beast was ever more and more,	
But man was less and less, till Arthur came.	
For first Aurelius lived and fought and died,	
And after him King Uther fought and died,	
But either fail'd to make the kingdom one.	15
And after these King Arthur for a space,	
And thro' the puissance of his Table Round,	
Drew all their petty princedoms under him,	
Their king and head, and made a realm, and reign'd.	
And thus the land of Cameliard was waste,	20
Thick with wet woods, and many a beast therein,	
And none or few to scare or chase the beast;	
So that wild dog, and wolf and bear and bear	
Came night and day, and rooted in the fields,	
And wallow'd in the gardens of the King.	25