

POINTS TO REMEMBER IN ENGLISH LITERATURE SERIES- 8

1. **Alfred, Lord Tennyson** (1809-1892), an English poet and poet laureate during Queen Victoria's reign is one of the most popular English poets. In 1829, Tennyson was awarded Chancellor's Gold Medal at Cambridge for his piece '**Timbaktu.**'
2. In the year 1830, he published his first collection of poems, **Poems Chiefly Lyrical**, of which Mariana and Claribel remain the most popular. Though pointed out by critics for being overly sentimental, the force of his talent brought him to the notice of well-established writers such as Coleridge in his prime.
3. It can be seen that Tennyson's early poetry borrowed from medieval times with powerful visual imagery. Remarkably, this literary style influenced **Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood**.
4. Some of his **short lyrical poems** are- 1) Break, Break, Break; 2) The Charge of Light Brigade; 3) 'Tears, Idle Tears' and 'Crossing the Bar'. Another set of notable blank verses in classical mythological themes are; 1) Idylls of the King, 2) Tithonus and 3) Ulysses.
5. The **Oxford Dictionary of Quotations** published in the year 1941, says in its study that Tennyson is the ninth most quoted poet.
6. **In Memoriam A.H.H** (published 1850) was written for his fellow poet and friend Arthur Hallam who died of a stroke. Oft quoted, " Nature, red in tooth and claw," appears in this poem. In fact, Tennyson named one of his sons Hallam in the memory of his friend. Other poems that were written in grief were In the Valley of Caunteretz and Way of the Soul.
7. After his first solo publication **Poems Chiefly Lyrical** (1830), Tennyson came up with the second book of poetry in 1833. It included the first version of **The Lady of Shallot**. It was met with heavy criticism. This reception made Tennyson not publish anything for ten years.
8. In 1842, he published Poems in two volumes. The first volume consisted of old poems. While the second volume consisted of new poems like- Locksley Hall, Break, Break, Break, Ulysses, and a new version of **The Lady of Shallot**.

Literature of Seven Continents at one place!

9. In 1847, **Princess: A Medley** came out. Written in blank verse, it satirizes women's education. Later, Gilbert and Sullivan adapted the work and brought out a parody titled Princess (1870) and Princess Ida (1884).

10. After the death of William Wordsworth in 1850, **Samuel Rogers** refused the position of Poet Laureate. So, Tennyson was appointed as the Poet Laureate. It's interesting to know that Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Leigh Hunt were also given due consideration. Until his death in 1892, Tennyson remained Poet Laureate in England.

11. **Maud and Idylls of the King** are considered to be the most famous adaptations of King Arthur and The Knights of the Round Table.

12. **T.S Eliot described Tennyson as 'the saddest of all English poets.'** This might be said in view of the string of sad, melancholic poems such as; Mariana, Tears, Idle Tears, In Memoriam, and The Lotus Eaters) while Auden called him the 'stupidest' of all poets.

13. A narrative poem, **Enoch Arden**, was published in 1864 by Tennyson. The content for the poem was provided by Thomas Woolner. The plot depicting the deserted island in the poem is suggestive of Robinson Crusoe. The poem is also similar to Ulysses, but the only point of difference is that Ulysses gets reunited with his wife, while Enoch's wife remarries thinking the former to be dead.

14. Enoch Arden was the name of the stranger in Agatha Christie's 1948 mystery crime novel Taken at the Flood. In popular culture, the movie Cast Away also depicts shipwreck, death, and deserted island, making the movie loosely based on this poem.

15. **Crossing the Bar, an 1889 poem** by Alfred, Lord Tennyson uses the extended metaphor of crossing the sandbar to death. An extended metaphor means the use of a metaphor at length. Some of the examples of extended metaphors are 1) In Sonnet 18, the speaker compares his love to the sun; 2) In Romeo and Juliet, where the balcony scene appears, Juliet is compared to the Sun; 3) the metaphor of fog in the Love Song of J.Alfred Prufrock; 4) the metaphor of life as a journey in Frost's 'The Road Not Taken' and 5) Walt Whitman uses the metaphor of Abraham Lincoln in his poem, 'O Captain, My Captain'.

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16) **The Lotus-Eaters**, is a poem by Tennyson published in an 1832 poetry collection. The title is derived from the lotus-eaters of Greek mythology. It was inspired by his trip to Spain with his friend Arthur Hallam. Other poems influenced by the landscape of the trip are; Oenone and Mariana in the South.

17) In the year 1884, the Queen appointed him as **Baron of Aldworth**. Upon which, he took a seat in the House of Lords in March 1884.

18) **Maud and other Poems** was Tennyson's first published collection after becoming Poet Laureate in 1850.

19) The main inspiration behind the poem, **Maud**, was Charlotte Rosa Baring. She was the younger daughter of William Baring and Frances Poulett-Thomson. Later, Frances Baring married Arthur Eden (1793-1874). The garden of the poem, Eden appears in Tennyson's poem- The Gardener's Daughter.

20) The famous line in the poem is - " Come to the Garden, Maud." The poem was heavily criticized for being distorted, fragmented, and compromised for having a depressive tone.

21) **D.G Rossetti** (1828-1882) founded the Pre- Raphaelite Brotherhood in 1848 with William Holman Hunt and John Everett Millais. His family and friends call him Gabriel but he put his first name Dante in the honor of Dante Alighieri.

22) He was also a major inspiration for **William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones**, the second generation of writers and artists. His works also left a major impression on European symbolists and were a harbinger of the Aesthetic Movement.

23) Early poetry was influenced by Keats and Blake; his work was distinguished by sensuality and medievalism. Thought and feeling were interlinked in Rossetti's work. This is exemplified in his sonnet, **The House of Life**.

24) Poetry and image can be found woven together in his sonnet sequence like **The Girlhood of Mary Virgin (1849)**. He also illustrated his sister, Christina Rossetti's work Goblin Market.

25) **The Germ**, thoughts towards nature in art and literature (1850) was a periodical established by the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. The periodical stresses the importance of human imagination.