

**ENOCH ARDEN,  
AND OTHER POEMS**

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Enoch Arden, and Other Poems by Alfred Lord Tennyson

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**ALFRED LORD TENNYSON**

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AND OTHER POEMS**



STANDARD LITERATURE SERIES

# ENOCH ARDEN

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

ALFRED LORD TENNYSON

SELECTED FOR USE IN SCHOOLS. WITH AN  
INTRODUCTION AND EXPLANATORY NOTES

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## INTRODUCTION.

A VOLUME of selections from the great representative English poet of the century, embodying much of his choicest and most characteristic work, may fitly be included among the issues of the "Standard Literature Series." Tennyson's writings worthily represent his age, and manifest many of the highest qualities of the thought and art of his time. Not only is his rank very high among the poets of his era, but he is also unsurpassed in the variety, interest, and charm of his work.

### BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Tennyson's life is eventful only in connection with his writings. These, as they successively appeared, are the milestone marks in the ascending path of fame. The poet was born August 6, 1809, at Somersby Rectory, Lincolnshire, and his youth was passed amid such scenes as he has described in the pleasing verse of his earlier poems. His father, himself somewhat of a poet and artist, as well as a fine scholar, was the village rector; and Alfred was one of twelve children, seven of whom were sons. Two of the latter, Frederick and Charles (afterwards Charles Tennyson Turner), had poetic gifts; Charles, later on, joining Alfred in the publication of *Poems of Two Brothers*. The poet's mother was a woman of sweet and tender disposition. Alfred received his early training at the hands of his father, and, in due time, proceeded to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he won the chancellor's medal for the best English poem of his year. The subject was the rather uninspiring one of "Timbuctoo." At college, young Tennyson made the acquaintance of many men who attained fame in later life, among whom were Monckton Milnes (Lord Houghton), Dean Alford, Frederick Denison Maurice, and, most endeared of all, Arthur Henry Hallam, son of the historian, whose memory he has immortalized in *In Memoriam*.

In 1830, appeared his *Poems chiefly Lyric*, containing *Mariana*, *Claribel*, *Lilian*, *The Owl*, etc., experiments in contemplative verse, overloaded, however, with ornament. Two years later, came a new collection, entitled *Poems*, showing a ripening of Tennyson's powers and a further development of his art. The volume included *Lady Clare*, *A Dream of Fair Women*, *The May Queen*, *New Year's Eve*, *The Miller's Daughter*, *The Lotus Eaters*, and other finished pieces of great rhythmi-

cal beauty. Not a little of his work was at the time subjected to unfavorable criticism; but in spite of this he continued to write and seek new and wider fields for his now rapidly developing poetic gifts.

In 1842, appeared two volumes, entitled *Poems by Alfred Tennyson*, which now won for him high rank as a poet of the first order. Many of these were new, though some were revisions of earlier productions. Among the former were *Morte d' Arthur* (now incorporated with the *Idylls of the King*), *Dora*, *The Lord of Burleigh*, *The Talking Oak*, *Locksley Hall*, *St. Simeon Stylites*, *Godiva*, *The Gardener's Daughter*, *Ulysses*, *Sir Galahad*, and the fragment "Break, Break, Break." *The Princess: a Medley*, was published in 1847, the motive of which is to illustrate woman's aspirations and indicate her place in relation to man. A later edition of the work was enriched by the songs which for their lyrical beauty are unsurpassed in literature.

In 1850, appeared *In Memoriam*, the now famous elegy, and perhaps the most characteristic product of Tennyson's genius. It gives noble expression to the poet's sorrow at the death of young Hallam, his once bosom friend. The work consists of a hundred and thirty short lyrics, all representing, as it has been said, "a phase of the poet's sorrow-brooding thought." *Maud*, a rather sentimental metrical romance, appeared in 1855, together with some fine additional poems. The volume contains *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, and an *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*. In this year the University of Oxford conferred on Tennyson the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law; while five years previously, on the death of Wordsworth, he had been awarded the English poet-laureateship.

During the years 1859-1872, appeared in successive instalments Tennyson's masterpiece, *Idylls of the King*, an epic of chivalry, interpreted by some as personifying in its various characters, the soul at war with the senses. The *Idylls* may be read as a mere narrative—a poetical rendering of the romantic stories that gather around the legendary King Arthur; or as an allegory, opening with the birth of the soul as portrayed in *The Coming of Arthur*, and closing with its mystical vanishing, as recorded in *The Passing of Arthur*. In 1864, came *Enoch Arden and Other Poems*. The longer poem relates a simple but pathetic story of domestic life in a seafarer's home, which has won much favor for its rare idyllic beauty. It contains many fine descriptive passages not only of picturesque English hamlet life, but of rich tropic scenery on the desolate island upon which one of the characters (Enoch) has been cast. In the volume are *The Northern Farmer* (a dialect poem), *Aylmer's Field*, *Lucretius*, *Sea Dreams*, and *Tithonus*.

The more important minor pieces in Tennyson's later life include *De Profundis*, *Rizpah*, *The Charge of the Heavy Brigade*, *The Defence of Lucknow*, and the spirited battle of the fleet, founded on an incident in the era of the Armada, entitled *The Revenge*. Other later productions are the volumes entitled *Tiresias*, *Demeter and other Poems*, *Akbar's Dream*, and *The Death of Othello*. His more ambitious modern work, which is full of extraordinary vigor and freshness, includes a number of historical dramas, the chief of which are *Queen Mary*, *Harold*, and *Becket*. Two of these have been placed on the stage with fine effect; but their chief merit is as historical delineations of dramatic incidents in English history, enriched by vivid character-painting and distinguished by numerous passages of strenuous and lofty thought.

In 1874, the poet became Lord Tennyson, a peerage having been conferred upon him as a tribute to his worth. His death occurred at Aldworth, his seat in Sussex, October 6, 1892, in his eighty-third year, and literature still mourns the great and tuneful Laureate.

#### POETRY AND RHYTHM.

The selections which are given in this volume will, it is believed, be found suited to the needs of pupils of the eighth and ninth school years in reading and studying one of the chief modern English poets.

The teacher may profitably arrange some preliminary class study of the nature and structure of poetry as distinguished from prose. Poetry has its own mission, to appeal to the feelings; its own style, poetic words, rare words, words obsolete in prose; its own arrangement, transposed order of words, elliptical expressions, omission of minor words; its own imagery, similes, metaphors, personifications, and other figures of speech, which are to the poet what color is to the painter. Poetry also has its own form—verses and stanzas as contrasted with sentences and paragraphs in prose.

It may have rhyme; it must have rhythm, the alternate stress and repression of the voice in reading. This metrical or measured succession of syllables depended, in the classic languages, on the way long and short syllables were made to succeed each other; but English metre depends upon the distinction of accented and unaccented syllables, as,

I fal'ter where' | I firm'ly trod.  
Bright'est and | best' of the | sons' of the | morn'ing.  
I come' | o'er the mount'ains with light' | and song'.

These groups of two or three syllables, only one of which is accented,



are called *feet*. Each foot has one accented and one or two unaccented syllables. There are five different measures, as seen in the words: 1, beau'ty (trochee); 2, com-bine' (iambus); 3, mur'-muring (dactyl); 4, comple'tion (amphibrach); 5, colou'nade' (anapest).

A *trochee* is a foot containing an accented, followed by an unaccented, syllable. An *iambus* is the reverse of the trochee, the unaccented syllable coming first. A *dactyl* is a foot of three syllables, the first accented. An *amphibrach* is a foot of three syllables, of which the second is accented. An *anapest* is a foot of three syllables, the third accented.

We frequently find substituted feet, an iambus for a trochee, a trochee for an iambus, a trochee or an iambus for a dactyl, or an anapest for a dactyl; but two accented syllables or three clearly pronounced unaccented syllables, are not brought together in the same foot. The tri-syllabic metres have a tripping lightness that suggests the analogy of triple time in music.

A verse of two feet is called a dimeter; of three feet, a trimeter; of four feet, a tetrameter; of five feet, a pentameter; of six feet, a hexameter.

*Enoch Arden* is in iambic pentameter or heroic verse.

"Long lines' | of cliff | break'ing | have left' | a chasm';  
And in' | the chasm' | are foam' | and yel'low sand';"

An occasional trochee occurs, as | break'ing | in the first line.

*The Defence of Lucknow* is in dactylic hexameter verse.

Frail' were the | works' that de|fend'sd the | hold' that we | held' with  
our | lives'—

Wom'en and | chil'dren a|mong' us, God | help' them, our | chil'dren  
and | wives' !

Hold' it we | might'—and for | fif'teen | days' or for | twenty at | most.  
"Never surren'der, I | charge' you, but | ev'ery man | die' at his  
post'!"

These lines show the ordinary movement of this poem. The sixth foot of each line is uniformly incomplete, containing only its accented syllable. The reader finds an occasional substitution of a trochee for a dactyl, or in a few instances a supernumerary syllable, as at the end of the first and sixth lines. In the sixth line may also be noted the unusual occurrence of an amphibrach—two amphibrachs.

Hexameter was the heroic or epic measure of the Greeks and Romans. The sixth foot was regularly a spondee (two long syllables) and the fifth a dactyl.

*Ring Out, Wild Bells* is in iambic tetrameter verse,

Ring out', | wild bells', | to the' | wild sky',  
The fly'ing cloud', | the frost'y light'.

*The Charge of the Light Brigade* is in dactylic dimeter verse.

"Half a league, | half a league,  
Half a league | on'ward,  
All' in the | val'ley of | Death,  
Rode' the | six' hundred."

A trochee repeatedly takes the place of a dactyl, and sometimes a supernumerary syllable is found, as in the third line.

In oral reading of poetry, care should be taken while noting the metrical accents, to avoid a sing-song movement, and to make appropriate, delicate recognition of the caesural and final pauses.

## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
ENOCH ARDEN . . . . .	9
THE COMING OF ARTHUR . . . . .	38
THE PASSING OF ARTHUR . . . . .	54
COLUMBUS . . . . .	70
THE MAY QUEEN . . . . .	78
NEW-YEAR'S EVE . . . . .	80
CONCLUSION . . . . .	82
DOBA . . . . .	85
THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BATTALION . . . . .	90
THE DEFENCE OF LUCKNOW . . . . .	92
LADY CLARE . . . . .	98
BREAK, BREAK, BREAK . . . . .	103
THE BROOK . . . . .	102
BUGLE SONG . . . . .	104
WIDOW AND CHILD . . . . .	105
THE DAYS THAT ARE NO MORE . . . . .	106
I ENVY NOT . . . . .	106
OH YET WE TRUST . . . . .	107
RING OUT, WILD BELLS . . . . .	108
CROSSING THE BAR . . . . .	110