UNIT 16  ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

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16.0 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit we shall discuss two lyrics and one long poem of Alfred, Lord Tennyson. After you have read this unit you should be able to:

- understand Tennyson’s relationship with the Victorian age;
- have an idea of Tennyson as a lyric writer;
- discuss the poetic techniques of Tennyson

16.1 INTRODUCTION

Lord Tennyson is called a representative poet of the Victorian age. When we say this we mean that he is one poet in whose works the basic nature of the age – its achievements, doubts and fears – are best reflected.

As a matter of fact, the Victorian age was an age of great progress and of the consolidation of the powers of England. Naturally, a poet of this age is expected to be full of optimism. But Tennyson could see beyond the political and economic achievements of his time. He was studiously following the advances of contemporary science which moved Victorian men and women to scrutinize the
Biblical story of the origin of the creation on a rational basis. This instilled first doubts in the realm of religion.

Tennyson felt the emotional tremors of the people of his age. His poems document their anxiety; but Tennyson could also instil faith as he himself mastered a personal crisis and remained devoted to creativity. This balance is characteristic of his poetry and is also a great contribution to the Victorian age.

### 16.2 THE VICTORIAN AGE

Queen Victoria ascended the throne in 1837 and introduced such economic and political measures, with the aid of her astute ministers that England was at the zenith of development. She did not hesitate in ending the monopoly of merchants – the old laissez – faire policy was replaced by just intervention and close scrutiny of market trends by state.

The major industries of coal, iron, textiles and railway building continued to flourish. There were other European competitors like Germany, France and Belgium. But England left them far behind. Many new machines and gadgets were either invented by British scientists or perfected by them. Bicycle, camera, electric light and telephone not only made life comfortable for Britishers; they gave rise to new industries that considerably enhanced British exports and income.

The rise of Limited Liability Companies was a new thing. It ended the monopoly of one-family firms; on the other hand, it gave birth to a new era of capitalism in which the British middle class had a definite share. These companies were managed by Board of Directors; but any individual might become a shareholder. Common people cultivated the habit of investing in industrial stock and a few depended entirely on the dividends from industry.

The picture did not remain so bright for long. A series of conflicts jeopardized the Victorian peace and prosperity – there were troubles in Canada and India. However, Queen Victoria emerged stronger and her policies proved to be a mixture of toughness and liberality. The Sepoy Mutiny in India in 1857 compelled the queen to be sensitive to the demands of justice and trust. She rose to the challenge and in her proclamation in 1858 promised “It is our further will that so far as may be, our subjects of whatever class or creed, be fully and freely admitted to any offices the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, abilities and integrity duly to discharge.”

The assertion of her independence and fairness is evident in this. The presence of such a wise queen together with long strides in commerce and industry made the Victorian age one of the best ages for the English people. They enjoyed peace at home, their children got the best of education and they had a healthy social life. They worked hard; they had a grasp of the affairs of the world; they were constantly modifying technology for better communication and facilities. And they remained deeply religious.

Yet the most serious crisis of the Victorian furies occured in the realm of religion. So far science had not disturbed their faith. But the publication of Charles Lyell’s *Principles of Geology*, 1830 and of Charles Darwin’s *The Origin of Species*, 1859 altered the scene.
Charles Lyell only studied the fossils and spoke of the great antiquity of Creation; Darwin accepted it and accounted on its basis for the differentiation of animal species by theory of Natural Selection. This was in direct conflict with the story of creation given in *The Book of Genesis*.

A storm rose and shook Christianity by roots. The Victorian intellectuals and writers, poets and novelists could not ignore the scientific basis of the theory of evolution propounded by Darwin. Faith was tinged with doubt; an attitudinal change had occurred, best expressed by Tennyson –

There remains more faith in honest doubt
Believe me than in half the creeds.

In view of such a spiritual crisis it would not be easy to sum up the Victorian age in a neat phrase. It was an age of prosperity, but also an age of gloomy forebodings; it was an age of imperial expansion, but also an age of colonial uprisings; above all, it was an age of peace, but there was an undercurrent of 'sick hurry and divided aims.'

### 16.3 Tennyson: Life and Works

Alfred Tennyson was born in August 1809 in Lincolnshire where his father was a rector. It is said that the rectory had an enchanting landscape that moulded the aesthetic taste of Tennyson. Not only did he take in the beautiful topography of his birth place, he tried to compose lines that could match the sights and the sounds that he experienced as a child and as a young man.

Tennyson’s father had an academic bent of mind. He made the young boy learn Latin and Greek classics seriously. So when Tennyson came to Cambridge University in 1828 he had sufficient intellectual training to cope with the studies and other challenges of the legendary educational institution.

In Cambridge Tennyson became intimate with Arthur Hallam, the son of the eminent historian. Later on Mr. Hallam was engaged to Tennyson’s sister; he died, however, in Vienna on a trip with his father. Tennyson had already written poems that won distinction. But the death of Arthur Hallam shattered him. For some time he was dumb with grief and melancholy. Yet in this period he found poetic composition as a means of psychic relief. He composed short lyrics as his moods dictated him. This continued for a couple of years and the result was *In Memoriam*, a great elegiac poem. The poem is supposed to reflect not only the intense personal sorrow of the poet, but also to represent the chief conflict of the Victorian age – the conflict between science and religion.

The fact that Tennyson could transcend his personal losses and think in a systematic way about the larger concerns and issues of his age is of singular importance. It gives Tennyson’s poetry a lasting appeal.

The classical training that his father imparted to him remained a principal stimulus to Tennyson’s poetic life. He is one poet who chose a number of medieval and Greek legends as subjects for his works. But in all his works he tried to interpret the life of his times. In other words, the sense of historical continuity gives his perception of modern issues a sharper edge. His poetry makes the readers feel that there exists a sure fusion between the past and the present.
In 1850 Tennyson succeeded as the Poet Laureate and continued to publish poems some of which have political themes. Extensive travels in England and Europe – Holland, Belgium and Switzerland and – further sharpened his vision. He was able to think in a practical manner since he had first-hand experience of social, political and economic changes.

After a fulfilled life of a prolific poet he died in 1892 at the age of 83.

**Major Works**

Poems, Chiefly Lyrical 1830  
The Lady of Shallott and other poems 1832  
The Princess 1847  
In Memoriam 1847  
Maud and other Poems 1855  
Enoch Arden 1864  
Locksley Hall Sixty Years After 1886  
The Idylls of the King 1888

### 16.4 THE SPLENDOUR FALLS

The two lyrics prescribed for you are extracts from *The Princess*, a poem that Tennyson wrote in his mature years when British political and social issues began to interest him seriously. It is said that *The Princess* covers a number of prominent issues related to women their status, their field of action, their educational and political rights, legal rights of marriage and property. The protagonist of the poem is Ida, a princess who holds extreme feminist views. She has raised an academy for training of women.

Tennyson’s characterization of Ida gives a clue to his attitude towards women. Ida is independent minded but in her zeal she has developed attitudes and a temper that make her unfit for reforms that she wishes to carry.

These two lyrics occur at dramatic moments in the narrative and were added by Tennyson in a subsequent edition. Actually, these two lyrics are supreme achievements of Tennyson and can be enjoyed independently.

The first lyric *The Splendour Falls* is a song that occurs after the narrator and others have had a magnificent view of the palace that the princess has shown them. The narrator is simply charmed by this view.

The second lyric is sung by a maid who is specifically ordered to entertain by the princess.

> Then she, ‘Let someone sing to us: lighter more  
The minutes fledged with music’: and a maid  
of those beside her, smote her harp, and sang

But the aftermath is quite ironic. In a fit of vanity the princess dismisses the tranquilizing effect of song:

> She ended with such passion that the tear / she sang of, shook and fell, an erring pearl / lost in her bosom: but with some disdain / Answered the princess, ‘If indeed there haunt / About the moulder’s lodges of the past so sweet a voice and vague, fatal to men / well needs it we should cram our ears with wool.'
This declamation on the part of the princess is spontaneous, of course. But the conviction with which she attacks melodious associations with the past is clear indication of her prejudices and haughtiness. All tenderness is anathema to her as it would interfere with her plans for women’s emancipation.

16.4.1 The Poem

The Splendour Falls

The splendour falls on castle walls
And snowly summits old in story:
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let we hear the purple glens replying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in you rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river:
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes answer, dying, dying, dying.

16.4.2 Glossary

Splendour : grand and impressive beauty
Cataract : large steep waterfall
Elfland : an imaginary country where elves – small creatures with magical powers – are supposed to live
Glen : narrow valley

16.4.3 Discussion

The lyric is an essay in landscape painting. The scene is that of sunset transforming a castle and its surroundings. The speaker notices not only the fall of sunlight but also of a fall of splendour, of a glorious hue, on the walls of the castle. This initial perception is in itself a cause of ecstasy. But this is not all. Each moment that succeeds brings in bright vistas of everything around. The bright light makes the snowy towers of the castle shine gloriously and then travels to the lakes and the cataracts in course of which its dynamism is revealed. It shakes the waters of the lakes and makes the cataract leap in joy. So happy is the speaker in the enjoyment of this scene that he wants the bugle to be sounded, allowing a synchronization of light and sound to follow.

The important thing, you should notice, is the impact of this scene on the speaker. We see not only the light adding beauty and glory to the castle but also creating absolute cheerfulness. It is this cheerfulness that sharpens observation and stirs the speaker for further activity.
The second stanza hints at the presence of someone else who is asked to hear by the speaker the faintly blowing horns of the Elfland. The sounds are at first thin and clear, then thinner and clearer whose echoes can be heard in the fields lying across. There is apparently nothing to suggest time – interval. But the thin sound and the elfland point to the onset of twilight – the light is there still, but like sounds it is also dying, taking leave of the world.

The identity of the listener is finally revealed in the third stanza – the speaker is addressing his beloved. He asks her now to enjoy the fainting sound of the echoes. But he also asks her to observe how the echoes move not only from hill to field or to river, but from soul to soul where they grow eternally. This is a unique experience of something transient acquiring eternity by sheer beauty.

16.4.4 Appreciation

The world of Nature maintains a course of life which is quite independent of an individual’s way of life and experiences. And yet at times there may be an identity between the two. Tennyson captures such moments in his lyrics beautifully. A number of his lyrics are good examples of pathetic fallacy, of the world of Nature reflecting the moods of the poet or the persona.

You must take note of the role of the dynamic verbs which Tennyson uses to describe the moment-to-moment changes in the scene – falls, shakes, leaps, flying, dying, blowing, replying, flying. The light and the sounds are not static. They have their own natural movement which, in turn, affects the objects within their range. But more important is the impact they have on the speaker.

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<td>2) Identify three lines of the poem in which there is use of alliteration.</td>
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16.5 TEARS, IDLE TEARS

The popularity of this lyric is the proof of the value of its content. Though occurring in a dramatic context and sung by the maid of the princess as a routine duty it dwells on man’s feeling of loss which is the cause of the flow of tears. Tears express a feeling that may be spontaneous; but they may emerge from a powerful emotion that lies suppressed in humdrum life. Any touching sight can however bring it on the surface of consciousness and make us cry.
In *The Princess* the maid’s song is surprisingly occasioned by the enchanting view of the palace. It must have created a feeling of awe and wonder in the maid also. But instead of bursting into a song that could express the shock of her delight, she chooses to sing a mournful song. The simplicity with which she touches on death and separation drawn not only a kindred feeling from the listeners; it makes them think of suffering as a vital fact of life.

### 16.5.1 Poem

Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,  
Tears from the depth of some divine despair  
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,  
In looking on the happy *Autumn*-fields,  
And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam *glittering* on a sail,  
That brings our friends up from the *underworld*,  
Sad as the last which reddens over one  
That sinks with all we love below the verge;  
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns  
The earliest pipe of half-awaken’d birds  
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes  
The *casement* slowly grows a *glimmering* square  
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

Dear as remember’d kisses after death,  
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy, feign’d  
On lips that are for others; deep as love,  
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret,  
O Death in Life, the days that are no more.

### 16.5.2 Glossary

- **Autumn fields**: fields full of ripening corn in autumn.
- **glittering**: shining brightly
- **the underworld**: the place under the earth where people are believed to go when they die
- **glimmering**: shining with a faint light
- **casement**: a window

**Similes**

- fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail
- sad as the last which reddens over one
- sad and strange as in dark dawns
- Dear as remembered kisses after death

All these similes are quite unusual – they do not compare like objects; there is comparison between a state of mind and a natural phenomenon or a scene. Fresh, sad, strange, dear are adjectives which have been concretized in this way.
The Great Victorian Poets

16.5.3 Discussion

The most arresting phrase in this lyric is divine despair, a paradoxical expression. Normally, despair cannot be linked with anything divine. To do so is to clearly refer to human limitation and this is what Tennyson does. The past cannot be recaptured. The tears that come to eyes spring from the realization that the happy days cannot be brought back.

Sadness became a part of Tennyson’s life after the death of Arthur Hallam; but Tennyson was not lugubrious poet. He was reflective in nature, a person who took interest in philosophy and science. Naturally, every emotion to him was a subject of not only feeling but of study also. “I know not what they mean” – this line is indicative of the rational tendency that was always active in him. He makes therefore the speaker to understand the emotion behind the tears.

You should also notice that the tears have originated from a sight of the happy autumn fields, that is, of a seasonal movement that helps crops ripen and grow. It is this scene of richness and abundance that reminds of the like days that have slipped away. Happiness is locked only in memory now, lingering, of course, as a permanent feeling over which time have no control.

Do you notice a touch of irony in the phrase – idle tears? It can be a common sense version of becoming sentimental. But the things that are supposed to cause tears are not so insignificant. This creates a tension which adds to the merit of the poem. Why? Simply because the intellectual effort that is required to understand it makes the sentiment valuable.

After the tone has been set, the speaker goes on elaborating the qualities of the happy days which she is reminiscing. In the first place, they appear to be as fresh as the first sun rays falling on a ship. The freshness of the morning scene on a ship appears to Tennyson – from personal experience of voyages – to be more memorable. Memory alone helps a man bring back his friends from the underworld. But it is not only fresh, there is overwhelming sadness when the moment of loss is recaptured in totality.

There is abrupt change in the scene in the last two stanzas where the speaker alters the persona from a living person to that of one who is awaiting death. A dying person’s sensitiveness to the music of the birds of the dawn is not lost, but the music seems to have become strange. The consciousness of leaving the world it is that makes the faculty of sight and hearing rather keener – to the dying eyes the big windows of the room seem to have become a glimmering square.

The perspective of death continues in the last stanza. The hint that the speaker is thinking not only of days that are no more, but also of a beloved who is no more is clear now – the kisses, the tokens of love, become painfully sweet; all fancies connected with love acquire a poignancy now. This what is Death in life – the condition of hopeless separation.

16.5.4 Appreciation

About popular pieces of creative writing it can be said that they touch universal chord. Being in a state of tears is quite normal for a person when he is separated from his love. And when this separation has been caused by death it is difficult to
seek consolation. Tennyson takes up this very situation in this lyric in which he develops this very idea of being inconsolable, the idea of being in incurable unhappiness.

What sustains this short poem is a unique blend of argument and feeling. The feeling is justified by argument, by parallels also between the state of maid of the speaker and the immediate surroundings. The autumn fields, the beam glittering on a sail, the half-awakened birds constitute the immediate world of the speaker. They provoke the feelings of loss and stimulate the memory.

The cadence is created by simple, familiar monosyllabic words – so sad, so strange, so fresh, thinking, glimmering, glittering are not exactly alliterative, but they weave a pattern of evanescence which is part of the theme.

**Self-check Exercise II**

1) Explain with reference to the context the following lines:
   - Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean
   - Tears from the depth of some divine despair
   - Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes
   - In looking on the happy autumn fields
   - And thinking of the days that are no more

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2) Write a short note on the mood of the speaker.

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3) Has the speaker justified his attitude? Give arguments in support of your answer.

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Ulysses is also known as Odysseus. He was a king of Ithaca and he participated in the Greek war against Troy. After the siege of Troy he was returning home along with a number of soldiers in a ship. But he had angered Poseidon who, in turn, caused tempests and many obstructions that forced Ulysses to wander to many places. His wife Penelope and his son Telemachus were anxiously waiting for his arrival. In fact, Telemachus had already left home in search of his father.

The poem tells us that Ulysses is close to Ithaca. In spite of being so close to his home he is not happy. His wanderings have been quite fruitful as he came into contact with people of different countries from whom he gathered a lot of knowledge. He has now a feeling that he should continue this pursuit of knowledge. To lead a peaceful life at home would be quite a dull thing. He is also worried about his subjects who love only pleasure and care for material things.

Ulysses however hopes that his son can be taught to handle the political affairs and give a new orientation to his people. And after his son is ready, Ulysses will have time for more wanderings in order to have more knowledge.

This love for knowledge in a king who has suffered a lot not only makes the character of Ulysses distinguished; it gives a philosophical edge to the poem and takes us to a glorious aspect of Greek civilization. There is a grandeur in this quest for knowledge which touches us.

### 16.6.1 Poem

**Ulysses**

IT little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
Match’d with an aged wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.

I cannot rest from travel: I will drink
Life to the lees: all times I have enjoy’d
Greatly, have suffer’d greatly, both with those
That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when
Thro’ scrudding drifts the rainy Hyades
Vext the dim sea: I am become a name;
For always roaming with a hungry heart
Much have I seen and known; cities of men
And manners, climates, councils, governments,
Myself not least, but honour’s of them all;
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro’
Gleams that untravell’d world, whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnish’d, not to shine in use!
As tho’ to breath were life. Life piled on life
Were all too little, and of one to me
Little remains: but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things; and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
And this grey spirit yearning in desire 30
To follow knowledge, like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.
This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
This labour, by slow prudence to make mild
A rugged people, and thro’ soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.
Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
Of common duties, decent not to fail 40
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.
There lies the port: the vessel puffs her sail:
There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,
Souls that have toil’d, and wrought, and thought with me
That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old;
Old age hath yet his honour and his toil; 50
Death closes all: but something are the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unleasing men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:
The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
’Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho’ much is taken, much abides; and tho’
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

16.6.2 Glossary

mete and dole : to distribute
I will drink life to the lees : I will experience life to its full extent
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scudding drifts : drifting waves
Hyades : nymphs forming a group of seven stars in the head of Taurus
Sceptre : a staff which is the symbol of royal authority
sounding furrows : loud stormy waves
Achilles : the greatest of Greek heroes

16.6.3 Discussion

The poem begins with the early formulations of thoughts of Ulysses as he nears Ithaca. His memory of his wife, country and his people is clearer – he sees his wife now as an old woman; his own country not so flourishing as he left; and he is quite unhappy with his subjects whose life is centered in physical and material pleasures. He cannot imagine himself now becoming part of this listless scene in his country. It is true that he has suffered; but what he has seen by way of people and civilizations has filled him with great curiosity – he has learnt much that has transformed him from a mere king and a fighter to a man who wishes to understand the forces of this creation. He has met all classes of beings, peculiar men, gods and goddesses and this experience has already enriched him. He cannot think of being settled in a place and taking care of mundane things. He fondly remembers the things that he has seen and thinks of his personality as being moulded by them all. Has he seen all? He is convinced that this universe does not allow any body to see all – it is so constructed that only a part of the vast universe can come to a man’s view.

He visualizes his ideas in the form of similes and metaphors – all experience is an arch, to follow knowledge, like a sinking star. The horizon is symbolized in the arch, the visible junction of the earth and the sky. There is a definite hint that this small view is not the full view; its imperfection is quite perceptible. And the sinking star is Ulysses himself, battered by war, age and sundry worries of the world. Yet the task of gathering more and more knowledge seems to him the only proper goal of life. There is a nobility in this craving that sets Ulysses quite apart not only from his subjects but also from other kings who have been interested in mere territorial conquests.

Had it been merely a wish it would not have been of any importance. But the thoughts of Ulysses are backed by determination – he has made up his mind to hand over the rule of the kingdom to his son, Telemachus, in whose abilities he has full confidence; he has also a hope that his subjects may be subdued by Telemachus in due course and their energies could be channelized in the right direction. He is also certain that Telemachus would be fulfilling all religious duties after his death.

Finally, he addresses his fellow mariners who have given their best to all his undertakings and exhorts them to seek a newer world. That is, he wants them not to be satisfied with a dull domestic life, but to explore new worlds that would broaden their view of life. He knows very well that they are also getting old like him. But it is better to end this life in the pursuit of greater knowledge than of material happiness.
16.6.4 Appreciation

It is a wonderful poem in which Tennyson makes a historical speaker touch upon issues of contemporary life. It is a fact that Ulysses was a legendary wanderer, an adventurous, fearless person who was forced by circumstances to go to strange places and meet strange people.

Tennyson therefore sees in him the prototype of the modern researcher or explorer. The scientific developments of his time were a thing of serious interest to him, and in his poetry he has paid tribute to the spirit of scientists and researchers who were expanding the area of human knowledge. In Ulysses, Tennyson sees such a figure who is willing to devote the whole of his life to exploration.

The poem has a dramatic structure – the development of the speech of Ulysses is entirely guided by the progress of his thoughts in course of his journey to Ithaca. The first point is the coming of the landmarks of Ithaca into his sight which stirs his memory; the second point is the rise of a conflict in his mind between his kingly duties and his appetite for knowledge which he acquired in the course of his wanderings; the third forms his decision in the fulfillment of which he seeks cooperation from his mariners.

As far as possible Tennyson tries to recapture the Homeric idiom– simple similes, a vigorous narrative style with appropriate pauses and shifts of mood and characterization through a long speech. A lot of associations are there in the poem with the ship and the voyages – shore, scudding drifts, vessel, sail, dark broad seas, sounding furrows, gulfs. They form the register of an accomplished voyager, ringing with authenticity of experience.

The command of blank verse is an important feature of the poem. It helps Tennyson follow every movement of the feelings and thoughts of Ulysses in a dramatic manner.

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<td>2) What does Ulysses say of his adventures?</td>
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3) Do you see any reference to the contemporary scene of Tennyson’s lines in the poem? Quote the relevant lines from the poem.
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16.7 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we studied:

- the salient features of the Victorian age
- the life and works of Alfred Lord Tennyson
- the lyrical extracts from The Princess
- the poem Ulysses which has a historical background but a relevant message for the modern man.

16.8 SUGGESTED READING

For detailed study of the works of Tennyson you can turn to the following works:
Robert Hoof, Tennyson 1809-1892, A Centenary Celebration, The Wordsworth Trust, Grasmere, 1992

16.9 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

Self-check Exercise I

1) Go through the discussion of the poem.

Self-check Exercise II

1) Go through the discussion, especially the first two paragraphs.
2) Take help of the parts of the discussion in which the speaker’s mood has been referred to.
3) Read Appreciation section carefully on the basis of which you can answer the question.

Self-check Exercise III

1) See the introduction of the poem.
2) Read the first two paragraphs of Discussion.
3) Read Appreciation, the first two paragraphs. See the last parts of the poem.