HEATH'S ENGLISH CLASSICS; TENNYSON'S IDYLLS OF THE KING (SELECTIONS)

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 $Heath's \ English \ Classics; Tennyson's \ Idylls \ of the \ King \ (Selections) \ by \ Alfred \ Tennyson \ \& \ Arthur \ Beatty$

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ALFRED TENNYSON & ARTHUR BEATTY

HEATH'S ENGLISH CLASSICS; TENNYSON'S IDYLLS OF THE KING (SELECTIONS)





TENNYSON 1809-1892

heath's English Classics

TENNYSON'S

IDYLLS OF THE KING

(SELECTIONS) .

EDITED, WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES
BY

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"I have lived my life, and that which I have done
May He within himself make pure!"

BOSTON, U.S.A.

D. C. HEATH & CO., PUBLISHERS

1905

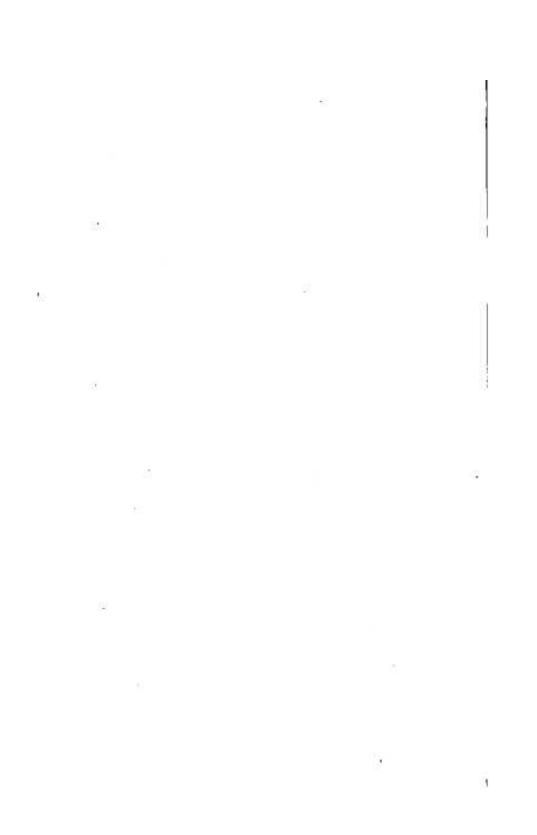
TO THE TEACHER

For the study of the Idylls of the King little direct help is to be obtained from the biography of the poet. For this reason the Editor has given only the most important dates in Tennyson's life, with special reference to the Idylls. The teacher who wishes a more extended biography can find it in the first three works mentioned in the List of Books (p. xxxiv). It has been the effort of the Editor to make the Idylls explain themselves; and in order to permit of this, it is necessary for the pupil to make himself familiar with the story of the Idylls, given on pages xiv-xxvi of the Introduction. In addition, the class ought to study carefully The Coming of Arthur, with the notes; as this poem, together with a knowledge of the story of the Idylls as a whole, forms the best possible introduction to the three Idylls that are prescribed for particular study.

The form of verse is an important matter, and should not be overlooked in any reading of the *Idylls*. On pages xxviii-xxxiii a brief account is given of some of the most important features of the verse; but the task of making such an analysis intelligible to the student must rest upon the teacher. This task can be accomplished only by persistent, sympathetic vocal interpretation on the part of the teacher, with equal encouragement to the student to do likewise. What Byron has said of Horace may equally well be said of Tennyson,

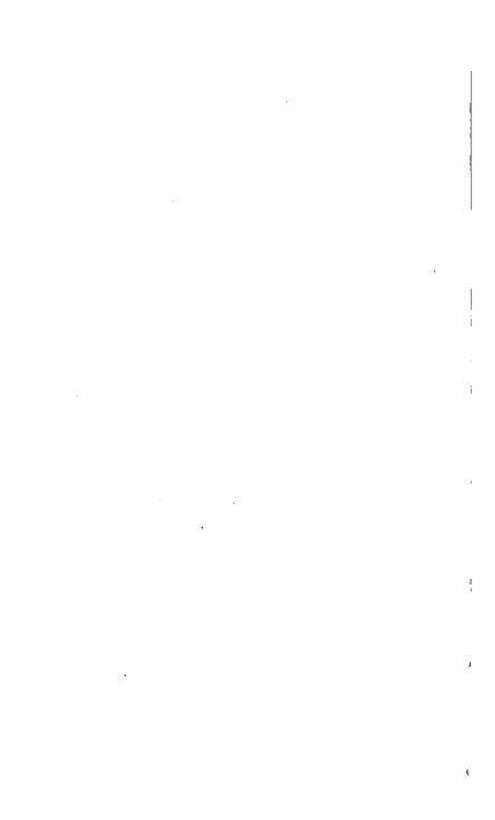
"—it is a curse
To understand, not feel thy lyric flow,
To comprehend, but never love thy verse."

Constant reference to the map will help to give concreteness to the pupil's conception of the *Idylls*. It must be remembered, however, that the geography is exceedingly vague, and some of the places cannot be even approximately located. They are in the region of pure romance.



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OUTLINE OF TENNYSON'S BIOGRAPHY

- 1809, Aug. 6 Alfred Tennyson was born at Somersby, a country village in Lincolnshire, the fourth son in a family of twelve children. His father, Dr. George Clayton Tennyson, was the rector of Somersby and West Enderby, and was a scholar and poet.
- 1816 At the age of seven Alfred, with his elder brother Charles, went to the Louth Grammar School, under "a tempestuous, flogging master of the old stamp." He was brutally used by the boys at first, and spent four unhappy years here.
- 1820 He then returned home, and studied under his father's direction. Besides studying Greek and Latin, he and his brothers Frederick and Charles read a large number of good books in English literature, and composed many poems.
- 1827 The first public sign of this verse-writing was the publication at Louth of a volume called *Poems by Two Brothers*. The present Lord Tennyson says that the poems were really written by the three brothers, Frederick, Charles, and Alfred.
- 1828, Feb. 20 He and his brother Charles went to Trinity College, Cambridge, where Frederick was already a student.
- 1829, June 6 He won the Chancellor's medal for his poem in blank verse, Timbuctoo. At this time he met Arthur Henry Hallam, with whom he formed a warm friendship, and whose early death was to inspire Tennyson's great poem, In Memoriam.
- 1830 He published his first independent volume of verse, Poems, Chiefly Lyrical.
- 1831 He left Cambridge without taking a degree, on account of the death of his father. He now became the manager of the household, and remained at home, diligently educating himself to be a poet.