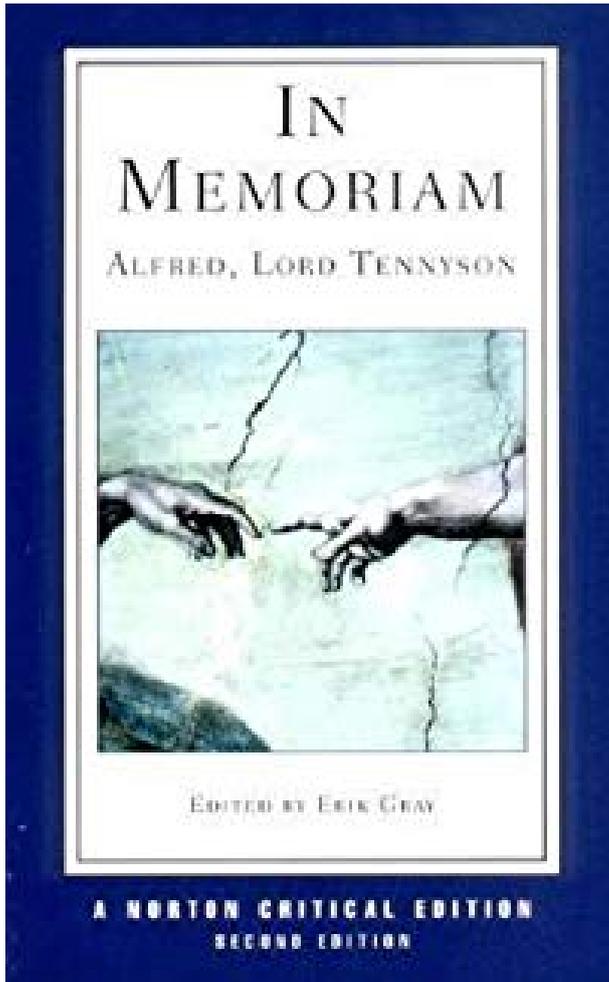


In Memoriam



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| Author: | Alfred Tennyson |
| Goodreads Rating: | 4.07 |
| Pages: | 252 |
| ISBN13: | 9780393979268 |
| Genre: | Poetry |
| Language | English |
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In Memoriam is Tennyson's tribute to his friend Arthur Henry Hallam who died at the age of 22, written over a period of 17 years. The original title of the poem was "The Way of the Soul", and this might give an idea of how the poem is an account of all Tennyson's thoughts and feelings as he copes with his grief over such a long period, including wrestling with the big philosophico-scientific questions of his day. It is perhaps because of this that the poem is still popular with and of interest to modern readers. Owing to its length and its arguable breadth of focus, the poem might not be thought an elegy or a dirge in the strictest formal sense. The poem is not arranged exactly in the order in which it was written. The prologue, for example, is thought to have been one of the last things written. Critics believe, however, that the poem as a whole is meant to be chronological in terms of the progression of Tennyson's grief. The passage of time is marked by the three descriptions of Christmas at different points in the poem, and the poem ends with a description of the marriage of Tennyson's sister. "In Memoriam" is written in four-line ABBA stanzas of iambic tetrameter, and such stanzas are now called In Memoriam Stanzas. Though not metrically unusual, given the length of the work, the meter creates a tonal effect which often divides readers - is it the natural sound of mourning and grief, or merely monotonous? The poem is divided into 133 cantos (including the prologue and epilogue), and in contrast to its constant and

regulated metrical form, encompasses many different subjects: profound spiritual experiences, nostalgic reminiscence, philosophical speculation, Romantic fantasizing and even occasional verse. The death of Hallam, and Tennyson's attempts to cope with this, remain the strand that ties all these together. Excerpt: Strong Son of God, immortal Love, Whom we, that have not seen thy face, By faith, and faith alone, embrace, Believing where we cannot prove ; Thine are these orbs of light and shade ; Thou madest Life in man and brute ; [...]