

[1891, March 25]

[From: Lord Alfred Tennyson]

[To: Sir Edwin Arnold]¹

Farringford,
Freshwater,
Isle of Wight.²
March 25/91

³Dear Sir Edwin Arnold

We like your “Light of Asia”⁴ so well that we had already possessed ourselves of your “Light of the World.”⁵ The copy which you have been so kind as to send thru our common friend Mr. Fitzgerald⁶ I shall value not only for itself but as your gift.

Whenever you

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are near either of my homes,⁷ we shall be glad to welcome you. My son Hallam⁸ writes this, (as my wrist is somewhat painful,) which I sign

Y faithfully

Tennyson

¹ Sir Edwin Arnold (1832-1904) was a poet and journalist who spent a number of years in India, first as principal of the Deccan Sanskrit College at Poona, and then as a fellow of Bombay University (see the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [ODNB]). He was seriously considered for the poet laureateship when Tennyson died in 1892.

² The address is imprinted in black on the upper right corner of the first page.

³ This letter is written on mourning paper. Tennyson's younger brother, Edward, had died in 1890 (see ODNB).

⁴ Published in 1879, *The Light of Asia, or The Great Renunciation* is Arnold's popular versified account of the life, character, and philosophy of the founder of Buddhism, Siddhartha Gautama.

⁵ *The Light of the World, or The Great Consummation* is Arnold's 1891 versified account of the life and teaching of Christ, which he published in attempt to placate the Christian critics of *The Light of Asia*. Unlike his earlier volume, *The Light of the World* “proved a signal failure” (see ODNB).

⁶ Possibly a relation of Edward FitzGerald (1809-1883), a friend of Tennyson from his time at Cambridge in the 1830s (see ODNB).

⁷ Tennyson owned two homes: Farringford in Freshwater on the Isle of Wight, and Aldworth, located near Haslemere (see ODNB).

⁸ Hallam Tennyson (1852-1928) was the eldest son of the poet laureate (see ODNB).