Chapter - III

Synthesis of Images
Sometimes the poet finds himself helpless to express the essence of his poetry. At this critical moment, he takes the help of images. They prove to be the vehicle of his feelings and expressions. Image is the soul of the poetry. It makes poetry more interesting and valuable. Although poetry comes spontaneously from the mind of the poet, yet later on it becomes intellectual and when he desires to communicate his ideas in a formula, it becomes an image. Many critics have defined image in different ways: An image is a concrete idea that the mind forms of an object.

A creative work is not like a negative copy of the original object, it is an indirect image and sometimes far from reality. In spite of these deviations and drawbacks, the work seems to be more attractive and beautiful. So it is the personality of the artist which gives the creation a different image. It transports the real object from its reality. Therefore an image is a synthesis of an objective reality and subjective disposition. According to Indian epistemology, images can never be real in the eyes of the beholder. Mind synthesises our feelings and emotions with the object of our perception. In literature we are not concerned with the image of the mind, but of the verbal image. In the process of image formation there are three stages-

a. The perception,
b. The synthesis of the object and the poet’s subjectivity
c. Recreation of the image

At first, we see an object which is an actual image and then it enters the mind of the beholder where an effortless process begins i.e. it synthesises with his subjectivity. In the work of art an image can never be free from the subjectivity of the poet. Further his subjectivity or individuality helps him recreate an artistic creation.
Subjective images can be spontaneous, but in spite of this, artistic creation is far from spontaneity because it requires mental effort. The time value of an artistic image is infinite, while the real objects and subjective images are short lived.

Usually classifications are quality based. Our mind classifies objects with the help of past experiences. Recollection, fantasy and visualization are the essential parts of images. In recollection we think about those things or incidents that had really happened in our life and never go beyond that. In the past there can be close as well as distant spatial imagination. But in fantasy only distant spatial imagination is possible. We cannot fantasize without thinking of a remote, person or place. Visualization is also one of the most important parts of an image. We can visualize the events of future. Whenever we observe an object, we link it with the past experiences and it gives us a new image. Images lie in our subconscious mind. They never perish, rather they are covered with the dust of time because of being out of use for a long time. But whenever a poet or a painter wants to express an idea, he tries consciously or unconsciously with the past images. While depicting the experienced images we also need the help of experience or recollection. Even futuristic images are not possible without recollection. Sometimes we do not notice the common things but their images make their place in our subconscious mind and are kept secured. Though they seem to be dim and glowless but they never lose their existence, rather they help us create new images. In this way past images are the supporter of fantasy and visualization.

There are two ways of presenting images - unified presentation and isolated juxtaposition. The unified can be opaque, transparent or translucent. In the opaque presentation the object described is fully covered by the object referred. So far as the unified translucent presentation of images is concerned, there is a latent reference of object described and with the help of object referred, we guess the object described i.e. only a few indirect suggestions appear. There are many poems of Tennyson in this group. The unified transparent presentation of images is very rare in his poetry. In this type of image object described is completely disclosed by the object referred. On the contrary isolated parallel juxtaposition of images are quite different. There lies an acceptance of similarity i.e. the two images go parallel. Simile comes in this category. In the isolated convergent juxtaposition of images, the two different images merge into
one point. Metaphor is a convergent juxtaposition of images. The isolated divergent juxtaposition of images is quite contrary. It is the negation of similarity. Here the images diverge i.e. they become apart. Wordsworth’s ‘Solitary Reaper’ is a beautiful example of this kind of image, where he says:

‘No nightingale did ever chant
More welcome notes to weary bands

A voice so thrilling ne’er was heard
In spring-time from the cuckoo bird…’

Sometimes we notice the combination of different images simultaneously, it is called collage. Images can also overlap and change from time to time.

Sometimes a poet does not take the direct image, rather he refers to the quality of a symbol. Between the object and images there runs an emotion and it creates the symbol. Symbolic images are very effective and powerful. They remain at the foreground without any reference to the real objects. Symbolic images can be introduced by the poet consciously or sometimes unconsciously. Unconscious images are more important and interesting than the conscious ones. It is very surprising to note that in order to present the mental and physical tensions the poet uses symbolic images. Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley, Tennyson and many other poets are experts at the formation of such images. While expressing symbols the original meaning or the basic idea goes behind the curtain, only the symbol stands out. There is always an idea or an object behind the symbol. Symbols can be or cannot be comparative. Some symbols are traditional and some are non-traditional. In other words we can divide them in two categories- compatible and non-compatible. Compatible symbols are to the point, they are very befitting. Although incompatible symbols are vague, yet they bear some symbolic element.

Tennyson’s ‘The flower’ is the beautiful example of unified opaque presentation of images. At the very outset the poet indicates to the translucent image and with its help he refers to his first experience. He asserts that he got the golden opportunity of creating poetry i.e. as soon as he thought to compose poetry, the ideas came to him spontaneously and he created a fantastic work, as he accepts:
‘I cast to earth a seed
Up there came a flower
The people said, a weed.

Here he presents the unified opaque presentation of images and regards ‘seed’ as the symbol of ideas and ‘flower’ is symbolized as a ‘creative writing’. We observe a wonderful similarity in ‘seed’ and ‘weed’. “Weed” has been frequently used by poets since the time of Shakespeare. Further he adds that though he had composed a beautiful creation, but the critics took it as a ‘weed’ i.e. a worthless or harmful idea. In the second stanza he speaks about the ‘garden bower’ and takes it as the treasure house of his poetry. He views that the people read and discussed it many times and concluded that his creative writing was nothing else, except a ‘weed’ an undesired piece and for it, they cursed him. But the poet does not care and tells that his garden of poetry is full of many kinds of multicoloured flowers which fascinate people and:

‘It wore a crown of light’.

Here the poet becomes philosophical and says that the excess of every thing is bad and that’s why his fame has become an obstruction to some people and they have stolen his idea:

‘But thieves from o’er the wall
Stole the seed by night

and-

‘Sow’d it far and wide
By every town and tower…

It means they presented his poetry in their names and consequently the people praised him and cried:

‘Splendid is the flower’.

Further he asks human being to read his fable and with the help of his creativity, they can also create new poetry, for God has gifted everybody this boon of creating, i.e. through his poetry they can gain more ideas:

‘Most can raise the flowers now
For all have got the seed.’
In the concluding stanza the poet tells that as soon as his poetry spread all over the universe, people began to present their views. Some of them opine that his garden bower is the mixture of pretty and ugly flowers i.e. some poems are fine and valuable, while some are poor and rough and hence they bear no moral lesson:

‘And some are pretty enough
And some are poor indeed.’

After sometime when he became the world known personality, some jealous person misbehaved with him and called his compositions, a useless, harmful and undesired thing:

‘And now again the people
Call it but a weed.’

So the social recognition makes anything good or bad, favourable or neglected.

‘Break, Break, Break’ is another example of the unified opaque presentation of images, where he speaks out the ‘cold gray stones’ and ‘sea’ which are the symbols of death and eternity. Here he has presented the two contrasting images in a wonderful manner:

‘Break, break, break
On thy cold gray stones O Sea!’

F.E.L. Priestley corroborates with this notion: ‘The Sea is capitalized and addressed with a formal vocative and the gray stones, which might ordinarily be thought of as opposed to the sea, and which are obviously ‘the destructive element’ here, are twice described as ‘Thy stones’, ‘The crags.’ The sea thus becomes a symbol, not simply of life, or of the physical flux from which life emerges and with which it is remerged, but of a unified system containing both life and death, and, by the capitalization, of a principle behind both life and death…’

Further he refers to the fisherman’s boy and the sailor lad, who represent the modernity and are engaged in the materialistic world. They have no concern with the reality of life and death and remain always joyful:

‘O well for the fisherman’s boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

Priestley rightly says: ‘It is well for those boys and lads who can still shout and sing, joyously alive: exclamation marks lend force also to the unstated converse: ‘I’ll fare those who are dead.’(146) But the poet is very conscious of the mystery of life and death and that’s why he mentions ‘stately ships’ and ‘haven’ in his poem. Here life is regarded as a voyage, whose destination is fixed i.e. the entrance and the exit of a man is pre-determined:

‘...the stately ship go on
To their haven under the hill...’

Walt Whitman rightly demonstrates this fact: “We are like the voyagers of a ship, casting off for new seas distant shores.” Tennyson also asks this question in ‘In Memoriam’: ‘Is it well also for the dead? / How fares it with the happy dead?’ Priestley says about the third quatrain: ‘The symbol of life as a voyage, with a safe haven at its end is a familiar one...’ And it ‘...can either be affirming a celestial haven, which nonetheless leaves the bereaved longing for the lost physical presence, or it can be asking, ‘Ships come safely at last to their haven, but is there a celestial haven to which man comes at the end of his voyage? To what haven has Hallam come (146)?’”

Elizabeth Hillman Waterston in her ‘Symbolism in Tennyson’s minor poems’ seems to agree with Priestley’s reference and says: ‘Break ,break, break’ represents the height of Tennyson’s symbolic method. It holds in perfect balance the ‘subject’ of death and ‘the other reality of temporal stones and eternal sea. It diverts conceptual and emotional response from the shout and song of the boys to the soundless haven of death. Finally it intensifies the ultimate regret for time past, by creating the unspoken contrast between the sea (whose individual waves breaking on the shore lose their own identity, but whose infinite nature is unchangeable) and the ‘tender grace’ of unreturning time’.

In his poem ‘The Lotos Eaters’ Tennyson has symbolized time and place through unified presentation as well as the isolated juxtaposition of images. While travelling, Ulysses visited the country of the Lotophagi or Lotus-eaters with his comrades. He refers to the changeless land where the time seems to be silent and dumb:

‘...they came unto a land

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In which it seemed always afternoon.

He means to say that nature throughout embodies the languid indolence and inactivity of the Lotus-eaters' ideal. Again he asserts:

'The charmed sunset linger'd low adown
In the red West...'

i.e. the sunset too is under a magic spell of stillness. Then he speaks out '... the poppy hangs in sleep.' and the amber light seems to dream:

'Falling asleep in a half-dream!
To dream and dream, like yonder amber light...'

and finally sums up the whole atmosphere through this line.'

'A land where all things always seem'd the same!'

Elizabeth Hillman Waterson views "Here we have extended use of the contrast of land and sea: languid land in amber light, where the yellow lotus dust blows beneath three silent pinnacles- changeless land, contrasted with the warring, confused, time filled, dark blue ocean."

Now he presents the transferred epithet image in the 'weary dream'. It is not dream that is weary, rather Ulysses is tired and exhausted because of long journey:

'Breathing like one that hath a weary dream.' Tennyson is the pastmaster in delineating the isolated parallel juxtaposition of images. Demonstrating the 'slender stream' he asserts that it is as thin as a streak of mist. In other words he wants to say that the movement of the smoke depends on the direction of the air, similarly the stream seemed to fall and to rest a moment before it fell to the next ledge:

'And like a downward smoke, the slender stream
Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem.

Further the noet beautifies his noem with the unified translucent presentation of images and tells that the land of streams fascinates him and the lawn appears to him gauzelike-veils. He mentions that just as the newly bride drops her veils slowly similarly the lawn looks:

'Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did go.'

Tennyson speaks out the 'wavering lights' and 'shadow broke.' It is not light that wavers, rather the breeze helps the light move and the shadow also seem to be broken
under the effect of the blowing air: ‘And some thro’ wavering lights and shadows broke.’ He imposes the image of human being in the ‘aged snow.’ He wants to tell that while travelling he observe the three silent pinnacles of snow on the mountain peak and they appeared as if they had lain unmelted for many years:

‘...three mountain tops
Three silent pinnacles of aged snow...’

Meanwhile he pays his attention to the ship where the pale faces Lotus – eaters were standing against the ‘rosy flame’ i.e. setting sun and describes it through parallelism that the rose comforts our eyes and the light of the sunset also gives us mental rest and that’s why the poet calls the sunset a ‘rosy flame’. In Homer the Lotus eaters do not approach the ship; only the two mariners, sent to spy out the land, actually meet them and eat the lotus. As soon as they tasted the ‘enchanted stem’ they reached the slumbrous state and began to stammer and for the poet, their voice became the voices of the grave. It creates an eerie mood through the reference of the voices of the grave:

‘His voice was thin, as voices from the grave.’

He views that their position was no more than the trance like stance induced by the lotus-flower, much like a narcotic.

Now he depicts wonderfully the isolated divergent juxtaposition of images when the sweet music falls softly in his ears than the petals of the blown roses on the grass. He refers to the sound of falling petals, but the music bent into his ears spontaneously and nobody could hear its steps:

‘There is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass.”

Further he symbolizes ‘the sleep’ with the help of translucent image. He calls the sleep as a ‘holy balm’ i.e. sleep is regarded as sacred because of its innocent, harmlessness and healing power. Tennyson considers human being as ‘the first of things’ and ‘the roof and crown of things.’ But so far as the world is concerned it looks like ‘the dark blue sky’.

‘Hateful is the dark blue sky,
Vaulted o’er the dark blue sea.’
Soon he is fascinated by the beauty of the ‘purple hill, the hill is probably covered with amaranath, genus of plants including love-lies-bleeding, with a purple colour. It is also a Greek name of an unidentified flower- the name meaning ‘fadeless’, ‘imperishable,’ the word being cognate with the Sanskrit ‘amrita’. Again he watches ‘...the emerald colour’d' water falling / Thro’ many a wov’n acanthus-wreath divine!’ The waters appears to him green, like emerald stone.

The unified presentation of images has decorated the poem ‘Crossing the bar’. The title itself denotes the symbolic representation where the poet speaks out the ‘sunset’ and ‘evening star’. They are symbolized as ‘an old age’ and he views that the day comes to an end with the sunset and the old age is the evening of one’s life and that is the reason he hears a call, and takes it as the last call from heaven:

‘Sunset and evening star,
   And one clear call for me!’

Now he refers to the ‘bar’ and its ‘moaning’ which gives the reference of birth and death. He wants no disturbance of the crying of the birth and death when he might cross the sea i.e. universe:

‘And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea.’

Cambridge also corroborates with this idea and opines: ‘The poet adopts this metaphor to convey the notion of his passage from this life (the harbour) to the next life (the open sea). Tennyson regarded this poem as his final testament to the world and this poem was printed by all the newspapers, the day he died.’

Through the translucent image the poet symbolizes the ‘tide’ as the force of death that has begun to tease him mentally and physically both as this time of old age. He clarifies that this disturbing step which was mute in youth, is full of sound and foam.’ Tennyson takes old age as the resting period and so he desires a complete rest in this last shelter of age and says that he has been drawn from the boundless deep i.e. infinity but now he wants to return to his real home, heaven:

‘When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.’
As soon as he speaks out the real home, the sound of the church bells make noise and he feels as if he were at the gate of heaven. The twilight and evening bell symbolizes the end of life and very philosophically he opines that there would be darkness behind the life. After leaving this world he would get an entry card of the unknown death:

‘Twilight and evening bell
And after that the dark!’

The poet wishes a peaceful death and requests not to be mournful at the time of his departure i.e. he hopes a cheerful farewell from his relatives when he transfers from this world:

‘And may there be no sadness of farewell
When I embark.’

It is because he is preparing to go to his real home, which is full of endless joys and pleasures.

Now he imagines himself in heaven and thinks that he is free from all tensions and bounds of Time and Place. He tries to demystify that the world is the web of time and place and after death he is not concern with any kind of worldly image. And the flood, i.e. the force of death which often teased him, has disappeared: ‘For tho’ from out our bourne of Time and Place / The flood may bear me far...’ He concludes his poem with the help of transparent presentation of images and is very optimistic that he would see God before him, he has crossed the bar (the texture of birth and death) and opines that this heavenly home is free from these kinds of artificial boundaries:

I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.’

Tennyson’s ‘The Palace of Art’ is the epitome of unified transparent presentation of images. The poet regards his soul as a ‘pleasure house’ which is the indicator of all the joys and happiness, moreover the sorrows are not permitted to enter this lordly home:

‘I built my soul a lordly pleasure house
Wherein at ease for aye to dwell.”
Here we are reminded of Coleridge’s ‘Kubla Khan’ which is quite contrary to Tennyson’s poetry. It presents the unified opaque images. He speaks out the ‘pleasure dome’ which symbolizes heaven and hopes to be enriched by all kinds of pleasure:

‘In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure– dome decree…’

In such a painless house Tennyson urges his soul to be cheerful:

‘…O Soul, make merry and carouse
Dear soul, for all is well.’

Now he refers to its interior decoration:

‘A huge crag– platform, smooth as burnish’d brass…
…The ranged ramparts bright.’

There is a fine greenery around the dome and it is decorated with multicoloured roses, which has hypnotised the poet and so he wants no outsider in his palace:

‘My soul would live alone unto herself
In her high palace there.’

Kubla Khan’s imagined ‘pleasure house’ also represents the similar beauty:

‘And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills
Where blossomed many an incense– bearing tree.
and,
‘…here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.’

Tennyson praises its vastness and views:

‘… that is built for me
So royal– rich and wide.’

He made four courts in all the four directions and the fountain proves to be as a point of attraction:

‘The golden gorge of dragons spouted forth
A flood of fountain– foam.’

Coleridge has also indicated to an enchanted fountain in his ‘pleasure dome’:

‘A mighty fountain momentely was forced.’
In order to decorate his palace he has built 'a gilded gallery without any boundaries i.e. unmeasureable or
‘...to where the sky
Dipt down to sea and sands.'
Moreover he fantasises a statue, tossing up:
‘A cloud of incence of all a dour steam’d
From out a golden cup.'
Here the poet regards the 'golden cup' as the shining sun and applies the translucent image and parallelism simultaneously, when he says that the 'golden railed' i.e. sun is shining like a fringe of fire. He clarifies that the fringe is used to make the dress more attractive and he views that the sun seems to be pleasant looking and it has no concern with the heat at evening and that's why the light which comes through it, seems to him very jolly natured and gallery looks beautiful in such kind of natural light:
‘The light aerial gallery, golden– rail’d,
Burnt like a fringe of fire.’
He was so pleased in this magical palace that his soul roamed in every room and it appears as if it is taking inspection whether the decoration is well fashioned or not:
Now he picks up the unified presentation of images in 'iron coast' and 'angry waves'. He opines that the coast is very powerful and safe like an iron. Nobody can enter his palace without his permission and with the description of 'angry waves' the poet has tried to give his imagination, an original touch:
‘...angry waves
You seem’d to hear them climb and fall.
Tennyson demonstrates the beauty of the river, meadows, herds and the streaks of rain, through this poem:
‘And one, a full– fed river winding slow...’
Coleridge, in his 'Kubla Khan' says in the same sense:
‘It flung up momently the sacred river
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran...’
The poet takes his dome as an epitome of modernity and everything is well settled:
'And one, an English home – gray twilight pour'd.
On dewy pastures, dewy trees,
Softer than sleep - all things in order stored…'

And calls it:
'A haunt of ancient Peace.'

Here he presents a picture of a maid—mother who is sitting peacefully with a baby in her arms and the other girl is St. Cecily, who is the beauty of attraction and that’s why an angel gazed her again and again. Seeing such beauties the palace seemed to him like heaven:

'Or thronging all one porch of Paradise…'

Coleridge also speaks out 'Paradise':

'For he on heavy—dew hath fed
And drunk the milk of Paradise.'

He imagines the ‘hills with peaky tops’ and the tracts were beautified with palm and rice on both sides. Through the translucent image the poet tells:

'…in the towers I placed great bells that swung…'

and whose sound was ‘silver’ like i.e. very clear. The most attractive thing was that he had decorated his art gallery with the pictures of famous poets, philosophers and many great men. He uses the isolated parallel juxtaposition of images in their description and says that the existence of Milton was very high and strong like an angel or he can be called a ‘cherub’. Moreover Shakespeare was next to him, who was a man of self-confidence and smooth—sophisticated manner:

'For there was Milton like a seraph strong
Beside him Shakespeare bland and mild…'

And Dante had made the whole atmosphere musical with his songs:

'…there the world—worn Dante grasp’d his song
And some what grimly smiled.'

Now he gives his palace a heavenly look where the angles were ‘rising and descending met / With interchange of gifts.’ In spite of being engaged in angels, Tennyson cannot neglect the human beings and says:

'Below was all mosaic choicely plann’d
With cycles of the human tale,
Of this wide world...

Through the translucent image the poet refers to the burdens of man's life that he suffers all his life, no more than a beast. But this palace is the 'home of peace; where he forgets his miseries and enjoys:

'The people here, a beast of burden slow,
Toil'd onwards, prick'd with goads and stings.
Here play'd...'

The whole of the atmosphere becomes like a fairy land where colourful lights are shining brightly; 'Thro' which the lights, rose, amber, emerald, blue, / Flush'd in her temples...'

Now he picks up the isolated divergent juxtaposition of images in a very fantastic way and views that even the sound of the nightingale is not so sweet and delightful as the voice of the imagined girl:

'No nightingale delighteth to prolong
Her low preamble all alone,
More than my soul to hear her echo'd song...'

The poet is very much worried about his existence and refers to the 'silent faces of the Great and Wise,' and calls them his 'gods' with whom he dwells. According to E.D.H. Johnson: '...in the 'The palace of art'...the reader sympathizes with the external forces which break in on the soul's self- possession...' and adds: 'The soul's motive alienating itself from the world is one aristocratic disdain for humanity. This, it frankly admits in such a way as to reveal a total absence of any sense of social responsibility:

'O God-like isolation which art mine,
I can but count thee perfect gain.
Whate'er time I watch the darkening droves of swine
That range on younger plain.

Priestley views; 'This poem is the embodiment of my own belief that God-like life is with man and for man. He further says: 'At the end of the poem, when isolation becomes to the soul not 'god-like' but dreadful, when she has understood that her own
self-hood depends on a relationship to a larger whole, and that isolation is annihilation. She descends to the valley to become one with human kind:

‘I take possession of man’s mind and deed.’

Soon he is very much disturbed with the entrance of same devils: ‘And oft some brainless devil enters in, / And drives them to the deep.’ But he consoles his heart and feels a strong moral support under the guidance of the imagined girl:

‘Then of the moral instinct would she prate…’

But she is not untouched with the sufferings of the earth: ‘Full oft the riddle of the painful earth…’ and even the poet is tensed with this life:

‘…when the shout was in his ears, Struck thro’ with pangs of hell.’

He is afraid of the unknown fear and bloody atmosphere:

‘But in dark corners of her palace stood Uncertain shapes, and unawares On white eyed phantasms weeping tears of blood, And horrible nightmares.

Elizabeth Hillman Waterston rightly opines: ‘The palace of art’ is baroque, more complex in its symbolism, using a tapestry technique of significant detail, both in the landscapes symbolizing the shifting moods of the self-pleasing soul, and in the later recognition of dark corners, uncertain shapes, white-eyed phantasms. Again the end bring a shifts in symbol, to the equation of the lost and isolated soul to a still salt poll, sand locked, seeing waters with draw, led by the moon, but hearing far off a roar, perhaps of the sea, or perhaps of the barren rocks, or perhaps of the wild beasts of uncontrolled passion…’

It is very surprised to note that the poet is not still in his previous notion for as he has told about his palace that it is free from death-like sufferings and speaks out the horrible thing:

‘And hollow shades enclosing hearts of flame, And, with dim fretted foreheads all, On corpses three-months-old at noon she came…’

And moreover the palace which was full of external lights seems to him dark:
'A spot of dull stagnation, without light
Or power of movement, seem’d my soul…'
Further it seemed to him as an epitome of peace. As she cries:
‘No voice,’ she shriek’d in that lone hall,
No voice breaks thro’ the stillness of this world.
One deep, deep silence all!’
He applies the translucent image in the ‘dreadful time,’ and says that time is the destructor of all the things, even the most powerful thing becomes helpless and the astonishing subject was that ‘eternity’ seems to him ‘dreadful’:
‘But dreadful time, dreadful eternity
No comfort anywhere.’
Though his ‘pleasure dome’ is untouched from the boundations of time, but he is terrified with the ‘growing time’: ‘Remaining utterly confused with fears, / And ever worse with growing time…’
Now he begins to hear the voices of the outside world i.e. he takes his transfer from imagination to the real world: ‘Far off she seem’d to hear the dully sound / Of human footsteps fall.’ And her life is nothing better than a traveller who is unknown to his life:
‘As in strange lands a traveller walking slow,
In doubt and great perplexity…’
She again hears the mournful voices of men and beasts:
‘…one deep cry
Of great wild beasts, then thinketh, ‘I have found
A new land, but I die.’
and cries for help:
‘…save me lest I die.’
After passing four years in the palace she wants to get rid of this life and asks the poet to make a cottage in the vale where she ‘…may mourn and pray.’ Again she prays not to pull her back into this miserable world. She does not desire to leave its charmness:
‘Yet pull not down my palace towers, that are
So lightly, beautifully built.'
Perchance I may return with others there
When I have purged my guilt."

We find a similarity in Priestley’s conviction: ‘...when, as she hopes, she returns ‘with others’ to the palace, the Art will have a new meaning to her; it will be true Art to her, full of the music of humanity, joyous and sad, comic and tragic, beautiful and ugly, - of the humanity she has re-accepted.’

D.J. Palmer does not take it the true example of symbolism. He views: ‘The palace of Art’ is the most ambitious poem of the 1832 volume and the most conciously realised version of the Mariana theme. It lacks the surface lucidity and coherence of pure symbolic form, such as ‘The Lady of Shalott’, and ‘Mariana’ itself possess, instead it is schematised as ‘a sort of allegory.’ R.C. Trench was one of the Cambridge ‘Apostles’ whose remark, ‘Tennyson, we cannot live in Art...’ (44) But Johnson favours his symbolism: “The palace of art symbolizes the many chambered life of the imagination, furnished with all the treasures of natural beauty, myth (including Christianity), the arts, literature and the accumulated learning of scientists and philosophers. The palace of art is not destroyed, but remains intact against the time when the poet will return, bringing others to enjoy its felicities. Presumably then, we are to believe that Tennyson would not altogether discredit the life of the imagination but rather would insinuate that the artist must become aware of the responsibility to communitate his insights,’

According to Priestley: ‘Death and suffering bring maturity to Wordsworth, to Keats, to Tennyson, to all young poets...’ And with maturity comes the problem for the young poet of how to express the inexpressible...’ E.M.W. Tillyard solved the problem and distinguished poetry in two sorts, direct and oblique. (Priestley138) One of the most brilliant example is Tennyson’s ‘On a mourner’ where he depicts this oblique use of language through different images. And the philosophical relationship between Nature and God has made the poem more valuable. He opines that nature is the imitator of God. She teaches us in many ways and helps us become a perfect man, but sometimes she punishes us through floods, storm and earthquakes:

‘Nature, so far as in her lies,
Imitates God, and turns her face
To every land beneath the skies,
Counts nothing that she meets with base.'

She loves us in the form of flowers, fruits and many valuable things;

‘But lives and loves in every place.’

This kind of parallelism we notice in Priestley’s remark: ‘...Within limits, then, what Nature seems to teach us, is an authentic divine message. The limitations is that Nature is a finite and physical analogy of the infinite and spiritual God, so that to say that we live and have our being in Nature is true in a physical sense, as a counter part of the spiritual truth that it is God in whom we live and have our being.’(139) In ‘In Memoriam’ Tennyson asks the rhetorical question: ‘Are God and Nature then at strife? / That Nature lends such evil dreams? / So careful of the type she seems...’

Further through the isolated parallel juxtaposition of images the poet says that Nature gives the new life to human beings to bloom and they make the atmosphere healthy. Moreover spring touches our heart with hope and joy, so God gives new life to the dead. The man who exits from this world, appears again in a different bodily frame. In his poem ‘The Vision of Sin’ Tennyson beautifully presents this fact of birth and death:

‘Every moment dies a man’
Every moment one is born.”

F.E.L. Priestley also favours this reference: ‘The implication is that as Nature, a physical power transcending the actual beings that live in Nature, in the Spring descends and gives them new life. The renewal of natural life in the Spring thus becomes, thanks to the analogy; which is valid even if limited, an intimation of immorality: the dead are not finally and eternally dead. This is why Spring touches our heart with a joy and hope which are not illusory...’

Now the poet asks mankind to be cheerful and happy in such atmosphere:

‘...Beat quicker, for the time Is pleasant, and the woods and ways Are pleasant, and the beach and lime Put forth and feel a gladder clime.’

He clarifies that man’s heart becomes optimistic with the entrance of the Spring. Priestley uses double meaning, ‘...literal and figurate in the ‘gladder clime.’ Our own
'natural sense of joy and new life with the renewal of Nature, the ‘quicker’ beating of our hearts, are not only physical responses to Nature, but also intuitive recognitions of the intimations.

Tennyson refers to the unified translucent presentation of images in this line when he says:

‘And murmurs of a deeper voice.’

‘A deeper voice’ indicates to the inner voice of man’s conscience and views that it teaches man, the existence of the ways of God. We can say in Priestley’s words: ‘It goes before to some far shrine,’ teaching acceptance of the ways of God as benovolent teaching...’ (141) The poet wants to learn more and more till he might lose his life: ‘Teach that sick heart the stronger choice / Till all thy life...’ And very philosophically Tennyson opines that everybody is helpless before His Will i.e. man has to meet his end someday or other:

‘... one way incline
With one wide Will that closes thine.’

Tennyson manifests that eve is the boundary line of two regions i.e. day and night. At this time the eve has come to an end and therefore the night has spread its existence and the whole of the atmosphere is dark. “The ‘eve’ separates day from night. When eve has died, all is night, and we are in the ‘dark valleys’, says Priestley. (145) Here he refers to the unified opaque presentation of images, for ‘eve’ is regarded as death and after death man goes to the unknown land, which is full of darkness:

‘And when the zoning eve has died
Where yon dark valleys wind forlorn...’

Tennyson’s ‘Crossing the bar’ exemplifies the similar expression:

‘Twilight and evening bell
And after that the dark!’

But the poet also presents night of death as the nourisher of the morning of re-birth, i.e. it is (night) death that leads human beings to the path of (morning) re-birth. Wordsworth also reveals this fact of re-birth in his poem ‘Me thought I saw the foot step of a throne’.
That Man who is from God sent forth
Doth yet again to God return?
Such ebb and flow must ever be
Then wherefore should be mourn.

Tennyson takes the bright side of night and regards the night as the outline of the morning that brings Hope and Memory and their child. He tries to demystify that Hope and Memory are wedded i.e. the husband and wife and they come together with their child, Love:

‘Come Hope and Memory, spouse and bride,
From out the borders of the morn,
With that fair child betwixt them born.’

Some critics view that Hope is the child of Memory and Memory, the remembering of the dead by a mourner. Priestley does not agree with it and opines: ‘The hope is the hope of immortality: that the night of the death leads to the morning of re-birth.’ He adds: ‘It is important to note that Tennyson does not make Hope, the child of Memory, but the spouse. Memory, the remembering of the dead by the mourner, does not create hope; they come together, inseparable, accompanied by their child, presumably Love, born of and nurtured by Hope and Memory.’

Now he demonstrates the place where lies no disturbances of mortality i.e. the place which is untouched by the darkness of death, nor he likes the horrible voices from the grave:

‘And when no mortal motion jars
The blackness round the tombing sod…’

And fantasizes Faith and Virtue, that might come not through the human clamour, but ‘through silence and the trembling stars,’ and not from the human consciousness but ‘from tracts no feet have trod.’ According to Elizabeth Hillman Waterton: ‘few changes in range of symbols; few extensions in basic range of subject matter; no radical departure from the initial double line of attack, direct and oblique – are we to conclude that Tennyson was timid or conservative, or simply that, having established an effective range of indirect techniques astonishingly early in his career, he accepted the tool as forged, and concentrated his effort on enlarging and deepening the thought}
content, the significance of the thing symbolize? Perhaps the most fruitful conjecture would be that Tennyson was aware that the both direct and oblique methods have a poetic value, and that in his minor poems he made a consistent effort to fuse the powers of both."