The dramatic monologue in Browning and in Tennyson

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http://hdl.handle.net/2144/5452

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Thesis for degree of Master of Arts.

The Dramatic Monologue in Browning and in Tennyson.
side by side through the very heart of the
nineteenth century, living out their lives in a
manner characteristic of each individuality, two
men—two masters, were devoting a life-time
to that noblest of arts—poetry, winning to them-
seves a name that shall never die, giving glory
to the country which could produce two such-
masters, and at the same time lending a new
charm, a new grace, a new depth of feeling to
poetry itself. The very world in which we live
seems more beautiful because Alfred Tennyson
has exalted it in his verse; humanity has a
deep meaning because Robert Browning has
searched its depths and idealized it in his poe-
try.

The fact that these two poets, both sons
of England, lived and wrought at the same time
under the same social, economic and political
conditions, enjoying a friendship that was ab-
most ideal, gives splendid opportunity for compar-
Their poetry, influenced by the same environ-
ments must show some similarity and still be marked
by the contrast of two distinct personalities, for even social and political facts must be viewed through the individual mind.

When, in the early part of the thirties, the two poets began to write, Europe had not yet entirely recovered from the shock of the French Revolution. The civilization of ages had been broken down; the ideas of government, which men had held before the contest with Napoleon had proved to be failures; new ideals must be formed; society must be reconstructed on a new basis. The most noticeable result was the aesthetic stir which appeared among the middle classes. This period has rightly been called "the age of inspired office-boys." Attempts at literature became popular; gifted or not, there was scarcely a youth but what thought he must try his hand at verse-making. In 1814 a reaction against poetry had set in among the upper classes. This was due chiefly to the wide-spread popularity of Sir Walter Scott's novels. Everyone, putting poetry in the background, began to read fiction. To win glory as a poet, one must overcome this gen...
eral indifference to poetry.

With affairs in such a state, the task of Browning and Tennyson was no small one. Amid the turmoil of political differences, each lived a comparatively secluded life among beautiful surroundings, following the bent of his nature, apparently unruffled by any political distemper. To each poetry was life. Tennyson was fond of privacy, and hated notoriety; Browning, on the contrary, went much into society, especially after the death of his wife, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, who justly shares his fame.

The intimacy of the two poets was noted for the hearty cheerfulness of a man like Browning acted like a tonic on the naturally melancholy temperament of Tennyson; who, nevertheless, seemed to have appreciated less of Browning than Browning did of him; yet he said, "Browning is the greatest-brained poet in England." True as this statement is, Tennyson and not Browning, is the one who best represents the spirit of the nineteenth century; the one.
who received the best love and praise of the people, while Browning, who was forced to publish his works at his own expense, can be spoken of only as the poet of the few.

Entering the field of Browning's poetry, one finds a marked similarity in the structure of his poems; almost without exception, his shorter pieces are in the form of monologues, even his longest, and perhaps his greatest work, "The Ring and the Book," is a series of pure dramatic monologues. Browning is said by some to have originated this form; whether or not that is true, he certainly made it his own special province. In this he excelled, for, better than any other means, the monologue was fitted to express the depths of his mind. It is probable that Tennyson was influenced by Browning's mode of writing, for he, too, especially in his later works, used this form of poetry to some extent, though with a purpose far different from that of Browning. But before examining the thought and aim of the two men as shown in their
dramatic monologues, it would be well to look at the technical structure of the poems themselves.

Among nine dramatic monologues taken as typical of Browning's whole work, one finds a variety of metres. Only three, "A Death in the Desert," "Andrea del Sarto," and "Fra Lippo Lippi," have the same method of scansion—the iambic pentameter. Though these are the most conventional, yet even here Browning often violates the rules of harmony. Take for example, the ninth line of "A Death in the Desert;—

"'Nu and epsilon stand for my own name',

The ictus comes on 'nu', the first beat, making the first two feet, trochees; a form which should never be used as a resolution for an iambic foot. The stress is often put on insignificant words, as in the following line from "Fra Lippo Lippi," line two hundred fifty-four,

"In pure rage! The old mill horse out at grass"—

Here, the accent falls on the 'the,' while 'rage,' the important word in the first half of the line, receives no stress; sense and sound do not har-
monize, "Andrea Del Sarto is the more nearly perfect of the three, as for example, lines twenty to twenty-four:

"Tomorrow, how you shall be glad for this! Your soft hand is a woman of itself. And mine the man's bared breast she curls inside.

Don't count the time lost neither; you must serve.

For each of the five models we require."

There is no variation of meter in these five lines.

The scheme of "Abt Vogler" is even more complex. In the first two stanzas Browning employed the elegiac distich, the first line being a catalectic dactylic hexameter, the second a dactylicpentameter catalectic in the third and sixth foot. The other verses defy classification, being a mixture of dactylic, iambic and anapaestic feet; yet there is a musical swing to this whole poem. Take stanza eight, for example.
"Well, it is gone at last, the palace of music I dreamed,
Gone, and the good tears start, the praises that come too slow,
For me is assured at first one scarce can say that he feared,
That he even gave it a thought, the grace thing was to go,
Never to be again! But many more of the kind
As good, may better perchance: is this your comfort to me?
To me, who must be saved because Icling with my mind
To the same, same self, same love, same God, ay what was, shall be:"

Most of Browning's pieces lack this musical swing, for few of his verses ring themselves,
yet even the stanza quoted loses its easy flow in the latter part of the verse.
The "Grammarian's Funeral" has two meters, a catalectic verse, consisting of a dactyl and four trochees, followed by an Adonic verse, as, lines one to four—
"Let us begin and carry up this corpse,

"
Living together,
Leave me the common crofts, the vulgar thorpes,
Each in its tether.

There are also two meters in "Prospero," the first, an anaapaesthetic dimerie, with iambics substituted in many of the feet; the second, an anaapaesthetic spondee; as, lines one through four,

"Fear death? to feel the fog in my throat
The mist in my face
When the snows begin and the blasts denote
I am nearing the place."

The peculiar staccato effect in this piece well suits the idea of scorning, fear of death.

It is difficult to classify the meter of "By the Fireside." The first four lines of each stanza are tetrasponde, sometimes iambic, sometimes anaapaesthetic; the fifth line is a spondee. Many verses in this beautiful poem possess a ringing cadence unusual to Browning; as, stanza forty-one,

"For my heart had a touch of the woodland time,
Wanting to sleep now over its best."
Shake the whole tree in the summer prime
But bring to the last leaf no such test!
"Hold the last fast, runs the rhyme.

The scheme of "Rabbi Ben Ezra" is even more unusual than the others, though the measures are more regular. The stanzas consist of six lines each, of which the first, second, fourth and fifth are tripodies; the third, a pentapody; the sixth, a trimeter, all in iambic measure, as in stanza one,

"Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be.
The last of life, for which the first was made;
Our times are in His hand.
Who saith "A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half, trust God; see all, nor be afraid."

But the masterly touch of the poet is found in the rhythmic movement of the lines of "Saul," as in lines three to seven,

"And he, since the king of my friend, for thy countenance sent,
Neither drunken nor eaten have we; nor until from
In tent
Phoe return with the joyful assurance the King liv-
eth yet,
Shall our life with the honey be bright, with the
water be wet.
The anapaestic pentameter is well adapted to ex-
press the soul of music which is felt in this
poem.

The scansion of these few monologues shows
that Browning was no slave to any form. His verses
are often harsh in measure and lacking in melody,
but the varied combination of metres proves the
originality of the poet's mind; and the musical
flow which sometimes appears in his poems,
shows that Browning might have saved himself from
much harsh criticism had he so willed, but to him "the
poet is not a maker of rhymes but the interpreter
of life."
The scansion of Tennyson reveals less origi-
inality of form. In eleven monologues, there
are only three different metres. Four blank verse
monologues, "Piriesias", "Sir John Oldcastle", "Columbus"
and "Romney's Remorse" are written in iambic pentameter. There is an easy flow of rhythm, a dulcet melody, an almost lyric sweetness, especially in "Romney's Remorse," which is not found in Browning's blank verse. For example, lines sixty-nine through seventy-eight of "Romney's Remorse:

I dreamed last night of that clear summer noon,
When seated on a rock, and foot to foot
With your own shadow in the placid lake;
You clasped our infant daughter, heart to heart.
I had been among the hills and brought you down
A length of staghorn-moss, and thus you twined
About her cafe. I see the picture yet:
Mother and child. A sound from far away
More louder than a bee among the flowers,
A fall of water, lull'd the noon asleep.

In the fourth line of "Columbus":

"Does the king know you design to visit him"
the thesis falls on the in the first measure; in the third line of "Tiresias," the stress comes on the unaccented part of the word ruddy:

"Ruddy thro' both the roofs of sight and wake"
In "Romney's Remorse" there are several words thus accented, but as a whole every word is placed with a skillful felicity. In "Rizpah" the dactylic hexameter catalectic alternates with the anapaestic trimeter: as in "stanga ten,

"Then since I couldn't but hear the cry of my boy that was dead,
They seized me and shut me up; they fastened me down on my bed.
"Mother, O mother!" he called in the dark, and year after year,
They beat me for that, they beat me, you know that I couldn't but hear."
The same two metres are used in the six dialectic monologues, "Auld Roä," "The Northern Cobbler," "The Spinner's Sweet Arts," "The Village Wife," "The Northern Farmer" (old style) and "The Northern Farmer" (new style). The anapaestic trimeter predominates in these; as lines three and four of "Auld Roä,"

"But if I mean to make it sound as I can,
Fur Ioüüa und Roäver moor nor hiver swäid mottal man."

There seems to be no fixed rule about the dactylic lines, but so nearly alike are these two metres that there is no harsh dissonance anywhere. There is a subtle, exquisite music in the first line of "Rigsvah."

"Wailing, wailing, wailing, the wind over land and sea."

The very swing of this line is an index to the mournful tone of the whole piece, in which the harmony of sound and sense is almost perfect.

It would be difficult, from a study of the monologues, to decide which poet had the greater command of language, the larger vocabulary. In Tennyson's dialectic poems, the form of the words claims the reader's attention. Unless one is familiar with this kind of dialect, that of the lower, uneducated classes of Lincolnshire, the thought seems subordinate to the language in which it is clothed. Of lesser poets it has been claimed that the dialect was used more to cover up the author's lack of knowledge of his subject than as a natural accompaniment to
the character described, but a close study of the forms of the words used in Tennyson's monologues shows that he must have been familiar with those who used this dialect. Underlying all these pieces, there is a natural agreement in the arrangement of vowels and the dropping of consonants. Tennyson is perfectly consistent in his dialectic orthography. Another proof of his acquaintance with this dialect is found in the many words and phrases not used in good English and to unfamiliar ears, appearing neither in sound nor sense, to have any connection with English words, such as mösthus, for generally, haurm for arm, urid for mad, skelpt for overturned, battle-twig for ear wig, knowy for filthy, hawnin' for lounging, detch for a brood of chickens; "that caps out" for that's beyond everything; "the bees is as fellas out" for the flies are as fierce as anything.

In "Rimpa" the language is simple, the style loose, but the broken form of the conversation and the parenthetical insertions are natural to such
a character as Ripsah, the poor old dying mother, as for example, stung to two,
"Who let her in? how long has she been?
You - what have you heard?
Why did you sit so quiet? you never have spoken a word,
O - to pray with me - yes - a lady - none of their spies.
But the night has crept into my heart, and begun to darken my eyes.
"
Turning from this poem to "Iphigenia" we find a great change; the tone is more majestic though less interesting; the words are classical, of deeper meaning and less modern; the sentences are more periodic. The whole poem, as far as style goes, might have been written by some ancient Greek author; the pictorial power of the attributes is not unworthy of a Homer or a Sophocles. How vivid is the picture expressed by "shrine-shattering earthquake", the "multitudinous beast" and the "shadowy lion"
The great pictorial imagination of Tennyson.
is revealed in this poem, which is but a group of picture words. The majestic tone is illustrated in lines one fifty-seven to one sixty-four.

"Thither, my son, and these
Then that hast never known the embrace of love,
Offer thy maiden life, this useless hand!
I felt one warm tear fall upon it, gone!
He will achieve his greatness. But for me,
I would that we were gathered to my rest.
And mingled with the famous kings of old." "Columbus" is written more in the narrative style. The language borrows upon both the modern and the classic mode. The fact that the subject is of Spain accounts for many unusual words, such as "hidalgues," Spanish noblemen of the lower classes, and "caravel," a kind of ship formerly used by Spanish and Portuguese sailors. There are fewer picture words than in "Tiresias," but more rhetorical figures. The admiral's description in lines twenty-three to twenty-eight of his setting forth to discover
"A new heaven, a new earth is a series of metaphors,"
"O chains for time,
"Whose flesh his prowse into the setting sun,
And made west East, and sailed the Dragon's mouth,
And came up on the mountain of the world,
And saw the rivers roll from Paradise."
It is a bold figure, yet not overstrained, to speak
of the unknown depths of the ocean as the "Dragon's
mouth," and of the new world as "Paradise." One of
Tennyson's most ornate metaphors is contained
in the poignant epigram in lines forty-two and
forty-three:

The golden guest
Is morning-star to the full round of truth.
"Sir John Oldcastle," as a whole, has a less
finished tone than the others; the style is broken,
sometimes harsh; the thought, disconnected;
the parenthetical lacks the ease and naturalness
of those in "Rizpah," for there is a hardening
in the verses - as in lines forty-three through
fifty:
"Ry, for they love me! but the king nor voice,
Nor finger raised against him—took and hung’d.
Took, hung’d and burnt—how many—thirty-nine
Called it rebellion—hung’d, poor friends, as rebels
And burnt alive as heretics! for your priest
Labels—to take the king along with him
All heresy, treason—but to call men traitors
May make men traitors.”

The only real beauty in this poem is found in the
character of Oldcastle. Possibly Tennyson wrote
in this harsh, broken manner because he thought
the dramatic treatment demanded it This poem
is a good proof of Tennyson’s large vocabulary.
It is rich in Anglo-Saxon words and contains
many which are seldom used as—whilome, joped,
boscage, mitred, pardoners. There is a subtle mean-
ing underlying line ninety-eight.

“...And play the Saul that webe will be Paul.”
This clear-cut, forcible manner of speaking of a
persecutor, who never repents as did the great
Apostle, is clever and original. To call the Go-

deal the priest’s pearl “is a pretty figure, while
the words “foam—churning chasm” makes
a vivid picture, but as a whole, the style of this poem would add no fame to any author.

Poe immediately from "Sir John Oldcastle" to "Romney's Remorse" is like going from a rough, rugged, mountainous pathway to a smooth, grassy plain. The rhythm is as the soft trickling of some gentle stream, for there is no suggestion of harshness, no word is wasted, but each adds to the beauty of the whole. The imagery, rich in depth of feeling, is in perfect taste. The whole—thought, partly narrative, partly retrospective, mostly reproachful—is arranged with admirable clearness. This masterpiece of blank verse has a lyric sweetness, many words in themselves are songs. Notice the musical rhythm in the phrase in line fifty-five: "the rainbow hues of heaven" and the alliteration in lines one, twenty-nine, and thirty-two.

"When living made
The wife of wives a widow, bride, and lost
Salvation for a sketch."

Let us turn from this poem directly to that
monologue by Browning, so similar to "Romney's Remorse" in form and substance, "Andrea Del Sarto.

Does Browning express himself in the same delicate, melodic style as Tennyson? Does he show the same pictorial imagination? Is his style as clear, his speech as lucid?

"Andrea Del Sarto" does not read, with the same rippling movement as "Romney's Remorse." The style is graver, exhibits a more massive power, yet is easy and natural. The short sentences are forcible and generally clear-cut, but some of the figures are not easy of comprehension. Just what does Browning mean in line twenty-six by "my serpentine beauty, rounds on rounds"? Is not the figure in this unusual word "serpentine" overstrained? Would the painter's wife bend or turn like a serpent? Whatever the meaning, it is a bold stroke, worthy of Browning. All his figures are strong. In lines one sixty-nine and one seventy, where he likens himself to a "weak-eyed bat, no sun should tempt out of the grove whose four walls make his world," is a forcible
expression of self-depreciation on the part of Andrea. What a delicate harmony of word and thought is suggested by the color-tone running through this poem. This "twilight piece." Not a jarring note, not a word too many! The golden hue of fame is softened to the silver-gray of peace, or more truly, of helpless, resigned melancholy. Could this thought have been more exquisitely expressed. Notice, for example, lines thirty-five through forty-nine.

"A common grayness silvers everything,
All in a twilight, you and I alike.
You at the point of your first pride in me-
(That's gone, you know), but I, at every point,
My youth, my hope, my art, being all toned down.
To yonder, sober, pleasant Tiesole.
There's the bell clinking from the chapel top.
That length of convent wall across the way
Holds the trees safer, huddled more inside.
The last moon, leaves, the garden; day, decrease
And autumn grows, autumn in everything.
Eh? the whole seems to fall into a shape,
As if I saw alike my work and self
And all that I was born to be and do,
A twilight-piece.

also lines forty-four and forty-five,
"I am grown peaceful as old age tonight,
I regret little, I would change still less."

The language of "Andrea Del Sarto" is, as a whole,
simple; the style, not fanciful, yet a few words
need separate annotation. In the fifteenth line,
"use" means are accustomed; in the eighty-
second line, "forthright craftsman's hand means
that, in his art, his hand possessed a perfect touch;
in line one fifty-three, "monarch's golden look" re-
fers to the patronage which brings fame. A subtle
meaning underlies the comparison of his hearing
the low voice and following, as the bird does when
he hears the fowler's pipe; for Andrea's wife had
persuaded him by the charms of a "perfect brow, and
perfect eyes and more than perfect mouth."

"A Grammarian's Funeral" is a proof that
Browning "delights in parenthesis." These are insert-
ed at varied intervals, with an abruptness which is
disconcerting to the reader, unless one is familiar with Browning's style of writing in general, and with the outline of this poem in particular. In the midst of exalted musings, the leader of the funeral procession gives directions to those who are carrying the body of their master, and then goes on with his speaking as if there had been no break in the thread of thought. The piece displays the classical knowledge of the author. Some words are of Latin derivation, as: calculus, tussis; many are uncommon, as: thorpe, croft, soul-hydroptic, convoy, queasy. The style here is inverted; lines seventy-three to seventy-nine:

"Here's the town-gate reached; there's the market-place,

Gazing before us.

Yea, this in him was the peculiar grace-

(Shattered our chorus)

That before living he'd learn how to live-

No end of learning."

The idea must be caught quickly, like all of Browning's thoughts, for he wastes no words in explanations.
Figure follows figure in quick succession, while the reader is left, groping in darkness till all at once the truth breaks upon him in all its beauty and wealth of meaning, its intrinsic richness, clothed with that daring originality so peculiar to Browning. This appears in each one of his monologues, take "Rabbi Ben Ezra," for instance, with its solemn expansion of the metaphor of man as the clay, and time as the wheel on which God, the potter, shapes him. Here the very loftiness of thought transcends the power of an adequate clearness of expression. The mode of speech is dark and elliptical. It requires deep study before the whole value of the thought bursts upon one, for every word requires attention, not one could be spared without changing the meaning. Every idea is concisely stated with utter disregard of form or melody. How harsh is the twenty-fourth line

"Does care the crop-full bird? Fret not, doubt the new-crammed beast?"

But the figure of the human soul being moulded
like clay into a cup, ornamented about its rim
with "laughing-loves" in early life; by "shrewd things"
in old age (by which Browning meant the care-
less, happy days of childhood and the graver,
sterner mood of age) strained and warped, per-
haps; yet formed to be "heaven's consummate cup," 
is one of the most wonderfully expanded meta-
phors in literature. It is neither flowery nor
overstrained, but both plain and natural.

The style of "By the Fireside" is an admir-
able bit of work, as near to a lyric as Browning's
massive power could come. It contains that rare
melody of verse which is found only in a few of
his poems and in certain isolated passages. The words
are exquisitely chosen to clothe the beautiful thought
of an eternal love between himself and his wife.

There is nothing of the sentimental that appears
in the majority of love poems, but the whole tone
is deep, pure and strong. The pictorial imagination
of the author is beautifully expressed in "By the
Fireside," the imagination which could look for-
ward to old age when he should sit in the autumn.
evenings in the glow of the firelight, with his wife reading beside him, her head resting on her small hand; could look even into eternity when she should make him see all through her eyes and at the same time could look backward to the time when their souls were mixed. The nature descriptions blend perfectly with the thought and form a beautiful background to the whole picture, but even this poem bears the individual mark of Browning's style. Many sentences are inverted, pronouns are brought in before their antecedents, as in the eighteenth verse,

"From slab to slab how it slips and springs, The thread of water, single and slim."

One is at a loss to know to what "it" refers till the following line is read. Details of description follow each other so closely that it is difficult to catch the whole idea at a glance, as in the ninth verse,

"Does it feed the little lake below? That speck of white just just on its margin."
The first line refers back to the thread of water; the next line is about something entirely different. The many compound words give a touch of grace to the poem, as if single words were not adequate to the beauty of thought. The masterly stroke of Browning is evident in the expression "green degrees." Slowly, compactly the thought is concentrated into these two words. Just as in going down a mountain, one marks his progress by the few-green plots and finds the way growing greener as he nears the foot, so in looking back toward youth, many events stand out prominently as marks of progress. All this is expressed in the fifth verse. In the forty-sixth verse is another masterly stroke where he speaks of two lives joining, but being "one and one with a shadowy third. One near one is too far."

The poem gains an added richness from the transition and diversion in the heart of the story. From the seventh through the twentieth stanza Browning is describing the scenery along some path...
in Italy, all is vividly portrayed from the stone chapel and bridge to the stray sheep that "drinks at the pond at times." In the twentieth stanza he tells of a little bird singing there all day long, in the ten succeeding verses he talks to his wife, then in stanza thirty-one he goes back to where he left off in describing the walk he had taken with her.

"What did I say? That a little bird sings all day long."

How real is the description of the crucial moment of that walk! One can feel the hesitancy, the fear to touch a last leaf, the great overwhelming feeling of the little more and how much it is! And the little less and what worlds away." Truly Browning is a master of love poetry.

The thought in the last eight lines of "Prospero:" puts this poem in the class with "The Pied Piper."-

"For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave; The black minutes at end, And the elements rage; the fiend voices that rave Shall dwindle, shall blend..."
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,
Then a light, then thy breast,
Oh, thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,
And with God be the rest!

The very brevity of this poem, its conciseness, its
short sentences make it a forcible bit of literature.

Abit Vogler's comparison of his musical perfor-
mance to the rearing of some beautiful structure
is an original figure admirably wrought, though
the meaning is somewhat obscure. There seems to
be no principal verb in the first stanza, but
the main thought is repeated, with its verb in
the beginning of the second. In the last line of
the first stanza "to please the princess he
loved," the meaning is ambiguous; pleasure
may be regarded as a verb with princess as its
object, but if this is the correct rendering, to
what princess does he refer, for Solomon loved
many princesses? Or pleasure may be a noun
and princess be in opposition. This rendering
would be more consistent with Solomon's character.
It is possible that Browning derived the figure in "Art Vogler" from Goethe's statement: "Architecture is petrified music." The description of the notes as slaves who do his bidding forms a vivid picture.

Who but Browning would analyze music with such rare subtlety and such daring originality? It is a bold stroke to speak of a base note as one that would bury his brow with a blind plunge down to hell in live thirteen. In stanzas five, "fresh from the Protosplant" refers to the old doctrine that unborn souls are ready and waiting for their turn to come into the world. In stanzas seven where he speaks of framing a star out of three sounds Browning is probably thinking of the rays of the star which dart forth in all directions, yet mingle in one bright light. Stanzas nine is said by many critics to contain the most thought of any given number of lines in literature—a gem in a few words.

"Therefore, turn not to thee, the ineffable name! Builder and Maker, thou, of houses not made with hands! What! have fear of change from thee. Woart ever the same?"
Doubt that thy power can fill the heart that thy power expands?
There shall never be one lost good! What was, shall live as before!
What was good shall be good, with for evil, so much good more,

On the earth the broken arcs; in the heavens, a perfect round.

It is true that Browning can say more in an instant than others; in thrice that time, even Tennyson would require many more words to express the same thought. The style of "Abt Vogler" is not simple. Mr. Browning had to unburden his mind of too many thoughts to make the language clear and still have the poem the same length. The close of this monologue, however, is not simpler, so simple; so profound, that after one has been deep in the mysteries of the poem, it seems almost abrupt. -

"Well it is earth with me; silence resumes her reign. I will be patient and proud, and soberly acquiesce. Give me the keys; I feel for the common chord again,
Sliding by semitones till I sink to the minor keys.
And I blunt it into a mourn, and I stand on alien ground,
Surveying awhile the heights I rolled from into the deep.
Which, hark! I have dared and done: for my resting
place is found.

The C major of this life: so now I will try to sleep.

Browning's fondness for climax is well illustrated in "Saul," for here we find climax within climax. David's attempt to recall Saul from his terrible lethargy may be separated into four divisions. Verses five through seven seek to recall him to a knowledge of life in general. This made Saul groan. Stanzas nine brings life gradually to Saul himself, then "arm folded arm, over the sheet whose slow heaving subsided," but all was not accomplished. "Death was past, life not come." Stanza thirteen is a more direct appeal to Saul to arouse himself to noble deeds, that his name might become immortal through his acts. Then Saul sinks down by the tent props and becomes visibly aware of David's presence, for he lays his hand softly on the mighty brow.
and David feels that what he needs is divine love in the human image. He sings no more, but outbreaks in that wonderful, prophetic revelation of God's incarnation of love in Christ. The great climax is reached in the eighteenth stanza, "See the Christ stand!"

Within these four divisions, there is also a climax, notable especially in the first two parts. The song of life in general is subdivided into seven songs. It begins with simple life—the song of the sheep. Nothing in this would make Saul think of himself. The second, the song of the birds has a little movement but is still on the animal plane. The third introduces people—the song of the reapers; then follows the funeral and marriage songs; the sixth is the great mercantile movement, and the seventh is the triumphant service in the temple. The second division in stanza nine—begins with the present in a general way—"On the wild joys of living!" then takes Saul to the past, the home-life, the meal, fath
er and mother, his work with his brothers, thus
life is gradually narrowed down to his own great-
ness.

The style of "Saul" is a triumph for Browning
for it is perhaps the grandest and most beautiful
messianic oratorico in words. Its vocabulary is
rich in word-pictures; as a narrative, it is a vivid
portrayal of Saul and David; its metaphors are
admirably chosen to fit the subject. It requires a
bold figure to describe Saul's appearance as he
stands against the main prop of the tent, but
Browning found one in the resemblance to a
waking serpent, hanging heavily in the pinea-
waiting his change: "stayed a four,
'He stood as erect as that tent-prop, both arms stretched
out wide,
And the great cross-support in the centre, that goes
to each side,
He relaxed not a muscle, but hung there, as caught in
his pangs
And waiting his change, the king serpent all heavily
hangs,"
Far away from his mind, in the pine, till deliverance came

With the spring-time - so agonized Saul, drear and stark, blind and dumb.

The numerous transitions relieve the strain of thought and add to the charm of the poem. The real end comes in the eighteenth stanza, but this resorted climax would have the mind in too high a tension; the last stanza saves the monologue from too abrupt ascending, and the fine touch of nature forms a fitting close to this master-piece.

"'Anon at the dawn all that trouble had withered from earth
Not so much, but Saul it die out in the day's tender birth;
In the gathered intensity brought to the gray of the hills
In the shuddering forest's held breath, in the sudden wind: thrills;
In the startled wild beasts that bore off, each with eye sidling still,
The averted with wonder and dread, in the birds stiff and chill"
That rose heavily as Dalpoorached them, made stupid with awe;
Ein the serpent that slid away silent. He felt the new law.
The same stared in the white humid faces upturned by the flowers;
The same worked in the heart of the cedar and moved the vine, flowers;
And the little brooks witnessing murmured persistently and low;
With their obstinate, all but husked voices. Ein, it said.

"A Death in the Desert" shows the versatility of Browning's mind. It begins with a narrative, gradually settles down to a philosophical, then to a theological argument, and ends in the narrative style. It is the longest of the monologues under discussion and for this reason, perhaps, the interest lags somewhat. It was written as a refutation of the two great infidels of the day, the French Renan and the German Strauss, who tried to prove that John did not write the fourth Gospel, that it was a mere myth and Christ was but a mere man. So the style and language is chiefly argumentative. The thought is
subtle, and requires the closest application of the mind to follow the arguments; yet it is evident that Browning had a clear insight into the subject for it is a master-piece of logic. The thought lay too heavy on Browning's mind for him to express it by pretty figures; though there are a few well-selected ones through the poem. In lines four twenty-four to four thirty-four the letting fall each round of a ladder above climbs to the next higher stage admirably illustrates the fact that man was made to grow up from one stage to a higher one.

I say that man was made to grow not stop.
That help he needed once and needs no more
Having grown but an inch long is withdrawn:
For he hath new deeds and new helps to these.
This imports solely man should mount on end
New height in view, the help whereby he mounts.
The ladder rung his foot has left, may fall,
Since all things suffer change save God, the truth.
Man apprehends him newly at each stage.
Whereat earth's ladder drops, its service done.
Splendid too is the illustration of his argument
that too much knowledge is worse than none at all,
in lines four eight six and seven,

A lamp its death when replete with oil, it chokes;
A stomach is when surcharged with food it starves.

In line four hundred fifty five, how well chosen is
the word "spoon fed" in speaking of how minds must
first be used. This monologue deviates too often into
prose to come under the head of artistic poetry; the
hard ring of the lines seems to correspond with the
depth of thought, which determines the true value
of any poem.

Fra lippo lippi is a typical illustration of
Browning's habit of opening his monologues with
such an abruptness as to take one's breath almost a-
way. He strikes immediately at the heart of the
story and holds one spell bound, for fear lest the poor
mocks may be taken—until the very close when
the poem ends as abruptly as it began.

lines one to eight,

Save, poor brother lippo, by your leave!
You need not clap your torches to my face,
Books, what's its blazon? You think you see a monk!
What! this past midnight, and you go the rounds.
And here you catch me at an allegro end,
Where sportive ladies leave their doors ajar?
The carmine's my cloister: shut it up.

The dramatic situation is more pronounced than in the other monologues; the story, more simple. Incidentally we are told the whole life and character of the realistic artist Fra Lippo Lippi, in the lively conversation that follows his capture by the city guards in an equivocal neighborhood after midnight. Some of the words are extraordinary. Fra Lippo Lippi does not appear to possess a strictly refined character; the language is made to correspond with this fact and consequently is of a somewhat lower tone than in the other monologues; this is seen in such words as traced (used with the obsolete meaning of to seize firmly), shucks, rubbish, junked, mean, offal, garbage. "Whiffs" seems to be a coined word. The figure in line twenty two, of sweeping people up in a net like pilchards, has a scornful tone. Many expressions are rather peculiar; as in line eighteen, the "house that caps the corner" for the house on the corner.
and in line forty-one, "they take?" for they attract.
The various little songs, inserted, beginning with
"flower," are taken from a kind of Italian folk-song,
called the "stornello." The first line contains the
name of a flower which sets the rhyme and is gen-
erally five syllables long, then follows two lines of
eleven syllables, both rhyming with the first, but
having no logical connection with it. Drowning makes
only one line follow, but each rhyme is full of wit,
as lines two forty-eight and nine.

"Flower of the peach,
Death for us all, and his own life for each."

To sum up briefly, the characteristics of the
style of the two poets as revealed in their monologues
that of Tennyson is simple, rich in imagery, full
of melody, displaying exquisite variety of diction,
and lucid beauty of form, with subtle allusive
touches; the style of Browning, on the contrary, is
involved and intricate, suggestive and creative, show-
ing extreme compactness of concentration, main-
taining a singular vitality in details, and at all
times displaying a beauty and strength peculiar
In a wide range of character the two poets show a marked difference. Tennyson delighted in English folks; with local coloring and their local peculiarities, especially did he take interest in the rough, harsh, narrow and racy of the soil, the rural characters of every day life. Browning, on the other hand, does not confine his subjects to England, but his range includes, especially Italy. His characters are not common people, neither are they famous men whose names ring through history, but they are unforgotten characters of past ages. Instead of making Beethoven or Mozart express the soul of music, he uncovers a German musician, Abt Vogler, who gained some fame in his day, by inventing pedals for the organ, but who is now practically forgotten. His thoughts of art are expressed not by Raphael or Michel Angelo, but by a poor monk, Fra Lippo Lippi, and by Andrea Del Sarto; his religious ideas are given not by Luther or Calvin, but by the obscure Jewish Rabbi Ben Ezra.

The treatment of these subjects varies with
the two poets. Tennyson's characters are studies in human nature, not, as a rule, at any particular moment, but as they might be found every day of their lives. Sir John Oldcastle — and to some extent, Romney — is an exception. The poet himself is kept in the background, his own thoughts seldom protrude. Browning's characters are always presented at some crucial point of their lives, or at some moment of special exaltation. The human being is the most prominent part of the poem; nature, and even philosophy, serve as a background, and tend merely to bring out the individual. Except in the titles of the poems, the only clue given to the speaker is furnished by his own words, leaving the reader to find his own bearings; "Prosper," "A death in the Desert," and "By the Fireside," do not, of course, come under this head. Unlike Tennyson, Browning often protrudes himself into his characters. Thus, his poems are mainly subjective, Tennyson's, mostly objective. But a separate consideration of the persons whom they impersonate will bring out the different points of the two
men in their character study.

Both types of the Northern farmers are numerous conceptions of the author, but beneath their rough exterior are the attributes of reality, they are living beings, both full of self-importance, the one thinking he knows better than the doctor and the parson, and even "Godamighty" himself, who is making such a mistake in taking him and not "old Joanes" or the worthless "young Robins"; the other thinking that those who have no money must come from lazy, good for nothing stock, not fit to be compared with himself who has acquired land from the farm to the mill and intends to "run slopes to the brig." To him all is "prosperity," even the horses' coat seems to say "prosperity," when he married, he went where "prosperity" was. This narrow-mindedness is his most prominent trait. The love of money has so enthralled him that he is void of all human sympathy, especially with his son who is "sweet-tempered" parson less, and cares nothing for money. To him it is not the root of all evil, but of good; even heaven depends upon it.
This farmer is a substantial character, a common type of the rough, spunk nature, and as a creation of Nature is an admirable study. So, also, is the farmer who would rather die than go without his pint of ale which he has taken every night for thirty years. He is a poor, ignorant, hard-working man, yet he has acted the best he knew how, attended church, at least while "Lally" was alive, and done his "dutyboy hall," now as he lies dying, craving his accustomed draught of ale, he presents a pathetic picture.

There is a more moral and ethical tone in the Northern cobbler, who would neither drink himself nor give anything but Adam's wine to a fellow-man. He is too reminiscent to present as striking a figure as the two farmers, yet the little we do see of him reveals a strong character. He, who prefers a bigger fellow to fight with, and so sets a quart of gin in his window instead of a pint, is surely a living man. The rough naturalness of his moral being is his most striking characteristic; his struggle to
overcome the drinking habit; his hearty hospitality to a guest; his pride in his wife and child, are but phases of his moral character.

Except for his tender care of "old Rover" and the boy, little Dick's father shows no prominent traits; his manner of story-telling, however, is natural to his type. It takes him a long while to get to the point; the account of old Rover's rescue of Dick, from the flames, ten years before, is often digressed and inserted in his own thoughts, but the subtle touches of humor tend to make him the most spirited of Tennyson's diabolic characters.

There is one notable difference between the two poets. Browning rarely ever takes a woman for a separate character study. When he does introduce one, she is always subordinate, serving merely as a foil to the personality of the man. Tennyson, on the contrary, shows a greater versatility in this direction, for he is a master of the comic and tragic alike. This fact appears especially in his character sketches of women. To the former class belongs "The
 spinster's sweet arts. As a portrait, it is more romantic than dramatic; as a character-study, it is both clever and amusing. Tennyson has drawn a vivid picture of the spinster as she sits rocking upon the hearth rug, stroking and talking to each of her four cats in turn. Her manner of addressing them, sometimes in their real character as cats, more often as her old sweethearts, has an original and peculiar vein of humor. She is typical of the eccentric class of spinsters, somewhat self-centering, not being able to endure the presence of a man who was not as scrupulously neat as she, and who would not wipe his shoes but would always soil her carpets and table-linen, yet she recalls them, especially Robbie and Steevie, with a sort of affection, a pleasure in the thoughts of "it might have been," but after all her reminiscences, which soften her somewhat for the time being, she resumes her bold front of being glad she has kept her two hundred a year to herself, to spend on the poor, with no man to question, none to obey.
Tennyson has given us another humorous conception in the village wife, a typical town gossip, always ready to hear any "harm" of her neighbors, eager to find some listening ears into which she may pour all her news, caring neither to whom nor about whom she is talking. Her ideas of the entail, and her account of the old squire who knew nothing but books, are somewhat ludicrous, while her language verges at times on the obscene, but this is perhaps perfectly consistent with such a character. Like all village gossips, she knows the personal history of everyone in the neighborhood and possesses insatiable curiosity; something unusual must happen to take her attention and stop her talking.

Tennyson understood her failing and so ended the monologue abruptly by having the hero get into her peas.

We see a far different side of human nature in Rizpah, the poor old dying mother. It would be hard to imagine anything more pitiful, yet more beautiful than that most
sacred of all instincts, the mother love, which still clung to her boy and preserved a simple faith and trust in him, though he had been changed from chains and left as a prey for birds, because he had robbed the mail. Stealthily by night, Zippah had crept out to the place where hung and gathered his bones and with her own poor old hands dug a grave for him by the churchyard wall. Her dying words are filled with terror lest a spy has come to find out where he lies, that his bones might again become a prey to the birds. Her defence of her own act and her boy's wild conduct wonder-

fully draws one's sympathy to her and one's aversion to the cruel laws of that time. Her views of Heaven and her own soul salvation might shock puritanical ideas but so closely allied to her love for her child is her implicit faith and trust in divine merci

and compassion, that we feel an admiration for a character so strongly, yet so pathetically in dependent. As a character study, Tennyson could not easily have surpassed Zippah.

There is a different, a more subtle kind of pathos
in Tiresias. The aged seer tells to Menaceus, the sto-
ry of his being blinded, and given the power of pro-
phesying, though none should believe him when he
spoke the truth. He describes, with wondrous beauty,
the goddess Pallas Athene, as she came up from the
bath and fixed her eyes on him till his "grew dark
forever." Now as he hears the fierce onset upon
the seven gates of Thebes, he pleads with Menaceus
to take his own life that he might be appeased;
and blunt the curse of Pallas by hearing him even
though he speaks the truth. When he feels a tear
von his "useless hand," and realizes that Menaceus
has gone to save Thebes, Tiresias is ready to die, for
his mission is accomplished. He longs to be where
his sightless eyes shall behold again the men he
knew, and where he may hear the golden lyre ever-
sounding "on one far height in one far shining
fire." It is a beautiful close to a life of undeserved
failure. His very nobility, since it is apparently use-
less, is pathetic, for none would hear his counsels.

Tiresias, of course, a pagan character, adds
such lends less interest as a study of living men.
than does Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, who
displays a more moral, more spiritual, and per-
haps a more aesthetic nature. He is, above all, a
strong spiritual man, ready to burn at the stake,
if necessary, for his religion. His account of his
trial by the priests details minutely his own
spiritual beliefs. His earnestness is revealed in his
longing to know the Welsh language, that he might
win some souls to Christ in the "wild field of
Wales," not just now, but later, when his craving
for bread has been satisfied, for he has just es-
aped from prison where he was doomed to die
for heresy and is anxiously looking for some
friend who is to meet him and take him to a
place of "hiding in the hills." His eulogy on the thirty
nine friends who had already been burned to death
for heresy his willingness to lay down his own life
to save the kingdom from harm, or a thousand
lives to save his soul, show him to be a true
friend. His aesthetic spirit reveals itself in his
appreciation of God's beautiful world. Nowhere has
Tennyson drawn so vividly such strength of char-
acter as that of Sir John Oldcastle.

Columbus is another sympathetic portrait of a historical character. "Bedridden and alone, scouted by court and king, the first discoverer starves." A friend from the court visits him, and Columbus, calling attention to his chains, recounts his long and bitter experience of disappointment and injustice; yet through it all, he reveals a splendid faith in divine guidance, a willingness even to go on a last crusade against the Saracen--in spite of the wrong which has been done him--if God and the king so willed. But at times, he seems too effective to be a true sketch of the real Columbus, so great a man should be more modest, allowing others and his own deeds to praise him.

The aesthetic and ethical point of view of the two poets can best be illustrated by a comparison of the two painters, Tennyson's Romney and Browning's Andrea del Sarto. They have many points in common; both have a genius and love for art; both have won some fame as painters; and, unlike most great artists, both are married; yet neither is wholly sat-
satisfied with his life and work. But what a difference in their attitude toward each of these points which they hold in common.

As they appear in the monologues, each is speaking with exquisite pathos to his wife. Tennyson, with his usual homage to women, conceives Mary as a faithful, loving and devoted wife. Browning, as was his wont, cares more for the beauty of the man's character, and so in his conception it is the husband who is faithful and devoted.

Shortly after Romney's marriage, he had deserted his wife because some great masters had said that a wife spoiled an artist. Seldom had he seen her again until near the close of life, when broken down in health and mind he came back to her, and she, forgiving his desertion of her, for his art, cared for him tenderly. This is a deathbed repentance, but his remorse is from his heart. His brain clouded by fever seems not at first to recognize his wife, but takes her for the Lady Hamilton, who has come to sit for a picture. Gradually his brain clears and he knows that his nurse is the "truest"
kindliest, noblest-hearted wife, that ever wore a Christian marriage ring." He is ready to curse the master who said that "wife and children drag an artist down." The thought of his fame as a painter brings no comfort for the loss of such a wife. Determined to make one last effort to paint her face, he calls for his crayons; but the touching reminiscences of the mother and child, as he pictures them together years ago, and the tender little ballad which he recalls her singing to their little daughter, who is now in Heaven, are too much for his art; the lines are blurred and tremulous, "not one stroke firm." What little praise will be given him by the "mindless mob" means nothing to him now in comparison with the contempt of Heaven, which he feels will be his due, for losing "salvation for a sketch" and for having been unfaithful to his wife and children, not for any divine ideal, but for art. His humble manner of addressing his wife, as if she were far above him, has a different note from the indub-
gent tone which Andrea uses with Lucrezia, as though she were some child to pet and humour. Andrea seems to take pleasure in obeying the caprices of his wife; all he earns is hers; he has even been dishonest for her sake and now he hardly dares to go out on the street for fear some person from the court of Francis may see and speak to him. His parents died in poverty while he was paying the gaming debts for a cousin of hers. Lucrezia smiles on him only for some end, yet he takes it all with a flaccid spirit "regrets little would change still less; the very wrong to Francis of what account is it? He has no desire to be forgiven. His very peacefulness ex-sults our pity far more than the dim hope of Ronteal, that his wife's forgiveness may in some way reach Heaven and thence "reflected sent a light on the forgiven". His ethics are nobler than those of Andrea.

As painters, both have won temporal success, though they have failed in the highest art, but one's sympathies go with Andrea, for Lucrezia...
 fault lay entirely within himself. He worked for temporal praise, but Andrea, though he
painted for gold and earthly reward, has been
dragged into this by an unfaithful wife, who
used him only for her own pleasure. He knows
what is lacking in his art, but environment
and a flaccid nature have kept him from fol-
lowing Shakespeare's adage, "To thine own self
be true, and it shall follow as the night the day,
thou canst not then be false to any man." Andrea
was untrue to what he knew to be the highest
ideal of art; his lines were perfect, his shades
and hues were faultless, he could even detect
the mistakes in the great artist Raphael. But
his own work lacked the soul which shone through
Raphael's. Technically Andrea's pictures were per-
fected, but in that very perfection lay his failure.
"A man's reach should exceed his grasp," but Andrea
stopped with what he could do, while those that
were inferior to him in art were nearer Heaven.
Mildly he rebukes Lucrezia because she did not
bring to him a mind, a soul. "We might have
risen to Raphael, and you!" What helpless paths in this line. Browning's aesthetics seem to have reached a finer point in Andrea than Dennyson's in Romney. Dennyson's aesthetics rise more into the realm of ethics and religion. Browning is concerned more with the aesthetic values of tones and colors, form and outline in combination and symmetry. He arouses the aesthetic feelings by demanding that high aspirations and deep experiences of the soul should shine through all art.

Browning's knowledge of art is displayed in another character, Fra Lippo Lippi, a more sensual man than Andrea, living more for self gratification, as an artist, more realistic, caring only to paint things as he sees them, and if at times, he rises to something higher, it seems to puzzle even himself. He seeks no sense in painting "body so ill, the eye can't stop there" but must look beyond for the soul. He would make the body beautiful, and let the soul be missed we found within himself. Wherever he turns his gaze, he finds beauty, his is the true aesthetic
feeling of

"The beauty and the wonder and the power,
The shapes of things, their colors, lights and shades,
Changes, surprises."

Nature and the whole world is for him to interpret to men. His artistic mind finds, even in the face of one of his captors, a model for a drawing of the man who brought in John the Baptist's head as a charger. Saints tire him, he longs for a breath of free air, and so lets himself from the place, where he has been confined for three weeks, in order to paint a picture and follow the musical minstrels through the streets. When captured, he recounts his life, his aims, but we see in him, despite the glimmering flashes of a better life, a coarser nature than that of Andrea, and less polish of refinement.

Another powerful display of Browning's aesthetic mind appears in Abel Vogler, whose conception of music is of a beautiful palace whose spires reach heaven and which, though
it may pass away, never to return, will some day be heard again in heaven. Pvt Vogler, who has just been extemporizing on some musical instrument, is left in a state of awe, rapture and exaltation over his ability. So far elevated was he in music that he was companionable with the spirits, past, present and future. He could not reach the highest heights, yet his earth seemed to touch heaven. The musical palace existed in himself; music was merely the expression of his own soul and God’s will. It is more wonderful than art or poetry for it is less imitative and comes directly from the soul. Just as music will be heard by and bye so will all our acts.

"There shall never be one lost good."
"All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall exist."
"And the earth, the broken arcs, in the heaven a perfect round."

These deep religious convictions of Pvt Vogler contain the secret of the optimism which appears
in all of Browning's characters, his technical knowledge of music is shown in the last verse where he minutely details the progression from the common chord to a major. As a whole, Altrogler is one of the sublimest of Browning's dramatic personae.

In Rabbi Ben Ezra, Browning has taken a real Jew—the most eminent among the scholars of the middle ages who was exiled from Spain at the outbreak against the Jews. The Rabbi has attained to that age whose where youth is past, and eternity spreads out before him. He has gained wisdom, the inheritance of youth, and is now fitted to survey the plan of life and judge between the right and wrong. In his philosophy, youth, with its ambitious and spiritual conflicts where one sighs for the impossible and blunders in the endeavor to improve on what he is, is necessary to the whole plan, though it "slowly but half." Man has the sole privilege of becoming superior to beast and fowl and should therefore
express an overwhelming gratitude to a creator,
who has conceived a life so perfect that even
rebuffs and dangers stimulate to higher aims.
The choice thing in life is that we do not have
all we want, but must struggle for the im-
finite; facing obstacles and meeting them
in such a way as to grow stronger. The
Rabbi has gained no worldly success that gives
peace to his age, but a spiritual value, no longer
troubled by doubts. It is "good to live and learn"
where once he saw power, now he sees love;
flesh helps soul, as much as soul helps flesh.
It is not what he has really accomplished, that
sentence will be passed, but on his instincts,
while purposes, thoughts and fancies, the thing in
the heart that leads to accomplishment. Man
may not understand the meaning of the
wheel nor the touch of the potter's hand,
but the Rabbi is sure of one thing, that our
imes are in the hands of Him who has
planned a perfect cup. Dramatically we lose sight of the
speaker, in the depths of his words, his relig.
ious faith, which has been the law of his life's struggles, gives to his character a strong ethical sense and a quiet repose.

The five other monologues under discussion are constructed on a somewhat different plan. In "By the Fireside" and "Prospero," the words are Browning's own, he himself is talking. Both poems reveal a strong man. The soul-inspiring "Prospero," which was written a few months after his wife's decease, is his anticipation of death as the climax of a life of struggle. "In every fighter, so one fight more," Death would be merely the last and final occasion for the spirit to assert its mastery over the flesh. The lofty heroism and clear note of Optimism in this piece is consistent with the strong personality of Browning.

Each of the speakers in the three remaining monologues brings before us the character of some individual other than himself. In "Saul," the shepherd lad, David, gives an account of his playing on his harp to dissuade the evil spirit which had taken possession of the king's mind. While the
great Saul is presented as a vivid picture of a strong man under thrall; that which draws one's attention, is the simplicity of the fresh country boy, who without form or ceremony, speaks out of his heart and life that which gives to Saul a touch of life-the needed touch of nature. From the depths of a pure soul, the music bursts forth through the lips of the boy-minstrel, who realizes the danger of going into the presence of the maddened king, yet is brave enough to face it. The humanity of the psalm is revealed in the fourteenth verse, where David begins with a reminiscence; then becoming overwhelmed with the thought of his victory, so far beyond his daily living, that it seems too great for belief the next day, he breaks off into a prayer. Before he goes on, with the account of his ministry to Saul's needs, no longer by the music of his harps, but by the power of his words and that wonderful prophetic imagination. It is an anachronism of thought for Browning to put into David's mouth the name of the one who should incarnate divine love; yet there is no harshness.
gruity. The poet, to add force and beauty to the character of David, has carried the thought of his own day back to the time of Saul's reign. It but serves to bring out the strength and independence of Browning's own mind. This whole poem is a living example of the keen, analytical, and above all, the psychological tendency of Browning, in dealing with the struggles of the human soul; to penetrate its very depths.

Another anachronism of thought appears in "A death in the Desert," where the Apostle John, dying in a lonely cave, with his four faithful friends around him, and the Cretian centurion watching outside as sentry, thus forming a dramatic picture, is made to refute Strauss and Renan, the sceptics of Browning's day. But the character of John is not incompatible with the words which the poet has put into his mouth, the prophetic insight into the life of future years when scepticism should overrule truth. The speaker, Pamphylax, is not seen after the introduction of the poem; it is the dying
man who engrosses the attention, though in the lengthy logical discourse, we sometimes lose sight of every one.

The monologue "A Grammarian's Funeral," is a eulogy given to a great scholar by the leader of a chorus of his disciples. The grammarian was one who was ever studying, ever gaining. He had become the ideal of his pupils, and at his death, thinking that the valley was not good enough for him, they took him up to a high hill on the top of which they were buried in full sight of heaven, the highest distinguished of men. Their task seemed too sacred for vulgar eyes to behold, so they chose the night-time to accomplish their work. There is apparently no sorrow over the death of their master, for they go along "singing together," a natural burst of song, because they have lived to know a man with such devotion to his life's work. He was determined to know all, so he mastered every book, even when his body was dying. He kept his mind at work for he was reaching for far gains. To him the present counted only...
as a part of eternity. "Man has forever," "God's task is to make the heavenly period perfect, the earth
en" for "lofty designs" must close in like effects."

In every case Browning's characters are
strong men—men of many types, and Browning
himself includes and dominates them all: he is
poet, musician, painter, scholar, theologian, mor-
alist, philosopher. Where these types appear in Tenny-
son's poetry, they are always objective and separ-
ated from the poet himself.

Any study of Browning would be incom-
plete without a comparison of the main thought
in each of his monologues. It will be found that
the leading idea is always the same thought, only
it is clothed in language suited to each of the va-
ried characters. It would seem, then, that Browning
had a message to deliver to mankind—an appeal
to make to the heart as well as to the intellect, some-
thing that grew out of his own observation and
experience, which would comfort, enrich and
uplift humanity. What then is that message?

Browning's hearty, buoyant optimism is the
secret of his religious philosophy. "Grow old along with me. the best is yet to be," might be called the
organ point of his poetry. In failure, lies success;
in imperfection, lies perfection; in the finite rests the
infinite. "the best is yet to be." In "A Death in
the Desert," line five-eighth-eight, is the thought
that man's limitations are the necessary condi-
tions of his progress.
"Man partly a, and wholly hopes to be;"
and lines two-hundred and fourteen.
"Isn't for nothing we grow old and weak,
Was when God loves? When pain ends, gain ends too.
To me, that story - ay, that life and Death
Of which I wrote. 'It was' - to me, it is;
- in, here and now; Dappled Naught else.
Do not God now in the world this power first made?
Do not his love at issue still with sin.
Visibly when a wrong is done on earth?
In "Saul" greatness is obtained not in mortal life,
but in the far-reaching effect of human deeds and the
infinite love of God is revealed in the imperfect power
of man's love, as in lines one, sixty-three, to seventy-two.
"Crush that life, and behold its wine running! Each deed thou hast done.
Died, revives, goes to work in the world, until even as the sun
Looking down on the earth, the clouds spoil him, the tempests of
face,
Can find nothing. His own deed produced not, must everywhere trace
The result of his past summer's power; so each ray of thy will,
Every flash of thy passion and prowess, long over, shall thrill
Thy whole people, the countless, with ardour till they to give
forth
A like cheer to their sons: who in turn fill the South and the
North
With the radiance thy deed was the germ of."

Rabbi Ben Ezra tells us to welcome pangs and
rebuffs as the privilege of man over beast, and as the
divine means of perfecting, the growth of the soul,
as in stages five and six;

"Rejoice we are allied
To that which both provide,
And not partake, effect and not receive!
A spark disturbs our cloud;
Nearer we hold of God.
Who gives, than of His tribes what take, I must believe."
Then welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!
Be our joys three-parts pain!
Strive and hold cheap the strain;
Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the pain.
In "By the Fireside" and "Prospero" death is regarded as the opportunity of prolonging life. But Vygler counts evil as naught, failure as triumph: the grammarian valued learning only in reference to future good; as in lines eighty-three and forty,
"He said, "What's time? Leave now for dogs and apes!"

Man has forever",
Andrea refers his failure to the very perfection of his part, while those whose lines are imperfect, but whose "reach exceeds their grasp," are nearer the ideal; lines seventy-nine to eighty-eight,
"There burns a true light in them of God in them, in their vexed beating stuffed and stopped up brain heart, or whatever else, than goes on to prompt
This law which forthright craftsmen hand of mine,
Their works drop groundward, but themselves, I know;
Reach many a time a Heaven that's shut, then
Enter and take their place there: place there: sure enough
They come back and cannot tell the world
My works are nearer heavens but I sit here."

It is not the work actually accomplished
That counts so much as the ideals one has.
This thought is variously expressed in Browning's poems.
In "Rabbi Ben Ezra" stanza twenty-three to twenty-four

"Not on the vulgar mass
Called 'work' must sentence pass,
Things done that took the eye and had the price;
Air which from level stand,
The hour world laid its hand,
Found straightway to its mind, could value in a trice;
But all the world's coarse thumb
And finger failed to plumb,
So passed in making up the main account;
All instincts, immature,
All purposes unsure;
That weighed not as his word, yet swelled the main account;
Thoughts hardly to be packed
Into a narrow act,
Fancies that broke through language and escaped;
All I could never be,
All men ignored in me,
This I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher shaped.
In "Saul" line three, ninety-five,
"Tis not what man does which exalts him, but what
man would do."

And in "Abt Vogler" stanza three,
"As we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall exist,
Not its semblance but itself; no beauty, nor good, nor power
Whose voice has gone forth but each survives for the melody
When eternity affirms the conception of an hour.
The height that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,
The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky,
Here music sent up to God by the lover and the bard,
Enough that he heard it once, we shall hear it "bye and bye."

Truly, Browning as a religious idealist, has an inspir-
ing, helpful message for humanity. But what of Tennyson? Is he
less inspiring? Has he no message for us? It would be
difficult to find one central thought in his poetry for he
is at all times a poet, not a philosopher, a poet of law and
orders he may sing of the past, the present or the future, of
court life, rural life, yet always the artistic touch predominates.
His religious opinions are less definite than Browning's, his optimism more chastened, as expressed in his own words: "All yet we hope, that somehow good may be the final goal of ill." His poems do not teach morality, but they have a moral tone, and are written with true ethical fidelity, though always subordinate to art. To master Browning is not an easy task, but it will repay the student, to master Tennyson requires less arduous labor for his poetry makes one dream rather than work.

Thus the two great Victorian poets thought, thus they wrote, and now, side by side, in Westminster Abbey, they sleep in front of the mighty Chaucer. Tennyson's place in the hearts of men is secure; Browning's is hopeful for:

"When the dust and refuse of his writings shall have been purged away, enough of pure gold will still remain to justify the placing of Robert Browning among the great masters of song."

-Finis-