THE STUDY OF PERFECTION:

MATTHEW ARNOLD AS RELIGIOUS HUMANIST

by

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PREFATORY NOTE

The purpose of this study is to analyze Matthew Arnold's concept of individual spiritual perfection as it relates to his concept of social perfection, and to determine the extent to which he developed thes concepts beyond the point which his father had reached. I have not dealt directly with "influence" as such; Professor Williamson and M. Bonnerot have done all that can be done for the present, I think, in showing the close intellectual and psychological relationship between Doctor Arnold and his son.

In tracing these relationships, I have dealt first with the various aspects of perfection as expressed in Arnold's writing in the fields of education, social and literary criticisim, and religious criticism. Once these fields are seen as parts of a whole, Arnold's concept of perfection and Arnold himself emerge in a new light. Finally, I have evaluated Arnold's concept of the perfected individual as a forerunner of his concept of the perfected state.

The concept of perfection is apparent even in the early poems. When these poems are examined in the light of Arnold's later work in the fields of social and religious criticism, a fresh critical viewpoint becomes mandatory. In addition to studying them from the standpoint of artistic development,

the scholar can now focus upon their importance as steps in a philosophical process which led Arnold first to an idea of individual perfection for himself and then to the need to help others realize this idea. Just as the poems help to explain the stages which Arnold used to reach his goal, the goal itself serves to shed new light upon his early work. The more we know about the creative process of a given writer, the better we are able to understand his work.

In such key works as "Alaric At Rome," "Cromwell," and "The Sick King in Bokhara," it is possible to see Arnold's later concept of the Church State in embryo. Conversely, our knowledge of the final stage of his plan for individual and societal perfection enables us to reappraise these poems in terms of their place in a continuous line of thought, rather than as separate and unrelated pieces.

In like manner, Empedocles on Etna and Tristram and Iseult are made richer for us by our knowledge of their reflection of Arnold's personal struggle at the time of their composition, and by our awareness of his belief that personal perfection must always precede societal perfection, a key point in St. Paul and Protestantism. "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse," "Dover Beach," and "Rugby Chapel" are related more closely, once we see each as a step in Arnold's change from individual struggle for perfection to his need to save others along with himself. In effect, they form a tryptich,

the first poem reflecting the need to withdraw from isolation and do battle with the forces of chaos in the world, the second showing the nature of the battle to be joined, and the last showing the need to enlist others in the struggle. While each of these poems has stood the test of time in its own right, each also becomes immeasurably richer, once we see it as a reflection of one stage in Arnold's poetic and spititual progress towards perfection. It is hardly too much to say, for example, that the seeds of "Rugby Chapel" are inherent within the structure of "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse." The flashing lance and pennon herald not only the ignorant armies on the darkling plain, but also the refreshed and reinspired marchers on their way to the City of God. And the three poems are even more closely bound when we consider them in the light of Arnold's statement in God and the Bible to the effect that Christianity's claim to be divinely revealed for the salvation of the human race is well-supported. We are all the wiser for knowing that the recruiting of the armies has been going on since the first sight of the passing troops in the sun, that the underlying meaning of the poem is a call to spiritual arms and to hope; not merely a complaint of being born out of tune with time, of being forced to wander between two worlds, one dead, the other powerless to be born.

Such prose works as The Function of Criticism at the Present Time and Schools and Universities on the Continent, excellent as they may be as critical studies of the nature

and purpose of criticism and as an analysis of educational standards with reference to their possible adoption by England, assume new importance when we come to see them as successive steps in Arnold's design to save others with himself, to recall the stragglers, to resume the march to the City of God. The function of Criticism, says Arnold, is to be perpetually dissatisfied with those works which perpetually fall short of a high and perfect ideal. It is no accident that Arnold ranges far beyond the field of literary criticism in The Function of Criticism at the Present Time, that he invades the fields of social and educational criticism as well. If we read the essay with literature only in mind, we may well wonder at his seeming to stray from the point; but when we consider with the wisdom of hind-sight that even his literary criticism was subordinate to the concept of a society of perfected individuals existing in harmony, one with another, then the essay becomes all the more enjoyable and all the more inspiring, for its having "strayed" from the point. In like fashion, Schools and Universities on the Continent can now be seen as something more than a mere report on the state of education abroad with possible good advice for English schools. It is that, of course; but it is also a plan for the dissemination of culture and tolerance for the rising generation of English school children, a way of fitting them for leadership of and participation in the new society to be born and in the ranks of the army which will reach the New

Jerusalem. It is not an isolated essay, an interesting work complete in itself; it is instead another and necessary step in Arnold's plan for the resuscitation of a stagnant society threatening to drown in its own complacency.

This is why we should consider Arnold's early work in the light of his final works on religion. They are the final skirmishes in a battle which he maintained throughout his literary life. Once we see them as such, once we realize that they could not have come into being, had it not been for the groundwork of the early poems and essays, then we can re-examine the early work in terms of its relationship to Arnold's plan for the redemption of society, can see its importance in relation to a unified and logical whole, instead of viewing each of its parts as isolated, separate conversation-pieces or subjects for analysis in sophomore survey courses. To see them only as such is to miss the entire point of Arnold's work, just as it is to miss a part of the meaning of each of the separate pieces.

With this in mind, I have written the following study of Matthew Arnold.

At this point I wish to express my appreciation to those members of the Graduate Faculty in English at the City University of New York who have helped and encouraged me. I am particularly grateful to Professor Wendell Stacy Johnson for his many valuable suggestions, his warm enthusiasm, and his friendly interest. To my daughters, for their encouragement

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I

MATTHEW ARNOLD, RELIGIOUS HUMANIST

The religious writings of Matthew Arnold have received less than their due at the hands of contemporary critics and scholars. Coming near the end of Arnold's life, they add a fourth dimension to the image of Arnold which now seems prevalent. We speak of Arnold the poet, of Arnold the literary critic, of Arnold the social critic. Finally, if we remember to do so, we speak of Arnold the religious critic. For the moment we tend to forget that all these Arnolds are in reality one and the same man. But these categories, as Frederick Mulhauser states, are only conveniences; they are true but misleading. "Arnold's work," Mulhauser reminds us, "is a whole; it has a unity and even a completeness. Throughout all his writing the same dichotomies recur: unity and disunity; authority and anarchy; excellence and mediocrity; man's essential self and the multitudinous external world."[1] Arnold would be the first to cry, Amen.

For the truth of the matter is, Arnold notes, that the object of every individual should be to strive for perfection

in all of his parts. Arnold applies this rule to himself no less than he does to the rest of mankind. "There is no unum necessarium, or one thing needful, which can free human nature from the obligation of trying to come to its best at all these points. The real unum necessarium for us is to come to our best at all points."[2] Man can never achieve spiritual perfection, but he must try to do so. In order to begin, he must strive to achieve moral and cultural perfection. In his insistence that one must try to reach the unreachable, Arnold follows closely the theory of Mill, that a goal reached can yield little or no pleasure, and that the struggle to reach that goal is the sole source of enjoyment.[3]

The "enlargement of the law of doing," to use Arnold's words, reveals a broadening action in Arnold himself: the poet become the literary critic, the social critic, and finally the religious critic--without giving up any one to become another. This coming to one's best at all points is vital to an understanding of Arnold's lessened commitment to poetry in his later years. It is also vital to an understanding of Arnold's concept of a great civilization.

As a man concerned with moral as well as cultural perfection, therefore, Arnold devoted more time to that other great field for which he is remembered: religious criticism. This is why Mulhauser, Super, Madden and others wisely see a unity and completeness in Arnold. "The real unum necessarium for us is to come to our best at all points." Arnold was

merely putting into practice what he had already stated in his writing.

Although it is tempting to begin with Arnold's religious work, since it completes the final stage of his development, I believe that it is first necessary to consider his poetry and his other prose writings, in order to show the development of the concept of perfection in Arnold's life as well as in his work. Arnold's concept of the perfected individual should be related to his concept of the perfected state in order to deal with his work as a whole and to avoid being trapped by Professor Mulhauser's "conveniences."

Finally, it is important to examine Arnold's concept of the Church-State developing concurrently with his plan for the perfection of society.

Arnold's poetry often indicates the Church-State concept and the need for individual development on all levels. In "Mycerinus" the father develops state power without morality. The sick king in Bokhara renders a reluctant judgement upon the moolah for breaking a law which is more properly religious than civil. The moral is implicit: State and Church must function together, one reinforcing the other. In "Balder Dead" Arnold recreates the vision of a new heaven and a new earth. As Kenneth Allott notes, "The parallel between Balder and Christ suggests that already in 1854 the vision of a world restored may have expressed for A. something of his aspirations towards a new social order and a 'purified' undogmatic

form of religion."[4] The relationship of individual development to universal development is expressed negatively in "Stanzas From the Grande Chartreuse:" the monks have perfected themselves morally, but have lost touch with the world. The same relationship is expressed positively in "Rugby Chapel," in which Arnold represents his father's concern with others as well as himself.

In turning from the individual to the universal, Arnold applies his theory in this way: "Let us suggest then, that, having this one-fourth of their nature concerned with art and science, men cannot but somehow employ it. If they think that the three-fourths of their nature concerned with conduct are the whole of their nature, and that this is all they have to attend to, still the neglected one-fourth is there, it ferments, it breaks wildly out, it employs itself all at random and amiss." He further argues that "Culture then, and science and literature are requisite, in the interest of religion itself, even when, taking nothing but <u>conduct</u> into account, we rightly make the God of the Bible, as Israel made him, to be simply and solely 'the Eternal Power, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness.' For we are not to forget, that, grand as this conception of God is, and well as it meets the wants of far the largest part of our being, or three-fourths of it, yet there is one-fourth of our being of which it does not strictly meet the wants, the part which is concerned with art and science; or, in other words, with

beauty and exact knowledge."[5] If the individuals who have succeeded in expressing the whole of their being coalesce, a society in which both the moral and cultural needs of man are met will result. The coalescence will occur when individual men recognize and act upon their obligation to the whole of humanity.

Arnold's concept of the Church-State as the ideal governing force to promote the perfecting of society reflects his concern with moral and cultural perfection. The State represents culture and authority, the Church represents morality; together, they operate to govern culture and conduct, to assure the striving towards spiritual perfection on the part of each member. But this happy union had not yet come to be: in England, Arnold says, "by concession to the denomination spirit, by dint of not maintaining an impartial and unsectarial character, the State . . . has been betrayed into a thousand anomalies, and has created a system far more irritating to sectarial susceptibilities than if it had regarded none of them."[6] This is the first step in Arnold's plea for an established church on the grounds that the non-conformist is out of touch with the mainstream of life. He suggests that all dissenting groups might be united within the established church.[7] This established church would function within the framework of a strong state. A strong state there must be; Arnold feared Americanization if England became democratic. To Arnold, the American people of the

day were energetic, powerful, and educated by their own standards; but they were also "an overweening, a self-conceited people . . . . Neither in Church nor in State have they had the spectacle of any august institution before their eyes. The face of the land is covered with a swarm of sects, all of them without dignity, some of them without decency."[8]

For the good of religion as well as the good of the populace, then, Church and State must function together. The State must maintain religious instruction in State-controlled schools: "The power which has to govern men, must not omit to take account of one of the most powerful motors of men's nature, their religious feeling. It is vain to tell the State that it is of no religion; it is more true to say that the State is of the religion of all its citizens, without the fanaticism of any."[9] As Super notes, Arnold considered The Popular Education of France, from which the above passage was quoted, so important that he republished it separately in 1879, under the title Democracy. To Arnold, education implied religious training, as well as cultural; this meant Church authority over the religious training, the whole to be governed by the State, of which the Church would be an integral part. His second publication of The Popular Education of France indicates his intention that the essay be reread in the light of his religious works; taken in this context, it serves both as prologue and epilogue to his developed concept of the individual seeking to come to his best at all

points within a society seeking to come to its best at all points.

Arnold believed firmly in the strong State. Like his father--and like Carlyle--he had great admiration for Germany, perhaps the most authoritarian state of his time. Even before the publication of The Popular Education of France (1861), the Prussian state had begun its drive towards a unified Germany, and Arnold found himself sympathetic towards the concept of strong central government, although his sympathy towards Germany in particular would diminish following the Franco-Prussian War.

In Culture and Anarchy (1869) he attempted to answer some of the objections to strong State control: "And we are all afraid of giving to the State too much power, because we only conceive of the State as something equivalent to the class in occupation of the executive government, and are afraid of that class abusing power to its own purposes." Culture, he affirms, suggests the idea of the State. While firm State-power has no basis "in our ordinary selves; culture suggests one to us in our best self."[10] In the conclusion, Arnold maintains that "a State in which law is authoritative and sovereign, a firm and settled course of public order, is requisite if man is to bring to maturity anything precious and lasting now, or to found anything precious and lasting for the future."[11]

The ideal State would represent the best self of each of the three major social classes, so that no one could exert tyrannical power over the others. It would be a State in which Culture and Morality would walk hand-in-hand. It would be a State in which religious freedom would be guaranteed, but in which all sects would be fused into one established Church, which would act as the conscience of the State.

What of this Church? First and foremost, it would be a Church broad enough in doctrine to include all sects. It would seek to correct doctrinal error in any of its branches from within, or to correct itself, if need be; it would expel no sect. Arnold insists that there is no error which will not reveal itself in time, provided the Church recognizes the spirit of St. Paul and does not base its judgement upon erroneous interpretations of St. Paul.

Arnold's first target is Puritanism. In St. Paul and Protestantism, he claims that Puritanism, like Protestantism in general, is founded upon a misinterpretation of St. Paul. This has led the Puritans into the trap of self-righteousness. The term "Puritan" is loosely applied: Arnold includes all Dissenting sects within this definition. He is seeking to establish the doctrine that the Church of England is the true Church; that at the time of the Reformation, the Church of Rome split away from the true Church, to be followed by the Puritans, Evangelicals, and other Dissenters. If the Puritans can be made to see the error in interpreting St.

Paul too literally, they can be brought into the fold without trouble. "For the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life," Arnold quoted from his favorite saint.

The inclusion of Puritans can be beneficial to the Church, because of the number and value of elements "which Puritanism could supply towards the collective growth of the whole body. The national Church would grow more vigorously towards a higher stage of insight into religious truth, and consequently towards a greater perfection of practice . . . "[12]

St. Paul himself condemned disunion in the society of Christians as much as he declined politics, Arnold declares. "This is decisive against the Puritan allegation that it does not matter whether the society of Christians is united or not, and that there are even great advantages in separatism."[13]

Although the Dissenters are in the main middle-class Philistines, Arnold sees their incorporation into the national Church as a benefit. Their very presence will insure the Church freedom from domination by the upper-class Barbarians.[14] Once the Dissenters are in the Church, he argues, the large middle class will be represented within the moral structure of the State. When this is accomplished, it may be expected that the lower class too will be represented, since they belong to Dissenting churches for the most part, when they belong to any church at all.

Once the Protestants have been united within one church, it may be possible to bring Roman Catholics within the fold.

The resulting Church will be stronger for their inclusion; peace and harmony will result, because all will be working together for moral good, rather than fighting among themselves.[15] Arnold does not foresee this in the immediate future, however. For the present, it will be enough to unite the Protestant sects.

There is an interesting parallel between Arnold's concept of the ideal State and his concept of the ideal Church. The State must reflect its citizens in the government. Each of the three major groups will furnish representatives who will put forth the best qualities of their respective groups. Each class has its virtuous mean, its defect, and its excess: if the best men from each are chosen to govern the entire State, each class will be represented fairly, each will contribute what the other two cannot, and no class can gain control in order to tyrannize the others. In the same way, the Church which comprehends all sects can draw from the virtuous mean of each class. The Established Church will no longer be open to the charge that it is merely an appendage of the Barbarians. (Arnold rather arbitrarily equates religious denomination with social class.) Significantly enough, he does not touch upon the lower class, the Populace. Apparently those who are already members of a Dissenting sect can be lumped together with the Philistines. Those who are not must be brought into the fold.[16]

It is precisely at this point that Arnold returns to a

favorite theme: If culture does not exist, there will be anarchy. The leavening action of the Church can be relied upon to exert moral pressure upon the Barbarian and the Philistine extremists. Cultural pressure can be exerted through State-controlled schools. A wide range of subjects will be taught, so that the student will have some knowledge of literature and the arts, in addition to his commercial and scientific knowledge. Religious instruction in the schools will bind Church to State, so that the student will come to see culture and morality working in harmony, instead of battling each other for preeminence.

But what of the Populace? Religious instruction they will certainly have in the schools, but it will hardly be enough in itself to inculcate an urge towards moral perfection. Arnold's answer is to be found in Literature and Dogma and in God and the Bible. It is necessary for the Populace to embrace religion for them to become capable of striving towards moral perfection. Since the Church of England exists and is the strongest single religious unit within the nation, let it embrace all other sects and draw the Populace into its all-embracing fold. As for Culture, the rudiments may be gained from reading the Bible.[17]

The church as well as the State, then, will be made up of individuals seeking to come to their best at all points; together, they will impart their collective efforts to the larger body. The Barbarian will contribute his virtuous

mean, a "high, chivalrous style." The Philistine will contribute ambition and self-reliance. The worker will contribute "bright powers of sympathy and ready powers of action."

Taken as a whole, the virtues Arnold lists would be a credit to any individual in any society. The problem is to keep the excesses and defects from ruining the whole, and Arnold guards against this by urging equal representation of each class, both in State and in Church.

The concepts of individual spiritual perfection, universal social perfection, and the Church-State derive from Doctor Thomas Arnold; Matthew Arnold carried them forward and developed them. In his own words, he was his father's continuator.[18]

Arnold's religious writings are of high literary quality, perhaps because of his need to reach a wider audience than he had done heretofore. He was concerned with converting the heads of the Church of England to at least Protestant Ecumenicalism; the civil authorities to a sense of moral responsibility; the Barbarians, Philistines and Populace to a greater understanding of each other's virtues, excesses and defects. Perhaps he was aware that the formal style which would have satisfied his more cultured readers would have missed those others most in need of being reached. At any rate, he seems to have tempered his style to fit the greatest possible number of readers; as a result, his writing is simple, graceful and lucid, and it is laced with that gentle

wit which reproves without malice. Arnold's religious writings reflect the mature artist as well as the mature man.

These works should be considered, then, as the final stage of a life of social criticism, not as a separate entity. They complete the Church-State concept, although they have been foreshadowed in most of his previous work. They must also, it seems to me, be considered in the light of Thomas Arnold's statements on the development of the individual, on the necessity for a firm union between Church and State, and on the proper approach to Scripture. Especially of note are such passages as this: "Paul is difficult because we tend to interpret him in our own terms rather than his."[19] A comparison of this statement with Matthew Arnold's opening chapter of St. Paul and Protestantism, in which Arnold writes, "But the reign of the real St. Paul is only beginning; his fundamental ideas, disengaged from the elaborate misconceptions with which Protestantism has overlaid them, will have an influence in the future greater than any which they have yet had . . . " is sufficient to indicate Matthew Arnold's source.[20]

To Arnold, as to his father, the deadly sin in Puritanism was the assumption that he who prospered was favored by God. By Puritan standards, the manufacturer who paid his workers starvation wages for twelve to sixteen hours work per day was chosen to be saved if he prospered. The Puritan God manifested his intention and his pleasure immediately and tangibly. It was this attitude which created suffering and

the fertile soil from which springs revolution. Both Arnolds were well aware of this; as intelligent men, they sought to get at the disease itself, rather than at the symptoms.

It is here perhaps that one can see most clearly the operational side of the quest for spiritual perfection: if the Philistine can be convinced that prosperity is not quite the same thing as spiritual grace, he may then be convinced that he must labor in other vineyards to attain spiritual perfection. The first stage in his conversion is a return to the spirit of St. Paul.

To Thomas Arnold, spiritual perfection resulted from a combination of cultural perfection and religious perfection. To Matthew Arnold, it meant the combination of cultural perfection and moral perfection. This is why it is perhaps accurate to view Thomas Arnold as a religious man with humanist leanings and to think of his son as a religious humanist. Where Thomas Arnold used humanism to lead people to God, Matthew Arnold used religion to lead people to a spiritual perfection on earth.

This, then, is the goal towards which Matthew Arnold strives. Cultural and moral perfection lead to spiritual perfection in the individual. Individual spiritual perfection, when multiplied infinitely, becomes social perfection; social perfection results in the "great epoch," the time in which great literature can be written.

In this study, I have traced the beginnings of the

idea through Matthew Arnold's writing, both poetry and prose, to show its development into the final form, the spiritually perfected state. But it is well to remember that the process is reversible. Once one sees Arnold's early poems as steps along the path to the New Jerusalem, it is possible to view them with new insight. Just as the early work sheds light upon the religious criticism which climaxed Arnold's literary production, so too the religious criticism sheds light upon the early work, showing it to be not merely a group of individual poems or essays, but part of a continuum. It is possible then to increase our literary knowledge of Arnold's work by token of our perception of his overall plan.

NOTES

[1]Introduction to Matthew Arnold, Selected Poetry and Prose (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1953), p. vi.

[2]Culture and Anarchy, in The Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold, ed. R. H. Super (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1960-), V, 180. Hereinafter referred to as Super.

[3]See Literary Essays, Super, V, 100-101 for Arnold's tenet that spiritual perfection is the result of cultural and moral perfection. See also St. Paul and Protestantism, Super, VI, 125, for a further statement. Cf. Mill, Autobiography, Chapter V. In some ways Arnold's theory also seems to parallel the joy-in-work concept of Carlyle (Sartor Resartus, Chapter IX).

[4]The Poems of Matthew Arnold, ed. Kenneth Allott (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1965), n. p. 388. Hereinafter cited as Poems.

[5]Literature and Dogma, Super, VI, 409.

[6]The Popular Education of France, Super, II, 144. Although public instruction was under State control in France, Church schools were allowed. Arnold agreed with the plan whereby the State controlled public education, and he favored religious instruction in all schools. (Ibid., pp. 35-36.) He firmly maintained that State control would insure religious freedom; this is an early instance of Arnold's concept of the Church-State. In a letter to his mother December 30,

1865, he mentions his second letter on "Education and the State," in the Pall Mall Gazette, December 22, 1865: "It took a line you would see was after Papa's own heart, and opened with quoting a passage from Wither, in Coleridge's Church and State, of which Papa was very fond." Quoted in Essays, Letters, and Reviews by Matthew Arnold, coll. and ed. Fraser Neiman (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960) pp. 102-110. Hereinafter referred to as Neiman.

[7]Arnold develops this argument at greater length in Culture and Anarchy. See Super, V, 238; 249-250.

[8]The Popular Education of France, Super, II, 260-161.

[9]Ibid., p. 198.

[10]Super, V, 134-135.

[11]Super, V, 223.

[12]St. Paul and Protestantism, Super, VI, 75.

[13]Super, Vi, 105.

[14]Super, VI, 121.

[15]"Who cannot see that the power of joint life already spoken of would be far greater and stronger if it comprehended Roman Catholics too? And who cannot see, also, that a movement is possible which may at last bring about a general union of Christendom?" St. Paul and Protestantism, Super, VI, 107.

[16]Arnold's concept of the virtuous mean, the defect, and the excess of each of the three classes is found in Culture and Anarchy, Super, V, 137-139.

[17]While Arnold held the view that "no man, who knows nothing else, knows even his Bible," he regarded the knowledge of the Bible among uneducated folk as the beginning of more comprehensive knowledge. See Culture and Anarchy, Super, V, 184; St. Paul and Protestantism, Super, VI, 7.

[18]Doctor Arnold was greatly influenced by Coleridge and by Bishop Wilson; Matthew Arnold quotes the latter freely in his religious works, and apparently used his father's text of Wilson's Sacra Privata.

[19]Thomas Arnold, Sermons (London, 1845), 4 vols., I, 137-138. The relationship of Doctor Arnold's religious writings to those of Matthew Arnold has been accurately traced by Eugene L. Williamson, Jr., in The Liberalism of Thomas Arnold (University: University of Alabama Press, 1964).

[20]Super, VI, 5.

II

THE POET AS PROPHET

"Matt does not know what it is to work because he so little knows what it is to think. But I am hopeful about him more than I was: his amiableness of temper seems very great, and some of his faults appear to me less; and he is so loving to me that it ought to make me not only hopeful, but very patient and long-suffering towards him."[1] Thus Thomas Arnold to William Charles Lake in 1840. Lake was then the tutor of eighteen-year-old Matthew Arnold.

Doctor Arnold's opinion was shared by others. He was not the only one to believe that his son was frivolous, foppish, undisciplined, and illogical; perhaps, as Patrick McCarthy states, "something in Matthew Arnold prevented his doing for long periods what every schoolboy was expected to do and what Dr. Arnold demanded more than most fathers."[2] Perhaps too Doctor Arnold remembered his own youth, which foreshadowed that of his son to a marked degree.[3]

Be that as it may, Matthew Arnold at twenty gave little indication of development towards perfection at any point except one: poetry. While Doctor Arnold did not disapprove of poetry, he did not have high regard for poets who were not also thinkers--concerned, Christian thinkers. Matthew Arnold showed little such inclination.

And yet the seeds were there. In "Alaric at Rome," the Rugby prize poem of 1840, Arnold ascribed the fall of Rome to moral decay, and with perhaps conscious self-criticism, spoke of "Energies wasted, unimproved hours,/The saddening visions of departed days;/And while they rise here might we stand alone,/And mingle with thy ruins somewhat of our own." "Alaric" is interesting in that it manifests a sense of history, a talent for scholarship, and a sense of the need for moral integrity in a lasting society. Surely Doctor Arnold need not have felt that he must be "long-suffering" with his talented son!

In his later work especially, Arnold was concerned with the influence of "the noble and great who are gone . . . . souls tempered with fire" upon the living. St. Paul was one such soul, and the spirit of Paul was an inspiration to Arnold, as it had been to his father. Perhaps Arnold was thinking of Paul as early as the composition of "Alaric at Rome," when he wrote: "There are, whose glory passeth not away--/Even in the grave their fragrance cannot fade."

The combination of moral integrity and a strong sense of civic structure points the way towards Arnold's later advocacy of the fusion of Church and State, but perhaps more important at this time is his recognition that energies may be wasted, hours unimproved. While the profitable use of time was a common Victorian theme, it was also a personal one with father and son. It meant self-improvement in all areas, a fully-rounded development: a coming to one's best at all points. As Thomas Arnold commented to Crabbe Robinson three years earlier, "If Arts mean merely logic or grammar, or arithmetic, or natural science, then of course a degree in Arts implies nothing whatever as to a man's moral judgement or principles. But open the definition . . . . and you encroach unavoidably on the domain of moral education . . . " Moral education, Doctor Arnold continues, "cannot be separated from religious education . . . . meaning by Religion what the Gospel teaches one to mean by it, it is nothing more nor less than a system directing and influencing our conduct, principles, and feelings, and professing to do this with sovereign authority and most efficacious influence."[4]

While Arnold was to continue in the field of poetry almost exclusively for more than a dozen years, he became increasingly conscious of the need to broaden his scope. Cromwell was the subject of his next important poem. The choice of subject seems to indicate Arnold's concern with the strong captain of Church and State alike. As DeLaura notes, Arnold

was still enchanted with Carlyle and the concept of the hero at the time the poem was written, and while he seems to be aware of the ruthless qualities of Cromwell, he still seems to admire him.[5] Nevertheless, his concern is perhaps not so much with Cromwell as it is with the prospect of functioning well in at least two areas, religion and statecraft.

The perfection of the individual, which was to form so important a part of Arnold's plan for the salvation of mankind, is considered in "Cromwell:"

> Say not such dreams are idle; for the man
> Still toils to perfect what the child began;
> And thoughts, that were but outlines, time engraves
> Deep on his life; and childhood's baby waves,
> Made rough with care, become the changeful sea,
> Stemmed by the strength of manhood fearlessly . . .
>
> (ll. 45-50)

But of course Cromwell was not "perfected." One side developed at the expense of others, and Arnold's real sympathy is with Falkland, who "eyed the strife that would not cease,/ Shook back his tangled locks, and murmured--'Peace!'" Arnold's cry was also for peace, and his later writings--most notably Culture and Anarchy and God and the Bible--reflect his desire to better his world without bloodshed. Cromwell represented the Church-State, it is true, but a Church-State founded on blood. His was "a heart that recked not of the countless dead,/That strewed the blood-stained path where Empire led,"

and Arnold's final comment was, "thou . . . art nothing now." Once Arnold's view of the perfected individual in the perfected society is understood, his antipathy towards Cromwell even in this early poem is clear. It is also clear that Cromwell will neither enter the New Jerusalem nor will he inspire others to do so.

"Mycerinus" (1849) shows Arnold's concern that religion without the power of the state may fail. The father of Mycerinus is a strong ruler, but is unjust. He is not checked by moral strictures, yet he lives long and dies peacefully. Mycerinus, on the other hand, has strict moral principles and a firm sense of justice. But Mycerinus has only six years to live. An unjust fate has ruled that the just son must die before his time. The son, in an effort to cheat Fate, turns night into day by burning lanterns and holding revel through the night.

The poem is interesting in that it displays in rudimentary form the doctrine of excess and defect which Arnold would later develop in Culture and Anarchy. Whereas his father was deficient in morality, Mycerinus was deficient in statecraft and in authority. Fate or "tyrannous necessity" has spared the father and condemned the son. Stoic and Christian doctrine alike dictate resignation and acceptance, but Mycerinus questions the authority of the gods which have rendered unjust punishment upon him, asking if they are

Not Gods but ghosts, in frozen apathy?

Or is it that some Force, too wise, too strong,
Even for yourselves to conquer or beguile,
Sweeps earth, and heaven, and men, and gods along,
Like the broad volume of the insurgent Nile?
And the great powers we serve, themselves may be
Slaves of a tyrannous necessity? (ll. 36-43)

By his retirement from the world, Mycerinus neglects his state duties. Perhaps this isolation from the world made it possible for Arnold to avoid doing the same. As Culler has put it in reference to Empedocles on Etna, although in one sense the poem "dramatizes what Arnold did, in another it dramatizes what he did not do. It dramatizes what he was saved from doing by the fact that he did it vicariously in the realm of art."[6] In this sense, the real point of the poem is that the balanced, perfected individual is that one who is best able to cope with life, that perfection in one area at the expense of another is not enough.

More important, perhaps, in view of Arnold's later work, is the implication that justice depends upon men: Mycerinus has relied upon "the all-just Gods" and has learned that "on the strenuous just man, Heaven bestows,/Crown of his struggling life, an unjust close!" Clearly Arnold does not consider Mycerinus one to be emulated. He has failed to perfect himself, first in the knowledge of the power of evil to destroy just men, and second in failing to attend to the duties of state which devolved upon him at his father's death.

Mycerinus, like Tristram and Empedocles, may be said to represent an attitude of Arnold's own. It is true that the legend is not Arnold's invention, but it is equally true that he chose it as a theme. If the poem is a study in isolation, a study which reflects a tendency in Arnold to isolate himself from an inimical world, it also shows concern with that very world to the extent that he considers the need for man to assure his own justice. When viewed from the standpoint of Arnold's later vision of the New Jerusalem in "Balder Dead," in "Rugby Chapel," and in God and the Bible, the poem seems less an apology for Mycerinus, less a message of self-pity, than it does a castigation of an attitude which can only lead to oblivion.

In "Stagyrius" the theme, stated through opposites, is harmony and reconciliation, rather than excess or defect:

> Let all worlds be mild,
> All strifes be reconciled,
> All pains beguiled!
> Light bring no blindness,
> Love no unkindness,
> Knowledge no ruin,
> Fear no undoing! (ll. 54-60)

The theme of harmony and the mutual development of all sides of Man's nature is expressed even more forcibly in "Written in Butler's Sermons" (1849). As Allott notes, Arnold found "all this elaborate psychology of Butler's"

unsatisfying.[7] Arnold's main quarrel with Butler is that Butler regards instincts and principle of actions as "separate, fixed, and palpable." Arnold sees instead "God's harmonious whole" unravelled by men. Beyond, "where none may see" are the foundations of the throne "where man's one nature, queen-like, sits alone/And rays her powers, like sister-islands seen/Linking their coral arms under the sea." In other words, what seem to be diverse and separate parts in Man are really parts of a whole: each must be brought to full strength, each must be brought into harmony with the others.

In poetry Arnold was searching for something which lay beyond the field of poetry, beyond the field of any art form. It seems somewhat coincidental rather than deliberate that he began to explore the way through poetry. Had his essay style been developed earlier, he might well have tried to work his way in prose. As it was, he began with poetry. It was a process at once cerebratory and hortatory. He thought and he wrote what he thought: occasionally he seems to have formulated his thoughts on paper, as in "Written in Emerson's Essays." At other times he expressed a mood which no thought could comprehend. This was the value of the early poetry to Arnold.[8]

Almost at once the theme of withdrawal and isolation appears. Mycerinus retires to his island, the Reveller strays from his fellows, the sick king is cut off from

humanity by his position. Arnold is, as Trilling says, at his best when he writes of self-pity and isolation. Occasionally the two are united. "Without a God, fundamentally separated from Nature, there is nothing to bind man to the universe, scarcely anything to bind him to life, strangely enough, little even to bind him to his fellow-man."[9]

But it is possible to go too far in stressing Arnold's sense of isolation and his self-pity. Arnold's is essentially a complex personality, and as Mulhauser has said, his life constantly presents us with dichotomies. "Of little threads our life is spun,/And he spins ill, who misses one," Arnold wrote in 1847. "Horatian Echo" states his resolve to be perfected in all areas, and this resolve would be impossible in a state of isolation.

"In Harmony with Nature" indicates Arnold's first real break with the Wordsworthian tradition. Man is separate from Nature in that he has a moral sense, a desire to be good. Nature does not represent a rendezvous where Man may approach God: it is a hostile, amoral world in which Man is compelled to live, and his principal weapon is his moral goodness. Isolation from the world of men would be, in effect, casting oneself adrift in a cruel natural world in which there would be no hope of finding God.

But if Man's principal weapon is his moral sensitivity, his goodness, this alone is insufficient to assure his survival. He must couple moral consciousness with the will and

the ability to survive: the speaker in "Fragment of an Antigone" says,

> Well hath he done who hath seized happiness!
> For little do the all-containing hours,
> Though opulent, freely give.
> Who, weighing that life well
> Fortune presents unprayed,
> Declines her ministry, and carves his own;
> And, justice not infringed,
> Makes his own welfare his unswerved-from law. (ll. 1-8)[10]

The right of the individual and his problem in maintaining it short of isolation seems to have concerned Arnold deeply at this time. Isolation was perhaps the way of the poet, but the way of the balanced man, the man coming to his best at all points, involved commitment to the world. Yet there was a danger that, in becoming too deeply enmeshed in the world and its problems, the finer self would be lost. "The Forsaken Merman" seems to illustrate this allegorically. The Merman is unable to live on the land, in the town which is dominated by "the little grey church on the windy hill." Margaret, on the other hand, returns to attend Easter service and stays, caught up by "the humming street, and the child with its toy." Were Margaret happy, all would be well, at least for her. But "anon there breaks a sigh,/And anon there drops a tear,/From a sorrow-clouded eye,/And a heart sorrow-laden . . . " Margaret has gained the world and lost the

prize which can only be won by some measure of isolation. But the Merman is unhappy too: total isolation cannot bring happiness.

In terms of the poet, "the poet's matter being the hitherto experience of the world, and his own, increases with every century." Thus to Clough, in late 1847 or early 1848.[11] And in the Fall of 1849, he stated the dichotomy more precisely, in the poem "In Memory of the Author of 'Oberman:'"

> Ah! two desires toss about
> The poet's feverish blood,
> One drives him to the world without,
> And one to solitude.
>
> . . .
>
> He who hath watched, not shared, the strife,
> Knows how the day hath gone.
> He only lives with the world's life,
> Who hath renounced his own. (ll. 93-104)

But Arnold was hardly ready to renounce his own life. Clough had given too much of himself to the world, in Arnold's estimation; Arnold would not make the same mistake. Empedocles might alternately cry for the company of men or for solitude, but Arnold would give up neither entirely. As J. Hillis Miller has suggested, Arnold was prepared to walk a tight-rope between the ruck of humanity and the void of isolation.[12]

In 1849 he was appointed Inspector of Schools by Lord Lansdowne, to whom he had been private secretary for two years. He would hold his new position for thirty-five years. Perhaps it inspired his metaphor, in Tristram and Iseult, of the world as

> A gradual furnace . . .
> In whose hot air our spirits are upcurled
> Until they crumble, or else grow like steel
> --Which kills in us the bloom, the youth, the spring--
> Which leaves the fierce necessity to feel
> But takes away the power . . . (III, ll. 119-124)

The appointment marked the end of a crucial period for Arnold. His father had died in 1842, only two months after the engagement of his favorite sister Jane had been broken. Although his "Cromwell" had won the Newdigate prize in 1843, he had taken his degree with only a Second in the following year. Conflict between the two desires in "the poet's feverish blood" had led him to Senancour, to Switzerland, and in 1847, to Marguerite. While the poems addressed to Marguerite are not properly within the scope of this study, Marguerite herself is, to the extent that she perhaps forced Arnold to abandon the somewhat Byronic pose of his youth.[13] Faced with the double knowledge that "the calm of Obermann is really the calm of death," and that he is not the "passionate Byronic lover," Arnold was able to come to terms with the world, to live in it without loss of individuality.

This, as Culler suggests, is the deeper meaning of Obermann, the one which eventually Arnold accepted. Perhaps it took Marguerite to challenge the pose and the worship of Obermann alike. The parting from Marguerite in 1848 was a parting from Obermann and young manhood as well.

1849 was the beginning of a new life for Arnold, one in which he would begin to perfect himself in other areas than poetry. Tristram and Iseult is a turning point. While the poem need not be taken as an autobiographical allegory, it is interesting to note that Arnold apparently first encountered the story in a French review article while he was at Thun.[14] Whether Arnold's retelling of the tale of doomed love was inspired by Marguerite or not is irrelevant; the main point is that Arnold considers and rejects the "tyrannous single thought" which may be the pursuit of poetry, and the "fit of passion" which may be the pursuit of a Byronic sexual goal. In each case, the single objective is rejected. Either would involve the exclusion of the affairs of the world, the closing in upon oneself which inevitably leads to isolation. That Arnold was determined to remain in the world, if not entirely of it, is obvious from his acceptance of the inspectorship and his marriage to Frances Lucy Wightman in 1851. Tristram and Iseult was almost certainly conceived at the time he parted from Marguerite in 1849; equally certainly, it was probably not completed until after he had met Miss Wightman. There is no question but that Arnold rejected Marguerite for

good and all, and that he was not tempted to look behind him.[15] The third part of the poem deals specifically with the theme of infatuation and sexual attraction and states Arnold's position at the time.

In St. Paul and Protestantism Arnold considers Paul's central doctrine to be dying "with Christ to the law of the flesh, to live with Christ to the law of the mind."[16] In other words, Arnold believed that a spiritual rebirth was necessary before any individual could come to his best at all points. In Literature and Dogma Arnold projects the theory of spiritual rebirth to comprehend all men, attacking the narrow interpretation of the Bible which is concerned only with the literal ressurection after death. There is, he says, a ressurection in life, and this is the true ressurection towards which we should all aspire. In God and the Bible, as will appear, the message is based upon the vision of John, the New Jerusalem.

Arnold's characterization of the two Iseults and Tristram is interesting in the light of these works. If one can consider all three characters in Tristram and Iseult to represent different attitudes of Matthew Arnold, then what Arnold intends by the poem is to show the death of the law of the flesh and the life of the law of the mind. Iseult of Ireland is characterized as a passionate woman, obsessed with sexual desire. Tristram may well represent the Byronic sexual pose of the Romanticist. Both die:

For thou wilt rouse no sleepers here!
For these thou seest are unmoved;
Cold, cold as those who lived and loved
A thousand years ago. (II, ll. 190-94)

Only Iseult of Brittany is left alive to tell her children the tale of Merlin and Vivian, thereby to warn them of the dangers of sexual obsession.

If the two Iseults represent different aspects of Arnold, as the religious works at the end of his career seem to indicate, then he was attempting to show the death of the old, fleshly self and the rebirth into the world of the mind through his characters.

This is further indicated by Arnold's treatment of the story. There are two significant changes from the familiar legend. One is Arnold's inclusion of the story of Merlin and Vivian, and the other is his sympathetic treatment of Iseult of Brittany. In Arnold's poem, Iseult of Brittany is patient and kind, sympathetic and tolerant. She not only does not lie to the dying Tristram, stating that she cannot see the sail which signifies the arrival of Iseult of Ireland, but she even allows her rival to sit beside Tristram until he dies. This love is compassionate, realistic, and moderate.

The third part of the poem is an even darker representation of the theme of obsessive sexual passion. Whereas Tristram dies of his obsession and Iseult of Ireland is consumed by her passion, Merlin is forever imprisoned in a living

death. While the legend of Tristram and Iseult of Ireland may be Romantic in the best Byronic tradition, Arnold treats this love with cool detachment and gives further point to his lack of commitment by narrating the story of an old man, wise in all ways but one ("Of little threads our life is spun,/ And he spins ill, who misses one"), who is infatuated with a young, clever, and unscrupulous woman who tricks him into giving her the charm which will bind him "till the Judgment day . . . For she was passing weary of his love." Arnold seems here to emphasize the similar passage about excess,

> some tyrannous single thought, some fit
> Of passion, which subdues our souls to it,
> Till for its sake alone we live and move--
> Call it ambition, or remorse, or love--
> This too can change us wholly, and make seem
> All which we did before, shadow and dream. (III, ll. 127-132)

Empedocles on Etna bears the same relationship to Arnold's philosophical search as Tristram and Iseult does to his personal one. If, as Culler suggests, Arnold was working out his problems vicariously through his poetry, the theme of Empedocles may be said to have been a presentation of his possible courses of action. Certainly it is tempting to relate Empedocles, Callicles, and Pausanias to three aspects of Arnold, as William Madden has done. Madden relates Empedocles to nostalgia and dialogue, Callicles to aesthetic consciousness, and Pausanias to stoicism. "At the conclusion of the poem each of the three

elements of Arnold's inner life has found its proper end: Empedocles--the symbol of his aspiring Romantic impulse--is buried; Pausanias--the kindly practical stoic--goies into the city; Callicles--the aesthetic consciousness--remains apart, turning away at the end from the human tragedy to listen to the stories of the divine Apollo and the Graces."[17] Madden sees Arnold as a fragmented personality, perhaps taking too seriously Arnold's contemporaneous letter to his sister, Mrs. Forster: "The true reason why parts suit you while others do not is that my poems are fragments--i.e. that I am fragments, while you are a whole."[18]

Perhaps Arnold felt fragmented about this time, but this is not quite the same thing as being fragmented. There were at least four sides to Matthew Arnold's rather complex nature, not counting his personal life. He was a poet, an educator, a literary and sociological critic, and a religious humanist. But, as I have already shown, no one area of endeavor excluded any of the others; indeed, they complemented each other. In essence, Arnold was neither more nor less "fragmented" than most men who have several interests rather than one. If his poetic production slackened, following the mid-fifties, it is quite understandable when one considers the arduous schedules of Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools, Arnold's increasing interest in the relevance of education to the future social structure of his country, and to his increased family responsibilities.

It is perfectly true, as Madden says, that Pausanias went off to the cities of the plain to labor in the vineyards of Government schools, that Callicles listened to the stories of the divine Apollo and wrote Merope, and that Empedocles, so far as he represents the Wordsworthian impulse in Arnold, was buried. But the problem of assigning rigid categories to Arnold and then trying to fit him into them is only intensified by fitting three sides of Arnold into three of his characters.

The metaphors are true but misleading. For example, the Byronic impulse towards sexual passion seems to have been rejected by the time Arnold composed Tristram and Iseult, if not before. Although one can certainly make a case for the Byronic lover in "Meeting" and in "Farewell," "Stanzas in Memory of the Author of 'Obermann'" shows quite clearly that Arnold had rejected Byronic emotion by 1849, if indeed he had not done so earlier.

As for Callicles-Arnold and Pausanias-Arnold, they were able to function simultaneously. And what shall we call the Arnold who was to write "Dover Beach" and "Rugby Chapel"? Not a Wordsworthian poet, but certainly not a Callicles, buried in a classical past where he might be insulated from the shocks of contemporary life. The categories are useful to a point, but beyond that point one must face the fact that there is a good deal of Matthew Arnold which will not be shut up in categorical cages.

But there is something to be gained from viewing Empedocles on Etna from the standpoint of Arnold's diverse aspects. Arnold almost certainly is represented by Empedocles himself.[19] If we allow also that there is something of Arnold in Callicles and in Pausanias, then we may well consider the poem from the standpoint of a religious or spiritual decision on Arnold's part.

The primary message of God and the Bible is the good news, the gospel of the New Jerusalem. The accomplishment of the City of God depends upon the spiritual regeneration of men, and this is to be accomplished by the death of the flesh and the rebirth into the mind and the spirit. In other words, Man is purified by baptism. Empedocles states immediately preceding his plunge into the volcano that

> it hath been granted me
> Not to die wholly, not to be all enslaved.
> I feel it in this hour. The numbing cloud
> Mounts off my soul; I feel it, I breathe free
>
> (II, ll. 405-408)

In other words, his death is seen, not as a suicidal plunge into complete oblivion, but as a way "not to die wholly." A "numbing cloud" is removed from his soul. The cloud may well represent the burden of flesh; when it is removed from the soul, the individual will indeed be free.

Arnold was of course familiar with the theory of Baphometism--baptism by fire--from his reading of Carlyle. But

there was another and more obvious source: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire."[20]

If we return to Empedocles' words, "not to die wholly," the meaning of the act becomes more clear. Arnold perhaps intends Empedocles to represent the Romantic self, in much the same way that Tristram represents the Byronic sexual hero. Death in each case is followed by a purified rebirth. In the case of Empedocles, the stoical side of the character is represented by his friend Pausanias, and the aesthetic side is represented by Callicles. They can live, once the Romantic has been purged. Literally, Empedocles-Pausanias-Callicles has been baptized in fire, has been purged so that the new Pausanias-Callicles self can live. The fear of illicit sexuality had vanished, once Tristram and Iseult of Ireland had died, and there was no longer danger that <u>le moyen sensual</u> would dominate the other selves; now the Romantic seeking oblivion had also died, and with him the fear of isolation.

Once one reviews the poem from the standpoint of the religious path which Arnold followed, it becomes obvious that the purification of self is the first step in the process which would lead Arnold to work for others in an effort to achieve the reality of the New Jerusalem.

Early in 1849 Arnold had written to Clough that "there are two offices of Poetry--one to add to one's store of

thoughts and feelings--another to compose and elevate the mind by a sustained tone, numerous allusions, and a grand style."[21] With the completion of Tristram and Iseult and Empedocles on Etna, Arnold was confirmed in a new life of moderation and balance. He had written in such wise as to add to his store of thoughts and feelings; he was now ready to compose and elevate his mind.

Two letters of this period are interesting in that they show Arnold's awareness of the danger of losing his identity in the world and his desire to become involved in less personal affairs. To his sister Jane he expresses a fear that he will be unable to resist the pull of like to like:

> How strong the tendency is . . . to submit oneself gradually to the silent influence that attaches us more and more to those whose characters are like ours, and whose lives are running the same way with our own, and that detaches us from everything besides, as if we could only acquire any solidity of shape and power of acting by narrowing and narrowing our sphere, and diminishing the number of affections and interests which continually distract us while young, and hold us unfixed and without energy to mark our place in the world; which we thus succeed in marking only by making it a very confined and joyless one.[22]

There is a danger in isolating oneself from the world in general by attaching oneself to people who are in agreement with one: the danger of such involvement is that individuality will be lost. For Arnold there was no real danger: narrowing one's sphere did not suit the man who was already becoming something of an expert in education and who was seeking to come to his best at all points.

Arnold was now twenty-nine, married, and had been Inspector of Schools for almost two years. What had been at first, perhaps, a task to be borne for the sake of marriage was becoming more interesting. Typically, Arnold was not interested in education for its own sake, but for the promise it held of bettering a possible ruling class. "I think I shall get interested in the schools after a little time," he wrote to his wife. "Their effects on the children are so immense, and their future effects in civilizing the next generation of the lower classes, who, as things are going, will have most of the political power of the country in their hands, may be so important."[23]

This letter is perhaps more significant than the letter to Jane. It indicates that Arnold has not been particularly interested in his position until this time. It further indicates that he believes he will become interested in schools only because of their effect on the children who may soon become those adults who have most of the political power. Since Arnold considered moral education to be at least as important as education in the other disciplines, his linking of "civilizing" with "political power" accurately foretells the theme of Culture and Anarchy.

But it is the very fact that he could write such a letter that is most important: he tacitly states that he has found the tightrope between the world and isolation. He will not fall into the trap of associating himself only with people who

are in agreement with him, nor will he fall into the equally dangerous trap of over-involvement in the world. He will instead be involved in the betterment of his world, on his own terms, and in his own way.

The "grand style" which Arnold was to use in his prose works had already been formed by his earlier poems and by his letters. Arnold was never a lyric poet; his style even in the early poems is declamatory, and it foreshadows his prose pronouncements accurately. In such poems as "Written In Butler's Sermons" he argues with another writer. In "Written In Emerson's Essays" he argues with what he conceives to be world opinion. But in other of the earlier poems, notably Tristram and Iseult, Empedocles on Etna, and "Mycerinus," he seems to be arguing with himself. The separate characters in the two former seem less like individuals in their own right than they do separate sides of the same character--Arnold. They give the impression that he had problems within himself that needed resolution, and that he was debating them through the speeches of the characters in order to arrive at a solution. The speech of the monk in "Stanzas From the Grande Chartreuse" is, when all is said and done, merely that side of Arnold which sought isolation from the world finding expression. The side of Arnold which won is that side which could see and respond to the flashing lances in the sun.

One may argue of course that the very form of some of the early poems demands the give and take of dialogue; when

two characters speak in a drama, they must discuss their differences of opinion in order to build and sustain dramatic tension. But a comparison of the verse dramas Tristram and Iseult and Empedocles on Etna with the later "Balder Dead" and Merope reveals the difference. The latter two are concerned with different characters. When Arnold reveals himself, it is through Balder or through Polyphontes. The other characters are properly different. But in the former, Arnold seems to be in each character in turn. I believe that this is due to a resolution within Arnold; once he had reached the point where he no longer wished to isolate himself from the world, to retire to poetic solitude, he was able to speak with one voice. He no longer needed to express different and at times warring elements within himself, because those elements had been reconciled and were able to work harmoniously towards a common goal.

Perhaps significantly, both of the later verse dramas seem to have been written with an external motive in mind. Merope, Arnold said, was written in an effort to prove that a Greek tragedy could be written in English. "Balder Dead" is a treatment of the Edda with Christian overtones. Where the early poetry, dramatic or otherwise, seems to concern itself with different opinions shared by the same person in many cases, these late dramas are concerned with a critical problem (Merope) or with the dissemination of an idea ("Balder Dead"). It is just this latter concept of writing with which

one must deal in discussing Arnold's prose work and the late poems such as "Dover Beach" and more particularly "Rugby Chapel." Arnold's style is argumentative in the earlier poems, hortatory in the later ones. Once he established his own personal perfection, it would seem that he felt the need to help others establish theirs, and this is perhaps the best explanation for his virtual abandonment of poetry in favor of prose. It is easier to preach in prose than in verse.

NOTES

[1]Thomas Arnold to William Charles Lake, 1840, in Memorials of William Charles Lake, Dean of Durham 1869-1894, ed. Katherine Lake (London: Edward Arnold, 1901), p. 161. In a letter to Arthur Hugh Clough's uncle, the Rev. A. B. Clough, Thomas Arnold praised Clough highly: "I cannot resist my Desire of congratulating you most heartily on the delightful Close of your Nephew's long Career at Rugby;--where he has passed eight years without a Fault, so far as the School is concerned, where he has gone on ripening gradually in all Excellence intellectual and spiritual . . . regarded by myself, I may truly say, with an Affection and Interest hardly less than I should feel for my own Son." The letter is dated October 19, 1837, and is found in The Letters of Matthew Arnold to Arthur Hugh Clough, ed. Howard Foster Lowry (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1932), p. 13, hereinafter referred to as M.A. to A. H. C.

[2]Patrick J. McCarthy, Matthew Arnold and the Three Classes (New York and London: Cambridge University Press, 1964), p. 28. Charlotte Bronte considered Arnold's manner displeasing from "its seeming foppery." Quoted in M.A. to A.H.C., p. 26.

[3]Norman Wymer, Doctor Arnold of Rugby (London: Robert Hale, Ltd., 1953), pp. 24-25, believes Matthew Arnold's early bumptiousness to have been foreshadowed by that of his father.

[4]Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, The Life and Correspondence of Thomas Arnold, D. D. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons,

1889), II, 80. The letter is dated March 15, 1837. Hereinafter referred to as Stanley, Life.

[5]David J. DeLaura, "Arnold and Carlyle," PMLA LXXIX (March 1964), 104-129, cites Kathleen Tillotson "Matthew Arnold and Carlyle" (Warton Lecture on English Poetry), Proc. British Acad., XLII (1956), 133-153, and Fraser Neiman, "The Zeitgeist of Matthew Arnold," PMLA, LXXII (December 1957), 977-996. Both indicate the extent of Carlyle's influence upon Arnold during the forties.

[6]A. Dwight Culler, Imaginative Reason: The Poetry of Matthew Arnold (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1966), p. 154.

[7]Matthew Arnold, "Bishop Butler and the Zeitgeist," Works, IX, 306. Cited in Poems, ed. Allott, p. 51, headnote.

[8]Howard Foster Lowry, Introduction to M.A. to A.H.C., p. 36. "The real truth is that his efforts in the two fields [poetry and prose] are inseparable, and the reader who knows only one body of his work can hardly say he knows even that. Voices reverberate back and forth between the verse and the essays; the questions raised in one are answered in the other. It is a fair suggestion, in fact, to hold that his poetry and his criticism were never really separate at all."

[9]Lionel Trilling, Matthew Arnold (New York: Columbia University Press, 1949), p. 109.

[10]cf. John Stuart Mill, On Liberty (London, 1859). In the first chapter Mill states briefly his principle that Man

is sovereign over his own body and mind except when his conduct concerns others. Arnold's statement that Man's welfare, provided justice is not infringed, should be his primary concern is similar, and antedates Mill's work by almost ten years.

[11] M.A. to A.H.C., p. 65.

[12] "Thyrsis" contains Arnold's criticism of Clough for over-involvement in the world. See J. Hillis Miller, The Disappearance of God (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963), pp. 232-268, regarding Arnold's sense of isolation from God.

[13] Culler, Imaginative Reason, pp. 130-131. Culler considers Arnold's separation from Obermann as the most important spiritual act of his entire life. Marguerite "represented the same kind of spiritual morbidity as did Obermann . . . . Arnold's discovery of his true nature is also reflected in the Switzerland poems. There he discovers that he is not the passionate Byronic lover which his relation with Marguerite implies but is essentially a Child of the Second Birth . . . " Culler's interpretation of the Second Birth imputes to Arnold an asexual, passionless nature which seems totally at variance with Arnold's later writing and his letters.

[14] See Allott, headnote to Tristram and Iseult, Poems, p. 194. Allott quotes from Arnold's letter to Herbert Hill, November 5, 1852, printed by R. E. C. Houghton, Times Literary Supplement, May 19, 1932. He believes the year was 1849.

[15]Culler, Imaginative Reason, p. 140, states that the poem dramatizes "what Arnold did not do rather than what he did . . . . he did not languish for Marguerite at all. Instead, he put all that he had thought and felt about her into Tristram and allowed him to die for love, while he recovered himself, wrote his poems, and set to work as Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools." for the dating of the poem and its possible autobiographical implications, see Allott's headnote, Poems, pp. 195-196.

[16]Super, VI, 47.

[17]William A. Madden, Matthew Arnold: A Study of the Aesthetic Temperament in Victorian England (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1967), p. 101.

[18]Unpublished Letters of Matthew Arnold, ed. Arnold Whitridge (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1923), p. 18. Whitridge tentatively dates the letter 1853. Hereinafter referred to as Unpublished Letters.

[19]Allott, Poems, p. 147, quotes J. C. Shairp's letter to A. H. Clough, June 30, 1849: "He [Arnold] was working at an 'Empedocles'--which seemed to be not much about the man who leapt into the crater--but his name and outward circumstances are used for the drapery of his own thoughts. I wish Matt would give up that old greek form . . . " Allott quotes from Correspondence of Arthur Hugh Clough, I, 270.

[20]Matthew 3:11. See also Luke 3:16, "Rugby Chapel," ll. 145-161.

[21]*M.A. to A.H.C.*, p. 100. Lowry dates the letter at about March 1, 1849.

[22]To Mrs. Forster, January 25, 1851, in *The Letters of Matthew Arnold*, coll. and arr. George W. E. Russell (London and New York: Macmillan, 1895), I, 14. Hereinafter referred to as *Letters*.

[23]To Mrs. Matthew Arnold, October 15, 1851. *Letters*, I, 17.

III

THE UNUM NECESSARIUM

In 1849 Arnold had written to Clough, "These are damned times--everything is against one--the height to which knowledge is come, the spread of luxury, our physical enervation, the absence of great natures, the unavoidable contact with small ones, newspapers, cities, light profligate friends, moral desperadoes like Carlyle, our own selves, and the sickening consciousness of our difficulties: but for God's sake let us neither be fanatics nor yet chalf [sic] blown by the wind . . . "[1] If the times were "damned" ones, however, they offered all the more opportunity to the individual concerned with improving them. Although many still labored in the vineyards of religion, Arnold realized that religious sentiment alone was not enough to improve the age. "This sentiment now, I think, is best," but it is to be "considered in conjunction with the grandeur of the world, love of kindred, love, gratitude etc. etc."[2] Arnold was convinced that this combination might best be achieved through education.

But the position of Inspector of Schools was not altogether a happy one. Arnold found the work tedious, ill-paid, and affording little opportunity for the sort of travel he liked. It had been the means of his getting permission to marry, and he certainly did not regret that, but until more could be done with the job than he had been able to do in the first two years, he would not be able to regard it as more than a means of earning a living.[3] This was the least desirable of all possible contacts with the world, because it implied taking the world on its terms rather than on his own. The wavering between isolation and involvement still seems to have been present.

In "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse" Arnold shows conflicting emotions. On the one hand he comes to seek refuge from a hostile world which derides both the Faith of the monks and Arnold's tears, while on the other he is alert to the excitement of the world, "to life, to cities, and to war." But there is really no ambivalence. The poem follows Arnold's return from Switzerland and implies his rejection of that world which is dead.[4] The period of chaos between this world and the world "powerless to be born" is frightening to Arnold; it is a testament to his moral courage that he became involved in the struggle to create order in the midst of this period.

"Dover Beach," which Allott dates tentatively June, 1851, expresses the theme of Arnold's letter to Clough negatively; the love between two people suggests a possible haven from a

world in which ignorant armies clash by night. If "Dover Beach" was indeed written before "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse," then the latter poem shows a distinct advance on Arnold's part. He has come from the illusory safety of a symbiotic love, a world of two, into the very real danger of the world of chaos, the "damned times" he mentions to Clough. The despair of the last lines of "Dover Beach" offers only a solution which is limited to the lovers: their love creates a sort of wall which may prevent them from becoming members of the ignorant armies. The world of the armies is a terrible one, in which people who are unaware of its evil are joyless, loveless, uncertain, unquiet, and unable to find succor for pain. But this is really no solution; it is merely an escape, an isolation of the lovers from the rest of the world.

This is the sort of haven the monks have found. They are at peace, clinging to a faith which is dead, insulated from the shocks of the world by their remoteness. But Arnold, although he comes to weep by their side, is not really willing to become a member of that community. Passivity is not for him; even while he lingers by the side of the monks, he sees the "pennon, and plume, and flashing lance" and is drawn away from the "desert" in which the monks reside. The trend in Arnold, then, is from isolation to involvement, but his course is hesitant. He seems on the one hand repelled by the noisy strife of the workaday work, and on the other faced with the need to strive in his own turn. It is safe to assume that necessity, as well as hope, overcame Arnold's reluctance.

Apart from any philosophical considerations, there was the necessity for earning a living and supporting a wife.

Arnold had apparently considered the possiblity of seeking refuge in Nature and rejected it. Nature in "Dover Beach" is at best a lovely illusion; in the earlier poems, "In Harmony With Nature" and "The Youth of Man," he is always aware that the beauty of Nature is countered by its amorality and cruelty. In "The Youth of Nature" he observes (ll. 59-63) that Nature is greater than the artist and outlives him. In "The Youth of Man" he urges the youth to "rally the good in the depths of thyself." This development from passive acceptance of the indifference of Nature to the positive act of asserting a moral code is in keeping with Arnold's final rejection of isolation, his willingness to live in the world, and finally his positive action in rallying the good in others, as well as in himself.

In his letters to Clough, Arnold had always demonstrated his awareness of the problems of poetry; this awareness is somewhat amplified about this time. "Modern poetry can only subsist by its <u>contents</u>; by becoming a complete magister vitae as the poetry of the ancients did; by including, as theirs did, religion with poetry, instead of existing as poetry only, and leaving religious wants to be supplied by the Christian religion, as a power existing independent of the poetical power. But the language, style and general proceedings of a poetry which has such an immense task to

perform, must be very plain direct and severe: and it must not lose itself in parts and episodes and ornamental work, but must press forwards to the whole."[5] The importance of the letter, coming as it does after "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse," cannot be overestimated.

In the first place, Arnold's statement is general, rather than specific. He is concerned with poetry and letters as a whole, rather than with the production of his friend or himself. He is attempting to set a critical standard for his own time, one which will serve as a guideline for his own work and for his own criticism. To a great extent, his later adverse criticism of the Romantics, and especially of Keats and Shelley, stems from his belief that they failed to subordinate style to content. His fiat that "modern poetry can only subsist by its <u>contents</u>" is made necessary by his subsequent statement that poetry must become a "complete magister vitae." Poetry must serve as a teacher, and if the poetry of past ages has not done so, it must be taken to task for its failure. Modern poetry must not make the same mistake; it must be useful to the extent that it includes morality, the rallying of the good in oneself and in others. Obviously, if poetry is to be moral, it will first of all rally the good in the poet; since few if any poets write wholely for their own edification, it will then rally the good in others by example and by precept. Finally, the style must be "plain direct and severe," so that the reader cannot become caught up in "parts

and episodes and ornamental work," and so miss the real meaning of the poem.

The pennon and plume and flashing lance drew Arnold from isolation and challenged him to enter the lists of the world. And with what better weapons could he enter those lists than with a keen awareness of literary excellence and moral values? In a sense, Arnold's later work in literary, social, and religious criticism stems from this letter: once poetry is conceived of as a teacher, then the kind of poetry that is written becomes all-important. It must satisfy literary standards by being plain and unpretentious, it must satisfy social standards by attempting to win readers to the side of goodness, and it must satisfy religious standards by stating the spirit of religion. It is significant that Arnold's later religious writings without exception treat religion and scripture in terms of content or spirit, and not in terms of form or style.[6]

The practicality and wisdom of Arnold's synthesis of literary, social, and religious criticism has been challenged, both in his century and in our own. Sir Joshua Fitch suggested that he was too lenient in his inspection of schools: "he valued the elementary schools rather as centres of civilization and refining influence than as places for enabling the maximum number of children to spell and write and to do a given number of sums without a mistake."[7] T. S. Eliot was more condemnatory: "The total effect of Arnold's philosophy

is to set up Culture in the place of Religion, and to leave Religion to be laid waste by the anarchy of feeling. And Culture is a term which each man not only may interpret as he pleases, but must indeed interpret as he can." As Kenneth Allott suggests, "For a generation now we have used Mr. Eliot to correct Matthew Arnold. It is useful to remember that the process can run in reverse."[8] It is perhaps more to the point to remember that Arnold does not substitute Culture for Religion, as Eliot states, but that he intends them to exist side by each in the general framework of Civilization.[9]

Arnold's sense of self and of the need to take an active part in the affairs of the world is paralleled by the quest of Sohrab. Sohrab seeks Rustum in battle to prove himself, to make sure that his father hears of his deed. He leaves the relative safety and isolation of Ader-baijan to enter the fray (where ignorant armies clash), and to seek his father in a manner which his father will approve.[10] When "Sohrab and Rustum" is considered in conjunction with "Dover Beach" and "Rugby Chapel," it seems likely that Arnold has rejected the struggle in the first poem, "Dover Beach," has felt and feared the need to join it in the second, and has overcome his fear of joining it in the last.

Perhaps Arnold realized that there was more to be dreaded in the state of isolation, in the introspection which solitude invites, than in involvement. "I for my part think that what [John Philpot] Curran said of the constitution of

the state holds true to individual moral constitutions: it does not do to lay bare their foundations too constantly," he wrote to Clough.[11] The statement seems to indicate Arnold's essential conservatism, his distaste for violent change. More than that, he makes a parallel between the moral constitution of the individual and the constitution of the state. This may possibly indicate Arnold's conviction that the state is, or should be, grounded upon a constitution which is the collective best of individual constitutions: if these be further described as moral foundations, then the moral quality of the state is assured.

That Arnold had faith in some sort of future for civilization, there can be little doubt. Despite his early pessimism, he actively engaged in efforts to create order out of chaos, to reconcile opposites, to save others with himself. This is not to say that he believed that all others might be saved, in the manner of a modern sociologist. Arnold's plan for the amelioration of dissention, suffering, and pain paralleled Christian doctrine. Some would be saved, some would not. The earth would be purified so that it might contain a chosen number of righteous individuals, all working in harmony, and all concerned with maintaining that harmony. These Arnold referred to as early as 1849. They are the "Children of the Second Birth."[12]

"Children of the Second Birth" is Arnold's phrase for those who will enter into the kingdom of heaven: "Except

a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."[13] The Second Birth, in this sense, refers to the ritual of baptism, the acceptance of God and of the divinity of Christ. The physical birth is followed by a spiritual birth. But this spiritual second birth need not incorporate literal baptism. The entire text of St. Paul and Protestantism is based upon Arnold's awareness that it is the spirit of the Bible which is important: the letter is to be taken figuratively, not literally.

There is a concurrent meaning. Following the end of the world, John predicts a "new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."[14] Those who will inherit the new earth are the Servants of God: "And I saw another angel descending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel."[15] These Servants of God are aided by the martyrs of Christianity, who lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were

finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."[16]

Following this period is "the second death," which has no power over those who took part in the first resurrection. The second resurrection, for "the rest of the dead," presents all others for judgement. Those who are written in the book of life will join the Servants of God and the Christian martyrs in the New Jerusalem, the holy city of God coming down out of heaven.[17]

It would be as futile to argue that Arnold took John's prophecy literally as it would be to argue that he was ignorant of it. There can be no doubt that he used Scripture as a starting point for the two poems which refer specifically to the new heaven and the new earth, and to the Servants of God and the Children of the Second Birth. They are "Balder Dead" and "Rugby Chapel," and they indicate the extent to which Arnold adapted Biblical prophecy to his own purposes.

In "Balder Dead," Arnold uses the concept of a new heaven and a new earth almost literally. When Hoder asks Balder to explain the "new-recovered seats, the happier day," Balder replies,

> Far to the south, beyond the blue, there spreads
> Another Heaven, the boundless--no one yet
> Hath reached it; there hereafter shall arise

The second Asgard, with another name.
Thither, when o'er this present earth and Heavens
The tempest of the latter days hath swept,
And they from sight have disappeared, and sunk,
Shall a small remnant of the God repair;
Hoder and I shall join them from the grave. (11.517-26)

As Allott notes, the prophecy of a "second Asgard" is based on the Prose Edda, but he fails to consider the Christian sources.[18] Undoubtedly Arnold was familiar with both and had remarked their similarity. Arnold's correlation of Norse mythology and Christian scripture has a worthy precedent in Milton's treatment of classical mythology and scripture in Paradise Lost.[19]

The small remnant recalls the phrase in Romans, 11:5: "at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." This remnant may include the Children of the Second Birth, those who are saved by grace, rather than by works. The Servants of God are those who have achieved salvation through their works in saving themselves and others. Hoder and Balder are among the number of those saved through grace. When Culler takes the Children of the Second Birth to be "passionless," he fails to consider the visions of Balder and of John, in which all former delights are apparently to be restored, and in which the only notable difference between this new life and the former one is the substitution of peace for war. There is nothing in Arnold's

treatment of the Edda that conflicts with Christian doctrine. John's New Jerusalem is a city purified of unbelievers and of sinful men, but John nowhere states that its inhabitants will be as angels.[20]

The idea of harmony, as opposed to the chaotic violence implicit in the last two lines of "Dover Beach," appealed to Arnold. He is primarily a "balanced" poet. Man's powers are to be harmonized, "like sister-islands"; Hebraism is to be balanced with Hellenism; Man's moral quality balances the amorality of Nature and enables him to survive; excess or lack of a characteristic is deplored--the list is infinite. To Arnold, balance was the way in which Man might come to harmonious terms with himself. But there was still more to be done: to say that one must have inner harmony in order to be in harmony with others is to state a strategic truth; to implement this strategy, one must also have a tactical method.

In "Rugby Chapel" Arnold sets forth his tactical plan for mankind, the plan which he would later elaborate upon in his prose writings. The actual date of composition assumes a great deal of importance, inasmuch as the earlier dating of 1857 indicates that Arnold had already begun to consider the means by which Man might be saved. The later date, 1867, postpones Arnold's development by ten years and fails to explain both the real meaning of his literary criticism and his interest in public education.[21]

The orign of the poem was Arnold's reaction to a letter written by his father which had been found by his mother and forwarded to Matthew Arnold in 1855 (Letters, I, 42). The poem is dated November, 1857, but ten years later Arnold commented that it had been inspired by Fitzjames Stephen's January, 1858 review of Tom Brown's School Days. The review appraised Doctor Arnold's influence over his Rugby scholars in disparaging terms. While Tinker and Lowry assume that the poem "could hardly have been completed for many years," there is no real basis for this statement. Nothing in the poem indicates any view of the relationship between Arnold and his father which was not already present in 1857. On the contrary, we have Arnold's letter to his mother, cited above, which recalls some of his father's characteristics in similar words to those of the poem. It seems reasonable to assume that the letter of his father, his visit to Rugby in the autumn of 1857, and Stephen's article combined to spur him to write the poem some time between 1857 and 1860. Doubtless he revised the poem, perhaps several times, before publication. But the fact remains that, unless we have proof to the contrary, Arnold's statement must stand.

At the beginning of "Rugby Chapel," Arnold sets up the basic contrast between light and dark, life and death:

> There thou dost lie, in the gloom
> Of the autumn evening. But ah!
> That word, gloom, to my mind

Brings thee back, in the light

Of thy radiant vigour, again (ll. 14-18)

As Wendell Stacy Johnson notes, "it might seem odd that gloom should bring brightness to mind, but this relating of opposites recurs when the father is remembered for his 'ray' of 'bright cheerfulness' in 'bygone autumns.' He is recalled in his own brightness but in a dark and dying season."[22] The relating of opposites is in keeping with Arnold's sense of balance and fitness; once opposites have been related, dissension vanishes and is replaced by harmony.

There is a curious parallel beyween the metaphorical representation of Doctor Arnold and Carlyle's definition of a hero: "We cannot look however imperfectly, upon a great man without gaining something by him. He is the living light-fountain, which it is good and pleasant to be near. The light which enlightens, which has enlightened the darkness of the world; and this not as a kindled lamp only, but rather as a natural luminary shining by the gift of Heaven; a flowing light-fountain, as I say, of native original insight, of manhood and heroic nobleness;--in whose radiance all souls feel that it is well with them."[23] Arnold's metaphors of light and darkness also represent life and death. The chapel walls are "cold, solemn, unlighted, austere," in contrast to the "radiant vigour" with which Doctor Arnold appears to his son. The unlighted chapel walls contain the father's tomb; the "radiant vigour" evokes at one and the same time light

and energy. The image is again used to indicate the continuation of the light and the vitality after death:

> Yes, in some far-shining sphere,
> Conscious or not of the past,
> Still thou performest the word
> Of the Spirit in whom thou dost live--
> Prompt, unwearied, as here! (ll. 44-48)

Arnold's use of the light image to represent Doctor Arnold owes as much, perhaps, to Thomas Carlyle as it does to the Biblical use of light to represent God and goodness.

Although Tinker and Lowry believe that "Arnold's agnosticism was much less assured than it had been in 1852," there is no positive evidence that this is so. Arnold mentions "servants of God" and "a God" who marshalled the host of mankind, and he urges the fainting, dispirited race "on, to the City of God," but he does not once state that he himself believes in that God. He does indicate that the City of God is a worthy goal to give meaning to an otherwise meaningless existence. The City of God refers to the New Jerusalem, as is evident from the simile, "Ye, like angels appear," and from the similar vision of Balder, in "Balder Dead."[24] The holy city is the pinnacle of Man's aspirations on the "new earth," but it is not Heaven. It has "come down from God out of heaven," according to John. Perhaps it has risen from the best ideals of mankind, according to Matthew Arnold.

In the poem, Doctor Arnold is equated with "the noble and great who are gone . . . . Servants of God!--or sons." These shall "like angels appear" to recall the stragglers, refresh the outworn, praise, re-inspire the brave." The greatest of the noble and great is of course Christ, since he has furnished the greatest example and has inspired the greatest number. The focus of the poem is not, therefore, upon the unapproachable light of God, but upon the goal which is approachable, the new earth and the holy city of the New Jerusalem. And this is the theme of Arnold's later work in religious criticism, the reason behind his use of Christianity as a focal point. He is aiming at a new social order, a re-birth of Man through a marriage of culture and conduct; the framework will be the Christian ethos, but this admits of neither the materialistic Christianity of Victorian England nor the literal Christianity of the Fundamentalists.[25] Neither, perhaps, does it admit of the Christianity of his father. The chief difference between the position of Doctor Arnold and that of his son is that Doctor Arnold believed in the divinity of Christ and in the existence of God. Matthew Arnold did not share this belief.[26] To Doctor Arnold, Christianity was an end which would be achieved through the enlightenment of Man; to his son, Christianity was a means by which Man could achieve his greatest development.

"Rugby Chapel" is perhaps the most prophetic of Matthew Arnold's poems. It marks the real beginning of his work in

the world. It is the prelude to his concern with humanity and social problems, just as it is also the end of his speculation concerning his place and that of his father in that world.[27] While the unum necessarium had been a basic principle with Arnold as early as the composition of "Written in Butler's Sermons" (c. 1844), the need to apply this principle, not only to his own life but to those of others, was not fully apparent to him until he had written "Rugby Chapel." Once the need had been recognized, he was ready to begin his work. A close analysis of the poem indicates the plan he has chosen.

The first fifty-seven lines eulogize his father. Doctor Arnold is equated with light, "the light of thy radiant vigour," and he is represented as one who sought to perform "the world of the Spirit" through works as well as faith. Arnold may have remembered John 8:12, "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life," and 1 Timothy 6:15-16, "The blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; who no man hath seen, nor can see; To whom be honour and power everlasting." This is not to say that Arnold equated his father with the traditional Christian God or with Christ: he was merely one who had the "light of life," the essence of Godliness.

Most men "eddy about" achieving nothing. They are concerned only with themselves, "are raised/Aloft, are hurled in the dust." They strive blindly and achieve nothing. No one asks "who or what they have been," and they are soon forgotten. These are men who have no purpose in life worth having, whose world was too much with them, late and soon. But there are some men who have a goal, a purpose in life beyond the material, and these men have chosen a path of advance towards that goal. The men with a purpose are the real Children of the Second Birth, the ones who have an aim given them by their moral awareness, their spiritual rebirth.

But not all of these men are true Children of the Second Birth: the journey is both long and steep, and friends are lost in the storm. Perhaps Arnold was thinking of Clough at this point; certainly Clough was a friend who had set forth at Arnold's side and whose talents, in Arnold's opinion, had been dissipated in the world.[28] True Children of the Second Birth do not fail and are not dissipated by the world. As Culler notes, Arnold considered Clough to be "the only living one almost that I know of 'The children of the second birth/ Whom the world could not tame--'"[29] Arnold, therefore, is following the definition of the Children of the Second Birth given in Revelation 7:2-4. Although Arnold changed his mind about Clough in "Thyrsis," the world <u>did</u> tame him, and for a time he lost his way.

What though the music of thy rustic flute
Kept not for long its happy country tone;
Lost it too soon, and learnt a stormy note
Of men contention-tossed, of men who groan,
Which tasked thy pipe too sore, and tired thy throat
It failed, and thou wast mute!
Yet hadst thou alway visions of our light,
And long with men of care thou couldst not stay,
And soon thy foot resumed its wandering way,
Left human haunt, and on alone till night. (ll. 221-230)

Happily, Clough seems to have been reconsidered and finally accepted, probably because he always had "visions of our light."

Culler believes the Children of the Second Birth are "simply the Children of the Forest reborn after their experience on the burning plain." The Servants of God, on the other hand, "are Old Testament figures and so are distinctly Hebraic. Unlike the Children, they are not simply themselves reborn but are related to something outside of themselves, namely God."[30] This statement seems to be at variance with the letter and the spirit of Arnold's source. Literally, the Servants of God are those who are "sealed," marked with a seal on their foreheads. They are the one hundred and forty-four thousand taken from the twelve tribes of Israel. But, Arnold does not use the term literally, because he includes Thomas Arnold among the Servants of God. By extension,

then, a Servant of God is figuratively one who does God's work upon earth, saving not only himself but others; he is not necessarily one of the one hundred and forty-four thousand (unless he also happens to be Jewish).

The Children of the Second Birth are those who have been "born of water and the Spirit." They have been received into Israel through baptism; since they were not born of the Chosen People, they must be "reborn" spiritually. This is essentially the meaning of St. John, and it is important to bear in mind that the early Christians considered themselves Jews who had recognized the Messiah and who confirmed this recognition by being baptized. Non-Jews who were baptized were thus accepted into Israel. Again, Arnold does not use this definition literally. The Children of the Second Birth need not be physically baptized; they must only have subordinated the world of the flesh to the world of the spirit. This both Arnold and Clough had done. The experience which compelled it has related them to God. Culler's statement that the Servants of God "could be considered simply the Children of the Second Birth at a slightly later stage of their development, when they have not merely emerged from repression but have actually strengthened the ego to the point where they are now willing to repress others" is on the whole figuratively accurate, although it is questionable whether Arnold would have agreed with this use of the verb "repress." His father, a Servant or Son of God, "sternly repressest the

bad," but not all "others" are "bad." I believe that Culler is mistaken in considering Arnold's poem in psychological terms. This can be useful, of course, but to concentrate upon the psychological aspect of the Servants exclusively is to miss their positive qualities.

The Children of the Second Birth bring only themselves. They have lost sight of those who they should have helped; their ambition, however worthy, is selfish. But some of the Children have seen the example set by the Servants; although the men Arnold sees in the present are "soulless and poor" and "Bluster or Cringe, and make life/Hideous, and arid, and vile," other men who lived in the past were "fervent, heroic and good." It is to these Arnold looks for example. They first perfected themselves and then turned to help others. That mankind has not fainted and fallen, that the race of men has not destroyed itself, is due to the "cheerful, and helpful, and firm" Servants who, because of these attributes, were chosen "many to save." And of course the Servants "repress" the bad.

"These are damned times," Arnold had told Clough, but Carlyle had stated that the hero was the savior of his epoch. Arnold seems to echo this belief in ll. 188-208, when he writes that the Servants of God appear to establish order and encourage the faint, when the time shows a need for them. Once the line of march has been strengthened and filled, the Children can go "on, to the City of God."[31]

The City of God is essentially the New Jerusalem; Arnold uses the term figuratively, of course, but he means precisely what he says in "Balder Dead" when he mentions "a new Heaven and a new earth." Through the efforts of the Servants, the great men who rescue mankind in "damned" times, it may be possible to enlighten men, to give them other moral creeds than the narrow and bigoted ones founded upon a misconception of Scripture: when this is done, the "new Heaven" will have brought forth "a new Earth." And if some of the Children become Servants, as Culler suggests they may do, then the path to the goal will be made easier. That Arnold used the theme of a new heaven and a new earth figuratively is beyond doubt. Certainly he was aware of the metaphoric quality of Scripture, as is apparent from the theme of St. Paul and Protestantism; just as certainly, he was unalterably opposed to the literal interpretation of Scripture which characterized the Fundamentalist creeds. A new earth there would be, in the sense that men might be able to work together and insure peaceful co-existence by means of a balance of moral strength and culture. But this is only the material goal. The spiritual goal is faith in the ability of man to perfect himself.

There is perhaps some significance in the fact that Arnold used his father as an example of the Servants of God who appear at crucial moments in history to rescue mankind. As Erich Fromm says, "the development of the human race as far as we have any knowledge of it can be characterized as

the emergence of man from nature, from mother, from the bonds of blood and soil."[33] Fromm believes that matriarchal religion preceded patriarchal religion, in which God is conceived of as a father. But patriarchal religion, the anthropomorphic concept of God which both Arnolds rejected, is not the end of belief, as Fromm sees it. As patriarchal religion develops, "God ceases to be a person, a man, a father; he becomes the symbol of the principle of unity behind the manifoldness of phenomena, of the vision of the flower which will grow from the spiritual seed within man . . . . Following the maturing idea of monotheism in its further consequences can lead only to one conclusion: not to mention God's name at all, not to speak about God. Then God becomes what he potentially is in monotheistic theology, the nameless One . . . God becomes truth, love, justice. God is I, inasmuch as I am human."[34]

Fromm's description of religious development seems in accord with the religious development of Matthew Arnold. Whatever Arnold's conception of his father may have been before the writing of "Rugby Chapel," the poem indicates that Doctor Arnold is both a Servant of God and "radiant vigour." He serves God and, in a sense, is God, "the nameless One." But if this is so, if One is God and God is One, then any "one" can be God, insofar as he represents truth, love, and justice. The equating of Doctor Arnold with God then becomes important, in that Matthew Arnold and all men could be so equated. "The not ourselves which makes for righteousness"

is, paradoxically, also that in ourselves which can respond to the "not ourselves," and which generates "that stream of tendency by which all things seek to fulfil the law of their being." Arnold could then consider himself in communion with God, insofar as he was God, that is to say, insofar as he served truth, love, and justice and worked toward righteousness.

In "The Lord's Messengers," written about the same time as "Rugby Chapel," the theme of men of genius appointed by God is treated somewhat more pessimistically:

Some in the tumult are lost;
  Baffled, bewildered, they stray.
    Some, as prisoners, draw breath.
Some, unconquered, are crossed
  (Not yet half through the day)
    By a pitiless arrow of Death.

Hardly, hardly shall one
  Come, with countenance bright,
    At the close of day, from the plain;
His Master's errand well done,
  Safe through the smoke of the fight,
    Back to his Master again. (ll. 13-24)

Perhaps Arnold was considering his father's untimely death; it is likely too that he was comparing his father's accomplishments with his own. Allott dates the poem 1857-60, when

Arnold was at least thirty-five. If his father had died at forty-seven, he himself might not have much more time in which to become one of the Servants.[35] The goal was clear, he had charted his course, and there was nothing left to do but set foot on the path to the goal.

Once one is able to see Arnold's early work as a continuum, it is possible to anticipate the later work. Arnold's plan to create a new world by means of the moral awareness of many individuals working in harmony, expressed in St. Paul and Protestantism, Literature and Dogma, and God and the Bible, had already been foreshadowed in the earlier poems and critical works. The awareness of the need to unify the moral force of the Church with the legal force of the State had been stated in "Alaric at Rome," in "Cromwell," and in "Mycerinus." The need for individual perfection at all levels of development had been dealt with in "Mycerinus," "Stagyrius," "The Sick King in Bokhara," Empedocles on Etna, and Tristram and Iseult. The need to be involved with others and to draw them into the search for universal perfection had been foreshadowed in "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse" and "Dover Beach," and stated in "Rugby Chapel." Now the time had come to implement the final stage of the plan, and this was to be done only with the cooperation of others. But many of these "others" would not be receptive to poetry. It is perhaps for this reason that Arnold turned more and more to prose following the composition of "Rugby Chapel."

In dealing with the early poetry, it is possible to formulate some generalizations. By and large, it is concerned with individual perfection, with the consciousness of the individual in conflict with his environment. It reflects the struggle of the individual to bring all his parts into harmony, perfecting them separately so that they will result in a perfected whole. For the most part, it seems to take the form of arguments with self, with others, or with a nameless and single other, perhaps Doctor Arnold or God. It is easy to see that, although Arnold is not regarded as a dramatic poet, he has written a large proportion of drama in relation to his other work. "Mycerinus," Empedocles, Tristram and Iseult, and "Balder Dead" come immediately to mind. But in addition to these are the dramatic fragments, such as "Fragment of an Antigone" and "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse." The dramatic works seem to point to Arnold's need to discuss the idea of perfection and harmony with himself and others. They do not reflect the clear statement of a man who is already perfected and who is ready to help others perfect themselves.

But this situation no longer obtains following the poem addressed to Arnold's father, "Rugby Chapel." The call to spiritual arms is clear and unequivocable, and it is the call of a man who is as aware of his mission and of his strength as he is of his weaknesses. In this poem, he is aware of his shortcomings, but he is no longer dominated by them. He

is able to draw strength from the examples of the great and good men who have gone before, his father among them. When one considers Arnold's later work with St. Paul, it is easy to see that Paul was an inspiration, not only as an admirable individual, but as a perfected individual helping others to achieve spiritual perfection. It is in this dual sense that "Rugby Chapel" should be considered: it is a poem which expresses not only the need to save others with oneself, but also a desire eventually to become one of the great and good who will serve as inspiration even after death.

NOTES

[1]M.A. to A.H.C., September 23, 1849, p. 111.

[2]Ibid., p. 115. See note 25.

[3]Ibid., shortly after December 19, 1851, p. 118. "Hard dull work low salary, stationaryness, and London to be stationary in under such circumstances, do not please me. However I myself would gladly have married under any circumstances, and so, I doubt not, you feel." Arnold's love of the outdoors was in direct proportion to his dislike for cities. It will be remembered that Empedocles fled from the cities of the plain (reminiscent of Sodom and Gommorah), and that Arnold ranked cities with newspapers and "light profligate friends" as things which were "against" him. See note 1.

[4]For an approximate dating of the composition of the poem, see Allott's headnote, Poems, p. 285. Allott believes the date of composition to have been 1852.

[5]M.A. to A.H.C., p. 124. The letter is dated October 28, 1852.

[6]Lowry notes that Arnold's "conviction of poetry's becoming a magister vitae, and including religion within it, is a striking early statement of his continued feeling that literature, in the religious transitions of the age, would increasingly serve mankind." He cites Arnold's statement in "The Study of Poetry" that "the strongest part of our religion to-day is its unconscious poetry." M.A. to A.H.C., p. 125, n. The full passage is cited in Neiman, p. 239, in

a slightly different version. Neiman uses the original text of "Introduction to Poetry," The Hundred Greatest Men (London, 1880), vol. I.

[7]Sir Joshua Fitch, Thomas and Matthew Arnold and their Influence on English Education (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1897), p. 171.

[8]T. S. Eliot, Selected Essays (London: Faber and Faber, 1932), p. 436. William Robbins cites this passage and Kenneth Allott's rebuttal in The Ethical Idealism of Matthew Arnold (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), p. 170 and n.

[9]A similar misunderstanding of Arnold's aim is apparent in Philip Reiff's statement that "among the educated, Protestantism . . . . became erudite and, therefore, a religion of culture. From a religion of culture, it was destined to become a religious psychology. After Matthew Arnold, and David Friedrich Strauss, at the end of churchly Protestantism, there came C. G. Jung, completing our permutatory line of rationalist Protestants; it broke up into small, charismatically led, mental health cults engaged in the testing of spiritual tonics for failing nerves." The Triumph of the Therapeutic (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), p. 128. Reiff apparently has overlooked Arnold's claim that religion is concerned with conduct, and that conduct is "three-fourths of life." See Literature and Dogma, Super, VI, 175.

[10]Wendell Stacy Johnson has discussed the filial element in the poem in The Voices of Matthew Arnold (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), pp. 127-128.

[11]M. A. to A. H. C., May 1, 1853, p. 135. Lowry cites Curran's discussion of the British constitution at the trial of Archibald Rowan: "'There are certain fundamental principles which nothing but necessity should expose to a public examination; they are pillars, the depth of whose foundation you cannot explore without endangering their strength.'"

[12]Ibid., September 23, 1849, pp. 109-110. A. Dwight Culler, Imaginative Reason, pp. 130-131, notes that the phrase comes from the third chapter of the Gospel of St. John, and suggests that Thomas à Kempis Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus, Obermann, Clough, Arnold's sister Jane, and Arnold himself were, in Arnold's view, Children of the Second Birth.

[13]John 3:5-7.

[14]Revelation 21:1.

[15]Revelation 7:2-4.

[16]Revelation 20:4-6.

[17]Revelation 21:1.

[18]Poems, Allott's note, p. 387.

[19]For example, see Milton's simile comparing Adam and Eve to Jupiter and Juno, Paradise Lost, IV, ll. 492-505.

[20]Popular misconceptions about the Bible are infinite. One is that the righteous dead will ascend to Heaven and become angels. A careful reading of Revelation demonstrates

the utter impossibility of this. No man can ever achieve the rank of angel.

[21]For a full discussion of the dating of "Rugby Chapel," see Tinker and Lowry, Commentary, p. 240, and Allott's note, Poems, p. 444.

[22]"'Rugby Chapel': Arnold as a Filial Poet," The University Review, XXXIV (Winter 1967), 107-113.

[23]Thomas Carlyle, Heroes and Hero Worship (London, Toronto, New York: Oxford University Press, 1904), pp. 1-2.

[24]Hebrews 12:18-22: "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest . . . But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels." See also Revelation 21:1-2.

[25]Christianity was perhaps more of a convenience than a doctrine for Arnold. In Literature and Dogma he defines God as "the not ourselves which makes for righteousness" (Super, VI, 196) and in St. Paul and Protestantism as "that stream of tendency by which all things seek to fulfil the law of their being" (Super, VI, 10). In God and the Bible he states that "The personages of the Christian Heaven and their conversations are no more matter of fact than the personages of the Greek Olympus and their conversations" (Works, VIII, xxii). He further notes that "the power of Christianity has been in the immense emotion which it has excited; in its

engaging, for the government of Man's conduct, the mighty forces of love, reverence, gratitude, hope, pity, and awe . . . " (Ibid., x-xi). Arnold had written Clough in 1849 that religious sentiment was best considered in conjunction with other emotions. The letter is partially quoted at the beginning of this chapter.

[26]E. D. H. Johnson, The Alien Vision of Victorian Poetry (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952), p. 152, observes that "orthodox Christianity was intellectually inadmissable to Arnold . . . . Perhaps the nostalgic undertone of Dover Beach is as close as the poet comes to an admission of the consolations offered by religion."

[27]Ibid., p. 205. Johnson believes that the poem "directs a retrospective glance on the influences which shaped the poet's faculties. And how noteworthy it is that at this turning point in his career the son should have felt impelled to celebrate Thomas Arnold's memory after fifteen years of silence! For if the scholar-gypsy is correlative to the poet's inner awareness, Arnold of Rugby as certainly exemplifies the ascendency of an outer or social awareness."

[28]Arnold views the world as a purposeless battleground ("Dover Beach") or a place of storm ("Rugby Chapel"): "Most men eddy about . . . are raised aloft, are hurled in the dust . . . some are not without aim to go round in an eddy of purposeless dust . . . on the height comes the storm." The eddy of dust is perhaps the whirlwind preceeding the storm.

The images of the unseen snow-beds with "their hanging ruin" and the lonely inn "'mid the rocks" recall Arnold's trips to Switzerland.

[29]Culler, Imaginative Reason, pp. 130-131. The letter to Clough is dated September 23, 1849 (M. A. to A. H. C., pp. 109-110).

[30]Ibid., pp. 277-279.

[31]Allott notes that the City of God is not much more than a poetical way of saying "righteousness," and cites Literature and Dogma, Works, VII, 371 (Super, VI, 398): "The world's chief nations have now all come . . . to reckon and profess themselves born in Zion,--born that is, in the religion of Zion, the city of righteousness." This is true of course, but the theme of a world reborn and of the second birth, both of which are implicit in the concept of the New Jerusalem, are the result of righteousness, not righteousness itself.

[32]J. Hillis Miller considers "Rugby Chapel" to be "one of Arnold's most hopeful poems about the future." He notes that Arnold "opposes the 'eddy of purposeless dust' of most men's lives to the sense of a clearly seen goal possessed by his father and others like him . . . . the goal is only an object of implicit faith." The Disappearance of God: Five Nineteenth Century Writers (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), p. 232.

[33]Erich Fromm, The Art of Loving (New York: Harper and Row, 1956), p. 64.

[34]Ibid., pp. 69-70.

[35]Allott says that Arnold had been warned he had inherited his father's heart defect, and suggests that this knowledge was an undercurrent in "Mycerinus." Poems, n., p. 26.

IV

THE COLLECTIVE INDIVIDUAL

Merope was not a success. Arnold could take some consolation in the praise of Dean Stanley, who had written that he had "so much secret delight in these classical revivals that I cannot find it in my heart to object to one of your projects." But even Arnold was aware that the play lacked unity. He explained to his brother-in-law that "the conflict of feelings in Merope's nature is what, I think, the tragedy turns upon--I think this would come out upon the stage, and this makes Merope the principal person. The most attractive, however, I certainly agree with you is Polyphontes."[1] As Tinker and Lowry note, the duality in the play caused by Arnold's desire to have the reader shift his interest from Merope to Polyphontes destroys the unity of action which is essential to the Aristotelian concept of good drama.[2] Had Polyphontes been the central character, so conceived from the beginning, the drama would have been far more effective: the conflict is within Polyphontes, not within Merope; and it is conflict within a character which makes for good drama. It is unfortunate that Arnold was least dramatic when

he most aspired to be so. Nevertheless, Merope is interesting, if only because of the lines which seem to anticipate Arnold's future statement about humanity:

> But thou, my son, study to make prevail
> One colour in thy life, the hue of truth;
> That justice, that sage order, not alone
> Natural vengeance, may maintain thine act,
> And make it stand indeed the will of Heaven.
> Thy father's passion was this people's ease,
> This people's anarchy, thy foe's pretence.
> As the chiefs rule, my son, the people are.
> Unhappy people, where the chiefs themselves
> Are, like the mob, vicious and ignorant!
> So rule, that even thine enemies may fail
> To find in thee a fault whereon to found,
> Of tyrannous harshness, or remissness weak-- ll. 1995-2007

The specter of civil insurrection was perhaps even closer than it had been in 1848. The Indian Mutiny of 1857 had alerted all thinking men to the danger of arming persons who might have a grievance against the existing government. Where the heads of state were, like the mob, vicious and ignorant, anarchy might well become the order of the day. Arnold himself served in the Queen's Westminster Rifle Volunteers, but he felt that such volunteer units were not dangerous, because the majority of the members of these units would be drawn from the upper and middle classes.[3]

The strong leader and the citizen who considered himself an extension of the state still appealed to Arnold, perhaps even more than formerly, now that he had had an opportunity to study the French educational system more closely. He had high praise for Napoleon I, for his balance between the old and the new while reorganizing the nation, and for the French people in general. He was apprehensive regarding the United States: "I cannot but think that the state of things with respect to their national character, which, after all, is the base of the only real grandeur or prosperity, becomes graver and graver. It seems as if few stocks could be trusted to grow up properly without having a priesthood and an aristocracy to act as their schoolmasters at some time or other of their national existence."[4] Arnold believed that in France "a man feels that the power which represses him is the State, is himself, while [in England] a man feels that the power which represses him is the Tories, the upper class, the aristocracy, and so on; and with this feeling he can, of course, never without loss of self-respect accept a formal beating, and so the thing goes on smouldering. If ever there comes a more equal state of society in England, the power of the State for repression will be a thousand times stronger."[5] Several points in these statements deserve examination. In the first place, Arnold seems to say that most people need an aristocracy, perhaps a clerical one as well, to grow a noteworty "national character." This is an early statement

of his advocacy of the church-state. Next he insists that the average citizen consider himself a part of the power which represses him. If England ever achieves that happy state of being in which social levels are equalized, the State will be able to repress wrongdoers much more efficiently, because the latter will see the justice of what is being done to them and accept it. In a sense, they will be judge, jury, and condemned, all at once. Arnold apparently had no idea that he was expecting nothing short of sainthood --or masochism--from the average citizen. In his effort to escape what he believed to be the cultural anarchy of the United States, he comes close to advocating totalitarianism or--at least--benevolent paternalism. Yet he seems to admire Mill's On Liberty as "worth reading attentively, being one of the few books that inculcate tolerance in an unalarming and inoffensive way."[6]

Arnold's sense of fitness and order was no new thing. His praise of the French was in large part based on the voluntary subordination of the individual to the good of the whole. This is not to say that he advocates the destruction of individuality; it has its place, but that place is determined by the effect which it has upon the society as a whole.[7] In this sense, Arnold is dealing with the problem of society from a different standpoint from Mill's: Mill is concerned with the degree to which society may rightly control the individual; Arnold is concerned with the degree

to which the individual may exercise liberty without endangering the State.

As Patrick McCarthy puts it, Arnold "knew that popular education was the best safeguard against revolution, but he knew also that the English system during those years reached only half of the children of school age." Arnold's six months in France in 1859 on assignment from the Newcastle Commission "enabled him to see by contrast the workings of the French educational system and then in turn to perceive the possibilities for improvement latent in the English system."[8] In general, Arnold admired the French nation and the way in which it was administered; this advance upon the road to perfection had been made possible by the French system of education. If it worked on the south side of the Channel, why might it not also work on the north?

"The French State," Arnold writes, "may refuse to concede to the Church the control of public instruction, but it agrees with the Church in holding that public instruction must be in the hands of an authorised body."[9] Arnold was in full agreement. Independent, sectarian schools, financially endowed by the whim of private individuals, too often meant promotion without merit, a poor education for many, and no education at all for some. What was wanted, Arnold thought, was a strong central board to maintain standards of proficiency in student and teacher alike. This board, an extension of the national government, would be above local politicking,

and would render fair and impartial judgement in all disputes.

Arnold was well aware of the need to educate the individual student, the need to fit him for his individual endeavor in life. He was also aware that education would benefit the State: "In schools the State has another interest besides the encouragement of reading, writing, and arithmetic--the protection of society. It has an interest in them so far as they keep children out of the streets, so far as they teach them--the dull as well as the clever--an orderly, decent, and human behavior; so far as they civilize the neighbourhood where they are placed. It owes to its schools for the poor something more than prizes, it owes them help for maintenance."[10] The three major classes of society would be benefitted in that they would learn to work together. "It seems to me that, for the class frequenting Eton, the grand aim of education should be to give them those good things which their birth and rearing are least likely to give them; to give them (besides mere book-learning) the notion of a sort of republican fellowship, the practice of a plain life in common, the habit of self-help. To the middle class, the grand aim of education would be to give largeness of soul and personal dignity; to the lower class, feeling, gentleness, humanity."[11] As for those who might argue that State-controlled education would be pauperising or degrading, Arnold had an answer. The citizen's relation to the State is not that of a dependent to a parental benefactor; "it is that

of a member in a partnership to the whole firm."[12]

So much for the need of the State, for the need of each of the three major classes of society. In essence, Arnold has merely applied the unum necessarium in a collective way. But to be effective, the need of the individual to perfect himself must be seen to, and for this Arnold turned to France. French parents desired religious instruction for their children. "It was commonly thought that there the children would be under a better influence; that the moral tone, as it is called, of such a school was superior . . . I believe the common opinion was right.[13] The children in lay schools Arnold found to be well instructed in catechism and "well acquainted with Scripture history." This was important, Arnold believed, because a religious background "inculcates the doctrines of morality in the only way in which the masses of mankind ever admit them, in their connection with the doctrines of religion."[14] This statement is perhaps the first to show that Arnold conceived of religion as a formal side of morality and as the way in which the populace could be brought closer to perfection. His approach to the general problem of education parallels his approach to literary criticism: poetry should be a magister vitae; it should inculcate a sense of moral obligation, and its form should be plain, simple, and severe. By the same reasoning, Arnold sees religion as the form taken by morality, the form by which most people can be taught morality. The form is still subordinate

to the content. "It would be well, unquestionably," he says, "if there reigned everywhere one truly catholic religious faith, embracing all the faithful in a common bond." But the spirit of sect exists; it is therefore necessary to accept differences without dividing the system in order to meet them.[15] England had "created a system far more irritating to sectarian susceptibilities than if it had regarded none of them."[16] Arnold's solution was to provide a flexible system of religious instruction in the school, allowing for more specific instruction in the student's preferred religion outside of school hours.

In the years between the publication of The Popular Education of France and that of Schools and Universities on the Continent, Arnold had ample opportunity to study the educational systems of the leading countries of Europe and to compare them with the English system. The Dutch schools in particular attracted Arnold in this respect. Basing his work upon the reports of M. Cuvier and M. Cousin, he noted that French students in 1811 were taught "the dogmatic part of their religion on Sundays, in church, by their own ministers; that on Saturdays, when Jews were absent, they were instructed in school by the schoolmaster in the New Testament and the life of Christ; on other days, in the truths common to all religions." In the Dutch schools, Cousin "had seen, he declared, in the great schools of Amsterdam, of Rotterdam, of the Hague, Jews, Catholics, and Protestants

seated side by side on the same benches, troubled by no religious animosity, receiving harmoniously a common instruction." But the Dutch teaching was essentially Protestant teaching; it had not yet solved "the difficult problem of uniting in a religious instruction genuine Christian teaching with absolute exclusion of dogma."[17]

The quality that most appealed to Arnold in the schools he inspected on the Continent was harmony, harmony between sects, even--to a limited extent--between classes. If the boy was truly father to the man, then a boy educated in the spirit of harmony would become a man who would be content to live in harmony with his fellows. The great public schools of England were not the answer; the education they provided might be, as M. de Talleyrand said, the best in the world, but that education reached only a small proportion of the population. "It embraces the aristocratic class; it embraces the higher professional class; it embraces a few of the richest and most successful of the commercial class; of the great body of the commercial class and of the immense middle classes of this country, it embraces not one." The State had a duty to protect its children from the charlatanism and cupidity of individual speculation," but even more important to Arnold was the fact that a great opportunity was missed "of fusing all the upper and middle classes into one powerful whole, elevating and refining the middle classes by the contact, and stimulating the upper. A fusion of the upper and middle

classes, such as Arnold had observed in the French schools, "raises the middle without dragging down the upper; it gives to the boy of the middle class the studies, the superior teaching, the proud sense of belonging to a great school . . . it tends to give to the middle classes precisely what they most want, and their want of which is the great gulf between them and the upper; it tends to give them personal dignity."[18] Arnold's statement is prophetic of Culture and Anarchy, and it expresses his strong belief that personal dignity and integrity are vital to the health of an individual, a class, and a nation.

To bring about this happy state of affairs, however, many old concepts would have to be abandoned. "Aristocracies almost inevitably fail to appreciate justly, or even to take into their mind, the instinct pushing the masses towards expansion and fuller life, that they lose their hold over them. It is the old story of the incapacity of aristocracies for ideas--the secret of their want of success in modern epochs."[19] In addition to the need for aristocracies to have ideas, to appreciate the need of the middle class to improve its lot, there was a temperamental problem. "A very strong, self-reliant people neither easily learns to act in concert, nor easily brings itself to regard any middling good . . . . It keeps its eye on the grand prizes, and these are to be won only by distancing competitors, by getting before one's comrades. . . .

so long as a people works thus individually, it does not work democratically."[20] Superiority of the individual might work against the good of the whole. There are always those who hear the sound of a different drummer and who must be brought back within the fold, lest they destroy its harmony. Arnold's solution was the strong state, a state which had the power to compel individuals to work in concert, rather than in competition; the ability to compel its citizens to accept a standard of conduct which would protect the weaker members of society, which would assure dignity to all, and which would restrain society to the extent that each individual would consider himself part of the state which worked for his own good. To allay fears that a strong state might exercise tyrannous powers, Arnold says that in England the state has always been used for the good of the aristocracy, while in France, which had stronger governmental control, it has worked for the good of all the people.[21] Arnold rightly saw state supervision of education as the key to the problem of inducing the relatively unreceptive individuals to accepting harmony as a way of life: "State supervision is useless if it can be rejected the moment it becomes a reality--the moment it tends to enforce general reason against individual caprice. The counsels of inspection, to be of any real worth, must be in some way or other authoritative."[22]

One final statement in the introductory part of Arnold's first major prose work indicates his line of reasoning:

"Perfection will never be reached; but to recognise a period of transformation when it comes, and to adapt themselves honestly and rationally to its laws, is perhaps the nearest approach to perfection of which men and nations are capable."[23] The individual who has come to his best at all points and who is working in harmony with others will be capable and willing to adapt himself to change. Perhaps, if there are enough like him, a nation may adapt itself to change in like manner.

As yet Arnold's concern was chiefly with the middle class. Its intellectual advancement would stimulate the upper class to have "ideas" and would inspire the lower class to emulate it. This advance could best be achieved by the assimilation of religious spirit into the educational process, making middle-class education a strong social force. "State-action," he reassures doubters, "is not in itself unfavourable to the individual's perfection, to his attaining his fullest development. So far from it, it is in ancient Greece, where State-action was omnipresent, that we see the individual at his very highest pitch of free and fair activity."[24]

The New Jerusalem might not be achieved by this single step, "but in a transformed middle class, in a middle class raised to a higher and more genial culture, we may find, not perhaps Jerusalem, but, I am sure, a notable stage towards it."[25] This transformation might be begun at the source, the education of children. But there were more immediate

things which could be done outside the field of education. Although children do grow up and become active members of society, the process takes time. Some steps might be taken to educate their parents in the meantime. This is the underlying reason for what is perhaps Arnold's best-known prose work, Culture and Anarchy.

As late as 1864 Arnold had written to M. E. Grant Duff that "one is from time to time seized and irresistibly carried along by a temptation to treat political, or religious, or social matters, directly, but after yielding to such a temptation I always feel myself recoiling again, and disposed to touch them only so far as they can be touched through poetry."[26] Temptation had carried him along to the extent that he asked for and received permission to publish his official report on French education. It had carried him even further, to the extent that he expanded the original report into Schools and Universities on the Continent. "Political, or religious, or social matters" were bound to concern Arnold increasingly, because they are matters which affect the individual in particular, just as they affect society as a whole. And, while he found himself "recoiling" from treating them "directly," he realized that direct treatment was the only way in which he could present his ideas in a form in which they would be heard by those who most needed to hear them. Given the burden of his official duties and his need to be heard, to carry others along with himself, it is little wonder that his

poetic output declined sharply following Merope. Poetry was an individual salvation, a way of expressing oneself at one's best at one point; but it was hardly saving others with oneself, if the others were people who did not read poetry.

Over ten years before Arnold had written Jane concerning the tendency to narrow one's interests, to attach oneself to persons with like characters.[27] In Arnold's case, this meant confining oneself to poetry, perhaps, since this was the field in which he had worked so well and in which he most desired to work. But the grand plan for the salvation of mankind required more of the individual than that he save only himself. It required perfection at all points, not only to perfect himself, but to enable him to save others whose interests might be different.

Arnold might well have stated his entire philosophic outlook in a single poem, but he did not. "Rugby Chapel" perhaps comes closest to the mark, but even here there is no mention of education or culture or criticism of an age in all areas. I believe that the reason for this failure to express the entire plan in a single poem was Arnold's awareness that one poem could not possibly reach the audience which needed to be reached. That there would always be people who would read and understand and appreciate his poetry, he had little doubt, but there were others who would be unresponsive to ideas presented in poetic form, and it was these he needed to reach.

In the same year that he published the first collected edition of his poems, Arnold published Culture and Anarchy.

It followed by one year his publication of Schools and Universities on the Continent. That the two works were logical steps in Arnold's developing theories concerning the state and social conditions is suggested by a letter to Lady de Rothschild, September 22, 1865, in which he stated his interest in popular education and indicated the reason for that interest. "I find, after all," he wrote, "the education of the middle and upper classes a less important and interesting affair than popular education, as a matter of public institution I mean. So many other influences tell upon those classes that the influence of a public system of education has not the same relative importance in their case as in that of the common people, on whom it is almost the only great civilising agency directly at work."[28] He had already expressed his belief that schools were equated with the protection of society, that religious training in schools was necessary because it inculcated the doctrines of morality in the only way in which most men could admit them; and that the grand aim of education whould be to give the upper class a notion of republican fellowship, the middle class personal dignity, and the dangerous lower class gentleness and humanity. In Culture and Anarchy the educational principles which he had expressed in Schools and Universities on the Continent are applied to the sociological needs of the state.

As early as 1865 Arnold had stated his belief that "men are wanted everywhere--not wealth, freedom, institutions,

etc. etc. so urgently wanted as men; and we have all to try in our separate spheres, to be as much of men as we can."[29] Arnold here is following Carlyle's concept of the strong leader emerging in time of stress to save a nation. In other letters of this period, Arnold castigates the Gemeinheit of the German middle class and invites comparison with the English middle class. To his mother he writes that "the mass of the English public, too, with the want of ideas of its aristocratic class, the provincial narrowness and vulgarity of its middle class, and the nonage of its lower, is exactly at Lord Palmerston's level and not a bit beyond it . . . "[30] Isolation of the middle class led to preoccupation with material things, to a lack of intellectuality and culture. In June, 1867 he wrote to his mother that "the great thing is to drag the dissenting middle-class into the great public arena of life and discussion, and not let it remain in its isolation. All its faults come from that isolation."[31]

The seeds of Culture and Anarchy had been germinating long before the book became an actuality. In the earlier Essays in Criticism (1865) Arnold had broadened "criticism" to include all branches of knowledge, not merely literary criticism. The implication is that the great poet and the great critic alike must know themselves and know the world, that each must be concerned with the society in which he finds himself. If that society, that epoch, is not great enough to generate great poetry, then criticism is the only

field in which progress can be made. Perhaps Arnold's introduction to Culture and Anarchy was in part inspired by the attacks upon culture which were prevalent in his own day. Culture, as T. S. Eliot has observed, is a term open to many definitions. The narrowest of these leads inevitably to the ivory tower; but the culture that Arnold defends is an all-embracing knowledge, a coming to one's best at all points, and it is one which his antagonists could not easily refute. Cleverly, he intimates that they have been attacking the wrong objective, that what he means by culture is something beyond mere aestheticism: a criticism of life itself. The lack of relevance which many critics ascribed to culture no longer existed, once the term was broadened to this extent. When one recalls that Culture and Anarchy was originally published in installments (1867-68), before the publication of Schools and Universities on the Continent, it is easy to see that Arnold's separate studies are merely parts of a larger whole, encompassing all aspects of life.

Typically, Arnold sets up an opposition in the first chapter. Sweetness is the appreciation of beauty; Light is the perception of truth. Culture embraces both and is a study of perfection which consists in becoming something rather than in having something. "The pursuit of perfection . . . is the pursuit of sweetness and light. He who works for sweetness and light, works to make reason and the will of God prevail."[32] Culture is opposed to mere mechanics, to

the talent for making and using material things. But sweetness and light are not really opposites, Arnold reminds us: "Beauty . . . is only truth seen from another side."[33] Truth then becomes figurative, rather than literal; this is a distinction which Arnold would develop at greater length in St. Paul and Protestantism a year later.

The second chapter of the work, "Doing as One Likes," is essentially an attack upon Millism. Although Arnold had come close to Mill's position, notably in "Fragment of an Antigone," he now pronounces against mere self-interest. Doing as one likes can be dangerous to the individual as well as to society. Freedom like machinery, Arnold says, is valuable as a means towards an end: neither is an end in itself. The thing that is lacking is the notion of the state in its "collective and corporate character, entrusted with stringent powers for the general advantage, and controlling individual wills in the name of and interest wider than that of individuals."[34] All classes in England fear the authority of the state because it would restrict them from doing as they like; no class has the sense of obligation towards others, towards a collective whole, which Arnold found in France and on the Continent. In practice, Arnold says, doing as one likes has led to outbreaks of rowdyism which "tend to become less and less of trifles, to become more frequent rather than less frequent; and that meanwhile our educated and intelligent classes remain in their majestic repose."[35] Arnold concludes

the chapter by insisting that "great changes there must be, for a revolution cannot accomplish itself without great changes; yet order there must be, for without order a revolution cannot accomplish itself by due course of law."[36]

In the third chapter, Arnold cites the virtuous mean, the defect, and the excess of each of the three major classes. The high, chivalrous style of the Barbarians, the perseverance of the Philistines, the "bright powers of sympathy and ready powers of action" of the Populace can be harnessed to work for the good of the whole.[37] The common bonds among the three classes are the existence of the same tendencies and passions, not necessarily developed to the same degree, and the common belief that happiness consists of doing what one likes. Since each class believes that it already has achieved that mean, it is necessary to disabuse it of that belief, to point out that "excellence dwells among high and steep rocks, and can only be reached by those who sweat blood to reach her." Since not every man knows what excellence is or how he may best achieve it, the state is necessary. The state is a combination of the best talents of all classes, the most enlightened individuals raised to the seat of authority in order to promulgate the good of the people as a whole, even when they cannot see that good.

"Hebraism and Hellenism" is another of Arnold's oppositions, created only to be destroyed. His belief that "the Reformation was strong, in that it was an earnest return to

the Bible and to doing from the heart the will of God as there written" is well taken. It was a point to which he would return in St. Paul and Protestantism in order to show how far short of the ideal the accomplishment fell. The Reformation was weak, as he sees it, "in that it never consciously grasped or applied the central idea of the Renascence,--the Hellenic idea of pursuing, in all lines of activity, the law and science, to use Plato's words, of things as they really are."[38] Hebraism need not be opposed to Hellenism; the two must work together for Man to achieve the one step further which is necessary to his survival. Had Hebraism not been exaggerated, he suggests, the Renaissance might have continued.

In the final chapter of Culture and Anarchy, Arnold says that the British people are dominated by Hebraism "because they have thought their real and only important homage was owed to a power concerned with their obedience rather than with their intelligence, a power interested in the moral side of their nature almost exclusively. Thus they have been led to regard in themselves, as the one thing needfull, strictness of consciousness, which tends continually to enlarge our whole law of doing."[39]

In pursuing the objectives of the three classes, "industrial enterprise, bodily exercises, and freedom," Arnold notes that the British are neither loved nor admired for their pursuits. "Is not the reason," he asks, "because we follow

each of these things in a mechanical manner, as an end in and for itself, and not in reference to a general end of human perfection; and this makes our pursuit of them uninteresting to humanity, and not what the world truly wants?"[40] Here Arnold stresses the confusion of ends with means which results in machinery becoming a goal, rather than a means of reaching a goal.

Culture and Anarchy is not a sudden development in Arnold's thought, since he had already stated the concepts contained therein in earlier work or in letters. But it is important in that here for the first time he combines the separate elements with which he was concerned into one cohesive statement. We confuse the ends with the means, we worship machinery and money, we see freedom as an end rather than a means toward the end of self-enlargement, and we work in opposition to other classes than our own instead of working with them toward the betterment of all men. But if each individual, regardless of class, comes to his best at all points; if strong government is truly representative of each class so that despotism need not be feared; if we as a whole are concerned with the good of each individual insofar as it does not run counter to the good of the whole; then Arnold sees Jerusalem within sight.

Arnold's awareness of the danger inherent in the development of one talent at the expense of others, of the substitution of materialism for religion, of the value of the

machine being exaggerated until it becomes more important than man, is worthy of note. Since he was concerned with the salvation of others, as well as with his own salvation, he was impelled to speak out directly.

As for religion, J. D. Jump notes that "to Arnold, as to his father, religion is essentially morality; and he holds that the truth of morality can be confirmed by the only test which will satisfy the modern spirit, the test of experience."[41] Arnold was to treat the subject more fully in the religious works which followed the publication of Culture and Anarchy. Although Arnold followed his father to a great extent, he did not subscribe to his father's far more narrow view of Christianity. He perhaps preferred to think of his father as a modern thinker, rather than as a Christian minister.[42]

McCarthy comments that Arnold's aloofness from the world did not imply a denial of social responsibility. Had he entered vigorously into the life of one class (which total involvement with the world practically demands) he would have lost the fine objectivity and knowledge which he had gained.[43] Arnold had succeeded in rejoining the world on his own terms, maintaining his individuality and indeed strengthening it by his involvement with the issues of his time and his place. He is, in his prose writing, no longer facing a lost past, but working out a vision of a world of perfected men, a new Jerusalem.[44] Whereas Mill believes that reason needs nothing but exercise and free expression to establish it, Arnold

maintains that reason is justified in using its antithesis --force--to establish itself.[45] Mill saw freedom of the individual as the ultimate goal; Arnold saw freedom of a whole society as the means by which the goal of perfection might be reached.

Arnold's use of the word "machinery" is interesting for other reasons than purely mechanical ones. He was concerned with the danger of the machine mastering man, of course, but he was perhaps more concerned with the machine-like qualities he saw in the Philistine. Man was not only not the master of the machine; in effect he tended to become a machine himself. This tendency Arnold ascribed to the Puritan ethos of money-making. He who prospered upon this earth was visibly favored by God; therefore it behooved man to prosper. Somehow virtue had become confused with prosperity, and the man who set his heart upon acquiring wealth and interpeting his Bible literally had narrowed his humanity to the vanishing point. All this Arnold was aware of. It offended his natural instincts of compassion as deeply as it offended his sense of culture. How could a man who concentrated upon Hell and Profit possibly come to his best at all points?

Education was certainly one answer, but its effectiveness depended upon the quality of the education. As McCarthy notes, when Arnold began to inspect the national schools and had opportunity to observe the education of dissenting children, he found that "it was difficult to educate the

children above the standards of their parents."[46] This was because salaries, books, and furniture were dependent upon student fees. The teacher who failed to pass a sufficient number of students found himself out of a job. This inevitably led to a lowering of standards, and it is safe to assume that many students were passed who were at best half-educated. Arnold's insistence upon a national standard and upon state control of the schools was an effort to eliminate this evil and to break the bonds of sectarianism.

But education by itself was not enough. Perhaps Arnold had this in mind when he wrote to his mother, shortly after learning that he was not to be appointed one of three commissioners of education, "I should have been interested in the work had it fallen to me to do. But the work these Commissioners will do is not in the least the real work I want to see done in secondary education; and it is better, I am convinced, at least for me, to act upon the public mind till it is willing to employ the means that are really required, rather than to labour at doing what can be done with the imperfect means it is at present prepared to concede."[47]

Culture and Anarchy had been a step in the right direction. It had implanted in the British mind the catchy names Arnold had devised for the three major classes of society, had made its readers aware of the possibility of those three classes working in harmony through their common interests, and had shown them that one man, at least, had faith that

there was a future which did not reck of pounds and pence to the exclusion of all else. But the materialism of Arnold's time and place, as he saw it, was based upon a religious belief. The acquisition of wealth was not only not evil, but was a positive virtue in the minds of man, especially among the dissenting classes. It was necessary to get at the heart of the matter, the religious belief that not only condoned materialism, but urged it.

One further step was necessary, one which had been broached in Culture and Anarchy: science had been made an end in itself or had been developed only for the purpose of serving business. From this stimulus came "Science and Literature."

As for the religious faith which allowed for the rise of materialism, Arnold dealt with it directly in the works of religious criticism which were to form a climax to his brilliant literary career. If this faith was based upon a literal interpretation of Scripture, then it was at this point that the battle must be waged. St. Paul and Protestantism was the opening gun in that battle.

NOTES

[1]Letter to W. E. Forster, January 11, 1858, Unpublished Letters, pp. 35-40. Arnold was more candid with his sister Jane: "It is true that Polyphontes is the most interesting personage, I think, though I suppose Merope ought to be." Ibid., p. 41.

[2]Tinker and Lowry, Commentary, p. 185. Arnold's failure to write a good Greek drama in English may have contributed to the curtailment of his poetry. As a classicist, he felt that the Greek drama was the highest form to which he could aspire.

[3]"Far from being a measure dangerous by its arming the people--a danger to which some persons are very sensitive--it seems to me that the establishment of these Rifle Corps will more than ever throw the power into the hands of the upper and middle classes, as it is of these that they are mainly composed, and these classes will thus have over the lower classes the superiority, not only of wealth and intelligence, which they have now, but of physical force. I hope and think that the higher classes in this country have now so developed their consciences that this will do them no harm; still, it is a consequence of the present arming movement which deserves attention, and which is, no doubt, obscurely present to the minds of the writers of the cheap Radical newspapers who abuse the movement. The bad feature in the proceeding is the hideous English toadyism with which

lords and great people are invested with the commands in the corps they join, quite without respect of any considerations of their efficiency. This proceeds from our national bane--the immense vulgar-mindedness, and, so far, real inferiority of the English middle classes." Letter to Frances Arnold, November 21, 1859, Letters, I, 109. Note that the letter anticipates Culture and Anarchy by almost a decade. See also Crane Brinton, A History of Western Morals (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1959), pp. 414-15. "Most Victorian intellectuals--a Mill, a Carlyle, a Tocqueville, a Matthew Arnold --had fearful doubts as to whether the many could be morally improved, or 'civilized' fast enough to forestall some disasters worse than that of the French Revolution." Arnold's implied solution of meeting force with force is here stated for the first time.

[4]To Frances Arnold, January 20, 1860, Letters, I, 114-15. At this time, Arnold was working on The Popular Education of France.

[5]To his mother, July 25, 1866, Letters, I, 335.

[6]To Frances Arnold, June 25, 1859, Letters, I, 96. The implication is that books which "inculcate tolerance" in an alarming or offensive way are inadmissible. Tolerance, as Arnold rightly perceives, smacks of contempt; therefore, Mill's championship of individualism was sure to elicit a response from Arnold, most specifically in the chapter of Culture and Anarchy entitled "Doing As One Likes." Arnold's

sense of order and his desire for a strong state precluded letting anyone do as he pleased, even if that one harmed no one else in the process.

[7]In a letter to his favorite sister Jane, May 22, 1859, Arnold observes that the French populace "are attached to the present government; they are sincerly grateful to it for having restored order--I saw to-day at Arles on the Roman obelisk an inscription to Louis Napoleon with the simple words 'il vous a sauvés de l'Anarchie'--which you may depend upon it expresses the sincere feeling of the industrious classes. But above all the French peasant (who feeds the army and is the real power of France) stick[s] to this man and is disposed to maintain him because he is the symbol, after all, of that final breach with the past and with a feudal aristocracy by means of which the peasant has become a personage and which he is firmly resolved shall never be filled up." Unpublished Letters, p. 46.

[8]McCarthy, Matthew Arnold and the Three Classes, p. 87.

[9]The Popular Education of France, Super, II, 36. See also "Three Letters On Education," Pall Mall Gazette, December 11, 1865, December 22, 1865, and January 17, 1866, reprinted in Neiman, p. 102 passim. The first letter states that it is the duty of the state to establish elementary schools for the populace; a conscience clause can protect religious freedom. If schooling is left to the nobles and gentry, there will be no such safeguard, and a lower standard

of education will result. In the second letter, Arnold says that the state system "must owe its first establishment to the intelligence and patriotism of the educated class." Instruction must be joined with reason and justice to keep the poor from "remaining such as they are." Arnold indicates his views of private charity and philanthropy in the third letter. These are not the answer to middle-class education, because they put the system at the mercy of those who furnish the money. The system will be a makeshift one, like that of the hospitals, "voluntary and horrible." In all three letters Arnold pleads the cause of strong state control: it is more objective, more efficient, and it is the sure way of preventing anarchy, since a high standard of education will provide that measure of self-discipline which leads to mass-discipline. Thomas Arnold (MWA, p. 497) had taken a stronger stand on the matter of education and the state: " . . . moral evils are ever at the root of such as are physical and political; and for moral evil I know of only one cure, and that is Christianity, by its double influence as a Religion and as a Church."

[10]Schools and Universities on the Continent, Super, IV, 228.

[11]Super, IV, 292. In general, Arnold believed that the aim of education was to enable a man to know himself and the world.

[12]Super, IV, 300.

[13]The Popular Education of France, Super, II, 119.

[14]Super, II, 142-43.

[15]Super, II, 143.

[16]Super, II, 144.

[17]Super, II, 186-195.

[18]Super, II, 87-88.

[19]Super, II, 11. See also Arnold's appeal to the English aristocracy to comprehend the new problems of the age in "England and the Italian Question," Super, I, 96.

[20]Super, II, 13.

[21]Super, II, 20-23.

[22]Super, II, 113.

[23]Super, II, 29.

[24]Super, II, 314.

[25]Super, II, 322. Note that here Arnold uses quite consciously the metaphor which John used in Revelation 21:1.

[26]Letters, I, 233.

[27]Letters, I, 14.

[28]Letters, I, 302.

[29]To W. E. Forster, September 30, 1865, Letters, I, 305.

[30]October 24, 1865, Letters, I, 306.

[31]Letters, I, 368.

[32]Super, V, 112.

[33]Preface to First Edition of Essays in Criticism, cited in Neiman, p. 98.

[34]Super, V, 117-18.

[35]Super, V, 119.

[36]Super, V, 136. Note that Arnold is careful to avoid the question, Why need a revolution accomplish itself "by due course of law?" His overriding sense of order prevented him from seeing that some revolutions can only come about extra-legally.

[37]Super, V, 137-39. Arnold here quotes Frederick Harrison somewhat disparagingly. Arnold is not prepared to state that the Populace has presently any virtuous mean, although this may be inferred from his fourth paragraph.

[38]Super, V, 172. The golden mean which Arnold implies is the practice of the spirit of Scripture and the broadening of one's application of this spirit to include all activities.

[39]Super, V, 176. See also Eric Fromm, Escape From Freedom (New York, 1941), pp. 155-56. Fromm suggests that the real aim of the Reformation was to compel the individual to forget himself, while the healthy aim of the individual is to realize himself. This is the contention Arnold makes in reference to conscience. Fromm further says that "the annihilation of the individual self and the attempt to overcome thereby the unbearable feeling of powerlessness are only one side of the masochistic strivings. The other side is the attempt to become a part of a bigger and more powerful whole outside of oneself, to submerge and participate in it. This power can be a person, an institution, God, the nation, conscience, or a psychic compulsion." Essentially, this is also Arnold's argument. The Puritan has denied himself by adherence

to the letter, rather than the spirit; he has submerged his individuality in a mass--nation, conscience, and his concept of God--and cannot hope to come to his best at all points until he rejects the narrowness of his beliefs and achieves self-dignity.

[40]Super, V, 189.

[41]J. D. Jump, Matthew Arnold (London, New York, Toronto: Longmans, Green & Co., 1955), p. 158.

[42]William A. Madden, Matthew Arnold, p. 14, notes that "from Arnold's point of view as a mature critic, his father was not primarily a devout Christian leader but a courageous teacher of modern ideas, and it was this side of his father's work that he saw himself carrying on in his own criticism."

[43]Patrick J. McCarthy, Matthew Arnold and the Three Classes. Fromm, Escape From Freedom, p. 140, says that two courses are open--positive freedom by spontaneous relation to the world in love and work, in "genuine expression of emotional, sensuous, and intellectual capacities; he can thus become one again with man, nature, and himself, without giving up the independence and integrity of his individual self." The other course is to fall back into the world, submerging his individuality. Arnold obviously took the first course.

[44]See J. Hillis Miller, The Disappearance of God, p. 268. Miller notes that Arnold renounces "everything here and now for the sake of something which never quite, while he lives,

is actual and present." It is not clear that Arnold renounced anything. He accepted the possibility of working towards a better life which he might not live to see, but this is hardly a renunciation.

[45]Lionel Trilling, Matthew Arnold, p. 260, indicates the major difference between Mill and Arnold on this point.

[46]McCarthy, pp. 110-11.

[47]Letters, II, 13.

V

THE CHURCH STATE

"The chapters on Hellenism and Hebraism are in the main, I am convinced, so true that they will form a kind of centre for English thought and speculation on the matters treated in them." Thus Arnold to his mother, shortly after the publication of Culture and Anarchy.[1] He was pleased with the success of his book, and well he might be. It was praised and damned, it was resented in some quarters and accepted with alacrity in others, but above all it was read. As Arnold said, the Hebraistic element had dominated English life for too long; it was time that Hellenism had its day in order to give balance. Whether the reader agreed with him or not, he had stated the problem so that no one could fail to be aware of its existence.[2]

As Arnold saw it, one of the principal flaws in Hebraism was the way in which it had been exaggerated. Most of the exaggeration came from a too-literal reading of St. Paul. This led to intolerance. "Whether I have rendered St. Paul's ideas with perfect correctness or not, there is no doubt that the confidence with which these people regarded their conventional rendering of them was quite baseless, made them

narrow and intolerant, and prevented all progress."[3] If the Protestant churches were ever to be united, this intolerance would have to be eradicated. This could best be done by getting at the truth of St. Paul.

Arnold's plan for a better world, a New Jerusalem on earth, depended upon understanding among the three major levels of society. Religion seemed to be the common denominator, but it would have to resolve its own sectarian differences before it could be effective. These differences were for the most part artificial, created by the generations of commentators who had missed the true meaning of Paul's message. Given the truth, Arnold felt, the differences could be resolved. Perhaps even the Roman Catholics could become a part of the great stream of Christianity which in England virtually excluded them.

St. Paul and Protestantism, sandwiched as it is between Culture and Anarchy and Literature and Dogma, has perhaps received less than its just attention. One tends to overlook its importance in its own time, because of its very success. In 1883, Arnold was able to note with satisfaction that in the seventeen years since the first edition the doctrines of predestination, original sin, imputed righteousness, and justification by faith "not as tenets to be formally professed, but as doctrines to fill and form man's mind and soul . . . are fast going." He saw progress in that man had at last become dissatisfied with the results of his religious

impulse."[4] But in 1870 these were burning issues. The large body of Dissenters was still inclined to take its Bible literally or as interpreted by those scholars who sought to impose their own notions upon Scripture. Arnold might well take pride in the success which his book had had in defeating at least one of the doctrinal dragons. The very fact that it went into a Popular Edition seventeen years after its first appearance speaks for its wide circulation, and Arnold--like most writers--enjoyed the fact that he was read.

St. Paul and Protestantism deals with the mistakes which Arnold believed had been made by various interpreters. If, as he says, the evils of the Church are due to too much "hebraising," this situation has come about as the result of a misunderstanding of Paul's language. Once the true value of Hebraism is understood, there will be no danger of having too much of it. "Hebraism at its best is beauty and charm; Hellenism at its best is also beauty and charm. As such they can unite; as anything short of this, they are at discord, and their separation must continue."[5]

Arnold considered Puritanism the chief culprit. "What in St. Paul is secondary and subordinate, Puritanism has made primary and essential; what in St. Paul is figure and belongs to the sphere of feeling, Puritanism has transported into the sphere of intellect and made thesis and formula. On the other hand, what is with St. Paul primary, Puritanism has treated as subordinate; and what is with him thesis and belonging

. . . to the sphere of intellect, Puritanism has made image and figure."[6]

This confusion arose, Arnold says, because Paul used metaphoric language, which suited him and his early readers, but which was taken literally by later readers. A modern reader can never be sure that he knows exactly what Paul thought. "All we can do," Arnold says, "is to get near it, reading him with the sort of critical tact which the study of the human mind and its history, and the acquaintance with many great writers, naturally gives for following the movement of any one single great writer's thought; reading him, also, without preconceived theories to which we want to make his thoughts fit themselves."[7] This tendency to superimpose one's own concepts upon Paul has led to unverifiable statements which, when disproved, Arnold warns, can lead to the renunciation of religion. The identity of God is an example. "That <u>stream of tendency by which all things seek to fulfil the law of their being</u>, and which, inasmuch as our idea of real welfare resolves itself into this fulfilment of the law of one's being, man rightly deems the fountain of all goodness, and calls by the worthiest and most solemn name he can, which is God, science also might willingly own for the fountain of all goodness and call God. But however much more than this the heart may with propriety put into its language respecting God, this is as much as science can with strictness put there."[8] Attempts to define God more precisely and to

formulate theories concerning His intentions have led to such errors as those of Calvinism, where God becomes a "magnified and non-natural man who decrees at his mere good pleasure some men to salvation and other men to reprobation" or who "foreknows the course of each man's life, and who decrees each of us to salvation or reprobation in accordance with this foreknowledge." Arnold then asks, "Why did not a being of infinite power and infinite love so make all men as that there whould be no cause for this sad foreknowledge and sad decree respecting a number of them?"[9] Both Calvinism and Methodism appeal to the Bible, and especially to St. Paul, for authority; Calvinism relies upon man's fears to enforce belief, Methodism on man's hopes for salvation.[10]

To Arnold, Paul's motivation was "the impulse which we have elsewhere noted as the master-impulse of Hebraism,--the desire for righteousness."[11] This desire came about as a result of experience and a psychological sense of fitness, rather than by a series of theological arguments based upon an authority which had no foundation in fact.[12] Experience and psychological fitness had led Paul to state that the sons of God are those who are led by the spirit of God.[13] Since the true impulse of Hebraism is righteousness, the sons of God seek to be righteous. But they are fallible, and the great point that Paul made, as Arnold sees it, was his affirmation of "the righteousness of God, the non-fulfilment of it by man, the fulfilment of it by Christ." This fulfillment

by Christ leads inevitably to the attempt of man to emulate his example, and leads further to Paul's central doctrine: "to die with Christ to the law of the flesh, to live with Christ to the law of the mind."[14] It is also Matthew Arnold's: "Whoever identifies himself with Christ, identifies himself with Christ's idea of the solidarity of men. The whole race is conceived as one body, having to die and rise with Christ, and forming by the joint action of its regenerate members the mystical body of Christ. Hence the truth of that which Bishop Wilson says: 'It is not so much our neighbour's interest as our own that we love him.'"[15] Arnold here states in religious terms his hope that the enlightenment of many will become the enlightenment of the whole. It would be a mistake, however, to take Arnold too literally at this point. He is not urging a mass conversion to Christianity. He is merely using Christ as an example of a man who sought righteousness and whose death on the Cross was preceeded by a death of the sense of the flesh and a birth into the world of the spirit. The death of Christ on the Cross, as Arnold makes clear in Literature and Dogma, is symbolic of the death of the flesh and the rebirth of the individual into spiritual life.[16]

Typical of the misconceptions which have arisen concerning Paul, according to Arnold, is that concerning the use of the terms Life and Death. The fundamentalists use the terms literally, in a physical and miraculous sense. Arnold says that Paul meant the terms to be taken metaphorically, although

he believes Paul to have given credence to both the literal and the figurative aspects of the resurrection. Figuratively, Death is the death of sin, of the things of the flesh. Life is the emergence of the spiritual man, pursuing righteousness and assisting others to do the same.[17] It is easy enough at this point to see the continuous operation of Arnold's early credo of coming to one's best at all points. A man who comes to his best at all points is of necessity concerned with ideas rather than with things, with goodness rather than evil, with selflessness rather than selfishness. In the terms of Christianity, this man becomes the true imitator of the spirit of Christ, and when all men have become so, the world itself will have been "reborn." As Arnold makes clear, "the resurrection Paul was striving after for himself and others was a ressurection <u>now</u>, and a resurrection to <u>righteousness</u>."[18] Paul sought identification with Christ through dying with him; he sought and found righteousness.[19]

Arnold is sure that he has rendered the ideas of Paul with general truth to their spirit, although not perhaps "with perfect Correctness," but he is not optimistic about the ability of men of his time to accept the call to righteousness. This acceptance will come, he says, only after a true theology is found for religion.[20] The true theology will apparently be one based upon the "secret" and the "method" of Jesus, as explained by Arnold from the writings of St. Paul. It is at this point that one may well ask whether Arnold had

not done what he accused others of doing, whether he had not in fact approached Paul with his own preconceptions in mind, and found that which he wanted to find, disregarding that which he did not. Arnold cites Paul as his authority, but he admits to his mother that he may not have rendered St. Paul's ideas with perfect correctness. He amplifies this statement in the study itself with the comment that a modern reader can never be sure that he knows exactly what Paul thought. Yet Arnold is perfectly sure that he has rendered Paul's thought correctly on precisely those points which justify his credo that enough perfected men working in concert can form a perfected world.

The separation of Church and State is a case in point. Although the dissenters of Arnold's day urged a separation, this had not always been the case. In 1660 both Puritans and Anglicans had advocated a national establishment. Arnold believed in a national establishment to an extent which, perhaps, the religious leaders of 1660 would not have subscribed.[21] To Arnold, as to his father, the idea of a nationally established church was not merely that of one which would protect all religions under a single head, but one which in effect made the Church the moral aspect of the State. Church and State were conceived of as being two sides of the same coin.[22] Culture and Conduct must work in harmony, and development outside the Church must be matched by development inside the Church.[23] In the early Church, separate

communitites coalesced for the sake of internal discipline and the establishment of church hierarchy; the Church later coalesced with the State because the Church gained strength by so doing. Arnold's authority for this is, of course, St. Paul.[24]

The union of all religious sects, providing each a measure of independence, is necessary to the discipline of religion as a whole; if religion be the study and enforcement of conduct, as Arnold maintains, then it is essential that the Church be one with the State, so that conduct and culture can work in harmony.[25] Roman Catholics are to be included, although this may not be possible in the present. "Who cannot see that the power of joint life . . . would be far greater and stronger if it comprehended Roman Catholics too? And who cannot see, also, that a movement is possible which may at last bring about a general union of Christendom? But this will not be in our day, nor is it business which the England of this generation is set to do. What may be done in England in our day, what our generation has the call and the means . . . to bring about, is the union of Protestants."[26] Finally, Arnold assures us, the union of all Protestant sects would bring health and strength to "the Establishment, of which the very weakness and danger is that it tends . . . to be an appendage to the upper-class Barbarians."[27] This is also Arnold's line of reasoning with regard to the State: it must reflect all social classes in its structure, so that

no one class can tyrannize any other by gaining complete control. Arnold looks for a balance of power, so that each class will be fairly represented, and so that the"best self" of each will be dominant.

The road to harmony between culture and conduct was not always straight, nor was it even. As Arnold sees it, the problem often lies with the man who has not come to his best at all points. James Bryce, Chancellor of Oxford, was one such man: "He is a dangerous man . . . and chiefly from his want of any true sense and experience of literature and its beneficent function. Religion he knows, and physical science he knows, but the immense work between the two, which is for literature to accomplish, he knows nothing of, and all his speeches at Oxford pointed this way," Arnold wrote to his mother.[28] Bryce wanted to retain the ecclesiastical and dogmatic form of religion, and in addition wanted to develop scientific studies at the expense of literature. "From a juxtaposition of this kind nothing but shocks and collisions can come; and I know no one, indeed, more likely to provoke shocks and collisions than men like Lord Salisbury [Bryce] . . . . I do hope that what influence I have may be of use in the troubled times which I see are before us as a healing and reconciling influence, and it is this which makes me glad to find--what I find more and more--that I have influence." Arnold's letter reveals a sense of his own worth, an accurate prediction of "troubled times" before him, and a fear that

the materialistic dogma of men like Bryce will plunge England into anarchy. Sweet reasonableness is needed, as Arnold sees it; polarities can only exacerbate the evils inherent in a materialistic world.

The real danger, Arnold says, is "the utter absence of a policy in any of our public men. They have not even a notion of such a thing being possible, but look anxiously to the public mind and its wishes, and endeavor to comply with them."[29] Arnold's desire for strong men to rule England would be repeated in "The Nadir of Liberalism" (1886) and in "The Zenith of Conservatism" (1887). It indicates an approach to Carlyle's strong-man theory of history, as DeLaura has noted, and it marks an increasing conservatism in Arnold's views. But there was no great danger that Arnold would become reactionary. In the same month he wrote his mother that with "Newdigate applauding the German Education minister for his reactionary introduction of the narrowest Protestantism into the schools, and for thus sending psalm-singing soldiers into the field who win battles . . . there is indeed much necessity for methods of insight and moderation."[30] Arnold's almost instinctive sense of balance and fitness prevented him from swinging to the political right, just as his respect for due process of law prevented him from mounting barricades, literal or figurative.

Instead of blaming the downfall of France in 1870 upon poor generalship, he blames it on the "want of a serious

conception of righteousness and the need of it, the consequences of which so often show themselves in the world's history . . . . Nothing gives more freshness and depth to one's reading of the Bible than the sense that this is so and that this testimony is perpetually being borne to the book of righteousness, though the nation out of which it came was itself a political failure so utter and miserable."[31] Of the French revolution of 1871 which preceded the establishment of the Commune, Arnold has nothing good to say. He hopes that "the present generation of Frenchmen may pass clean away as soon as possible and be replaced by a better one . . . . there is no way by which France can make the rest of Europe so alarmed and uneasy as by a socialistic and red republic. It is a perpetual flag to the proletaire class everywhere--the class which makes all governments uneasy."[32] It is amusing to compare Arnold's attitude towards the French before the Franco-Prussian War with his attitude towards them following the debâcle at Sedan. Perhaps the change was due to the danger Arnold foresaw stemming from the rise of the Commune. Like many Englishmen of his day, Arnold was afraid that violent revolution would come before the reforms which he hoped to have some part in bringing about. But writing letters, however satisfying they might be to one's ego, has little effect upon the current of history. Arnold believed that the cultural and societal re-education of England was waiting.

A Bible Reading for English Schools (1872) was a small effort in this direction. To George de Bunsen he confides that he hopes the book will reach the "Volksschule at last." To William Seward he says that he would be "very sorry to think that masterpieces of our English literature, such as a play of Shakespeare, or Milton's Comus, which you mention, would never be read in our popular schools; but I think they will be read all the better, and with the more appreciation if there is some such basis as that which this Bible reading proposes to give."[33] Both letters indicate Arnold's belief that culture was dependent upon a sense of righteousness which could best be gained through reading the Bible, and that culture was the only alternative to anarchy. The major effort, however, was to come in 1873, when Arnold published Literature and Dogma.

By 1883, when a new edition was published, Arnold could state that the object of his work was to reassure those who were attached to Christianity and the Bible but who "recognize the growing discredit befalling miracles and the supernatural." But the goal Arnold stated in 1873 was more limited. He was then more concerned with the establishment of religion as a national institution, and he claimed to see the question of so establishing the existing Church as "absolutely unimportant! The thing is, to recast religion. If this is done, the new religion will be the national one; if it is not done, the separating the nation, in its collective and corporate

character, from religion, will not do it."[34]

As Super says, Arnold's theology differs little from that of Jowett; both men followed the conservative German theologians Doctor Arnold had admired. But the conclusions which Arnold draws are somewhat radical, leading at least one modern scholar to comment that "his rank amateurishness shocked biblical scholars who had devoted their lives to the textual and historical problems which he handled so lightly."[35] In reality, as Super indicates, Arnold's translations are in some cases superior to those in the King James edition, and his sense of history made it possible for him to see that, if religion and the Bible were to survive in any meaningful way, a new interpretation was needed. Arnold's whole work is based upon the assumption that literal miracle and supernaturalism can and will be disproved; if the Bible is interpreted literally in order to defend miracle and supernaturalism, then the Bible itself is in danger of being overthrown. Culture is the glass which enables us to see that the Bible is "fluid, passing, and literary," Arnold says. This being so, a literal interpretation is ruled out from the start.

Culture was a major point with Arnold, long before he entered the field of religious criticism. It was the means by which man could come to his best at all points. In addition to this, culture enables us to see the Bible for what it is, he says, a guide to conduct and an historical record of Man's experience. Apart from the correctness of Arnold's

assumption that disbelief in miracles and the supernatural will destroy the meaning of the Bible for those who choose to interpret it literally, it must be said that Arnold's entire thesis depends upon the Bible's being taken figuratively. Once one accepts Revelation on literal terms, for example, it is impossible to believe that the injustices of the earth will ever be corrected in this life. Arnold was perfectly aware of this. In addition, the sects which had split the Christian world were caused in large part by differing literal interpretations of the Bible. Arnold was aware of this too, and his answer was posited in terms of experience: unity is necessary to the survival of Christianity, Christianity is necessary to the survival of order in England, and unity can best be achieved by working in terms of the figurative truth of the Bible.

All of us waste at least some time which might be spent in developing culture, Arnold claims. "The valuable thing in letters,--that is, in the acquainting oneself with the best which has been thought and said in the world,--is, as we have often remarked, the judgment which forms itself insensibly in a fair mind along with fresh knowledge . . ."[36] Culture gives perspective, a sense of the proportion of things, and it is only the man who has it who can read the Bible intelligently, taking from it its lessons of good and evil, without being caught in a literal interpretation which can only lead to its rejection.

To Arnold, the object of religion is conduct, "three-fourths of human life." Religion itself is "morality touched with emotion." Arnold was somewhat indebted to his friend J. C. Shairp, who defined religion as "the impulse in man to see God" and culture as "the impulse in man to seek his own highest perfection."[37] God is the eternal righteousness who loves righteousness and enables us to do right. Right conduct is a joy in being alive.[38] This is evident, once we understand that the language of the Bible is "literary, not scientific language; language thrown out at an object of consciousness not fully grasped, which inspired emotion. Evidently, if the object be one not fully to be grasped, and one to inspire emotion, the language of figure and feeling will satisfy us better about it, will cover more of what we seek to express, than the language of literal fact and science. The language of science about it will be below what we feel to be the truth."[39] In the same manner, the Aberglaube or extra belief, is poetry, not science. It has resulted in the concept of a literal Messiah for Israel and in a literal belief in physical resurrection for Christianity.[40]

Christ's value, Arnold says, is that he made religion personal, rather than only national and social. Prophecy and miracle are unnecessary in a personal religion, and if one attempts to use them, one is doomed to fail. This failure may lead to the abandonment of religion by the literal-minded masses, the ones who most need it guidance.[41] But the secret

and the method of Jesus need no miracles, no prophecy. The secret is the renunciation of the old life of sin and the rebirth into a life of goodness. To die with Christ is a figure of speech, not to be taken literally. The method of Jesus was to approach people in ways which they could understand, and he chastized only those whom he could not save, in order to save all the rest.

It is here that Arnold's purpose is most evident. He is interested in the national establishment of religion, which nevertheless is to remain a personal religion. By applying Jesus' method to the present, he considers the use of poetic figure justifiable, even when this way of stating a concept is incapable of scientific proof--logical proof as well, if one agrees with Bradley. In a word, Arnold is concerned with results, not with the establishment of methodology or of a new theology. Any method which will convince the literal-minded reader that he need not base his faith upon a literal interpretation of Scripture is justifiable, because it will preserve the faith of the literal reader. Plainly, Bradley had a point when he paraphrased Arnold's definition of religion: "It is religion when with morality you have--religion. I do not think we learn a very great deal from this."[42]

But it was not religion with which Arnold was primarily concerned, at least not with religion in its conventional sense. Arnold defines religion as morality touched with emotion. Bradley counters Arnold by saying that Arnold's

religion amounts to morality touched with religion. In other words, Bradley insists that religion is emotion, that the ends and the means are precisely the same. While Arnold was not the logician that Bradley was, there is little doubt that he might have avoided this logical impasse, had he meant religion to be defined as emotion. But if religion is expanded to include any logical system which provides for selflessness --humanism, for example--but which does not provide for a God, save in abstract terms, then Arnold's statement may stand. A better way of putting it would be to say that religion is morality touched with that special emotion which compels any person to think of other persons in such a manner as to be constantly aware of his conduct in terms of their welfare. For want of a better term, we will call this special emotion the eternal concept of righteousness which enables us to do right. If this concept be given the name of God, a name which most people believe they understand to some extent, then those people will do right because of their previous religious training. But even the lack of the name will be no deterrent to those people who do not recognize a God. They too will do right, because they will recognize the need for a moral code based upon human conduct, and the need for a positive emotional stimulus to make it work. Not all emotional stimuli will work; what is needed is a special stimulus related to the individual's capacity for response. With a Puritan, it may be response to fear. With a Methodist, it

may be response to love. The quality in each individual must be found by that individual, and the way in which it may be most readily found is through the abandonment of selfishness (the hatred of self transferred to other individuals) and the assumption of selflessness (the love of self multiplied infinitely until it embraces all other individuals).

This perhaps explains why Arnold's work was popular among churchmen and agnostics alike. The definition of religion which he suggests is perfectly workable, given his own terms. It may allow for the existence of God and at the same time allow for His non-existence as a person. If, however, one narrows the concept of religion to include only such beliefs as are theologies--beliefs which are predicated upon the existence of a God--then the statement Bradley makes is valid. The question is, What did Arnold mean?

There are abundant clues to his intention. From his father, he had long since learned to discard the anthropomorphic concept of God as a stern sort of super-man, a Father figure sitting in righteous judgement upon the world. He had also gone so far as to state that God must be taken as impersonal, because it is impossible to verify a personal God.[43]

With this in mind, it is not surprising to find Arnold regarding Christ as a teacher of men, rather than as a literal, only-begotten Son of God.[44] The literal belief in Christ as the only Son of God is part of Aberglaube, a myth which has grown out of the earlier myth that God is an extension of

Man, a sort of super-man who created Man in His own Image. This leads to Arnold's definition of Faith, "the being able to cleave to a power of goodness appealing to our higher and real self, not to our lower and apparent self."[45] In practice, it does not much matter if we give God the attributes of a super-person, or if we conceive of Christ as His only-begotten Son, provided we do not rest our entire faith upon this belief. The important thing, to Arnold, is to accept the provable as the hard core upon which Faith must rest if the myths surrounding God, Christ, and religion are disproved. Faith can be as strong as before, perhaps stronger. But if faith is allowed to rest solely upon the myths which are in danger of being disproved, then those people who have accepted the myths as literal truth will be left with no faith, no guide to righteousness or good conduct. The world will then, in truth, be plunged into anarchy.

Arnold believes that Christ was important in the sense that he was a focal point for Man's urge to perfect himself. He also realizes that, if the miracles with which Christ was credited are found to be untrue, Christ will also be found untrue, if he is "solidary" with the myths. By separating Christ from the myths, Arnold can save him for religion.[46] By a simple extension of logic, it is easy to see that Arnold puts the personalized God in the same category: If God is made solidary with the myths which have surrounded Him, then He will fall when the myths are disproved. God and Christ

are therefore important, not because their existence can be proved in a literal sense, but because they are needed.

Arnold reminds us that the three major creeds of Christianity are based on a strong literal belief in Scripture, and that they must fall along with the myths, unless they separate themselves from them: "Thus we have the three creeds: the so-called Apostle's Creed, popular science; the Nicene Creed, learned science; the Athanasian Creed, learned science with a strong dash of temper. And the two latter are founded on the first, taking its data just as they stand, but dressing them metaphysically."[47]

Arnold's principal message is that culture leads to understanding, which leads to "sweet reasonableness," which in turn leads to the death of the flesh and the birth of the spirit. Once this has been achieved, the New Jerusalem will be an accomplished fact. The New Jerusalem is a thing of the spirit, a state of mind. It is not the City of God as found literally in Revelation, nor is it the popular concept, a literal place laden with riches (or, as Arnold puts it, the literal believer's home stocked with furnishings and provisions in super-abundance). Here, as always, Arnold is conscious of the materialism of his time, and he cautions his reader against believing that material gain is in any way related to righteous conduct and the pleasure of God.[48] No religion, Arnold says, has the whole of it. "Protestantism has the method of Jesus with his secret too much left out of

mind; Catholicism has his secret with the method too much left out of mind. Neither has his unerring balance, his sweet reasonableness. But both have hold of a great truth, and get from it a great power."[49] The fact that each major branch of Christianity has "hold of a great truth" makes it possible for Arnold to hope that in his own day Protestants may be united in one fold, and that in some future time, Roman Catholics may also be included.[50]

In St. Paul and Protestantism, Arnold attacked the literal interpretation of the Bible and maintained that Protestantism generally was in error, since it took its Bible either literally or filtered through the studies of theologians who had done so. It was obvious to Arnold that there was error in this method, because experience had shown that the masses of mankind were as far from the spiritual New Jerusalem as ever. Mankind was perfecting itself neither as individuals nor in toto. In effect, then, he poses the question, What is to be done?

In Literature and Dogma, Arnold bases his plan for the redemption of Man on several key points, in effect answering the question he himself had set up in the earlier work. It is worth while to take up these points, not in the order in which he presented them, but in the order in which they seem best to apply to his theory of perfection. First, the masses of mankind are losing their religion, as well as their Bible. "Yet assuredly, of conduct, which is more than three-fourths

of human life, The Bible, whatever people may thus think and say, is the great inspirer; so that from the great inspirer of more than three-fourths of human life the masses of our society seem now to be cutting themselves off. This promises, certainly, if it does not already constitute, a very unsettled condition of things. And the cause of it lies in the Bible being made to depend upon a story, or set of asserted facts, which it is impossible to verify . . . "[61] An unsettled condition of things might well lead to revolution, and it is obvious that this was the last thing Arnold wanted to see. Although he grew even more conservative as he grew older, he had always been on the side of law, a strong central government, and repression of anarchy by force, if necessary. His principal statement, then, indicates his belief that the Bible and religion are necessary to the masses as elements which will control their conduct and make them content to remain subordinate to the due process of law.

The second important point in his argument concerns the reason for the peril in which the Bible and religion have found themselves. Scientific discoveries had, particularly in the fields of archaeology and biology, shown certain statements in the Bible to be untrue. Since almost all religions depended upon at least some literal reading of the Bible, religion itself would fall along with the Bible. This would be especially true when the members of the class most apt to take their Bible literally--the <u>proletaire</u> class, "the

class which makes all governments uneasy"--discovered that neither their Bible nor their religion had absolute literal truth. Given that the end that physical and violent revolution must be avoided at all costs, the simplest way to achieve this end is to control the proletariat--the class most apt to take active measures--by encouraging them to follow religion, the three-fourths of life concerned with conduct. It then becomes vital to protect the strength of the Bible and of religion. Since the Bible has been shown to be in error as to chronology and prophecy, and since miracles--even those of Christ--have been subject to doubt, it is necessary to shift the opinion of the literalists, to convince them that the lessons in the Bible are still valid, that the Bible was never intended to be interpreted literally, that the authors of the Bible wrote figuratively, poetically, and in terms of the spirit. Although Arnold is not sure how much of the Bible is to be taken as figurative, he assumes that "we cannot make sure of knowing exactly. All we can do is to get near it, reading him [Paul] with the sort of critical tact which the study of the human mind and its history, and the acquaintance with many great writers, naturally gives for following the movement of any one single great writer's thought; reading him also, without preconceived theories to which we want to make his thoughts fit themselves."[52] This statement serves two purposes; it disarms those of Arnold's critics who might attack him on the grounds that, although he may not be a good

enough linguist to ascertain when Paul is to be taken literally, there are others who may be able to do so; and it paves the way for Arnold's espousal of culture as the sure medium by which all classes can be led into social harmony.

This is the third point in the argument. Culture, hitherto restricted to the upper classes for the most part, enables one to gain the perspective necessary to interpret the Bible (a book concerned with conduct) correctly. It is the link between religion and physical science, the one force which can reconcile the differences between the two. It is also a possible common meeting ground for the three major classes, an area in which similarities can be emphasized and differences minimized. Culture enables us to see that Paul had the method and the secret of Christ and that, if we read Paul correctly, we too shall have them.

The fourth point Arnold makes is that Paul condemned disunion. Although there is disunion among Christians now, this disunion is fundamentally based upon the myriad literal interpretations of Paul. No one has got Paul exactly right. If we return to the spirit of Paul, which we can now do, having discarded preconceptions and literal interpretations alike, we will find that the major differences among sects will disappear, that all Protestants will certainly be united, that in some future time the Roman Catholics will also be drawn into the fold. All sects will be united under the standard of "sweet reasonableness," the secret of Jesus.

By using the method of Jesus, therefore, approaching each man in terms which he can understand, condemning only those who are beyond redemption, we shall all be able to reach the secret of Jesus. Inferentially, since Jesus is not to be taken as a literal son of God, his divinity is no more and no less than that of any other man who does God's will, who saves others with himself. The door is thus opened to all men of good will, including those who regard Christ as a teacher, but who do not accept his divinity.

This union of Christians, perhaps of all men of good will, willserve many purposes. It will present a united front to the forces of anarchy at work in society. It will minimize the differences between social classes by breaking the strangle hold the upper class has had upon the Church of England. It will pave the way for a Church-State by, in effect, becoming the national religion. If all members of the State belong to one common religion, however broadly defined, then the State itself will reflect that religion, will support it, and will become its executive branch. Finally, this union will prevent any sect from breaking away from the Church-State as did early Lutherans, and contributing to a contemporary equivalent of the Peasant's War.

Arnold's comment upon the coalition of several early church communities and the subsequent coalition of Church and State is especially noteworthy at this point. He maintains that the Church gained strength by this coalition, and

that it lent moral force to the State.[53] Implicit is the belief that a present union of Church and State will enforce harmonious relations among the social classes. The period in which Church and State were most closely allied was the Middle Ages. While Arnold did not attempt to defend the Middle Ages intellectually or from an historical point of view, he was by no means inclined to accept the optimistic view that history is a record of steadily increasing achievement.[54] History might well be no more than the record of a series of blunders. Despite their social injustice, however, and despite their supposed anti-intellectualism, the Middle Ages appealed to Arnold. As Farrell indicates, something in Arnold was responsive to the charm of the period. Perhaps this something was Arnold's desire for a stable social order. There was an order, a hierarchy in the Middle Ages, with God at the top; and God's sanction was given to those who put down, however ruthlessly, any attempt to overthrow the hierarchy. The Church lent moral authority to the power of the State, and the State and Church were able to act as one to maintain order and harmony among the various hierarchal levels. This is not to say that Arnold would have headed a movement back to the Middle Ages; he was well aware of the injustices of the period, of its "anti-intellectualism." But there were things to be learned from the Middle Ages, as well. Social stability and the power of the Church were among them.

Arnold had before him the example of France, which turned briefly to Communism, following the war of 1870. A violent overthrow of the existing government was the last thing he wanted for England. Change to Arnold meant a gradual and peaceable change within the existing structure. It implied the continuance of the major social classes within the existing order.[55] It provided for the amelioration of social injustice by making religion personal, so that each individual would be responsive to his conscience, and so that no one would be able to take refuge behind some impersonal doctrine that might allow him a margin whereby he might oppress others. While the three main levels of society were to be retained, each would strive to perfect its best self, and that best self would be represented in the State. The unifying force would be the Church, a national religion to which each individual would subscribe because he believed in it personally. Since the Church would be broad enough to include all existing sects, and since major differences would be allowed to coexist, no one would be barred from the Church.

Arnold was also aware of the destructive forces which had compelled the virtual separation of Church and State in the Renaissance, and which had brought ordered civilization to an end. One force was social injustice, but this could be remedied by making each man's conscience a king. Another force was the separation of various sects from the main body of the Church; a Church which could contain differences of

doctrine until they either became a part of the major doctrine or were disproved to the satisfaction of all was the answer. The final force was science, that perpetual mixed blessing. Arnold's answer was to prevent any further split between religion and science by the continued development of literary culture at all levels of society; literature was the great link, the harmonizer.

This was the meaning of Literature and Dogma. It was not primarily designed as a work to inspire people to read their Bibles more intelligently. It was a work intended to reaffirm the moral value of the Bible and of religion as a guide to conduct and a safeguard against violent revolution. In a sense, it was the religious side of Culture and Anarchy, another effort to unify the existing social order, another attempt to provide for peaceful change and for the establishment of social justice short of violence.

The virtual equation of Christianity and politics was of course not original with Matthew Arnold. Coleridge had advocated a Church-State, and Thomas Arnold had gone so far as to indicate the role which the Christian Church must play in such a combination. The upper and middle classes had a duty to help and to educate the poor. The poor had an obligation to refrain from violence. Christian values should be the great consideration in matters of foreign policy. Finally, a Christian education should be mandatory for all children.[56] In three main respects Matthew Arnold's works reflect the

teachings of his father. Both subscribe to the idea of the State as the chief agency in the moral and intellectual improvement of mankind. Both recommend disinterested consideration of social problems. Both advocate better middle-class education as an important means of increasing national welfare.[57] But it remained for Matthew Arnold to speak out in Culture and Anarchy and in Literature and Dogma in defense of the dual role of the modern state, a leader in both a religious and a secular sense. Without moral values as a guide, the power of the State would be oppressive and brutal. Without the power of the State to implement the moral guidance of the Church, moral values would be set aside and the State would become subject to decay from within.

The battle was far from won. Literature and Dogma was attacked on religious grounds, on logical grounds, and on scholarly grounds. Arnold's answer was God and the Bible, a defense of the stand which he had taken and of the way in which he had taken it.

NOTES

[1]Letters, II, 11, June 12, 1869.

[2]Arnold seems to have been influenced by his father's statement in Introductory Lectures on Modern History, p. 26, to the effect that "all religious knowledge [was communicated] to mankind through the Jewish people, and all intellectual civilization through the Greeks . . . " Thomas Arnold saw the successful balance coming through Christianity: "To the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but to them who believe, both Jews and Greeks, CHRIST . . . " Quoted in Stanley, Life, I, 359.

[3]To his mother, November 13, 1869. Letters, II, 21.

[4]Preface to Popular Edition, 1887. Super, VI, 3. In all my references to St. Paul and Protestantism, I have followed the full text of the 1870 edition, as given in Super. The Popular Edition was greatly abridged.

[5]Preface to 1870 edition, Super VI, 124-125. Note that Arnold is repeating the theme of Chapter IV of Culture and Anarchy.

[6]Super, VI, 8.

[7]Super, VI, 20.

[8]Super, VI, 10. See 1 Corinthians 6:1-2 for Paul's view of the role between Church and State.

[9]Super, VI, 15.

[10]Super, VI, 19.

[11]Super, VI, 23.

[12]Super, VI, 33. Arnold believed in experience as the test of truth. This was one of the fundamental areas of agreement between him and Newman, who did not believe in emotional conversions, and who justified his change of faith on conclusions reached after long reflection upon the apparent failure of the Church of England. In later years, Newman also used experience and a sense of psychological fitness as tests of truth. "I had a great dislike of paper logic. For myself, it was not logic that carried me on; as well might one say that the quicksilver in the barometer changes the weather. It is the concrete being that reasons; pass a number of years, and I find my mind in a new place; how? The whole man moves; paper logic is but the record of it." Newman also cites St. Ambrose, "Non in dialectica complacuit Deo salvum facere populum suum." John Henry, Cardinal Newman, Apologia Pro Vita Sua (New York: Norton, 1968), p. 136.

[13]Super, VI, 40. Arnold agreed with this definition, and it is in this light that the term "sons of God" in "Rugby Chapel" should be considered.

[14]Super, VI, 42-47. The rebirth in Christ, which is an essential part of Christian doctrine, is the source of Arnold's earlier use of the phrase "Children of the Second Birth." See Arnold's letter to Clough September 23, 1849, "Rugby Chapel," Balder Dead, and "The Servants of God."

[15]Super, VI, 49. Cf. "Rugby Chapel," in which Arnold emphasizes the divisions of mankind, rather than the unity.

[16]Super, VI, 291-292.

[17]Super, VI, 51.

[18]Super, VI, 52.

[19]Super, VI, 69

[20]Super, VI, 20-21.

[21]For his information concerning the Puritan and Church of England positions in 1660, Arnold was indebted to John Stoughton's The Church of the Restoration (London, 1870). Dr. Stoughton was a Congregationalist minister and a friend of Arnold, who praised him in a letter to his mother, September 15, 1869. See Super, VI, 72, and note.

[22]Stanley, Life, I, 170. In a letter to James Marshall January 23, 1840, Thomas Arnold wrote, "I look to the full development of the Christian Church in its perfect form, as the Kingdom of God, for the most effective removal of all evil, and promotion of all good; and I can understand no perfect Church or perfect State, without their blending into one in this ultimate form." Matthew Arnold's position is that the State should be "of the religion of all its citizens, without the fanaticism of any." (Democratic Education, Super, II, 198.) This State would be strong, unlike the present one, which "has not enough shown a spirit of initiative, and individuals have too much thought that it sufficed if they acted with entire liberty and if nobody had any business to control them." (Letter to M. Fontanes, December 15, 1878, Letters, II, 173.) Arnold went so far as to suggest that

the government be radically changed to gain this strength. "What people are wanting here is a totally different system of Government--an état de siége, in short--only carried out with perfect humanity and quietness." (Letter to his wife, December 22, 1880, Letters, II, 187.) Robbins, op. cit., p. 145, says that Arnold "makes the State Church the vehicle also of Christ's distinctive teaching. This extension both Coleridge and Thomas Arnold would have rejected with horror as not only illegitimate but also irreligious." However, Williamson, The Liberalism of Thomas Arnold, p. 207, claims that the Christian State was the ideal of both father and son. Thomas Arnold "conceived of the end of the State as 'the intellectual and moral improvement of mankind, in order to make possible their reaching their greatest perfection, and enjoying their highest happiness.'" Williamson cites Thomas Arnold, MWA, p. 331.

[23]Super, VI, 92.

[24]Super, VI, 96.

[25]Arnold cites St. Paul on this point. "Paul, too, be it remembered, condemned disunion in the society of Christians as much as he declined politics. This is decisive against the Puritan allegation that it does not matter whether the society of Christians is united or not, and that there are even great advantages in separatism." Super, VI, 105.

[26]Super, VI, 106-107.

[27]Super, VI, 121.

[28]June 15, 1870, Letters, II, 35-36.

[29]To mother November 15, 1870, Letters, II, 45-46.

[30]Letters, II, 43-44. Trilling, Matthew Arnold, pp. 278-280, finds no basis for the charge that Arnold was reactionary. He mentions Leonard Woolf (After the Deluge) and Ernest Barker (Political Thought in England from Herbert Spencer to the Present Day) as two critics who maintain the opposite; "but to rescue Arnold from the charges of reaction, we need only carry him out of the realm of metaphysico-political theory into the realm of practice . . . to see that his practical recommendations are such to make him, if a reactionary at all, a reactionary of a very strange kind."

[31]To his mother, January 31, 1871. Letters, II, 48.

[32]To his mother, March 20, 1871. Letters, II, 52.

[33]Letters, II, 85-86.

[34]Super, VI, 150-151. I have followed the American edition of 1883, based upon the London edition of 1876, as given in Super. Super notes that the later British edition was heavily excised.

[35]S. C. Chew in A Literary History of England, ed. Albert C. Baugh (New York: Appleton, Century, Crofts, 1948), p. 1414. Trilling also notes the flaw in Arnold's logic.

[36]Super, VI, 168.

[37]Super notes the similarity between Arnold's statement here and Shairp's in Culture and Religion in Some of Their Relations (New York, 1871). See Super, VI, 173 and note. Trilling, Matthew Arnold, says that F. H. Bradley, while fundamentally in agreement with Arnold in that religion is essentially a moral doing, a doing of what is moral, indicated a tautology in Arnold's reasoning.

[38]Super, VI, 184-185.

[39]Super, VI, 189. Arnold here returns to his angle of attack in St. Paul and Protestantism. By suggesting that the language of the Bible was figurative, he sought to demolish the theological arguments of the Fundamentalists.

[40]Super, VI, 212-213.

[41]Super, VI, 218; 233.

[42]Cited in Trilling, Matthew Arnold, p. 340.

[43]Super, VI, 370. Note that this completes Arnold's earlier statement regarding God: the eternal righteousness who loves righteousness and enables us to do right. God then becomes a non-person, a concept. Insofar as this concept is received by man, i.e., man is capable of receiving the concept; man contains God within himself.

[44]Super, VI, 310.

[45]Super, VI, 315.

[46]Super, VI, 324.

[47]Super, VI, 343.

[48]Super, VI, 344-351. It should be noted that Arnold's entire argument against literal interpretation of Scripture is based upon the concept of the Second Birth. Once the Second Birth is conceived of solely as a renunciation of material things and an acceptance of the existence of--and participation in--an eternal spirit of righteousness which is at once outside Man and within him, then literal interpretation of any point, from God to the New Jerusalem, becomes not only unnecessary but impossible.

[49]Super, VI, 352.

[50]See Super, VI, 106-107. William Robbins, The Ethical Idealism of Matthew Arnold, p. 177, says that "the fact that the interpretative ideas Arnold advanced or championed have become commonplaces of modern thought has obscured the freshness and force with which they appealed to a large number of his contemporaries." However, Robbins further states, p. 187, that "one is bound to find a complete lack of realism in Arnold's vision of a 'transformed' Catholic Church of the future as the probable form of a truly universal Christendom." In view of the developments within the Catholic Church since the publication of Robbins' study, it would seem that Arnold was far more "realistic" than Robbins thought.

[51]Super, VI, 363.

[52]Super, VI, 20. The quotation is from St. Paul and Protestantism, but it paves the way for Arnold's later statements in Literature and Dogma; the gist of it is repeated there.

[53]Super, VI, 96.

[54]For a discussion of the meaning of the Middle Ages to Matthew Arnold, see John P. Farrell, "Matthew Arnold and the Middle Ages: The Uses of the Past," Victorian Studies, XIII, 3 (March 1970), 319-338. Farrell believes that Arnold considered the period to be non-intellectual.

[55]Trilling, Matthew Arnold, p. 382, quotes from "Equality" to demonstrate Arnold's belief in a classless society: "Certainly equality will never of itself alone give us a perfect civilisation. But with such inequality as ours, a perfect civilisation is impossible." The modifier "ours" suggests a different meaning. McCarthy, Matthew Arnold and the Three Classes, pp. 74-76, sees Arnold favoring the aristocracy: "If we do not permit ourselves to be lulled by the air of conscientiousness with which he dulls our critical sense, we notice, especially in the matter of 'defects,' that the graver sins of the lower classes are matched against the peccadilloes of the aristocracy." On the basis of Arnold's letters and works, I believe that he did not favor a classless society. That there was too much "inequality" among the classes, he was the first to admit, but the very world "equality" implies separateness.

[56]See Williamson, The Liberalism of Thomas Arnold, pp. 170-171. Williamson indicates the extent to which the ideals of Thomas Arnold were applied by Matthew Arnold.

[57]Williamson, p. 205.

VI

RELIGIOUS HUMANISM

God and the Bible is a defense of Literature and Dogma, a defense rendered necessary by the criticism of Bradley, who attacked it on logical grounds, and by the sniping of those Biblical scholars who feared that years of textual criticism would be wiped out. By their standards, Arnold must have seemed an amateur whose avocation was their life work.[1] But Arnold was not particularly concerned with textual criticism. He was, as Trilling puts it, interested in preserving faith "through the demolition of dogma, to the end that ethics might emerge and fraternity prevail."[2]

Significantly, perhaps, Arnold did not try to answer the charges of inconsistency and illogic: he shifted the point of attack by saying that he had been addressing a different audience, one which was not concerned with textual criticism nor with the finer points of logic. "We did not write for a public of professors; we did not write to interest the learned and curious. We wrote to restore the use and enjoyment of the Bible to plain people, who might be in danger of losing

it."[3] This is his rationale for Literature and Dogma. "Our present business, he says in reference to God and the Bible, "is with the religion of the Bible; to show a new aspect of this, wherein it shall appear true, winning, and commanding."[4] Arnold's choice of words is interesting--or unfortunate. Does he mean that the Bible shall be shown to be true? Or does he mean that it shall only appear to be true, winning and commanding? If the latter meaning is taken, then the sentence may be paraphrased in this fashion: The religion of the Bible must appear to be true, it must attract new followers, and it must govern the conduct of all its followers. This meaning brings Arnold close to the position of T. S. Eliot's narrator in "The Rock:"

> Our age is an age of moderate virtue
> And of moderate vice
> When men will not lay down the Cross
> Because they will never assume it.
> Yet nothing is impossible, nothing,
> To men of faith and conviction.
> Let us therefore make perfect our will.
> O GOD, help us. "The Rock" Chorus VIII

In other words, Arnold seems to command his reader to believe that religion is true, even if it may not be true, because one needs religion.

The argument in favor of Arnold's use of religion as a means to lead all men into a fraternity based upon ethics is

compelling. His letter to his mother, indicating that he may not have rendered the meaning of St. Paul "with perfect exactness" indicates the degree to which he rules out literal meaning. His purpose, he states is to break down the narrow reading of Paul in order to demolish the spirit of sect and intolerance that has grown from literalism. It is perhaps true, as he says, that no one now can be sure that he knows precisely what St. Paul meant at any given point, but it is also true that Arnold did not much seem to care, once he had made his point regarding the secret and the method of Christ. One is thus tempted to ask whether, since St. Paul is to be taken figuratively, Matthew Arnold is not also to be taken figuratively? Certainly Arnold was aware that ideas and the forms they take may change, indeed will change.

> The freethinking of one age is the common-sense of the next, and the Christian world will certainly learn to transform beliefs which it now thinks to be untransformable. The way will be found. And the new Christianity will call forth more effort in the individual who uses it than the old, will require more open and instructed minds for its reception; and this is progress. But we live at the beginning of a great transition which cannot well be accomplished without confusion and distress. I do not pretend to operate a general change of religious opinion, such as can only come to pass through the operation of many labourers working, all of them, towards a like end, and by the instrumentality, in a very considerable degree, of the clergy . . . . even one man in his short term may do something to ease a severe transition, to diminish violent shocks in it and bitter pain. With this end in view, I have addressed myself to men such as are happily not rare in this country, men of free and active minds, who, though they may be profoundly dissatisfied with the received theology, are yet interested in religion and more or less acquainted with the Bible. These I have endeavoured to help; and they, if they are helped, will in their turn help others.

> To one country and nation, and to one sort of persons in it, and to one moment in its religious history, have I addressed myself; and if the attempt thus confessedly partial has even a partial success, I am enough rewarded.[5]

Preface to God and the Bible

The entire text of God and the Bible is devoted to the thesis that most readers who now do not understand the Bible will be enabled to do so, once they see "what the Bible really is . . . . So we sought to show that the Old Testament is really a majestic homage to the grandeur of righteousness, or conduct, and a sublime witness to its necessity; while the New Testament, again, is really an incomparable elucidation by Jesus Christ of what righteousness in fact and in truth is. And there can be no question that books of which this is the real character do concern men vitally."[6] The concluding part of God and the Bible completes Arnold's argument. "The misapprehending and materialising of his religion, the long and turbid stage of popular Christianity, was, however, inevitable. But to give light and impulsion to future time, Jesus stamps this Christianity, even from the very moment of its birth, as, though inevitable, not worthy of its name; as ignorant and transient, and requiring all who would be truly children of the kingdom to rise beyond it."[7] This is perhaps what Arnold means by the test of experience. That which is of value shall prevail, shall be retained; that which is valueless shall be cast out. No belief is permanent or is to be taken as unchanging, unless it has been flexible enough to

withstand the test of experience. The Eternal Righteousness and the setting aside of evil ways in order to adopt good ones are such beliefs. Everyone who pretends to goodness can subscribe to these beliefs in any time. They are broad enough to comprehend almost all men. They are also broad enough to be almost valueless, since, by Arnold's own test of experience, they have failed to alleviate the ills of the world.

Arnold himself saw the danger of expanding the ethical framework to the extent that it no longer becomes a guide at all. His subsequent statement in The Church of England, which followed God and the Bible by less than a year, narrows the definition considerably. "I regard the Church of England as, in fact, a great national society for the promotion of what is commonly called goodness, and for promoting it through the most effectual means possible, the only means which are really and truly effectual for the object: through the means of the Christian religion and of the Bible."[8]

While the definition of the ethical framework in terms of the Church of England is considerably narrower than the "Righteousness which loveth righteousness," it links the Church and religion to social problems. Arnold says that, if necessary, he is quite willing that his previous writings give way to the more important business of teaching men their duty and assisting them to do good. While this is laudable in one sense, it also serves Arnold's purpose by denying the validity or relevance of the textual and scholarly criticism

which had attended Literature and Dogma and God and the Bible. Arnold then takes up the point of favoritism, upon which he had touched in Culture and Anarchy. "The Church is supposed to be an appendage to the Barbarians, as I have somewhere, in joke, called it; an institution devoted above all to the landed gentry, but also to the propertied and satisfied classes generally; favouring immobility, preaching submission, and reserving transformation in general for the other side of the grave." In the earlier work, Culture and Anarchy, it was not quite the joke he would now have us believe. Arnold in fact hopes that the Church will not be merely the appendage of the Barbarians, but his denial is really an apology. "Such a Church, I admit, cannot possibly nowadays attach the working classes, or be viewed with anything but disfavour by them. But certainly the superstitious worship of existing social facts, a devoted obsequiousness to the landed and propertied and satisfied classes, does not inhere in the Christian religion. The Church does not get it from the Bible."[9] In an effort to popularize religion, Arnold considers the possibility that there is communism in the Bible. "If we say . . . that the Bible utterly condemns all violence, revolt, fierceness, and self-assertion, then we may safely say . . . that there is certainly communism in the Bible."[10] Arnold appeals directly to the working classes, telling them that the teaching of the Bible provides for all the social gains that they might hope to get through communism, without

the use of violence. He insists that not only is class privilege abhorrent to the spirit of the Bible; it is also "not the authentic tradition of the Church of England. It is important to insist upon this, important for the Church to feel and avow it, because no institution with these prejudices could possibly carry the working classes with it. And it is necessary for the Church, if it is to live, that it should carry the working classes with it."[11] Arnold might well have added that it is necessary for a state, if it is to live, that it should carry the working classes with it.

Arnold's appeal to the working classes is practical, but he is not always candid. When he states that the Church of England has not always supported the propertied and satisfied classes, one may well ask which Church he meant. There is little doubt that devoted and incorruptible churchmen always existed, but the history of the Church of England, especially during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, indicates that these were an almost silent minority who did not represent the main stream of Church policy. There were some, like John Wesley and Thomas Arnold, who were not so silent. It is the cry for reform that tells us that there was great need for reform, that the Church was sympathetic to the propertied and that it often paid little or no attention to the needs of the lower classes.

Arnold is constantly aware of the need for the Church to improve its image, and it is to his credit that he insists

that reforms be more than skin-deep. The works of the clergy towards the "popular, the working classes" must not be overlooked, he says. "But this is not enough without a positive sympathy with popular ideals. And the great popular ideal is, as I have said, an immense renovation and transformation of things, a far better and happier society in the future than ours is now."[12] One of the ways in which this positive sympathy with popular ideals may be evoked to the point where the clergy profess and preach it, is to return to the early message of Christendom, the Gospel. "It is really well to consider, how entirely our religious teaching and preaching . . . turn on quite other matters from the fundamental matter of the primitive gospel, or good news, of our Saviour himself. This gospel was the ideal of popular hope and longing, and immense renovation and transformation of things: <u>the kingdom of God</u>."[12]

No doubt Arnold is sincere in his desire to reach the popular classes, but there is at least room for question as to his method. Even if one grants that the Gospel was the "ideal of popular hope and longing" in Christ's time, this assumption does not warrant Arnold in believing that it can be the popular hope and longing of his own day. Without becoming involved in religious controversy, it is safe to say that few Christian sects preach literally the kingdom of God on earth. But this is precisely what Arnold meant, what he preached, what he wanted others to believe. "This was the

ideal of Jesus:--the establishment on earth of God's kingdom, of felicity, not by the violent processes of our Fifth Monarchy men, or of the German Anabaptists, or of the French Communists, but by the establishment on earth of God's righteousness. But it is a contracted and insufficient conception of the gospel which takes into view only the establishment of <u>righteousness</u>, and does not also take into view the establishment of <u>the kingdom</u>." The establishment of the kingdom implies "an immense renovation and transformation of our actual state of things . . . . This, then, which is the ideal of the popular classes, of the multitude everywhere, is a legitimate ideal."[13]

What Arnold sees clearly, then, is that there is no good reason for the "popular classes" to follow the banner of Christianity, unless the banner becomes a symbol for the kingdom of God on earth. The appeal inheres, not from a sense of religious duty, but from a realization that material things, as well as harmony, can be achieved in this way, and that there is no such onus attached to Christianity as is attached to most revolutionary movements. Perhaps Arnold was aware of this also. It is certain that he used Christianity as the only alternative to violent revolution, and yet that he equated it in other ways to the violent social revolution which he had already observed in France.

In 1871, Arnold had written to his mother that "the Paris convulsion is an explosion of that fixed resolve of

the working class to count for something and live, which is destined to make itself so much felt in the coming time, and to disturb so much which dreamed it would last for ever. It is the French working man's clearly putting his resolve before himself and acting upon it, while the working man elsewhere is in a haze about it, that makes France such a focus for the revolutionists of all Europe." In 1866, he had told his mother that the French citizen felt himself a part of the State, that when he was repressed by the State, it was as if he was exercising his own control upon himself.[14] Five years had been sufficient to show Arnold and the world that there was a strong class sense in France, and that the revolution became not only possible but necessary when the working man felt that the government which "repressed" him was no longer an extension of himself nor representative of his needs. When one spoke of the French Revolution in 1871, one assumed that it was the new revolution, not the one of 1789 nor the one of 1848. The earlier revolutions had already become somewhat sanctified by becoming historical artifacts. Historical revolutions are far more pleasant to observe than are revolutions which are taking place in the present and in one's neighbor's yard. The blood has been mopped up, and the sounds of gunfire are still.

But it would be a mistake to assume that Arnold was motivated primarily by fear, that he wanted only to patch up surface defects in the Church of England, or that he was

concerned with the welfare of the "popular classes" only insofar as they represented a threat to ordered existence. Like his father, Arnold was concerned with cause, rather than with effects. Good works are very well, he tells his sister Suzy, "perhaps there is nothing in which one may more safely employ oneself, or which brings one, and properly brings, so much happiness as beneficence. But do not you feel sometimes anxious to attack the condition of things which seems to bring about the evils on which your beneficence has to be exercised? When once you have got it into your head that this condition <u>does</u> in great measure bring the evils about, and that it is in great measure remediable, I think one can hardly rest satisfied with merely alleviating the evils that arise under it."[15]

That the future would be perilous, Arnold did not doubt, but he faced it with hope and courage. In 1874 he told his sister Fan, "When I see the conviction of the ablest and most serious men round me that a great change must come, a great plunge must be taken, I think it well, I must say, instead of simply dilating, as both the religious and the anti-religious world are fond of doing, on the plunge's utterness, tremendousness, and awfulness, to show mankind that it need not be in terror and despair, that everything essential to its progress stands firm and unchanged."[16]

By 1881 he could see some results of the revolution. In a letter to his friend, M. Fontanes, he says that Man is

beginning to satisfy the needs of his varied nature, now that he has been freed from the narrow religious world. "I think this revolution is happening everywhere . . . . It is, like all inevitable revolutions, a salutary one, but it greatly requires watching and guiding. The growing desire, throughout the community, for amusement and pleasure; the wonderful relaxation, in the middle class, of the old strictness . . . have their good side. They belong to this revolution of which I speak. The awakening demand for beauty . . . is another sign of the revolution, and a clearly favourable sign of it."[17] As Arnold sees it, men of all classes, and particularly those of the middle class, are developing toward perfection in all areas. Materialism, which has been fostered by the narrow forms of religion, and which has given rise to ugliness and Gemeinheit, is being challenged by the search for beauty.

To his sister Jane, he was less optimistic. The revolution of which he spoke so confidently to M. Fontanes "is before us in England too, though it has not actually commenced." Still, he is hopeful for the future, and he recalls "the great Hebrew prophets, with their conviction, so distasteful to the rulers and politicians of their times, of the inevitability of a profound revolution; their conviction, too, of the final emergence of a better state of things."[18] There is no reason to doubt Arnold's desire for a change.

Arnold was still dubious about Americans. The bulk of them he calls Philistines, but he has hopes that the wholesome condition of life in the United States will lead to the defeat of Philistinism there. This judgement is, however, based upon hearsay; when Arnold actually had an opportunity to stay with an American middle-class family, he found that it compared most favorably with the English middle-class families he had observed. "The whole family have, compared with our middle class at home, that buoyancy, enjoyment, and freedom from constraint which are everywhere in America, and which confirmed me in all I have said about the way in which the aristocratic class acts as an incubus upon our middle class at home."[19] Arnold believed that the lower classes wanted to rise into middle-class respectability; if the middle class was afflicted with Gemeinheit, the rising lower classes would also become common and humdrum. The "rise" of the middle class, the lower class, or indeed any class, is common to every era; but Arnold finds special meaning in this rise. He greatly admired Vico's Scienza Nuova, and he sees in his own time the continuous shift of power from one group to another. The Age of Gods, according to Vico, is succeeded by the Age of Heroes; the Age of Heroes by the Human Age. When the Human Age degenerates, the nation in question has three possible courses. One is to regress to barbarism, the Age of Gods; another is to be saved by the conquest of a still-strong people; and the last is to find

a strong hero to lead the nation back into the second stage. As Trilling says, it is to the credit of both Arnolds, father and son, that they did not turn to the hero, as did Carlyle. They turned rather to the State, "no mere constable but a creative agency; if its essence is power its aim is human good."[20]

Matthew Arnold sees the degeneration of the Human Age of the Viconian cycle, not as an inevitable occurence, but as a probability which may be averted. The discord during the third stage, which leads to its degeneration, comes about because of the intense spirit of competition among men and among classes. It comes about also, Arnold suggests, as a result of doing as one likes. This state of affairs can be managed once the State becomes a strong moral force, once the liberty of the individual is restrained to the point that competition becomes impossible.

One of the early forms of competition, as Arnold recognizes, is imitation. It leads the middle class to attempt to ape the upper class, and it leads the lower classes to seek to rise into the middle class. In "A Lay Sermon" (1884) Arnold lauds those who, dissatisfied with "merely living the life of those classes, came to the East-end, and such men are the true saviours of society."[21] Arnold sees the upper class "possessing and enjoying," and the middle class "desiring nothing better than to possess and enjoy too . . . . but there may also be conceived here as presented to our view a

great receptacle and limbo in which the people who have failed and fallen or been hurt and wounded, and whom the excess of production and competition which the trading classes carry on have turned out . . . " Arnold recognizes the good in those of the successful classes who have come to bring solace to the failures and the fallen, but he warns that conventional Christianity, with its preternatural and miraculous aspect, will not do. It leads to an Age of Gods, perhaps, or to an Age of Heroes; it does not lead to the ideal of the Human Age.

This ideal depends upon a growth in all phases of human activity, Arnold maintains. The secret and the method of Christ cannot be utilized "until the domestic affections and the social impulses have been cultivated and verified, until the sense of duty has been quickened, until the pleasures of art have been laid open." Love, fraternity, morality, and culture must walk hand-in-hand, because they are "like sister-islands seen/Linking their coral arms under the sea." The equation of Vico's cyclic theory with the progress toward the New Jerusalem is nothing new with Arnold. In his concern with the welfare of the middle class so that the lower class will have a worthy goal to which to aspire, in his fear of revolution in violent form which might precipitate humanity back to the Age of Heroes--or worse, that of anthropomorphic Gods--the link between the zenith of the Human Age and the New Jerusalem can be traced almost from the beginning.

There is an inevitability in the development of the working class, Arnold says, in that it seeks to follow the middle class. But the middle class may develop into an example worth of emulation by improved education and by the "practice of a rational, large, and elevating system of local government." More equitable representation may stave off the violence Arnold fears, and the development of the middle class in terms of cultural and moral goals, rather than financial ones, will perhaps minimize the competitive spirit Arnold had already noted.[22]

By 1887 Arnold's concern had shifted to Ireland. As he saw it, the point of greatest danger lay in the violent means taken by Irish Radicals to achieve independence. Ireland had to be kept in the English sphere to keep England strong, but there was much that could be done short of granting absolute independence. Violence by the Irish would only serve to alienate Irish supporters in England. As early as 1886, Arnold had pointed out the impossibility of peace while English absentee landlords bled Ireland white. "I do not wish to have anarchy in Ireland," he wrote Jane, "or to disestablish the Church of England; but Lord Clanricarde as an Irish landlord, and Lord Lonsdale as the patron of forty livings, have become impossible. They must be seriously dealt with."[23] Like his father, Arnold was interested in Ireland as an example of Puritan misrule. Both favored the establishment of stronger local government, which would more fairly represent the

populace; and both favored reducing the power of the English absentee landlord.[24]

In "The Zenith of Conservatism" Arnold in part prophesies the British Commonwealth of a later time. He sees that Ireland must remain a part of the Empire, but he wants strong local government to deal with local matters.[25] In "Up to Easter" and "From Easter to August" he restates his alarm at the Irish problem in somewhat different fashion. Wrongs there are, and they should be redressed, but violence must be crushed.[26] Characteristically, Arnold is determined to be fair; if he seeks strong punitive action against Irish extremists, it is no more than he has asked for earlier against English extremists. Characteristically too, Arnold is faced with a dilemma; although the Irish have right on their side, order must be maintained. Arnold's sense of right and justice is in direct conflict with his respect for law, and one recalls his statement that revolution must be accomplished by "due process of law." Somewhat predictably, Arnold's last word is a defense of this due process of law.

The opposition between Arnold's sense of righteousness and his desire for order upheld by law is an old conflict. It stems from his ability to see the abstract in clear terms, and his corresponding inability to see the concrete and deal with it on its own terms. Revolution by due process of law is a case in point. As an abstract statement, it is commendable, but it fails to consider exceptions. In the case of

Ireland, for example, it is extremely doubtful that any measure of independence would have been obtained "by due process of law." One needs only to look at the American Revolution for a parallel case. In each instance, freedom from an unjust set of laws, created and maintained by the very people to whose advantage they worked, was possible only through violent revolution--without due process of law. Arnold's recurrent failure is his inability to recognize the concrete instances wherein the abstract ideal must give way.

Initially, as has been shown, Arnold was concerned with the individual and with his search for perfection. The balanced individual is one who comes to his best at all points. He does not neglect the cultural self for the religious self, nor does he neglect the intellectual self for the physical self. It is always well to remember that Arnold himself was active in the fields of poetry, criticism, sociology, religion, and to some extent politics. His was a far-ranging mind with many interests. It is equally important to remember that Arnold enjoyed people and activities; that he was a warm and loving brother, husband, and father; that his friends were many and varied; and that he enjoyed walking, fishing, and shooting. All these aspects of Arnold indicate his ability to practise what he preached, and one reads with affection his letters dealing with Toss, the Persian cat, and with Kai, the "dachshound." The impression one carries away is that of a man who is at peace with himself and with his world, a man

who has discovered that the goal of life is joy in living, and that only he who has varied interests--who has come to his best at all points--can achieve that joy. The placidity of Arnold's last years was perhaps due to his espousal of the cause of order through the due process of law. When one has faith that all wrongs may eventually be righted by legal means, one is no longer faced with a fresh decision to be made at every step of the way.

In Arnold's plan, the perfected individual becomes a Son of God, a Child of the Light. But it would be impossible for a truly perfected individual not to be concerned with other individuals; his varied interests would of necessity involve him with others, and his sense of moral fitness would demand that he assist others to reach for perfection. In the course of time, many Sons of God working together to assist others will bring about a perfected society, the New Jerusalem. The zenith of the Human Age, once reached, may be continued indefinitely. Although Trilling has said that Arnold's ideal was a classless society, I do not believe this to be so.[27] As I have indicated earlier, Arnold's essay "Equality" by its very definition implies separate groups. In addition, Arnold recognizes an unalterable fact of human existence: all men are not created equal nor do all men have the same endowments, physical or mental. There may be an abandonment of social classes based on money or upon property--Arnold's stand upon these matters is clear--but intellectual levels

and levels of moral achievement will always separate some men from others.

In purely abstract terms, Arnold succeeded in bringing social problems to the attention of his readers. In concrete terms, he fared less well. To Arnold, every trade unionist was a potential revolutionary, prepared to storm Parliament with a red flag streaming from his bayonet. As McCarthy says, Arnold was too much out of touch with "the common people" to realize that the responsible union men could never become a jacquerie.[28] Arnold's failure to know "the common people" stems from a personal fastidiousness, rather than from a lack of concern. Whitman's comment to the effect that "Arnold always gives you the impression that he hates to touch the dirt--the dirt is so dirty!" is appropriate. The dirt, as Trilling says, is the stuff from which things grow. "It was the just people aspect of life that Arnold could never get; he missed the right perception of that world which has always existed and perhaps always will exist, which no Utopia, no State, no culture, no rule of superior intelligence, no progress, will--or should--ever get rid of: life warm, mistaken, silly, but the 'dirt' out of which things grow."[29]

Arnold perhaps never realized that perfection, whether of the individual or of society, is only a relative term. He understood this well enough intellectually, but he never seems to have grasped it emotionally, and he was invariably

surprised and chagrined when people did not live up to his expectations. The standards themselves and the expectation that others should measure up to them are directly attributable to Doctor Arnold, and it is not surprising that Arnold maintained his father's attitude. He had firmly before him the example of Clough, whom he thought had "learnt a stormy note/Of men contention-tost, of men who groan,/Which tasked thy pipe too sore, and tired thy throat--/It failed, and thou wast mute." If one sees danger in involvement in the world and shuns that involvement, then one can never know the world at first hand. It is not surprising that Arnold sees things in the abstract, considering the influence of his father and the example of his dearest friend.

When the perfected individual, the Son of God, becomes an integral part of a perfect society, that society will be morally good. The perfected individual will have a personal religion, a personal conscience to be his guide, and this collective conscience will become the moral force of the State. Just as the perfected individual has become a Son of God and part of a perfected society, so will the personal religion (or the personal awareness of religion) become that of many, and finally that of the State. In this sense, the social and religious sides of the individual are the basis for the social and religious sides of the master community, which is best described by the term Church-State.

Arnold's concept of the perfected individual has its origins in his father's teaching. "Learning," his father wrote, "when not properly mixed with that comprehensive study which alone deserves the name,--is, I am satisfied, an actual mischief to a man's mind; it impares his simple common sense, and gives him no wisdom. It makes him narrow-minded, and fills him with absurdities; and, while he is in reality grievously ignorant, it makes him consider himself a great divine."[30] Echoes of this statement are to be found in Matthew Arnold's St. Paul and Protestantism, in Culture and Anarchy, and in Literature and Dogma.

The concept of the perfected society again stems from Thomas Arnold. "All societies of men, whether we call them states or churches, should make their bond to consist in a common object and a common practice, rather than in a common belief; in other words, their end should be good rather than truth."[31] Matthew Arnold's view of the union of Protestant churches which will permit disagreement without allowing the union to disintegrate is expressed in St. Paul and Protestantism. In a sociological sense, the same argument is used in Culture and Anarchy. Arnold's awareness of the need for some to take the initiative in social regeneration is most clearly stated in "Rugby Chapel." In each case, the end is goodness rather than truth for the sake of truth. In each case also, Arnold fails to consider the imperfections among men that would prevent all men from coming to that degree

of perfection which would make possible a perfected society. This is a failure stemming in large measure from his inability to come to terms with the reality of the concrete.

Ideally, Arnold's concept of the perfected society involves individuals perfected both morally and socially, individuals who are in basic agreement on fundamental issues. Behind it all lies Culture. Religion as Arnold envisions it cannot be achieved without Culture. Social awareness comes about only with Culture. But Culture, when used as an ancilla for Religion, implies social awareness in that it comprehends history, the record of the changing patterns of human behavior. And Culture, when it becomes the ancilla of social awareness, implies a knowledge of moral and ethical standards. This is how Arnold conceives of the Church-State, as an authority which functions simultaneously on two levels.

In order for the Church-State to function at all, Arnold says, it is necessary for each member to consider himself as a member of a business firm, with a sense of responsibility to the whole. The difficulty is that most individuals will find themselves in disagreement with some part of the structure. Arnold's analogy with the commercial world fails to consider the enormous difference between the management of even a large business and the management of even a small nation. There is far more room for disagreement in the multiplex problems of a state. In the case of a Church-State, the problems are even more complex. (How, for example, would a

Jehovah's Witness be able to agree with all the decisions rendered by a Church-State, the Church part of which is based upon the Church of England?) Arnold's answer is that the union of churches which has gone to make up the whole need not agree in every respect; there must be room for dissent within the overall structure. "It is the very essence of bigotry," Thomas Arnold had preached, "to insist upon agreement in trifles."[32] Perhaps his son remembered this when he urged a flexible union in St. Paul and Protestantism and in The Church of England. But if Thomas Arnold's statement were carried out logically, without the preconceptions which its author imposed upon it, there could be no such thing as a national church with a particular policy. There might be a national religious board, which would have among its representatives members of each sect, Christian or non-Christian; but this is not what either Arnold has suggested. Matthew Arnold and his father are essentially in agreement on this point: the National Church shall be the Church of England, broadened to include the dissenting sects and perhaps the Roman Catholics. The Church of England shall be the authority, the final voice, and even though dissent will be "allowed" within the framework of the Church, the very term implies thought control.

The social side of the Church-State also presents a difficulty. While there are three major classes, there will be needs or wants of each that are not common to the other two.

In fact, they may be inimical to them. Arnold's answer, in Culture and Anarchy, is that the best self of each class should be represented. Perhaps significantly, he does not envision a time when society will be completely classless. He does hope for a time when each class will be fairly represented by the best of its own members, acting in the best interest of the whole community. Insofar as the Barbarians have been chiefly represented by the Church of England, the flexible union which Arnold has envisioned for the Church-State will serve as a check in both areas. The Church will now include all sects, so that all will be represented; the State will comprehend all social levels, so that none will be at the mercy of another. Thomas Arnold had preached that "nothing is more fatal to the good conduct of people in a lower station, than the suspicion which they sometimes entertain of the sincerity of those above them."[33] Matthew Arnold, in Culture and Anarchy, in Literature and Dogma, and in The Church of England, showed the way by which much of this suspicion might be allayed.

The Church-State would function in both domestic and foreign matters. Its moral force would govern the conduct of England to the world, and in time might serve as an example to the rest of the world. But the immediate thing was to set the plan in motion in one time and in one place. In England, even the union of Protestant churches was seen as an event belonging to the future.

But this is not quite the solution to the difficulty. Arnold's argument is logical, once one accepts his premises. But the premises are by no means clearly true. Arnold assumes that the best men of any particular class will represent it in government. He further assumes that the government representatives will compromise among themselves so that the best interests of each class will be served. Neither of these assumptions is warranted by the record of history. Even with the magic infusion of the secret and method of Christ--into all men?--the very existence of the upper class is predicated upon the maintenance of the other two. If there are no workers and no managers, how can there be a ruling class? Assuming for the moment that class distinctions will be based upon intelligence and moral fitness, that the old standards of wealth and property shall disappear, who is to say that the two go hand-in-hand? Will not the most intelligent and least scrupulous seize power within a short time? Arnold's reply would be that the moral redemption of mankind will have taken place, but this is hardly more than wishful thinking. Even if one assumes that Arnold has the one"right" answer, there would always be some who would fail to follow his standard, perhaps on the sole ground that it was not their own.

The abstract argument which Arnold presents is laudable and ingenious, but it fails chiefly because it is abstract. Arnold is not close enough to the people he disposes of so

neatly on paper to realize that they cannot be led into a binding union like so many sheep. He is not close enough to them to see that many men in different ways were already working for harmony without the religious and societal strictures which his plan would impose upon them.

By wiping out the distinctions between sect and sect, between class and class, Arnold suggests a community of man, a community based upon ethical principles which will provide for Man's growth, either as an individual or in company with his peers, toward perfection, toward the joy of living, the happiness of Man. Distinctions among sects or classes or men themselves are of far less importance than their needs and desires for participation in society; if the distinctions interfere, they must be got rid of. But this is easier said than done. The distinctions are not the disease; they are but symptoms of it. Arnold declares that once the true spirit of the Bible is comprehended, once each man develops a personal conscience, the distinctions will fall of their own weight. But he cannot say with any authority that this will come about. There will doubtless always be men without personal conscience, perhaps without any conscience whatsoever, and no amount of preaching will make them otherwise. Repression by society is hardly an answer, because this would involve a moral wrong against those so repressed.

What Arnold is saying is that we must all strive for a goal which cannot be fully attained. The Church of England

is the most convenient framework for the state of mind which will keep everyone striving, and the Bible is the most convenient reference for the spirit which urges us to strive. This is the essential difference between Arnold and his father. Thomas Arnold was a Church of England priest who was concerned with bringing all men to Christ by means of the development of their social awareness. Matthew Arnold is a humanist who sees religion as a unifying force which may bring all men together in harmony, even those who eddy purposelessly about in the dust.

This humanism, this awareness of the needs and desires of others, of society as a whole, may best be achieved through education, by which means the mass of individuals receive culture. Culture, as Arnold reminds us in "Literature and Science," includes the entire intellectual activity of a nation. There are perils to be faced, but they can be overcome with patience and intelligence and a sense of moral and ethical right-doing. It is here that Arnold is on safe ground, here too that his message has most permanence. Education or culture or the "entire intellectual activity of a nation" can lead at least some men to see that there is a way out of the morass, that the truth can indeed set them free.

The balance of cultural values with moral values, if one distinguishes between them, is the key to Arnold's plan for the regeneration of mankind. If the moral values are not

dictated solely by one church or by a union of some churches to the exclusion of others, then the plan may stand. If each individual is governed by a sense of righteousness, the need to do right; if each individual becomes concerned with concepts and with other individuals rather than with things; then perhaps a new world shall come into being. It may never reach the New Jerusalem, but it will be a better world. The way in which Man can achieve this state of being is by bringing himself to a spiritual rebirth and by helping others to achieve the same by teaching them by whatever means they can best grasp the concept of joy in living.

NOTES

[1]A full discussion of the critical opposition to Literature and Dogma will be found in Trilling's chapter "Joy Whose Grounds Are True," Matthew Arnold, pp. 317-368.

[2]Trilling, Matthew Arnold, p. 316.

[3]God and the Bible. Works, VIII, 170.

[4]Works, VIII, 103.

[5]Works, VIII, xliv-xlv.

[6]Works, VIII, 322-323.

[7]Works, VIII, 378. One should bear in mind Arnold's criticism of those who approach the Bible and religion with preconceptions, so that they find only that which they want to find, and do not find that which contradicts it. It is possible that Arnold is open to the same charge. As another Matthew once said, "First cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." (Matthew 7:15)

[8]Works, IX, 345. The printing history of Arnold's religious work should be kept in mind. The order of composition is indicated by the order in which the pieces first appeared in serial form. St. Paul and Protestantism, Puritanism and the Church of England, Literature and Dogma, and A Persian Passion Play appeared in Cornhill Magazine in that order, beginning in October, 1869, and ending in December, 1871. God and the Bible, the defense of Literature and Dogma, was first published in Contemporary Review in 1874-75, three

years later. The Church of England was first published in Macmillan's Magazine in April, 1876, following God and the Bible by less than a year. The modern text is taken from Arnold's Last Essays on Church and Religion (1877) which included Bishop Butler and the Zeitgeist, The Church of England, and A Last Word on the Burials Bill. Arnold's religious writing covered a span of seven years and immediately followed the publication of Culture and Anarchy. These works stem from Arnold's concern with society, most clearly stated in Culture and Anarchy; with each publication, he seems to move further from the universal and closer to the specific. See Trilling, Matthew Arnold, p. 340 n.

[9]Works, IX, 356.

[10]Works, IX, 356-357.

[11]Works, IX, 361.

[12]Works, IX, 362-363.

[13]Works, IX, 365-366. In a letter to his sister Frances, Arnold tells of the reception of his address, "The Church of England," delivered February 22, 1876. " . . . I did carry them, in so much that Bishop Piers Claughton, and Littledale, and Malcolm MacColl, who had all come to curse, remained to bless, and the comic thing was that clergyman after clergyman got up and turned upon Claughton . . . who had thought he must caution people against something in my address, and, as I had insisted on the kingdom of God upon earth having been the original gospel . . . said it behoved them to

remember that the real kingdom of God was not what I had said it was. Clergyman on clergyman, I say, turned upon Claughton and said they agreed with me far more than they did with him." (Letters, II, 127.) It is doubtful that Arnold's audience agreed with him to quite the extent that he thought they did, since a literal kingdom of God on earth precludes the need for aspiring to Heaven.

[14]May 31, 1871. Letters, II, 57. Arnold refers to the Commune. See also Letters, I, 335 for Arnold's statement about the relationship of the French citizen to the state.

[15]January, 1879. Letters, II, 151-152. It is interesting to compare the letter with Thomas Arnold's statement on the same subject: "Those who fear the growing power of the poorer classes, fear it because they think that these classes are morally ignorant, and therefore are not fit to exercise power . . . " Thomas Arnold further states that moral evil is more important than physical or political evil, since both are symptoms of moral evil. Eradicate moral evil, he says, and the other two will fall of necessity. ("Ends of the Church," in MWA, p. 443.) See also Matthew Arnold, Letters, II, 130. In a letter to George Macmillan, Arnold says he has "always insisted that the only right way to an outward transformation was through an inward one, and that the business for us and for our age was the latter."

[16]Letters, II, 119-120.

[17]Letters, II, 190.

[18]December 27, 1881. Letters, II, 195. In this letter, as in the preceding one to M. Fontanes, Arnold equates the religious revolution with the social one.

[19]To his sister Jane, November 15, 1883. Letters, II, 229. In an earlier letter to the Reverend F. B. Zincke, June 27, 1883, he had stated his belief that there was a tendency for every American "to turn into a trader . . . of the 'cutest and hardest kind." Letters, II, 213.

[20]Trilling, Matthew Arnold, pp. 52-53, discusses the cyclic theory of Vico and its influence upon Thomas and Matthew Arnold.

[21]Originally published in The Pall Mall Gazette, December 1, 1884; reprinted in Neiman, Essays, Letters, and Reviews. The occasion was the unveiling of a mosaic by Antonio Salviati, at St. Jude's, Commercial Street, Whitechapel, as a tribute to the work of the Reverend Samuel Augustus Barnett, vicar of the parish. Arnold used the occasion to emphasize class distinctions, the possibility of reform, and the meaning of the Gospel in contemporary life. Neiman, pp. 256-257.

[22]"The Nadir of Liberalism," Nineteenth Century XIX (May 1886), 645-663. Reprinted in Neiman. Arnold quotes his friend, Dr. Johann J. I. von Dolliger, theologian and church historian, to remind his readers of the similarity between the present situation in England and that preceding the French Revolution of 1871.

[23]October 21, 1886. Letters, II, 348. Arnold was personally involved in Irish politics to a degree. The life of his brother-in-law W. E. Forster, who was Chief Secretary, had been threatened by revolutionary groups.

[24]See Stanley, Life, I, 327. Thomas Arnold, writing to the Archbishop of Dublin November 8, 1833, states that "a Catholic is a member of Christ's Church just as much as I am; and I could well endure one form of that Church in Ireland, and another in England." Doctor Arnold saw the Church as a force for the prevention of moral evil, and he considered it morally wrong for the people of Ireland to be compelled to support the Church of England as the established church, since it was not the church of their choice, and since it represented the English absentee landlords.

[25]In Nineteenth Century XXI (January 1887), 148-164. Reprinted in Neiman.

[26]"Up to Easter," Nineteenth Century XXI (May 1887), 629-643; "From Easter to August," Nineteenth Century XXII (September 1887) 310-324. Both are reprinted in Neiman.

[27]Trilling, Matthew Arnold, p. 382.

[28]McCarthy, Matthew Arnold and the Three Classes, p. 103.

[29]Trilling, Matthew Arnold, p. 398. The statement by Whitman is from Horace Traubel, With Walt Whitman in Camden (New York, 1914-15), I, 232, and is cited in Trilling, p. 398.

[30]Letter to J. W. Hoskyns, September 22, 1839. Life, II, 155-156.

[31]*Introductory Lectures*, p. 39.

[32]*Sermons*, III, 314. Jehovah's Witnesses, a fundamentalist sect, interprets the Bible literally. Interestingly enough, the sect relies upon the Gospel--the "good news of the Kingdom"--and preaches the kingdom of God on earth as a basic tenet. Except for their literal interpretation of Scripture, the Witnesses come very close to Arnold's position.

[33]*Sermons*, I, 239.

VII

HUMANISTIC CRITICISM AND MATTHEW ARNOLD

In concentrating upon Arnold the religious humanist, it is possible to overlook the importance of Arnold the literary artist. Here again the convenient categories may play us false by focusing our attention on one area of Arnold's work to the exclusion of the others.

Arnold's own attention was never thus distracted. Poetry, he said, was the magister vitae. It needed moral value to exist. The best part of religion in his day, he added, was the poetry, the content of men's deepest feeling unhampered by the outworn forms of liturgy. If Arnold at times seems to have lost himself in specific problems of the Church of England, as in his essay "On the Burials Bill," it should be remembered that Arnold himself was always aware of the relationship between the parts and the whole. If he occasionally dealt with one problem separately, he still saw its importance based upon the way in which it affected the whole.

Arnold's religious feeling is never confined to his essays on religion. As I have shown, it permeates such

early poems as "Mycerinus," "The Strayed Reveler," and "The Sick King in Bokhara." It is evident in the poems to Marguerite in the air of critical detachment, of active personal conscience at work. In such poems as Empedocles on Etna, "Stanzas From the Grande Chartreuse," and "Dover Beach," where doubt and fear are so poignantly expressed, it is Arnold's sense of the loss of religious values which give meaning to the poems. In "Sohrab and Rustum" and in "Rugby Chapel," it is Arnold's religious values which dictate the resolve of each protagonist to join in battle, to enter the fray of the world. In his critical essays, especially in the two dealing with Maurice and Eugènie de Guerin, Arnold evaluates his subjects and their writing in terms of their commitment to religious and moral standards. Literature was never separated from religion and morality in Arnold's mind; indeed, it was of worth only insofar as it furthered man's awareness of a moral standard. One recalls Arnold's slighting comments on Shelley and Keats, his inability to accept the possibility that good and even great poetry can exist independently of an implicit moral code, and one can easily see the limitations which his view has imposed upon his criticism.

But it is these limitations which govern Arnold's creative writing as well as his criticism. He wrote and judged his own writing by the same standards which he used to judge the work of others. If one looks beyond the specifics of his

comments upon the Burials Bill or Disestablishment in Wales, one can see the general moral structure which informs all his writing. It is for this reason that Arnold's religious writing assumes so much importance in our appreciation of Arnold's literary artistry. It reflects the content of his entire body of work, it indicates why he chose the subjects he did, and it explains in large measure his critical blind spots and his failure to write significant poetry following Merope. If Arnold's religious work is anticipated in his early writing, it is also true that his religious writing, containing as it does his view of Man and Man's need for moral guidance, enables us to view individual poems and essays as parts of a related body of work rather than as merely single and unrelated elements.

In "Alaric at Rome," for example, it is possible to see for the first time in Arnold's work the importance he attached to figures of the past. "There are, whose glory passeth not away" becomes more meaningful to us when we can see its relationship to "the noble and great who are gone . . . souls tempered with fire" and to "the reign of the real St. Paul is only beginning; his fundamental ideas . . . will have an influence in the future greater than any which they have yet had."[1] Our appreciation of Arnold's later religious work enables us to see "Alaric" as something more than an early prize-winning poem. It contains the germ of Arnold's plan for the salvation of mankind, the need to have the example

of great men before us, the need to have moral strength within the framework of the state, and the warning that a civilization without moral stature will collapse.

In the same way, the concept of spiritual baptism which plays so important a part in Arnold's St. Paul and Protestantism sheds new light upon such poems as Empedocles on Etna and Tristram and Iseult. The plunge into the volcano and the death to the world of the flesh can no longer be interpreted only as vicarious forms of suicide, once one considers them in terms of Arnold's religious work. They may represent suicide as well, but they are primarily necessary steps leading to the growth of the spiritual and intellectual man. Once we realize that the souls of "the noble and great who are gone" have been "tempered with fire," and that Arnold stresses the need for spiritual rebirth in St. Paul and Protestantism, we appreciate the full significance of his preoccupation with the dedication of life through some symbolic act.

This dedication and perfection of the individual are only fully realized when we see that Arnold's plan for the redemption of society involves first the redemption of the individual. The flawed Tristram, with his preoccupation with sexual love, and the flawed Empedocles, with his preoccupation with introspection, must die in order for the perfected Matthew Arnold to be born anew in the spirit. The vague outline of the plan for the redeption of man is apparent in "Balder Dead," in which Balder speaks of the new heaven and the new earth,

"more fresh, more verdant than the last, with fruits/Self-springing, and a seed of man preserved,/Who then shall live in peace, as now in war."[2]

When "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse" is reviewed from the standpoint of the religious works, it can then assume its correct place in juxtaposition with "Sohrab and Rustum," and--more precisely--with "Dover Beach" and "Rugby Chapel." The sense of having to do battle with the world, to take action, is already apparent in "Stanzas," but without knowing that Arnold, in his three famous religious works, aims at nothing short of the New Jerusalem, the City of God descended from Heaven, it would be difficult to see the poems as separate links in a single chain. The death of Sohrab is in a sense a rebirth: he will be one of the "good and great" because he inspires Rustum beyond the fields of war. But the concept of the youth going forth to battle would be meaningless save as an adventure tale, had it not been woven into the fabric of Matthew Arnold's great plan. The "pennons and flashing lances" of "Stanzas" are found again on the plain of the Oxus; they are the weapons of light with which the individual can do battle with the "ignorant armies," and they may well be the beacons of hope in the form of angels who appear to "strengthen the wavering line" in its march "to the City of God."

Arnold's essays, whether religious, sociological, or educational, have an easy, graceful style which reflects

the personality of their author. This comes about partly through his informal tone, his being present in all their parts, his personal intrusion. This personal tone perhaps springs from Arnold's habit of thinking on paper, as Lowry has indicated.[3] It also owes a great deal to his correspondence. Apparently Arnold initiated thoughts in his letters which would later come to fruition in his published work. It is interesting, for example, to compare the following citations with an eye to style: in each, Arnold expresses the same thought, but with each reiteration some change has been made. "But this is just what makes him great--that he was not only a good man saving his soul by righteousness, but that he carried so many others along with him in his hand, and saved them . . . "[4] "But thou would'st not alone/Be saved, my father! . . . . /Therefore to thee it was given/ Many to save with thyself . . . "[5] "Having been delivered, deliver; having been consoled, console; being arrived at the farther bank, enable others to arrive there also."[6] "If every one would mend one, we should have a new world."[7]

The first two passages refer to Thomas Arnold. It is reasonably clear that Arnold intends the reader to believe that his father was great because he saved others with himself. The difference in style is chiefly due to Arnold's concept of poetic diction. The use of archaic forms reminds one that Arnold admired Spenser, who also used them.[8] The third passage also expresses the need to save others, but

is attributed to Buddha. It is less forceful, less reliant upon image than the first two. One might note also a straying from the simple verbs save and carry; Arnold seems to have abandoned for the moment his plain, unpretentious and noble style, that which he most admired in Homer.[9] But the use of longer words, words with more syllables, is not in itself a criterion of style. One may well prefer the third passage to the lines from "Rugby Chapel" on the grounds of balance and cadence. The sentence gains force from its parallel construction, from the juxtaposition of the passive form of the verb with the active ("having been delivered, deliver"), and from its simplicity of statement. In fact, the diction here is reminiscent of nothing so much as the passage, "I am with thee to deliver thee."[10] The strength and dignity of the passage seems an improvement over Arnold's letter to his mother and over the poem.

But what of the final statement? Here, it would seem, Arnold is deliberately using the diction of the Bible in his paraphrase of Christ's words. The words are monosyllables. There is repetition in the first clause, and would and should lend the charm of internal rhyme. But there has been a development which is not strictly confined to style: Arnold has shifted his meaning slightly to fit the new occasion. The passage paraphrasing Christ indicates merely that each man is keeper of his own conscience, that if a man save himself, if every man save his own soul, then there will be a

new world. It is probable, knowing Arnold's plan for the redemption of the world by means of the efforts of the chosen few, that he also meant those who were able to save others with themselves. But in this instance, he is dealing with the concept of personal conscience, a personal religion. Perhaps Arnold was inspired by, "He saved others, let him save himself."[11]

One other point is worth noting in terms of Arnold's style: his use of martial metaphors in the key poems which lead to the religious works. I have already noted the flashing lances and pennons in "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse," the battle scenes in "Sohrab and Rustum," the "ignorant armies" and the "line of march" in "Dover Beach" and "Rugby Chapel." It is somewhat odd to find a writer who speaks of peace in the world to be born using warlike metaphors. But it is not so odd, perhaps, when we remember Arnold's views on civil disorder. "A strong hand" and "a good secret police" are his answer to the Hyde Park Riots and the blowing up of the Clerkenwell Jail.[12] Religion was a serious matter with Arnold, and he was prepared to defend it by force of arms, if necessary.

The importance of style in Arnold stems from his intensely personal relationship to his work, and if his poetic style be rough at times--"Who prop, thou ask'st, in these bad days, my mind?" is surely one of the worst lines in English poetry--this too can be explained once one has become familiar with the later works and with his letter to Clough which explains

his attitude towards poetry as the magister vitae, and when one remembers that Arnold always conceived of style as being subordinate to content.

But the relationship of Arnold's religious writing to his other prose and to his poetry is by no means its sole importance. Even if no other work existed in the Arnold canon, these essays alone would probably be sufficient to secure him a place in the literary history of his time. We need not limit ourselves to Arnold's fiat that art is a criticism of life; we need only examine his religious writing in terms of stylistic excellence, seriousness of intent, and nobility of theme in order to affirm its literary merit. For this reason, it is as impossible to deny Arnold's religious writing a place in literature as it would be to pass over Newman's Idea of a University, on the grounds that it is merely a treatise on higher education; or Mill's On Liberty, because it is a social and political manifesto; or the poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins, because they are expressions of his love of God. In each case the excellence of form is the criterion which we use, once we have established the high seriousness of the content. The question of relevance to the issues of only one time or one place has no part in the critical method of the serious scholar; we need not agree that the most vital part of a university is its student body to accept Newman's work as literature, we need not agree with every article of Mill's belief in the limitation of the state

to acknowledge Mill as a talented writer of great literary merit, and we need not accept Roman Catholic dogma to share the beauty of Hopkins' poetry. We need not be educators or religious critics or poets to acknowledge the work of Matthew Arnold in any of these fields as significant literature.

It is difficult in one sense, however, to see the relationship between Arnold's religious work and his early poems and his essays on education, criticism, and society. The difficulty is caused by chronology, I think. If the religious work had come first, it would be accepted without question as ancillary literature; it would exist, not for its own value, but for the light which it could shed upon the work which follows it. But coming at the end of his life, as it does, it is often neglected. The casual student of Arnold's poetry is seldom familiar with his religious writing; it follows his poetry, and the casual reader may well ask, What effect can it possibly have upon work which preceded it by as much as thirty-five years. The obvious answer is, of course, None; but the obvious is not always accurate. Once the student of Arnold's poetry becomes aware that the poetry is but one way of expressing the ideals of Arnold, that it does not exist only as a group of individual poems with no relationship to the whole, it becomes necessary to indulge in <u>deja vu</u>, to study the entire corpus of Arnold's writing in terms of his final pronouncements. In this way only is it possible to grasp the importance of each work in terms of

the whole. Even such minor poems as "The Servants of God" then assume new importance when their relationship to major poems and their place in the entire schema is established.

In their own right and as indispensable aids to the interpretation of Arnold's earlier work, then, the religious writings have earned their right to be considered, and it may well be that in years to come Arnold will be judged for his work in the field of religion to the same degree that he is now studied as a poet and as a literary critic.

Arnold's clear view of the problems of his time, his courage in attepting to solve them, and his intellectual capacity to deal with them--not only separately, but in terms of a general plan for the regeneration of mankind--make him one of the foremost men of his time. Learning and forbearance, culture and morality, love and hope walk hand-in-hand through the pages of Arnold's writing. As Arnold says,

> We are entering upon new times, where many influences, once potent to guide and restrain, are failing. Some people think the prospect of this reign of democracy, as they call it, very gloomy. This is unwise, but no one can regard it quite without anxiety. It is nearly 150 years since the wisest of English clergymen [Bishop Butler] told the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs of London in a hospital sermon that the poor are very much what the rich make them. That is profoundly true, though perhaps it rather startles us to hear it. On the other hand, it is almost a commonplace that children are very much what their teachers make them. I will not ask what our masses are likely to be if the rich have the making of them. I prefer to ask what they are likely to be so far as the teachers have the making of them.[13]

Perfection, whether individual or societal, may be beyond the range of Man; but the advice "to come to one's best at all points" is still a bulwark against ignorance, a weapon in the struggle against bigotry, and a guidon to follow in the dust of the plain.

NOTES

[1]Super, VI, 5.

[2]"Balder Dead," ll. 529-531.

[3]Introduction to M.A. to A.H.C., p. 36.

[4]To mother, February 27, 1855. Letters, I, 42. Cited by Allott, Poems, n., p. 444.

[5]"Rugby Chapel," ll. 124-125; 140-141.

[6]"On the Modern Element in Literature," Macmillan's Magazine XIX (Feb., 1869), 304-314. Cited in Neiman, p. 4.

[7]Literature and Dogma, Super, VI, 223.

[8]Super, I, 143.

[9]Super, I, 127.

[10]Jeremiah 1:8.

[11]Luke 23:35.

[12]To mother, February 14, 1867. Letters, I, 437-439.

[13]From Arnold's speech on his retirement, reprinted for the first time in Neiman. Pall Mall Gazette, November 13, 1886; The Times, November 13, 1886.

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