THE DEVELOPMENT OF ARNOLD'S HUMANISTIC THINKING

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: THE CRITICAL BACKGROUND

Looking as he thought deeply into the English mind, character, and civilization during his age, Arnold was very distressed to find the sad reality: the Englishman's way of life was too narrow. The Englishman also preferred not to think--priding himself on his energy. But this energy was directed toward the wrong objects because the Englishman was unable to see more than one side of a thing. This deficiency, Arnold thought, derived from lack of a spirit of criticism and culture. Arnold's dissatisfaction with the English temperament led him to look to the Hellenic ideals of unity and fusion.[1] The constant aim of his work is to explore these Greek ideals and to emphasize their application to his age.

Many writers attempt to discuss the way in which Arnold intended to achieve this goal. Most studies are devoted to some aspect of his humanistic thought. Some critics limit their discussion to the classical influence on Arnold; others to the Romantic influence on him. Still others think of him as both classical and Romantic. Those who associate him with the classical tradition affirm the applicability of his Hellenic principles to the Victorian

age and to Arnold himself, seeing a complete unity in his work. Those who place Arnold in the Romantic tradition allude to the inapplicability of Hellenism to Arnold and his age. Their analysis is generally restricted to the discussion of Arnold's poetry and its themes of despair, alienation, and division.

Thus the two main streams of Arnold criticism (he is classical or Romantic) deal with the adequacy or inadequacy of Arnold's application of Hellenism (culture) to Victorian life and times. Almost no Arnold scholars have attempted to go deeper in their analysis of Arnold's thought and work. As we will see, no one has attempted to show that Hellenism is actually a context in which Arnold develops an increasingly powerful sense of modernity. Critics do not give us a complete sense of the development in Arnold's humanistic thinking.

In his discussion of Arnold's poetry E. C. Houghton (The Influence of the Classics on the Poetry of Matthew Arnold, 1923), for example, considers classical humanism to be central to Arnold's work. Douglas Bush, in Mythology and the Romantic Tradition in English Poetry (1937), develops a similar thesis. Arnold's use of classical mythology, Bush indicates, reflects his [Arnold's] desire not only to escape the chaos of his own age but also to search for order in nature and in himself. Taking Arnold's "1853 Preface" as his example, Bush concludes that Arnold's classical pronouncements are valid both for the past and

the present. In a similar approach, Lionel Trilling (Matthew Arnold, 1939) thinks of Arnold's classical humanism of the sixties as the core of his thought. The subjectivity which Trilling sees in Arnold's poetry is balanced, he thinks, by the principles of objectivity and wholeness which Arnold explores in his prose writings. Trilling, accordingly, sees Arnold's thought as organic and unified.

The adequacy of Arnold's Hellenic principles of integration is suggested also by W. F. Connell. In The Educational Thought and Influence of Matthew Arnold (1950) Connell contends that Arnold's belief in social equality had led him to seek the diffusion of culture. Arnold, Connell suggests, had a strong belief in the strength of Hellenism--its unified thought and its balanced vision of life. Connell says that Arnold's central goal was to bring his countrymen into close contact with the spirit of the Greeks and the Romans. Like Connell, W. J. Hipple's "Matthew Arnold, Dialectician" (UTQ, 1962) places Arnold in the tradition of classical humanism. According to Hipple, Arnold was a platonic dialectician who uses such "contraries" as Hebraism and Hellenism, which is to say Medieval and Pagan religious sentiment. A similar view is indicated in Rose Bachem's "Arnold's and Renan's view of perfection" (RLC, 1967). In comparing Arnold with Renan, Bachem concludes that both men, more than any other thinkers of their age, were very close to the humanists of the Renaissance. They are also similar in their reconciliation

of Hebraism and Hellenism. In his recent book The Victorians and Ancient Greece (1980) Richard Jenkyns suggests also that Arnold's Hellenism is an essential corrective to Hebraism.

In his discussion of Arnold's Hellenic ideal of poetry, Edwin Burgum (Symposium, 1931) connects Arnold's notion of the touchstones with the question of poetry's "truth." Arnold was not thinking of emotions but of ideas. Whereas Burgum links Arnold's Hellenic ideal of the touchstones with poetic truth, R. C. Townsend, in "Matthew Arnold, H. M. I., on the study of Poetry" (CE, 1968), connects Arnold's view of the touchstones with his [Arnold's] idea of education. Arnold's touchstones, according to Townsend, are intended to be models or guides for life. They are identical in Arnold's mind with those passages which he wishes to be memorized in the schools. Arnold's interest in classical ideas is suggested also by G. Robert Stange. In his book Matthew Arnold: The Poet as Humanist (1967), Stange associates Arnold with classical humanism. Arnold's poetry, he says, is a poetry of ideas: the ideas of poetry, Nature, self, and love.

Arnold's ideals of the relationship between literature and life and the moral and religious function of poetry have led many critics to consider him in the main current of classical humanism.[2] All these scholars assert the Hellenic elements in Arnold's thinking. They attempt to reconcile his view of literature and life. Furthermore they confirm Arnold's belief in "literature" or "culture"

as a substitution for traditional religion.

Similar views about Arnold's Hellenic ideals of literature and life are expressed by other scholars. In "The Background of the Function of Criticism at the Present Time" (PQ, 1963) as well as in "The Evolution of Culture and Anarchy" (SP, 1963), Sidney Coulling contends that Arnold's thinking is unified. He shows how Arnold's definition of criticism had led him to move toward his ideal of culture. In another essay, "Matthew Arnold's 1853 Preface: Its Origin and Aftermath" (VS, 1964), Coulling reads the "1853 Preface" as a representative of Arnold's search for classical objectivity and a rejection of Romantic subjectivity. In the same essay Coulling thinks, however, that Arnold's "On the Modern Element in Literature" (1957) shows "a significant modification" of the "1853 Preface." This can be seen in its emphasis on the involvement with the age. Like Coulling, Patricia Ball, in The Central Self: A Study in Romantic and Victorian Imagination (1968), regards the "1853 Preface" as the embodiment of Arnold's Hellenism and a rejection of the Romantic notion of self-indulgence in art.

Epifanio San Juan, in "Matthew Arnold and the poetics of Unbelief" (Harvard Theol. Rev. 1964), thinks that Arnold's Hellenic tendency affected his religious thinking. Similarly, Knoepflmacher, in Religious Humanism and the Victorian Novel (1965), compares George Eliot with Arnold and comes to the conclusion that they are alike in

identifying religion with culture. Furthermore they both believed in a moral tradition outside ourselves. The same notion is reinforced also by Remford Bambrough. In Reason, Truth and God (1969) Bambrough emphasizes the "objectivly existing power" in Arnold's "eternal, not ourselves" as well as his notion of literature as the basic source of moral knowledge.

Though these critics, in their different ways, are mainly concerned with the Hellenic aspects of Arnold's thought and their adequacy to his age, there are also other scholars who take different approaches and attitudes. These critics attempt to minimize Arnold's classical humanism and concentrate upon his relevance to the Victorian age. Furthermore they allude to the inadequacy of classical humanism for Arnold and his age. Most of these scholars establish their arguments on the basis of the central themes of alienation and division which characterize Arnold's poetry in particular.

In "Matthew Arnold's 1853 Preface" (RES, 1941), H. W. Garrod, for example, focuses upon Arnold's proximity to the Victorian age rather than upon his penchant for classical humanism. Garrod insists that Arnold, in his attack on Keats and Shakespeare, repudiated that influence which makes up his best poems. Like Garrod, Frank Kermode, in The Romantic Image (1957), attacks the Hellenic tendency of Arnold's prose writings. Kermode sees Arnold's significance as a poet in his longing for isolation and aloofness

from action. But Kermode says, Arnold had failed to keep a sufficient distance between the self and the social world. By omitting Empedocles from the "1853" collection of poems, Arnold "plunged into action," and therefore he interfered in other people's business. Leon Gottfried places Arnold in the Romantic tradition. In Matthew Arnold and the Romantics (1963) he discusses Arnold's relation to the Romantic poets. He sees him as both a follower and critic of the Romantic tradition. Arnold's criticism of Wordsworth, he emphasizes, suggests many facts about Arnold's life. The relationship between Arnold and Wordsworth is suggested also by Herbert R. Coursen's "The Moon Lies Fair: The Poetry of Matthew Arnold" (SEL, 1964). Coursen places Arnold's poetry in the main current of the Romantic tradition, especially that of Wordsworth.

In Matthew Arnold and the Classical Tradition (1965), Warren D. Anderson refers to the conflict in Arnold's mind between his commitment to classicism and his tendency toward Romanticism. In his prose, Anderson thinks, Arnold was not completely possessed by the spirit of Hellenism. The Hellenism of his prose is the creation of his own imagination. In a similar way to Anderson, Henry Ebel (Matthew Arnold and the Classical Culture, 1965) sees Arnold's relations with the classical as a great failure in the history of ideas. Arnold's failure as a classical writer is evoked also by H. A. Mason (Arion, 1962). Mason considers Arnold's lectures on Homer "inadequate" both in

their "conception of translation" and in the claims they suggest on Homer's behalf. Like Mason, Paul Edwards, in "Hebraism, Hellenism and the 'Scholar-Gipsy'" (DUJ, 1962), thinks that Arnold's attempt to reconcile Hebraism (action) with Hellenism (thought) is unsuccessful.

In "Matthew Arnold's Tragic Vision" (PMLA, 1970), Farrell suggests that Arnold favours a post-Romantic tragic figure, who is a victim of "revolutionary" historical change rather than the classical view. The inadequacy of Arnold's Hellenism is also strongly emphasized in Michael Fischer's "Matthew Arnold's Anticipation of Subsequent Challenges to Humanism" (Southern Humanities Review, 1979). Fischer suggests that Arnold faced a hostile society which could not give his literary interests any practical support. Taking Arnold's Culture and Anarchy as his example, Fischer insists that the classical correlation which Arnold made between literature and action is quite inapplicable to Arnold's age as well as to our age. He relates its inapplicability to the fact that the individual could not find any support in the actual life of what the poets seemed to say.

According to other critics, Arnold failed to practice his own principle of disinterestedness. This criticism is suggested, for example, by Geoffrey Tillotson ("Matthew Arnold: The Critic and the Advocate," first in Essays by Divers Hands, ed. by Gordon Bottomley, 1943; later included in G. Tillotson's Criticism and the Nineteenth

Century, 1951) and E. K. Brown (Matthew Arnold: A study in conflict, 1948).

Arnold's anti-Hellenism, according to most of these critics, is a reflection of the division and fragmentation which characterize his poetry. In English Poetic Theory, 1825-1965 (1950, rpt. 1966) A. H. Warren considers Arnold "a sick romantic" who retreats from his own unresolved conflict. The conflict to which Warren and other critics refer is embodied in Arnold's poetry. In "Matthew Arnold in Our Time" (Spectator, April 1954); rpt. in Mid Victorian Studies, 1965) Geoffery Tillotson thinks that the subjects of Arnold's poetry are distinguished by their sense of frustration, isolation, longing and blankness. Some writers think that these central themes of Arnold's poetry are behind his failure to apply the Hellenic ideals of fusion in his prose writing. In The Alien Vision (1952), for example, E. D. H. Johnson thinks that in spite of Arnold's emphasis on classical objectivity in his prose writing, he did not really succeed in resolving the division which distinguishes his poetry. Related to Johnson's view is also John Eells's idea that Arnold's work embodies the personal estimate which he attacks. In his choice of the touchstone passages, Eells indicates in The Touchstone of Matthew Arnold (1955), Arnold was quite affected by the conditions of his own mind. The subjectivity of Arnold's mind is indicated also by R. A. Donovan's "Philomela: A Major Theme in Arnold's poetry" (VN, 1957). Donovan

links Arnold's central theme of isolation and pain to his [Arnold's] poetic vision. Quite similar to Donovan's criticism is that of Henry Ebel. In "Matthew Arnold and Marcus Aurelius" (SEL, 1963), Ebel thinks that it is actually not Aurelius who yearns but Arnold himself. Arnold, he stresses, undertook to bring a joy to his age which he himself could not feel. J. Hillis Miller also alludes to Arnold's strong subjectivity and his failure to apply the classical principles, which his writing prescribes. In his chapter on Arnold in The Disappearance of God: Five Nineteenth Century Writers (1973), Miller, referring to Arnold's poetry, states that Arnold's attempt to escape the hard times of his own age is quite unsuccessful. Miller thinks that "not the exploration of time or space, nor the acceptance of society, not love, not passion--no way will work, and whichever way Arnold turns he is thrown back on himself, and on his usual state of isolation and fluctuation." Arnold's unsuccessful attempt to find the proper solution to "the divided mind" of his verse is shown also in Melvin L. Plotinsky's "Help for Pain: The Narrative Verse of Matthew Arnold" (VP, 1964) and in D. G. James's Matthew Arnold and the Decline of Romanticism (1961).

Arnold's Hellenic ideals of literature and life and the moral function of poetry are ignored by some critics and seen as inapplicable by others. In his book Matthew Arnold: A Study of the Aesthetic Temperament in Victorian England (1967), William Madden, for example, discusses

Arnold in the manner of Walter Pater's aestheticism. He stresses the aesthetic aspects of Arnold's work and ignores the moral and religious ones. David Daiches, on the other hand, in Some Late Victorian Attitudes (1969), discusses Arnold's ideal of religion and morality. He considers the role which Arnold gives to poetry devoid of any ethical purposes.

It is clear therefore that there exists no systematic analysis of Arnold's humanistic thinking. Though there has been a growing interest in recent years in this subject* there is no single comprehensive study which places Arnold's humanistic development on context. This is the task which I intend to undertake in this study.

Although most Arnold scholars have stressed Arnold's belief in the adequacy of the Hellenic ideals to his age, I intend in this study to make a somewhat different emphasis. I will attempt to show that, in spite of Arnold's conviction that the Greeks achieved harmony, in spite of his continual struggle to achieve these Hellenic ideals himself, in spite of his keen desire to see a similar kind of homogeneous life and thought in Victorian England, Arnold was at times very doubtful about the application of these same ideals to his age. Furthermore, I will attempt

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*See, for example, John P. Farrell, "Homeward Bound: Arnold's Later Criticism" VS, 17 (1973), 187-206; Peter Allen Dale's chapter on Arnold in The Victorian Critic and the Idea of History (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England: Harvard University Press, 1977).

to show that Arnold's uncertainty led him to move gradually from Classical Humanism (where the Greeks are the center of authority) to a Modern Humanism (in which the individual becomes the centre of this authority).

I intend to start this study with an introductory section on Arnold's poetry and letters up to 1853. In it I will show not only that Arnold was doubtful about the adequacy of the Hellenic ideals of order even in the first decade of his career but also how most of his future ideals of literature and life have their origins in this decade. Many of his most important ideas are to some degree subject to doubt: the need for "self-dependence" and regeneration, his notion of "love" and "joy,"[3] his high regard for the ancients, his admiration for the continent, his view of "an idea of the world," his idea of the religious future of poetry, and his notion of the relationship between "style" and the "age."[4] Furthermore, I will explain how Arnold's uncertainty about the applicability of these Hellenic principles reflects to some extent the general attitude of his age. At the same time I will show how Arnold gives us a good description of the general temper of the Victorian age as "damned times" characterized by "<u>blankness</u> . . . <u>barrenness</u> . . . <u>unpoetrylessness</u>," and "aridity."[5] I will also demonstrate how his central themes of "resignation," "isolation" and "division"[6] anticipate his future doubts about how best to apply his ideals to his society.

In the following chapters I will show how Arnold's attempts to explore Hellenic unity were challenged by his countrymen and how this challenge contributed to his doubt concerning their adequacy. These are some of the major ideas to which I will refer specifically: the need for the moderns to imitate the excellent "actions" of the ancients ("The 1853 Preface"); "intellectual deliverance" ("On the Modern Element in Literature," 1857); "the grand style" (On Translating Homer, 1861); "disinterestedness" ("The Function of Criticism," 1864); "an academy," ("The Literary Influence of Academies," 1864); "imaginative reason" ("Pagan and Medieval Christian Sentiment," 1864); the "State" or the "Best Self" (Culture and Anarchy, 1869); and the four "powers" which constitute human nature ("Literature and Science," 1882).[7]

These ideas and many others are interwoven and interrelated throughout his writings, and they magnify the humanistic ideals which Arnold wishes to establish in the individual, in society, and in works of art. In the examination of these humanistic principles, I will point out how Arnold is not very optimistic about their realization in his society. The tendency of the English individual to disregard anything not English, his refusal to open his mind to "what has been said and thought in the world," his reluctance "to see the thing as in itself as it really is," his insistence on asserting his ordinary self instead of his best self, his exaggeration of the Hebraic side of human nature as opposed to the Hellenic one, his emphasis

on scientific facts to the detriment of the humanities;[8] all of these are only a few examples which I will emphasize in order to show the inadequacy of the humanistic principles of unity to Arnold's age. I will also show how Arnold's own thinking about these Hellenic ideals shifted with time. The emphasis on the ancients which characterizes his earlier criticism [for example "The 1853 Preface," "On the Modern Element in Literature" (1857) and On Translating Homer (1861)] is to shift somewhat into an emphasis on the continental (especially in Essays in Criticism: First Series). His models from the ancients (Sophocles and Homer, for example) are to be replaced by contemporary models from France (Joubert, Saint Beuve) and Germany (Goethe, Heine, Maurice de Guerin).

The emphasis on the Hellenic ideal of intellectual deliverance which distinguishes most of his criticism before 1870 is to shift into an emphasis on the question of morality in the final two decades of his life. Arnold's interest in the problem of morality signifies a very important step toward his adaptation of the philosophy of Modern Humanism. As he gets older he becomes disillusioned with Greek and continental cultures. He becomes more practical and nationalistic. The critical tone which characterizes early estimates of English and American character and civilization is softened in his later work. The central focus of his later criticism is upon Victorian England and America. His earlier writing on the ancients

and the writers of the continent is replaced by criticism of English and American writers such as: Wordsworth, Byron, Keats, Shelley and Emerson. Moreover, Arnold's gestating nationalism and his growing interest in the practical needs of his countrymen lead him to develop a very strong belief in individualism. As he advances in age, he begins to assert that the past is for those who had lived in the past. Victorian England has her own needs and her own conditions ("Wordsworth" [1879] for example). Though he continues to insist on the need for the English individual to open his mind to the rest of the world, ancient and modern, he has come to think that the Hellenic ideals of the past are not necessarily applicable to the present.

Therefore, the Greek statements of wholeness, synthesis and perfection which he attempts to establish in his earlier criticism as the source of authority are increasingly diminished in his work after 1870. Instead he starts to consider human experience as the moral basis of authority (especially in his religious writings of the eighteen seventies). Consequently, in the final years of his life, Arnold insists more and more on the need for liberating and freeing the English individual from any traditional or external sources of authority an insistence which reaches its climax in "Emerson" (1883).

NOTES

[1] Arnold's extensive reading throughout the 1840's shows us that the central source of his Hellenism lies in the German thought from Winckelmann to Heine. Among the things which he read are: (1) Victor Cousin's history of eighteenth century thought; (2) Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason; (3) Herder's Metakritik; (4) Schilling's Bruno and his Philosophy of Art; (5) Humboldt's essay on the Bhagavad-Gita. See Kenneth Allott, "Matthew Arnold's Reading Lists in Three Early Diaries," Victorian Studies, II (March 1959), 254-266. For a detailed study of the sources of Arnold's Hellenism see David J. DeLaura, Hebrew and Hellene in Victorian England: Newman, Arnold, and Pater (Austin and London: University of Texas Press, 1969), pp. 181-191.

[2] See for example Robert Shafer (Christianity and Naturalism, 1926); T. S. Eliot ("Arnold and Pater," 1930); Basil Willey (Nineteenth Century Studies, 1949); David Perkins ("The Function of Literature," ELH, 1951); F. W. Bateson ("The Function of Criticism at the Present Time," ELC, 1953); R. B. Braitwaite (An Empiricist View of the Nature of Religious Belief, 1955); Vincent Buckley (Poetry and Morality: Studies on the Criticism of Matthew

Arnold, T. S. Eliot and F. R. Leavis, 1959); Wayne Shumaker ("Matthew Arnold's Humanism: Literature as a Criticism of Life," SEL, 1962); and Edward Alexander (Matthew Arnold and John Stuart Mill, 1965); and "Roles of the Victorian Critic: Matthew Arnold and John Ruskin," Literary Criticism and Historical Understanding, ed., P. Damon, 1967).

[3] See for example "Self-Dependence," "The Buried Life," and "Dover Beach." The Poetical Works of Matthew Arnold, eds. C. B. Tinker and H. F. Lowry (1950; rpt. London: Oxford University Press, 1957), pp. 239, 210. Except where specifically indicated all references to Arnold's poetry are to this edition and are given in parentheses in the text wherever possible.

[4] The Letters of Matthew Arnold to Arthur Hugh Clough, ed. Howard Foster Lowry (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1932), pp. 100-101; 72-73, 80-81; 97; 115, 124; 65. All references to Arnold's letters to Clough are to this edition and are given in the text wherever possible.

[5] Ibid, pp. 111, 126, 131.

[6] See for example "Resignation," "Isolation - To Marguerite," "Separation," "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse," and Empedocles on Etna. PW, 50; 180, 207, 210; 299, 406.

[7] The Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold, ed. R. H. Super, Vols. I, III, V and X (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1960--). Except where specifically

indicated all references to these and other volumes of Arnold's prose are to this edition and are given in parentheses in the text wherever possible.

[8] This will be clear in the discussion of his prose essays such as On Translating Homer (1861), "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" (1864), "The Literary Influence of Academics" (1864), Culture and Anarchy (1869) and "Literature and Science" (1882).

CHAPTER II

ARNOLD'S HUMANISTIC THINKING: ITS ORIGINS

The Poetry and Letters up to 1853

It is particularly in the harmonious life and thought of fifth-century Athens that we first find the source of Arnold's humanistic thinking. In his critical writing before the eighteen seventies Arnold attempts to describe that period and to define the major Hellenic ideals which he wished to establish in Victorian life and thought. In "On the Modern Element in Literature" (1859) he considers that period as "one of the highly developed, one of the marking, one of the modern periods in the life of the whole race" (CPW, I, 23). The Greeks, he indicates in Culture and Anarchy (1869), were "the great exponents of humanity's bent for sweetness and light united." They "arrived . . . at the idea of a comprehensive adjustment of the claims of man, the moral as well as the intellectual, of a full estimate of both, and of a reconciliation." Moreover the goal of Hellenism "is to follow . . . the whole play of the universal order, to be apprehensive of missing any part of it, of sacrificing one part to

another" (CPW, V, 179, 165).

Greek poetry, Arnold points out in "On the Modern Element in Literature" (1859), is "a mighty intellectual deliverance" (CPW, I, 19-20). It was at Athens, he says in "Pagan and Medieval Christian Sentiment" (1864), that poetry "made the noblest, the most successful effort she has ever made as the priestess of the imaginative reason" (CPW, III, 230). In brief, "calm," "objectivity," "harmonious acquiescence of mind," "noble serenity," "repose," "radiance," "harmony," "grace and serenity" (CPW, I, 1, 20, 28, 59; III, 378; V, 100, 125) are among the central Hellenic qualities which Arnold wished to apply to Victorian life and thought.

Arnold's letters and especially his poetry up to 1853 not only state the central problems of the Victorian age but also explore the anti-Hellenic forces which diminish his attempt at synthesis and fusion in both his poetry and prose. In order to show Arnold's uncertainty about the application of the Hellenic ideals of order to his age even in the first decade of his career, it is essential to give a brief summary of the major Hellenic principles which he advocated at that time.

Arnold's notion of man's need for self-regeneration, for example, embodies one of the Hellenic virtues which he defended at that time of his career. Man's first task, Arnold indicates in "Self-Dependence," is to discover the foundation of his self-hood and his relation to nature and

God. "Resolve to be thyself," he says, "and know that he / who finds himself, loses his misery" (PW, 24). Man, he says in Empedocles on Etna, must avoid external pressures and look for the "only true, deep-buried [self], / Being one with which we are one with the whole world" (PW, 235). "Sink . . . in thy soul!" and "Rally the good in the depths of thyself," he emphasizes in "The Youth of Man" (PW, 235). Man should repudiate his false self which mired him in the practical and the material world. Arnold's insistence on the need for self-regeneration is to become the constant theme of his literary and social writings. It foreshadows, for example, his idea of the "best-self" in Culture and Anarchy (1869) and the harmonious development of human nature in "Literature and Science" (1882).

Arnold's ideal of "self-regeneration" is associated with his Hellenic ideal of love. Since man is a social being it is only through love, Arnold stresses throughout many of his poems, that man can unify himself and reunite with other people. Love, he suggests in "The Buried Life," functions as a reminder of the inward knowledge of the buried-self: "The eye sinks inward, and the heart lies plain" (PW, 247). It is through rediscovering love that man can realize his goal and achieve his aim of creating and establishing a well-harmonized and ordered society. "Ah, love," he says in "Dover Beach,"

let us be true

To one another! for the world which seems

> To lie before us like a land of dreams,
> So various, so beautiful, so new,
> Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
> Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain; . . .
> (PW, 211)

It is only through love that the individual's mind and soul can possess "the immeasurable all" (Empedocles on Etna, PW, 423).

Arnold's idea of love is associated also with his Hellenic ideal of joy. Man is in great need of somebody to delight his soul and give him joy and pleasure. "I am glad you like the Gipsy scholar," Arnold tells his friend Clough,

> but what does it do for you? . . . [it] awakens a pleasing melancholy . . . that is now what we want.
> 'The complaining millions of men
> Darken in labour and pain . . .'
> what they want is something to animate and ennoble them . . . not merely to add zest to their melancholy, or grace to their dreams . . . I believe a feeling of this kind is the basis of my nature . . . and of my poetics." (Letters to Clough, 146)

In the next decades of his career Arnold affirms also the poet's need for cheer and to rejoice. Indeed the principle

of joy and cheerfulness is one of the central themes in the "1853 Preface to Poems." In it Arnold specifically indicates that his omission of Empedocles from the collections is solely related to the absence in its argument of any kind of joy (CPW, I, 3). It is the poet, according to Arnold, who possesses a spontaneous joy and who can express it in his poetry. The task which Arnold gives to the poet anticipates many of his critical writings in the next decades. "On the Modern Element in Literature" (1857), "Wordsworth" (1879), and "The Study of Poetry" (1880) are only a few examples of the essays in which he deals with the function of poetry and the task of the poet.

Arnold's notion of the poet as one who is more gifted in delighting man, is interrelated with his ideal of literature and life. Literature, especially poetry, in Arnold's view, is the medium through which man can achieve self-regeneration. Poetry is the best means through which man and God, nature and man can be reconciled. It is the cultural agent through which man can realize his perfection. "Arnold's main significance," W. J. Bate indicates,

> lies . . . in . . . his attempt to lift the view of the English-speaking reader toward a wider, more cosmopolitan range; his reapplication of classical criteria; and above all, his courageous attempt, in an increasingly hostile environment,

to reassert the traditional value of literature.[1]

What Arnold found valuable in ancient and modern literature, as Knickerbocker also points out, "were those qualities which had shaped his own mind and spirit in the Oxford of his youth: high seriousness, love of perfection, detachedness, reflectiveness."[2]

Arnold's previous interest in the aesthetic aspects of poetry[3] has been transformed into a concern for the relationship between character and style, literature and life. In a letter to Clough, March 1, 1849, Arnold expresses his interest in the Hellenic ideal of the relation between style and character. In it he attributes a moral effect to the elevated style of Milton and Sophocles. Style, he says, is "the expression of the nobility of the poet's character . . . matter is the expression of the richness of his mind: but on men character produces as great an effect as mind" (Letters to Clough, 100-101). Arnold starts to be "snuffing," therefore, "after a moral atmosphere" (Letters to Clough, 109-110). Arnold's notion of style as the expression of the morality and nobility of the individual's character foreshadows his ideas of the "grand style" in the lectures On Translating Homer (1861) and the moral function of poetry in "Wordsworth" (1879).

The same ideas are closely connected with his Hellenic ideal of the relationship between literature and life. "Modern poetry," he informs Clough on October 28, 1852,

"can only subsist by its contents: by becoming a complete magister vitae as the poetry of the ancients did, religion with poetry, instead of existing as poetry only" (Letters to Clough, 124). This letter is very striking not only in its high praise of the ancients, but also in its foreshadowing Arnold's later idealistic view of poetic theory. It anticipates his notion of poetry as "criticism of life" ("Joubert," [1864] and "The Study of Poetry" [1880], CPW, III, viii). Arnold's focus on the moral or religious element at this time of his career can be seen also in another letter he wrote to Clough in May 1850. In reference to Newman, Arnold tells Clough that

> he [Newman] bepaws the religious sentiment so much that he effaces it to me. This sentiment now . . . is best not regarded alone, but considered in conjunction with the grandeur of the world, love of kindred, love, gratitude etc., etc. (Letters to Clough, 115)

Arnold's notion of the connection between literature and life reflects his classical tendency to find discipline and order in the universe. It reinforces his conviction that what is needed, in Victorian England particularly, is a discipline that can organize the basic drives of the individual into meaningful unity. As has been indicated, Arnold sees the existence of such a discipline or authority only among the ancients, especially the Greeks. Therefore

his view of the ancients is the basis of his Hellenic ideals. It constitutes a major current in his thinking in the first period of his career. It becomes almost a major force behind the ideas of his future essays, such as "The 1853 Preface," "On the Modern Element in Literature," On Translating Homer, Culture and Anarchy, and "Literature and Science."

Arnold affirmed that among the ancients poetry had flourished and fulfilled its proper task. Their poetry succeeded in giving joy and delighting the soul of man. It also succeeded in creating a sense of harmony and unity. Arnold's interest in the ancients at this time can be seen, for example, in a letter he wrote to his mother on July 29, 1849. In it he indicates that during that year he "read through all Homer's works and those ascribed to him" (Letters, I, 13). He thought that a poetry such as that of Homer and the Greek dramatists was at once regulative, humanistic, and aesthetic. Among Arnold's exemplars from the ancients, in addition to Homer, were Marcus Aurelius and Sophocles "who saw life steadily and saw it whole" ("To A Friend," PW, 2).

Thus Arnold's notion of self-regeneration, his idea of love and joy, his view of the relationship between style and character, literature and life, poetry and religion are the major Hellenic principles to which he referred in the first decade of his career and toward which his future prose work was to be directed. They reflect his deep

interest in seeking order and integration in the individual, in society and in works of art. In all of them, Arnold's voice, says Edward Sharples,

> is the voice of sanity. His search for authority in human affairs, his search for a central organizing thesis for life, a holistic principle around which all sides of life can be organized, is based on the complete man and his society, unified art, and a Christian religion which embraces fact and refuses to assert that myth is actuality.[4]

It is therefore significant that Arnold is quite uncertain of the application of these same Hellenic ideals to his age. His doubt is related to the "blankness . . . barrenness . . . unpoetrylessness" and the "aridity" of Victorian life and thought (Letters to Clough, 126, 131; the italics are Arnold's). "Reflect too," he says also to Clough, "how deeply unpoetical the age and all one's surroundings are. Not unprofound, not ungrand, not unmoving! . . . but unpoetical" (Letters to Clough, 99). Two years later he indicates to "K" that since the qualities for creating poetry are lacking in the nineteenth century, he is retreating more and more from the modern world and modern literature" (Letters, I, 18). This feeling of disappointment and frustration leads him to declare, one year later, that "the world tends to become more comfortable

for the mass, and more uncomfortable for those of any natural gift or distinction" (Letters to Clough, 122). The poet, Arnold says, not only expresses himself, but his thoughts are reflections of the feelings and needs of the whole society. The creation of poetry depends on the general need and atmosphere of the entire society: "For in a man," he says to Clough, "style is the saying in the best way what you have to say. The what you have to say depends on your age" (Letters to Clough, 65). This is a clear indication that Arnold is quite suspicious whether the principle of joy and other classical principles can ever be applied in his age.

The "poetrylessness" of the age is related also to the absence in the poet's mind of "an idea of the world" (Letters to Clough, 97). In other words poetry lacks the proper materials or substance. Objects or things in Victorian England no longer have any significance beyond themselves. Victorian poems, as Arnold tells Clough, "excit[e] curiosity and reflection," rather than attaining the "beautiful" and giving "pleasure" (Letters to Clough, 99). The transformation of religion into theological dogmas, as Miller indicates, is a clear instance for Arnold of man's division and disunity from the complete and divine life.[5] "If one loved what was beautiful and interesting in itself passionately enough," Arnold writes to Clough,

> one would produce what was excellent without troubling oneself with religious dogmas at all.

> As it is we are warm only when dealing with these last and what is frigid is always bad. (Letters to Clough, 143)

Accordingly Arnold's attack on the personal feelings which Clough's poetry evokes, its lack of an organic vision of life, its need of objectivity, wholeness, and a controlling "idea of the world,"[6] is very ironic. The individualism which Arnold saw in Clough is not only, as we will see, characteristic of the whole age but of Arnold himself. Like most Victorian writers, Clough was making his own unique way.

The "poetrylessness" of the Victorian age, its lack of concrete objects, its lack of an "idea of the world," in short, its lack of materials, all of these foreshadow Arnold's notion of the need for the moderns to imitate the excellent "actions" of the ancients ("The 1853 Preface"), "intellectual deliverance" ("On the Modern Element in Literature," 1857), "disinterestedness," "ideas" ("The Function of Criticism at the Present Time," 1864), "imaginative reason" ("Pagan and Medieval Christian Sentiment," 1864), "Hellenism" (Culture and Anarchy, 1869). Furthermore they anticipate his attack especially in Essays in Criticism: First Series, on some of the Romantic poets whose poetry, he thinks, lacks ideas.

It is clear, therefore, that in spite of Arnold's strong belief in the high value of these Hellenic ideas

he was nevertheless doubtful about their application to his age and even to himself. Arnold's uncertainty is related, furthermore, to the sense of alienation, despair, fragmentation, division, and individuality that characterized Victorian life and thought. Arnold, as Anderson and Buckley point out,

> was actually aware of the bewildering confusion of his time--the ebb of traditional values, the flow of false tendencies, the increasing estrangement of the individual from his fellows--and each of his poems records a memorable response to the human dilemma.[7]

The division and the fragmentation which Arnold saw in his work as well as in his mind are clearly expressed in the following undated letter to his sister, Mrs. Foster. "Fret not yourself to make poems square in all their parts," he indicates to her, "the true reason why parts suit you while others do not is that my poems are fragments . . . i.e., that I am fragments . . . I shall do better some day I hope" (Unpublished Letters, 18). Indeed Arnold attempts to do better in his prose work. But again his outlook continues to be divided. In a letter he wrote to his sister "K" in April 1856 he declares that his poems "are making their way" and that "the state of mind expressed in many of the poems is one that is becoming more common" (Letters, I, 59). In another letter, addressed to

his mother in June 1869, Arnold indicates how his poems reflect not only the spirit and temper of the day but also his own uniqueness. "My poems," he points out, "represent . . . the main movement of mind of the last quarter of a century, and thus they will probably have their day as people become conscious to themselves of what that movement of mind is." Then he compares his literary achievement to the "poetical sentiment" of Tennyson and to the "intellectual vigour and abundance" of Browning and comes to the conclusion that because he has "more of a fusion of the two than either of them" and because he has "applied that fusion to the main line of modern development," he is "likely enough to have [his] turn, as they have had theirs" (Letters, II, 10).

Throughout most of his poems we get the sense that the time of harmony is past. In the past almost everything was consistent and united; now almost everything is broken and divided. This sense of disharmony and inconsistency heightens one's sense of the inapplicability of the classical principles of unity and order to Arnold's age. Man, Arnold shows us in many of his poems, is capable of seeing only a part of what lies before him. Therefore, the content of Arnold's poetry, as Trilling suggests, is

> . . . a plagent threnody for a lost wholeness and peace . . . it is [also] the exploration of

> two modern intellectual traditions of romanticism and rationalism, and moving back and forth between these two strands, it is an attempt to weave them together into a synthesis. Each alone, he feels, is insufficient, but together they promise much.[8]

The division which Arnold experienced and saw around him makes his search for synthesis very difficult to be realized.

> Hither and thither spins
> The wind-borne, mirrowing soul,
> A thousand glimpses wins,
> And never sees a whole . . . .
>
> (Empedocles on Etna, PW, 415)

Therefore, as Bush suggests,

> . . . most of Arnold's great poetry is a series of variations on this many-sided conflict, spontaneity and discipline, emotion and reason, faith and scepticism, the rich youth and the dry age of the individual and the race. A victim of modern unfaith, disintegration, complexity, and melancholy, he can only long for primitive faith, wholeness, simplicity, and happiness.[9]

"The desperate unbelief that permeates so much of Arnold's verse," as Buckley also indicates, "arises from distinctly Victorian cultural conditions, a sad contemplation of withering faith and an unprecedented fear of encroaching materialism."[10] The age was mainly distinguished by its division and its indifference to ideas. "The Victorians," Buckley maintains,

> were torn by doubt, spiritually bewildered, lost in a troubled universe. They were crass materialists, wholly absorbed in the present, quite unconcerned with abstract verities and eternal values . . . 'they were . . . rugged individualists,' given to 'doing as one likes,' heedless of culture, careless of a great tradition.[11]

The alliance between the Scientific and Industrial Revolutions, as Houston indicates, had intensified man's spiritual isolation. Charles Lyell's Principles of Geology (1830) and Charles Darwin's Origin of Species (1859) had affected all thought. Old beliefs had vanished and had been replaced by scientific theory. Men like Huxley became the spostles of the new scientific theory. They claimed natural knowledge and believed in man's capacity to control his own destiny.[12] Furthermore it was an era in which, Brinton declares,

> the revolutions of the late eighteenth-century . . . the Americans, the French, . . . had struck the Western mind with a sense of catastrophe . . . something essential, men felt, had been destroyed and there was as yet nothing to put in its place.[13]

It "was an age," above all, Levine points out,

> of anxiety, an age of flux. Traditional institutions--religious, social, political--were challenged from every corner. Individual man's relationships to his Church, class, and government were coming under a new scrutiny. . . . The traditional relationships between men and their institutions were crumbling.[14]

Brinton also points out that "faith in progress" in Victorian England "is faith in order constructed out of human desires for quite definite satisfactions, or it is no faith at all."[15] It was actually a time in which human beings, in Mills' opinion, "are no longer born to their place in life . . . but are free to employ their faculties . . . to achieve the lot which may appear to them most desirable."[16]

Arnold explains the spiritual condition of the age in a letter 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 millions of small ones, newspapers, cities, [etc.] (Letters to Clough, 111).

They were indeed, Arnold emphasized, bad times. The machine shaped the whole society. Man had become isolated and disconnected not only from his fellow men but also from himself. Man's "vaunted life," as a result of the miserable conditions of the Victorian world, is depicted by Arnold, in "A Question: To Fausta" as "one long funeral": "Joy comes and goes, hope ebbs and flows / like the wave . . ." (PW, 44). In such a difficult time "let us," therefore, Arnold suggested to his friend, "pray all the time . . . God keeps us both from aridity: Arid . . . that is what the times are" (Letters to Clough, 131). The individual, as he saw him, had lost his belief in anything and had retreated into himself. Man, Arnold insists, is left alone "wandering between two worlds, one dead, the other powerless to be born" ("Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse," PW, 302). According to Arnold, as J. Hillis Miller has described the conditions of the nineteenth century in general,

> Everything is changed from its natural state into something useful or meaningful to man. Everywhere

> the world mirrors back to man his own image and nowhere can he make vivifying contact with what is not human . . . the city is the literal representation of the progressive humanization of the world. And where is there room for God in the city? Though it is impossible to tell whether man has excluded God by building the great cities, or whether the cities have been built because God has disappeared, in any case the two go together. Life in the city is the way in which many men have experienced most directly what it means to live without God in the world.[17]

Man, according to Arnold, is left alone in a materialistic world which deprives him of any kind of values and any means of protection and security. The city for Arnold has become the place in which "all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with Toil; / And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell."[18] Man, Arnold stresses in "The Future," is "A Wanderer . . . from his birth" (PW, 251). He is wondering upon "time's barren, stormy flow" ("Absence," PW, 183), and is "distracted as a homeless wind" ("Farewell," PW, 177). In his wandering man is without direction. He is like the "turbid ebb and flow" ("Dover Beach," PW, 211) of "life's incognisable sea" ("Human Life" PW, 40).

Arnold thinks that man's alienation has resulted in

his loss of any sense of relatedness. Man has lost also his touch with any kind of tradition. He is no longer eager to learn or to make any sense of the experience of the past:

> The past, its mask of union on,
> Has ceased to live and thrive,
>
> . . .
>
> Your creeds are dead, your rites are dead,
> Your social order too!
>
> . . .
>
> The millions suffer still and grieve,
>
> . . .
>
> And yet men have such need of joy!
>
> ("Obermann Once More," PW, 320)

Man is therefore left alone in a strange world: a world where all relationships with other people are broken; a world where man has lost his sense of unity, communion and originality with his social environment, a world, as Arnold describes it in "A Summer Night" where

> . . . most men in a brazen prison life
> Dreaming of nought beyond their prison-wall,
>
> . . .
>
> Gloom settles slowly down over their breast.
>
> (PW, 243)

Man has become very subjective. He is divided and

no longer has a single mind. He possesses a "naked, eternally restless mind" (PW, 438). The mind is always in dialogue with itself. The individual's life is an endless consequence of half-lives, each one broken and unperfected. "And each half lives a hundred different lives," Arnold affirms in the "Scholar-Gipsy" (PW, 194). Thus as Miller indicates,

> . . . no one has been more aware than Arnold of the terrible fluidity of time, and of the discontinuity this flowing imposes on the soul which is forced constantly to begin again a life and a self it never has time to bring into perfection.[19]

Furthermore, "no writer of his time--except perhaps Emerson," Trilling also suggests, "understood in terms as clear and straightforward as Arnold this psychological phenomenon of the distortion of purpose and self and the assumption of a manner to meet the world."[20]

Man in Victorian England had lost his identity and had fallen unconsciously into the condition painfully delineated by the central character of Kierkegaard's Repetition. "My life," says Kierkegaard's hero,

> has been brought to an impasse. I loathe existence . . . One sticks one's finger into the soil to tell by the smell in what land one

> is! I stick my finger into existence . . . it smells of nothing. Where am I? Who am I? How come I here? What is this thing called the world? Why was I not consulted, why not made acquainted with its manners and customs . . .? How did I obtain an interest in this big enterprise they call reality? Why should I have an interest in it? Is it not a voluntary concern? And if I am to be compelled to take part in it, where is the director? I should like to make a remark to him. Is there no director? Whither shall I turn with my complaint?[21]

These questions which Kierkegaard's protagonist raises have the same origin as similar questions with which intellectual Victorians were occupied. The same dilemma is evoked in Arnold's "Self-Dependence." As he travels on the sea of life Arnold's hero says:

> Weary of myself, and sick of asking
> What I am, and what I ought to be,
> At this vessel's prow I stand, which bears me
> Forwards, forwards, over the starlit sea.
>
> (PW, 239)

The harsh conditions of human life in the Victorian Age, therefore, not only deprive the human spirit of joy and love but stand also against any attempt at attaining

Arnold's Hellenic ideal of self-regeneration in particular and a wholly and truly harmonized life in general. In Tristram and Iseult, for example, we get a clear sense that Arnold's Hellenic ideal of joy cannot be attained under the present circumstances. ". . . tis the gradual furnace of the world," Arnold declares,

> In whose hot air our spirits are upcurl'd
> Until they crumble, or else grow like steel--
> Which kills in us the bloom, the youth,
> the spring--
>
> . . .
>
> By drying up our joy in everything
> To make our former pleasures all seem stale.
>
> (PW, 153)

In such a world not only joy but also love withers. In many of his poems (such as "The Forsaken Merman," the sonnet Written in Butler's Sermons, and "To Marguerite--Continued") Arnold presents, as Culler suggests, "a world which is either deeply united in love or else is longing for union, and in every case this union is thwarted by some social force."[22] In the Switzerland poems, as Culler also affirms, we get the story of a man whose short moment of love is interrupted and who therefore is "plunged into a sea of passion, suffering and loss, and finally . . . moves into the solitude and calm that are properly his."[23]

Arnold's doubts about England led him to suggest to

his people the need to consider, at least, the experience of their contemporaries in the rest of the continent. He recommended especially France and Germany as good models for his country. England, Arnold tells his mother on March 7, 1848, is not yet "liveable-in." In the same letter he refers to a wave of moral, intellectual, and social vulgarity which is a prominent quality of the age. He compares the English with the French and indicates that whereas "the French are the most civilized of European peoples," the English "are fictitious in their manners and civility. There is little inbred with them" (Letters, I, 5). Arnold compares the English with the German and asserts the superiority of the latter.[24]

Arnold's attack on the English and his admiration for the rest of the continent, especially France and Germany, will later become a major motif, particularly in Essays in Criticism: First Series.

Arnold praises the French and the Germans but criticizes the American way of life. "I see a wave," he writes to his mother on March 7, 1848, "of more than American vulgarity, moral, intellectual and social, preparing to break over us." In a letter to his sister "K," March 10, 1848, he considers America inferior to France. The French, he says, "do not threaten the exhausted world with the intolerable laideur of the well-fed American masses, so deeply anti-pathetic to continental Europe" (Letters, I, 4, 5-6).[25] Arnold's attack on what he

considered the dangers of "Americanization" is a distinctive feature of his criticism before 1870. Later in his life Arnold shifts his attitude. He later regards America as the proper model for the English to follow. Indeed, in the later years of his career, he considered England and America as one nation.[26]

Arnold's poetry as well as his letters during this stage of his career reveal, therefore, in one way or another, most of the ideas which he is to develop or to reconsider throughout his entire work. In them we have seen direct or indirect statements about his view not only of literature but also of life in general. In them we can see also Arnold's Hellenic ideal of the interaction of literature and life. He took poetry as his starting point in reforming the literary, social, and religious life of Victorian England. We can see also his deep interest in the English individual's life. He alludes in various ways to the deficiencies of the English mind and its lack of intellect. His dissatisfaction with the English mind and character, in general, stimulates him to look for ways and elements of fusion, reconciliation, synthesis, and unity. This is clear in his affirmation of the Hellenic ideal of self-regeneration; his view of the Hellenic principles of joy and love; his notion of the interrelationship between poetry and life and his high evaluation of Greek culture and of contemporary Europe.

Arnold was not alone among major Victorian writers

in addressing the problems of his age. Other Victorian writers, in their various ways, "focused their attention on the conditions of man in modern society, and tried to analyze his weakness and prescribe his cures."[27] Like Arnold, as Fredrick Roe indicates, they "tell us something of the main currents of life and thought running through the period, a period so complex and many-sided and so rich in source materials as to baffle even the most expert and comprehensive of students."[28] Many of the Victorian writers attempted to reconcile faith with the new evolutionary science, the spiritual world with the material and the internal with the external but their attempts were no more successful than Arnold's. The complexity of the Victorian age had affected the relationship of the artist and his society. The poet or the artist lost the power to influence public opinion. "Scarcely anyone in the more educated classes," Mill declares, "seems to have any opinions, or to place any real faith in those which he professes to have . . . It requires in these times much more intellect to marshal so much greater a stock of ideas and observations."[29]

Therefore Victorian society refused any compromise which writers such as Tennyson, Browning, Carlyle, Ruskin, and Arnold had offered. They were not able to accept, for example, Tennyson's attempt to reconcile religion with science or Carlyle's preaching of work and hero-worship, nor could they listen to the social sermons of Ruskin or

to Arnold's criticism of the Middle-class.[30]

This sense of disunity and detachment is not only an outstanding characteristic of the relationship between the artist and his society but also is a distinctive quality among the Victorian writers themselves. "It was the complex social, moral, and political problems of Victorian England," as Levine says,

> which produced the unusually large number of many-sided intellects. In an age shaken by the onsloughts of science and an emerging technology, poverty and squalor, Rome and Evangelicalism, Utilitarianism and radicalism, thinking men had to take sides.[31]

In such a situation "hardly a man," as Brinton points out, "can be said to be anything like in complete agreement with another." There seem to be as many ideas as men."[32] There is no longer a unity. Man's consciousness is split and fragmented. "None of the ways in which . . . mental regeneration is sought," as Mill declares in 1842, "Bible societies, Tract societies, Puseyism, Socialism, Chartism, Benthanism, etc.--will do."[33]

Arnold's themes of individualism, disunity, fragmentation, alienation, loneliness, despair are common to Victorian writing. Like Arnold, major Victorian writers struggled to redeem English society and culture from the materialism into which it had sunk, yet each

of them has a distinctive outlook on and a unique approach to the social, religious, and literary problems of their age.

Tennyson, for example, is generally considered the most representative poet of the Victorian age.[34] His poetry, as A. G. George indicates, represents the general temper of the time: its faith and gloom, hope and despair, its spiritual unrest, its political aspirations, its scientific achievement, its religious questionings and its philosophic perplexicities.[35] Like Arnold and most other Victorians, Tennyson employed the theme of inner conflict. The divided personality dominates his poetry. Tennyson's poetry, like Arnold's, approaches the dilemma of the artist in his society in a subjective way. Unlike Tennyson, however, Arnold attempts in his prose writing, to develop the individual's intellect by means of learning "the best that has been said and thought."

Browning is "the great champion of individualism" among Victorian writers.[36] He "could endow the creatures of imagination with his own highly individualistic perceptions while seeming to present them as independent beings fully responsible for their own values."[37] Though he strives to conceal himself from his poetry "he is always," Morse Pickham suggests, "behind the scenes, pushing his actors on the stage, but in fact each of his actors is himself, acting indirectly."[38] Browning, like Carlyle, thinks that man wears masks not only to hide his

true character from the world but to hide his true character from himself.[39] In a similar way, society for Browning is also structured on contradictions and confusions. The only way to avoid these contradictions, he thinks, "is to transcend them, that is to transcend the culture."[40] This made him completely different from Arnold, who believed not in transcending the culture but in transforming it. Thus, whereas Arnold affirmed that it is through rational knowledge that man can aspire to truth, Browning, like Carlyle and Tennyson, advocated the intuitive and the unconscious. He believed that it is through imaginative insight that man can approach truth.[41]

Like the others, Thomas Carlyle deals with the themes of alienation, division, and multiplicity. Like Arnold he shows a complete distrust of democracy, a hatred of utilitarianism and materialism, a contempt of the machine and the economic doctrine of laissez faire. He believed also in the need for order and self-discipline. Unlike Arnold, however, Carlyle had less faith in the ability of the state to raise the average person to a higher level of conduct. Whereas Arnold argues in Culture and Anarchy the essential need for the individual to respect an external order as embodied in the State, Carlyle, "in his chapter on symbolism in Sartor Resartus sees the heroic personality as an 'intrinsic' symbol (that is, one that has value in itself, as distinct from the flag or the cross which are extrinsic and have value only as indicators). As

a symbol, the hero is the focus of a community . . . crowds gather to see the Queen in order to see their own unity as a society reflected in her."[42] Unlike Arnold's, Carlyle's work is characterized by its transcendental doom. "A sense of crisis and doom," as Lavalley points out, "pervades all his work and threatens both self and society with disintegration and ruin."[43]

Another writer who takes modern civilization severely to task is Ruskin. Though he was profoundly involved in the social and moral problems of his time, Ruskin was a man to whom the life of the imagination was a necessity.[44] Therefore, "like Tennyson and Arnold who return to ancient and medieval legend for [their] materials . . . Ruskin consciously attempts to enrich the present with the forms and inspiration of earlier times."[45] Whereas Arnold's ideal is classical and literary, Ruskin's is medieval and visual. In spite of his attempts to find ways through which he can harmonize the individual and society, Ruskin, like Arnold, realizes the difficulty of that. Therefore, as Bradley declares,

> imperfection, imbued with a sense of striving, of unworthiness, of incompletion, of a separation toward a moral and spiritual awareness lying beyond the secular, is at the heart of Ruskin's conception of the Gothic. Beyond that, it should permeate the life of modern England.[46]

Walter Pater, my last example of the alienated Victorian writers, recognized the disintegration of accepted moral values. But he

> has none of Arnold's nostalgia for the age of faith; on the contrary, he quite complacently identifies himself with modernity; he has none of Arnold's longing for certitude; instead, he shows considerable willingness to involve himself in the flux.[47]

Therefore the basis of Pater's social relativism, as John Killham suggests, is in science and not in history. Accordingly he owes much to Darwin rather than to Arnold or Carlyle. Unlike Arnold, Pater "is not concerned with changing beliefs, attitudes and the like, issuing in social arrangements, but relates rather to the individual's personal apprehension of the world he inhabits."[48]

Therefore the central themes and the variety of approaches which the major Victorian literary writers have employed in their assessments of their age not only reflect the divided and individualistic tendencies of the time but reinforce Arnold's uncertainty of any successful attempt at synthesis and unity. The nineteenth century was indeed, in the words of Whitehead,"a perplexed century." "Each individual was divided against himself." Its thinkers were "muddled thinkers." Their assent "claimed by incompatible doctrines; and their efforts at reconcilation produced

inevitable confusion."[49] Man was no longer eager to become reconciled with his fellows or to compromise on any question. There appeared to be no way, therefore, for Arnold and most Victorian writers, to re-establish unity or connection. As Franz Kafka points out "there is a goal but no way; what we call the way is only wavering."[50]

Nevertheless "despite the resounding clash of individual wills," as Buckley suggests, "there was until late in Victorian's reign a desire for cultural synthesis."[51] In Arnold's case he continued to turn "the floodlight of his cultivated intelligence upon the broad issues of his time--in literature, in politics and society, in philosophy and religion and tried to see them as they really were and to call them by their right names; . . . he opposed reform for its own sake and urged upon his countrymen a return to first principles and to an idea of progress which was intellectual and spiritual rather than material."[52] Indeed Arnold's attempt to analyze the English character and his struggle to find elements of unity and integration in the individual, the social order and in the works of art continued to be his only interest throughout the rest of his life. He had no other desire than to see in all things a harmonious balance and order. The constant aim of his work is, in his own words, to "unite matter" rather than "to express varieties" (Letters to Clough, 65). Furthermore, the goal of his writing, as he says to Clough, is not "to lose itself in parts and episodes and ornamental

work, but it must press forwards to the whole" (Letters to Clough, 124). Arnold's dissatisfaction with the real conditions of Victorian poetry led him also to express his own ideas about the future of poetry. In an undated letter to his sister "K" he promises to reform poetry and destroy its prevailing methods. "At Oxford particularly," he says

> many complain that the subjects treated do not interest them. But as I feel rather as a reformer in poetical matters, I am glad of this opposition. If I have health and opportunity to go on, I will shake the present methods until they go down, see if I do not.[53]

Arnold was certainly to attempt in his prose writings not only to reform the prevailing methods of poetry but also all the main currents of Victorian life and thought. But, as has been suggested above, the complexity of Victorian life and thought, the tendency toward division and individualism within the whole society would certainly make it very difficult, if not impossible, for Arnold to achieve his dreams of reform and innovation. The great desire of the English individual to disregard the whole on behalf of the parts ("The 1853 Preface"), his indifference to anything not English (Essays in Criticism: First Series), his tendency to like only what he himself likes to do (Culture and Anarchy, 1869), his insistence on stressing scientific facts to the detriment of the humanities

("Literature and Science," 1882) are only a few conditions which will certainly make it hard for Arnold to realize his Hellenic goals for unifying the individual, the social order, and the works of art. As Arnold says in May 1855, "the want of independence of mind, the shutting their eyes and professing to believe what they do not" is "so eminently a vice of the English . . . of the last hundred years" (Letters, I, 51). This same individualistic and independent attitude to which Arnold refers in this letter was the most distinctive feature not only of the Victorian society but of Arnold himself. It is because of strong English individualism that Arnold doubts the adequacy of his Hellenic principles of order and unity to the Victorian age. Gradually in his life Arnold will seem to agree completely with J. C. Shairp, one of his most hostile critics, that

> no strength of imagination can turn back the world's sympathies to the shores of Greece, and the poet who tries to do so while his own land and all Christendom lies fresh around him is wasting himself on an unprofitable task.[54]

Indeed in the final decades of his life Arnold modified his earlier view of Greek culture. He became more nationalistic and also came to love England as it was.

NOTES

[1] Walter Jackson Bate, ed., introduction to Criticism: The Major Texts (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1970), p. 436.

[2] William S. Knickerbocker, "Victorian Education and the Idea of Culture," Backgrounds to Victorian Literature, ed. Richard A. Levine (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Company, 1967), p. 163.

[3] In a letter to Clough, dated February 1849, for example, Arnold regards form "as the sole necessary of poetry . . . whereas the greatest wealth and depth of matter is merely a superfluity in the poet as such" (Letters to Clough, 98-99).

[4] Edward Sharples, "The Holistic Principle in Arnold," English, XIX (Summer 1970), 49-50.

[5] J. Hillis Miller, The Disappearance of God: Five Nineteenth-Century Writers (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1963), p. 220.

[6] See Letters to Clough especially pp. 63, 66, 130, 146.

[7] George Anderson and William Buckley, eds. The Literature of England, 5th edition (Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1968), p. 518.

[8] Lionell Trilling, Matthew Arnold (1939, rpt. New

York: W. W. Norton & Co. publishers, 1982), p. 79.

[9] Douglas Bush, English Poetry: The Main Currents from Chaucer to the Present (reprinted 1961, England: Jarrold and Sons, Ltd., Norwich, 1952), p. 158.

[10] Jerome H. Buckley, The Victorian Temper: A Study in Literary Culture (New York: Vintage Books, 1964), p. 11.

[11] Ibid., p. 2.

[12] Percy Hayen Houston, Main Currents of English Literature: A Brief Literary History of the English People (New York: F. S. Crofts & Co., 1926), pp. 340-431.

[13] Crane Brinton, "Victorian Political Thought: Conclusions," Backgrounds to Victorian Literature, ed. Levine, p. 265.

[14] Levine, in the introduction of Backgrounds to Victorian Literature, p. 2.

[15] Brinton, p. 265.

[16] John Stuart Mill, The Subjection of Women (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dryer, 1869), p. 445.

[17] Miller, p. 5.

[18] Gerard Manley Hopkins, "God's Grandeur," Poems, ed. W. H. Gardner (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1948), p. 70.

[19] Miller, p. 214.

[20] Trilling, p. 136.

[21] S. Kierkegaard, Repetition, trans. Walter Lowrie (Princeton, N. J., 1946), p. 114.

[22] Dwight Culler, Imaginative Reason: The Poetry

of Matthew Arnold (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1966), pp. 21-22.

[23] Ibid., p. 122.

[24] See Letters to Clough, pp. 64-65.

[25] See also Arnold's Letters to Clough especially those of March 4, 1848; May 24, 1848; Dec. 14, 1852; Feb. 12, 1853; March 21, 1853.

[26] Arnold's modified view of America will be established in the final chapter of this study. It will be quite clear in the discussion of his latter essays such as "A Word About America" (1882), "A Word More About America: *1885), "Emerson" (1884), and "Numbers" (1884).

[27] Anderson and Buckley, p. 521.

[28] Fredrick Roe, ed. Victorian Prose (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1947), p. xi.

[29] The Letters of John Stuart Mill, II, ed. Hugh S. R. Elliot (London, New York, etc.: Longmans Green and Co., 1910, p. 359.

[30] See especially Tennyson's In Memoriam; Carlyle's Sartor Resartus; Ruskin's "The Nature of Goethic" in The Stones of Venice and Arnold's Culture and Anarchy.

[31] Levine's introduction to Backgrounds to Victorian Literature, p. 3.

[32] Brinton, p. 267.

[33] Quoted by Walter E. Houghton in The Victorian Frame of Mind, 1830-1870 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), p. 11.

[34] Bush, p. 158.

[35] A. G. George, Studies in Poetry (London: Heinemann, 1971), p. 256.

[36] E. D. H. Johnson, The Alien Vision of Victorian Poetry: Sources of the Poetic Imagination in Tennyson, Browning and Arnold (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1963), p. 95.

[37] Ibid., p. 86.

[38] Morse Peckham, Victorian Revolutionaries: Speculations on Some Heroes of a Culture Crisis (New York: George Braziller, 1970), p. 116.

[39] Ibid., pp. 91, 92.

[40] Ibid., p. 15.

[41] Johnson, p. 143.

[42] Northorp Frye, "The Problem of Spiritual Authority in the Nineteenth Century," Backgrounds to English Literature, ed. Levine, pp. 126-127.

[43] Albert Lavalley, Carlyle and the Idea of the Modern: Studies in Carlyle's Prophetic Literature and Its Relation to Blake, Nietzsche, Marx and Others (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1968), p. 3.

[44] Graham Hough, The Last Romantics (London: Methuen, 1961), p. xv.

[45] George P. Landow, The Aesthetic and Critical Theories of John Ruskin (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), p. 15.

[46] John L. Bradley, An Introduction to Ruskin (Boston:

Houghton Mifflin Company, 1971), p. 46.

[47] Hough, p. 137.

[48] John Kilham, "Browning's 'Modernity': The Ring and the Book, and Relativism," The Major Victorian Poets: Reconsiderations, ed. Isobel Armostrong (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), p. 157.

[49] Alfred North Whitehead, Science and the Modern World (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937), p. 119.

[50] Quoted by J. Hillis Miller in The Disappearance of God, p. 2.

[51] Buckley, p. 12.

[52] Anderson and Buckley, p. 518.

[53] Unpublished Letters of Matthew Arnold, ed. Arnold Whitridge (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1923), p. 15. All references to his unpublished letters are to this edition and are given in the text wherever possible.

[54] Quoted by Dale, p. 153.

CHAPTER III

THE CLASSICAL HERITAGE

Arnold's Major Critical Writings from 1853 to 1861

In his critical writing of the eighteen fifties and early sixties Arnold's interest in the Greek ideals of unity is very intense. By continuing to explore Hellenic ideals, he wishes to cure Victorian life and thought of the anti-Hellenic forces which his poetry and letters up to 1853 described. Nevertheless Arnold's attempt at synthesis proves also to be inapplicable.

"The 1853 Preface to Poems," "On the Modern Element in Literature" (1857) and On Translating Homer (1861) are Arnold's major critical works at this time of his career.[1] As we will see, Arnold's longing for the classical principles and ideals of wholeness and unity is clearly defined and expressed. Classical and particularly Greek culture had begun to form a larger part of his critical thinking. He found his models and ideals of culture, perfection, and style embodied in Greek culture. His main interest was, in Goldmark's phrase, "to characterize Greek culture for the benefit of the public and apply it to English problems."[2]

"The 1853 Preface," for example, renounces the subjective theory of poetry in the Victorian age. It is, as Johnson also indicates, "a recantation of everything that no longer satisfied [Arnold] in the content and form of his earlier poetry."[3] In his search for an objective theory of poetry Arnold recommends the need for modern (Victorian) poets to imitate in their works the excellent "actions" of the ancients.

In "On the Modern Element in Literature" he continues to acknowledge the importance of classical tradition. His notion of "intellectual deliverance" is associated with his idea of "actions." It reflects his desire that the English individual should open his mind to various historical cultures.

"In On Translating Homer Arnold treats the classical ideas of life and style. By choosing to lecture on Homer Arnold aims to awaken the public to the decline of classical studies during his age and to restore the classical tradition. His notion of the "grand style" is also interconnected with his view of "actions" and "intellectual deliverance."

These same essays make it clear that Arnold had undergone a very notable development. Whereas the emphasis in the "1853 Preface" is on the personal need for objectivity, in "On the Modern Element in Literature" and On Translating Homer the focus is more on society. Whereas in the "1853 Preface" he calls for imitating the ancients, in these

essays he modifies his position. He no longer asks for imitation. He still, however, stresses the need for the moderns to make use of past cultures.

"The 1853 Preface"

"The 1853 Preface" is Arnold's first serious critical attempt to undertake a reform of Victorian poetry. It summarizes Arnold's poetic and critical concepts before 1853, which form the basis for most of the major ideas that will distinguish his later criticism. Its significance, as Masso Miyoshi suggests, is in the reading it offers of the spiritual disorders of the Victorian age and in the cure it prescribes for that age. It anticipates most of the ideas of Culture and Anarchy: "Culture, disinterestedness, Hellenism, contradiction, division, the arid irritability of the age, and its delirious vanity."[4]

It is usually considered not only "a major piece of literary criticism in the Victorian period"[5] or "one of the classics of English criticism,"[6] but also "a manifest of the modern classicism"[7] and the "most forceful pronouncement of English theoretical criticism in the Victorian period."[8] It shows very clearly how classical humanism forms a larger part of Arnold's critical heritage. In it, as Thomson indicates, Arnold "represented . . . the tendencies of classical art as no one else had done before in English literature."[9] His tendency, in Warren's words, is generally "reactionary: a cold-blooded attack on

modernism, and a reassertion of the value of the ancient Greek art and culture . . . heroism, dignity, calm, sanity, detachment, and objectivity."[10]

The gist of Arnold's poetic theory, with which he is deeply concerned at this time, is clearly indicated at the end of the essay. "The sincere endeavour to learn and practice, amid the bewildering confusion of our times, what is sound and true in poetic art," Arnold says, "I seemed to myself to find the only sure guidance, the only solid footing among the ancients. They . . . knew what they wanted in art, and we do not." "If it is impossible for us," he adds, "to think clearly, to feel nobly, and to dilineate firmly: if we cannot attain to the mastery of the great artists;--let us, at least, have so much respect for our art as to prefer it to ourselves" (CPW, I, 14-5).

These are the basic issues of Arnold's previous statement: the chaos and imbalance of life and thought in Victorian England; the regulative norm of the art of the ancients; and the essential need for an objective poetic theory. In addition to these major points the previous statement, especially the last part, implies Arnold's uncertainty about the application of his classical ideal of the ancients to his age. The high praise and regard he gives to the ancients in this essay reflect, however, the major tendency of his thought: the longing for discipline, order, authority, and centrality. This longing is to preoccupy him all the rest of his life. It foreshadows his

later ideas of an academy ("The Literary Influence of Academics"), the need for state action (Culture and Anarchy), and the value of touchstones in evaluating poetry ("The Study of Poetry"). It anticipates also his attack on Romantic subjectivism, especially in "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time."

Arnold's attempt to bring order to the poetics of his age is seen in his affirmation that poetry must return to the principles of Aristotle.[11] To Arnold, as Jamison suggests, "it was a mistake . . . to think that a sound theory could be derived from a poetry which rejected the traditional virtues of discipline, restraint, and serenity."[12] Like Aristotle, Arnold thinks also that poetry must "inspirit and rejoice" (CPW, I, 2); it must not only add to the store of man's knowledge but it must add to his happiness. "All art," Arnold quotes Schiller, "is dedicated to Joy, and there is no higher and no more serious problems, than how to make man happy" (CPW, I, 2). The "eternal objects of poetry," for both Arnold and Aristotle, are human actions. The poet chooses a good action, by which Arnold means an action which will give pleasure. It is the quality of poetic pleasure, as Aristotle thinks, which persists in the presence of tragic circumstances as they are represented in art. Some actions do not give pleasure; these are defined as those "in which the suffering finds no vent in action; in which a continuous state of mental distress is prolonged, unrelieved by incident, hope, or

resistence; in which there is everything to be endured, nothing to be done" (CPW, I, 3). Passion in itself is not tragic but morbid and painful. The good action is one which appeals powerfully to "the great primary human affections: to those elementary feelings which subsist permanently in the race, and which are independent of time" (CPW, I, 4). The poet's task is to select such an action and to emphasize its construction. He is required to present such an action as a meaningful whole. In order for him to achieve the whole or the unity of effect, the exploitation of separate thoughts and images must be subordinated to this end. It is poetry, according to Arnold, which can move the fundamental human passions. Its aim is to evoke a total impression which will move the whole man--both aesthetically and morally.

Arnold employs the Aristotelian poetic theory in order to justify his rejection of his own dramatic narrative--Empedocles on Etna. The poem, he believes, is not rejected because its subject is derived from "distant times and countries" (CPW, I, 3) but because its argument is based on a defective action. Empedocles exemplifies man who lives in an age in which cheerfulness, joy, calm, disinterested objectivity have vanished and been replaced by doubt and uncertainty. Through him the "dialogue of the mind with itself" has begun. Judging the situation of Empedocles by classical standards, it is "poetically faulty" (CPW, I, 3). It is a painful situation and is incapable of producing the

great effect that a true tragedy can. In its inability to inspirit and rejoice, the situation in Empedocles violates the classical principle of joy through which Arnold hopes to cure the sick souls of his countrymen. Therefore, by emphasizing the capacity of Greek tragedy to "inspirit" and "rejoice," Arnold, in Farrell's phrase, is

> valorizing tragedy for the grandeur it bestows upon the Empedoclean man who is engaged in unremitting struggle with his milieu. And so, while Arnold was explicitly trying to recapture the style of the Greeks in order to make modern poetry efficacious, he was implicitly trying to appropriate the world's most prestigious tragic tradition in order to generate incident, hope [and] resistance.[13]

Arnold's rejection of Empedocles implies his disbelief in mere philosophical speculation and his belief that reality or life itself in his age is the most important thing. Arnold's recommendation of excellent actions of the ancients as the proper subject of poetry implies his uncertainty as to whether his own age can provide him with adequate materials and subjects. "An age wanting in moral grandeur," he declares, "can with difficulty supply such, and an age of spiritual discomfort with difficulty be powerfully and delightfully affected by them" (CPW, I, 14). Arnold's emphasis on the importance of content in poetry and his

stress on the question of morality are a continuation of similar ideas he expresses in his letters to Clough. In addition they anticipate many of the ideas he is to express in his literary criticism.

In his choice of the subject of Empedocles from classical story, Arnold, as Ifor Evans suggests, brings poetry back to its classical allegiance.[14] The subject of Empedocles reflects his own dissatisfaction not only with the conditions of Victorian poetry but also with society in general. Arnold's "preference for a theme in a distant setting," as Kingsmill declares, "is at bottom emotional not aesthetic; and springs from his distaste for his age."[15] In spite of his choice of the subject of Empedocles from classical story, Arnold asserts also that the nearness or remoteness in time of the action is of no major importance: "The date of an action . . . signifies nothing: the action itself, its selection and construction, this is what is all-important" (CPW, I, 5). This, he thinks, was understood by the Greeks while it is ignored by the moderns.

Arnold attacks in this essay the poetic theory of his age because it relies on romantic subjectivism. Great poetry is not lyric, subjective or personal; it is above all impersonal and objective. This is the main reason behind his preference for the ancients. In their poetry Arnold finds the embodiment of his notion of impersonality and objectivity. His distaste for mere subjectivism in

Victorian poetry leads him to suggest that the poet needs always to be reminded

> to prefer his action to everything else; so to treat this . . . without interruption from the intrusion of his personal peculiarities; most fortunate when he most entirely succeeds in effacing himself, and in enabling a noble action to subsist as it did in nature" (CPW, I, 9).

The ancients should be regarded by the moderns as good models and guides. Writers, he indicates, have chosen the wrong models. Arnold indicates that Shakespeare, for example, is generally regarded the first guide for the English, but Shakespeare is not the best model. Though Shakespeare chooses excellent actions for the subject of his poetry, yet he is distinguished by a "happy, abundant, and ingenious expression" (CPW, I, 9). "As a poet" Shakespeare's most distinctive quality is his "Architectonice" "that power of execution, which creates, forms, and constitutes: not the profoundness of single thoughts, not the richness of imagery, not the abundance of illustration" (CPW, I, 9). Instead of concerning themselves with Shakespeare's actions, the moderns devote themselves completely to imitating his expression. Arnold clarifies his point by commenting on Keats's Isabella. Isabella is "a treasure-house of graceful and felicitious words and images"; it contains more "happy single expressions" than "all the

extant tragedies of Sophocles." "But the action, the story?" "The action is good but so weakly constructed that the effect produced by it is null" (CPW, I, 10). Arnold's intention behind this example from Keats is to emphasize his notion that it is the ancients, and not Shakespeare and the Elizabethans, who can be the proper models for young modern writers. The modern poet is required not only to imitate the ancients but also to "reproduce . . . something of their excellency by penetrating himself with their works and by catching their spirit," that is, to grasp "their purity of method" (CPW, I, 9). The modern poet who follows this method must keep three major principles in mind: "The all-importance of the choice of a subject; the necessity of accurate construction; and the subordinate character of expression" (CPW, I, 12).

Arnold's notion of architectonics in poetry reflects his classical and formalist approach to poetry in its broader sense. He strongly affirms the need for "immortal beauty of consummate form" among his countrymen. Thus he associates the beauty of form with the aesthetic principles of the ancients, especially those of Greece. This concept is an affirmation of similar ideas he expresses about the subject in his letters to Clough[16] and anticipates his theory of the "grand style" in On Translating Homer and the touchstone method of "The Study of Poetry."

The poet can learn from the ancients also the superiority of a single moral expression and the simplicity and

validity of the permanent feelings of men. It is "unity and profoundness of moral impression, at which the ancient poets aimed" and "which constitute the grandeur of their works" (CPW, I, 12). There are also the personal and cultural advantages of familiarity with the ancients that the moderns can make use of. "I know not how it is," Arnold says, "but their commerce with the ancients appears to me to produce . . . a steadying and composing effect upon their judgment, not of literary works only but of men and events in general" (CPW, I, 13).

Arnold's notion of the moral expression of the ancients and the need for the modern poet to communicate with them shows his deep concern not only with literature but with life in general. The word "judgment," as Victor N. Boutellier declares, "not only implies the moral bias of Arnold's poetic theory but also anticipates his later critical concept, which will require judgment on the part of the new critic not of literary works only but of men and events in general."[17]

In spite of Arnold's reference to the relationship between literature and life, he does not put strong emphasis in this essay on the need for the writer to participate in the life of his age. He admires the Greeks because their major concern is "neither to applaud nor to revile their age" but "to educe and cultivate what is best and noblest in themselves" (CPW, I, 13). Self-perfection is their main goal. It is indeed such perfection that Arnold's writings,

at this time, aim to achieve.

The "Preface," therefore, is Arnold's first attempt at literary criticism. The essence of this criticism is that the moderns must concern themselves only with the best. Arnold will look for the "best" wherever it can be found. In this essay he thinks that the best is most vivid and apparent in Greek literature. This same notion is reinforced in "The 1854 Preface." He emphasizes also the need for studying the ancients and making use of their views in literature, art, religion, morality (CPW, I, 17).[18] This idea foreshadows much of his literary, social and Biblical criticism. It anticipates also his future ideals of "intellectual deliverance," "disinterestedness," and "Hellenism." The word "caprice" with which Arnold concludes "The 1853 Preface" anticipates On Translating Homer (1861) where he talks about the "eccentricity and arbitrariness" of English literature and its lack of the critical spirit (CPW, I, 140). Furthermore, it is with the same view that Arnold begins his essay "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" (1864).

Thus, as has been indicated above, Arnold attacks the poetic theory of his age: its romantic expressionism and subjectivism. Instead he presents the classical poetic theory of objectivity, impersonality, wholeness, and cheerfulness. Above all, he suggests the essential need for Victorian poets to imitate the ancients, to choose from them excellent actions as the proper subjects of their

poetry, in short, to regard them as their best models.

It is therefore significant to point out that despite Arnold's differences with the Romantic theory of poetry we find, in the same essay, not only clear evidence of his complete agreement with that theory but also of contradictions and uncertainty in his mind about the applicability of the classical principles which he undertakes to preach. Many of the major points which Arnold treats in the "Preface" are a continuation of Romantic poetic theory and especially that of Wordsworth. The emphasis on the chaos of Victorian life, the definition of subject-matter as the great and permanent feelings and passions of men, the notion of the plain style and the idea of moral pleasure as the end of poetry, all of these recall to our minds many works of the Romantic poets, especially Wordsworth's "Preface" to Lyrical Ballads (1800). In Arnold's 1853 "Preface" we get also the sense of unapplicability of the classical principles with which he is occupied. "Arnold's concern for the classical which he directs here in vain at the Romantic," as Gwilyan James says, "is itself . . . only a symptom or manifestation of the Romantic spirit . . . the hunger for the classical in the modern spirit is a useless form of escape from its own nature and destiny; and this is what it is in Arnold's Preface."[19] In spite of his severe attack on "Romanticism and the Romantic age," Arnold, as E. K. Brown declares, "was himself a Romantic. . . . His quarrels with the Romantics were family quarrels."[20]

Arnold's high regard for Goethe as expressed in the "Preface" is certainly a clear indication of his doubt about any successful application of the classical philosophy to his age. In praising Goethe we get an indication that Arnold's mind is moving from the ancients toward the continent. Arnold's allusion also to the importance of the spirit of his age is, as Buckley indicates, a clear evidence that Arnold "is fully of the Romantic tradition of thought."[21] Arnold's assertion that the times are out of joint is a clear example that Arnold, in Warren's words, "was himself at bottom a 'sick' romantic . . . the Preface is his desperate . . . and romantic escape from the unresolved problems of his personality and his art."[22]

Arnold acknowledges that whereas the essence of a poem, for the ancients, relies on the careful construction of the action and functional use of expression, the essence of a poem, according to the modern critic, lies in its fine writing, in its separated images and thoughts, in "languages about the action," not in the complete structure of the action itself.

> With them, the practical character of the action in itself, and the conduct of it, was the first consideration; with us, attention is fixed mainly on the value of separate thoughts which occur in the treatment of an action. They regarded the whole; we regard the parts. (CPW, I, 5)

Therefore, because the ancients lived in periods where life or culture was more unified, it was much easier for them to organize their materials and to harmonize their experiences. The moderns, on the other hand, because they live in a fragmentary and divided culture, because of the complexity of their civilization and the individualistic attitudes it has created, cannot organize their materials or thoughts in a way similar to the ancients. Whereas he asserts that suffering which "finds no vent in action" is not a proper subject for poetry, he admits that the elegiac tone in Victorian poetry is the characteristic feature of his age as a whole and that the most memorable lines are those which express the sense of loss and nostalgia. Thus, as David Daiches says,

> while [Arnold's] head agrees with Aristotle on the importance of action and structure and rejected subjective sadness as a proper poetic theme, his heart led him to that elegiac mode which his own poetry, "Dover Beach," for example--rendered so well and which his age so frequently indulged in.[23]

Therefore, even in this essay, which is regarded by most critics as "a manifesto of classical humanism," we see a very strong conflict in Arnold's mind. It is the same conflict and division which he expresses in his poetry and letters up to 1853. It is a conflict between the ideal

world, in which he wishes to live, and the real world in which he is living. It is a conflict between desire or hope and the actual, a conflict between theory and practice. In comparing Arnold with Tennyson and Browning, F. L. Lucas has rightly suggested that

> Arnold was indeed at war with himself; the artist in him with the moralist, the Greek poet with the Hebrew prophet, the lover of Byron and passion and the beauty of the South with the disciple of Wordsworth and knowledge and the sternness of the North.[24]

The conflict in Arnold's mind, as the previous chapter has pointed out, is an embodiment of the conflict and the division of Victorian society as a whole. Arnold is then very doubtful, even in his first major classical theoretical pronouncement, about the practicality of classicism for his age. Therefore, as Johnson affirms,

> like Tennyson and Browning, Arnold sought to make his inner vision subserve ends dictated from outside; but to the extent that his temperamental alienation was more self-conscious, he lacked the saving faculty for compromise, for disguising his true intent under apparent meanings of a more ingratiating kind. In the 1853 Preface Arnold had set an impossible goal both

for himself and for his reader.[25]

Gradually in his life Arnold will be more conscious of that. In his inaugural lecture as a professor of poetry, "On the Modern Element in Literature," Arnold gives great attention to the importance of "intellectual deliverance" in terms of one's own age.

"On the Modern Element in Literature"

In "On the Modern Element in Literature"[26] (1857) Arnold continues his desire of reforming the present methods and matters of Victorian poetry. The letter he wrote to his brother Thomas on December 28, 1857, contains the major ideas of this essay. In that letter Arnold declares his notion that poetry should reflect the cultural life of one's own age. This is suggested by the contrast he draws between the inadequacy of modern poetry and the poetry of Alexander Pope. "Pope's poetry," he indicates,

> was adequate . . . to Pope's age--that is it reflected completely the best general culture and intelligence of that age; therefore the cultivated and intelligent men of that time all found something of themselves in it. But it was a poor time, after all, so the poetry is not and cannot be a first-class one. On the other hand our time is a first-class one. . . . but our poetry is not adequate to it; it interests

> therefore only a small body of sectaries: hundreds of cultivated and intelligent men find nothing that speaks to them in it.

Then, by comparing the age of Pericles with that of Shakespeare, Arnold shows that the "greatness of the literature of the Greece of Pericles is that it is the adequate expression of the first class epoch. Shakespeare . . . is . . . of a second class epoch."[27]

Thus Arnold emphasizes the importance of one's age. Though this essay, as Pater Dale indicates, is a continuation of the thesis of the "1853 Preface," that ancient Greek writers are excellent guides for the moderns, yet there is a clear shift in Arnold's thought. Arnold's position is somewhat different from that of the Preface four years earlier. In this essay Arnold is more positive than in the Preface about the poet's capability for "overcoming the adverse consequences of the modern age."[28] Indeed Arnold begins to be more concerned with the relationship between the writer and his own society. "Pope's poetry," as he says in the above quoted letter, "was adequate . . . to Pope's age" but it is not necessarily, the statement implies, adequate to the Victorian age. In the "1853 Preface" Arnold does not stress the involvement of the artist with the contemporary conditions of his society. "The old artists," he indicates in the Preface, "attained their grand results by penetrating with some noble and

significant action, not by inflating themselves with a belief in the pre-eminent importance and greatness of their own time" (CPW, I, 13). In "On the Modern Element in Literature" Arnold modifies his opinion when he asks of Lucretius: "How can a man adequately interpret the activity of his age when he is not in sympathy with it?" (CPW, I, 33).

Thus, though Arnold continues in this essay to emphasize the importance of the ancients to the moderns, he no longer requires the moderns to imitate the ancients. This shift from his earlier attitude is a clear sign of Arnold's doubt about the application of classicism to his age. In this essay Arnold is simply presenting modern situations by comparing two cultures: the Greeks, whose literature is well-interpreted by its poets, and the Romans, whose literature is inadequately interpreted. Arnold gives also to the poet a more important task than he does in the "1853 Preface." He thinks of the poet, here, as a savior of his society. It is the poet who can bring deliverance to his people. "He who . . . has risen to the comprehension of his age: he who communicates that point of view to his age," Arnold points out, "is one of his age's intellectual deliverers" (CPW, I, 20).

Literature, especially poetry, has become therefore an effective means by which the poet can realize man's need for spiritual liberation from the hardness and oppression of the world. The greatness of poetry is related to the

amount of inspiration that the poet can get from a great epoch. Therefore, the term "modern" in this essay is associated in Arnold's thought with any historical period in which creative and critical intelligence is capable of interpreting past and present. There are, in Arnold's view, some epochs of the past which are closer to us than other epochs. These epochs are what we call "moderns." They are distinguished by the same complexity as our present age. A society is modern when its individuals practice free activity of mind; it is modern when it helps to create peace and confidence and when it judges by reason and observes with critical spirit.

In order to fulfill his task properly the poet needs to learn as much as he can from the history of mankind and apply his knowledge to improve the present situation of his society. He should learn from "the coexistence, the simultaneous appearance of a great epoch and a great literature" (CPW, I, 23). Hence the key phrase of the essay is "intellectual deliverance." It is a continuation of his idea in the "1853 Preface" that the moderns need to imitate the excellent actions of the ancients. It anticipates his views of "epoch of expansion," "disinterested objectivity," "criticism" in "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" and "Hellenism" in Culture and Anarchy. Arnold considers Greek literature as "an object of indestructable interest" and "a mighty agent of intellectual deliverance" for the Victorian age (CPW, I, 20).

In comparing the time of Elizabethans and that of the Romans with the Athens of Pericles, Arnold considers the latter as the most truly modern. The Greek tradition achieved a fusion of the man and the moment. Athens was both modern and adequate. It was great both in its civilization and its literature. In Athens Arnold finds a perfect balance between the critical intellect and profound moral insight. Greek culture is distinguished by major qualities which Arnold hopelessly longs for in his society:

> The intellectual maturity of man himself; the tendency to observe facts with a critical spirit; to search for their law, not to wander among them at random, to judge by the rule of reason, not by the impulse of prejudice or caprice. (CPW, I, 14)

Pericles reflects the "general intelligence of his age and nation" because, in Arnold's opinion, he embodies all the qualities which I have just quoted.[29] Arnold wishes also that these same qualities should be of great use to the modern age. But the Victorian age is distinguished by its lack of the "critical spirit," by the absence of the rule of reason," and by its overdevelopment of "the impulse of prejudice or caprice." These same terms evoke Arnold's attempt to define his poetic and critical theory. The term "caprice" is a continuation of the same idea in the "1853

Preface." The terms "critical spirit" and "rule of reason" look forward to his next essays, especially On Translating Homer, "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time," and Culture and Anarchy.

Like Pericles, Sophocles is presented by Arnold as a great poet.[30] His poetry "represents the highly developed human nature of that age--human nature developed in a number of directions, politically, socially, religiously, morrally developed--in its completest and most harmonious development in all these directions" (CPW, I, 28). Arnold's concern with the "Harmonious development" of "human nature" in this essay continues throughout his whole work, particularly in Culture and Anarchy and in "Literature and Science."

As in the "1853 Preface" Arnold continues in this lecture to emphasize that poetry must give joy and cheerfulness. Poetry "must give the charm of that noble serenity which always accompanies true insight" (CPW, I, 28). The true insight can be determined through the internal effect which a poem evokes in the reader. Poetry should convey an emotional apprehension to the whole personality. It unifies man with the universe.

Unlike Greek literature, the literature of Rome, in spite of its modernity, is not adequate. Arnold gives three representative examples of this age: Lucretius, Vergil, and Horace. In his discussion of the poetry of Lucretius Arnold laments that Lucretius's poetry "has

produced the most painful, the most lamentable results. It has produced . . . the feeling of depression, the feeling of ennui" (CPW, I, 32). Lucretius is not sympathetic with his age; therefore he cannot interpret it adequately. He is not concerned with the life of his day and its needs. He directs himself to "the naked framework of the world" (CPW, I, 33). He is therefore "over-strained, gloom weighted, morbid; and he who is morbid is no adequate interpreter of his age" (CPW, I, 34). In spite of his greatness Vergil is also inadequate. He is melancholy. The epic form he uses is an example of his inadequacy. Like Lucretius and Vergil, Horace also is not adequate. He is wanting in seriousness.

Arnold's attack on the three poets of Rome and his insistence that they should deal in their poetry with their own age implies an attack on Arnold himself. It is a clear hint of Arnold's uncertainty about the practicality of the classical principles of unity to his divided age and self. The significance of Arnold's contrast between the Athenians and the Romans is to be seen therefore in his affirmation of the required relationship between literature and life. Literature should be involved with the needs of life. It should not retreat from life as Lucretius did. "It is to the poetical literature of an age," Arnold suggests, "that we must look . . . for . . . the performance of a work which demands the most energetic and harmonious of all the powers of the human mind" (CPW, I, 22). This statement

foreshadows many of the ideas in his next essays. It is, for example, what lies beyond his key phrase "the imaginative reason" in "Pagan and Medieval Christian Religion." It is also evoked in the essay "Maurice de Guerin," where he says, "the grand power of poetry is its interpretive power; . . . the power of so dealing with things as to awaken in us a wonderfully full, new, and intimate sense of them" (CPW, III, 12-13). It is also a continuation of his letters to Clough in which he refers to "a growing sense of deficiency in your poems, and of this alone as being poetical as distinguished from rhetorical, devotional, or metaphysical" (Letters to Clough, 60).

Thus, in this essay Arnold asserts that it is through poetry that man can deliver himself intellectually. "The deliverance," as has been indicated, "consists in man's comprehension of . . . past and present" (CPW, I, 20). It can only be realized "when we have acquired that harmonious acquiescence of mind" (CPW, I, 22). The poet must understand the "collective [historical] life of humanity" and how it relates to various historical ages and periods. It is essential that we see the connections between the various ages in order not only to understand ourselves but to make use of these connections in improving our present situations: "To know how others stand, that we may know how we ourselves stand, that we may correct our mistakes and achieve our deliverance--that is our problem" (CPW, I, 21). Arnold emphasizes the need for interaction and

communication between all ages and in all aspects of life: in literature, art, science, etc. "No single event, no single literature," he says,

> is adequately comprehended except in its relation to other events, to other literature. The literature of ancient Greece, the literature of the Christian Middle Ages, so long as they are regarded as two isolated literatures, two isolated growths of the human spirit, are not adequately comprehended. (CPW, I, 21)

This essay therefore marks a turning point in Arnold's thinking. He begins to see literature as the means of "adequate interpretation" of one's own culture and life. In a letter to Clough on August 11, 1859, he indicates that he uses "reason from a way of thinking I have about the ancient and modern or anti-Christian and past Christian worlds . . . which I am developing in my lectures" (Letters to Clough, 149). Arnold's chief concern in this lecture, as Trilling says, is with

> the nature of the full and healthy life of the spirit, the conception of literature as no mere ornament of life but one of its prime instruments, the recognition that literature depends not upon the effort of the individual but upon the effort of a whole society.[31]

Like the "1853 Preface," "On the Modern Element in Literature" embodies Arnold's longing, at this time of his life, for elements of synthesis and unity through which he can cure the division he sees in the English mind and character. But individualism, as has been suggested before, is the chief quality of Victorian life. Therefore the individual as well as the whole society rejects any attempt for synthesis. This is quite clear from the individualistic reaction of some of his audience and critics. Most of his audience found it very difficult to absorb or even to think about what Arnold had to say in this lecture. William Wordsworth (the grandson of the poet William Wordsworth), for example, reacted to Arnold's lecture in this way: Arnold, he thinks, seems "to lust after a system of his own: and systems are not made in a day."[33] In a letter to his mother, twelve years after the publication of his lecture in Macmillan's Magazine, Arnold expresses his sorrow about the misunderstanding of his lecture by a reviewer in the Spectator who "shows his strange aptitude for getting hold of the wrong end of the stick, entirely misapprehending my use of the terms modern and adequate . . . my real doctrine" (Letters, I, 67-69).

In his lectures on Homer, the subject of the next section, Arnold hopelessly continues his search for cultural synthesis. His idea of "intellectual deliverance" in "On the Modern Element in Literature" is associated with his notion of the "grand style" which he sees embodied in Homer.

On Translating Homer

On Translating Homer (1861) is modern in critical approach if not so much in substance. By lecturing on Homer Arnold wishes again to awaken the minds of the public to the need for studying the classics, and, in these lectures, particularly Homer. Homer is for a long time the writer who for Arnold best embodies his notion of "intellectual deliverance" and "disinterested objectivity." In his poem "To a Friend" Arnold regards Homer as the "clearest soul'd of men" (PW, 2). In a letter to Clough, September 6, 1853, Homer's Iliad is considered as "a juster measure and happier vein" than any other literary work" (Letters to Clough, 143). In "On the Modern Element in Literature" Homer is given a higher place than Sophocles.

The outstanding place of Homer in these lectures has led many critics to give them very high praise. "None of Arnold's dealings with the classics," Anderson says,

> has had so widespread and continuing an effect as his lectures On Translating Homer. They won outspoken praise from A. E. Housman, the most savage of all critics among classical scholars; the learned Sir Richard Jebb adopted their characterizations of Homeric style in his handbook on the poet; and rare today is the discussion of the theory of classical translation

> that does not consider them.[33]

In his book Matthew Arnold, Saintsburg, as another example, affirms also the great value of these lectures. "Almost for the first time," he points out, "we have ancient literature treated more or less like modern--neither from the philological view, nor with reference to the stock platitudes and traditions about it."[34] Furthermore these lectures are of great value in the study of Homer for any beginner.[35] Arnold's power of perception in these lectures, as Tillotson indicates, is

> pinned down by an elaborate pattern of hard thinking. In these four lectures Arnold's power of coordination, or architectonice, is probably more completed than anything he demanded of the architectonic powers of the poet.

This combination, he stresses, constitutes "the power of all critics."[36]

The subject of these lectures is also "one of very lively current interest."[37] They contain, as one reviewer puts it, "delicacy of taste, keenness of insight, and evidence of true poetic culture."[38] Their purpose, as Arnold says to his mother, is not only "to lay down the true principles on which a translation of Homer should be founded," but also to give his own translation of some passages in order to "add practice to theory" (Letters, I,

145-146). In these lectures Arnold associates the task of the translator with that of the critic. Both of them attempt to produce an adequate interpretation of the original work. They employ the same method. Both are supposed to put their eyes on the "thing itself" and to avoid "collateral issues about the thing" (CPW, I, 174).

In these lectures, generally speaking, Arnold gives us a scientific analysis of style. Their central theme is that Homer possesses four major stylistic qualities: rapidity, plainness and directness of diction and syntax, plainness in thought, and nobility. None of the four translators--Cowper, Pope, Chapman, and Newman--satisfies the major stylistic criteria which Arnold sets for Homer. All of them have failed to show one or more of these qualities. Homer is a poet of "unrivalled clearness and straightforwardness [in] his thinking; in the way in which he keeps to one thought at a time, and puts that thought forth in its complete natural plainness" (CPW, I, 119). Pope, for example, has failed to show Homer's plainness and directness of syntax and diction. His translation of the Iliad has produced a "literary and intellectualized" Homer. "One feels that Homer's thought has passed through a literary and rhetorical crucible, and come out highly intellectualized" (CPW, I, 114). Chapman, on the other hand, fails to point our Homer's plainness of thought. In his translation of the Iliad there are still the "grotesqueness . . . conceits . . . irrationality" of the Middle Ages which are not

actually Homeric: "Homer expresses himself like a man of adult reason. Chapman like a man whose reason has not cleared itself" (CPW, I, 113). Cowper fails to mention Homer's rapidity. Newman does not succeed in revealing Homer's distinctive quality of nobility.

The failure of all these translators, Arnold thinks, is generally related to the absence in their minds of any objective standards or models. All these translators are very subjective and have to invest their materials with their own criteria. Arnold's reference in these lectures to the need for models (discipline, order) recalls to our minds similar ideas he has already expressed in his letters, the "1853 Preface" and in "On the Modern Element in Literature." It anticipates also many of his future ideas such as the "touchstones" in "The Study of Poetry" and the "powers" in "Literature and Science."

The errors in translating Homer are related also to the failure of the translators to understand the spirit of the author. For unless one penetrates the spirit of an author, one cannot make a satisfactory translation. Among all Homer's translators--Cowper, Pope, Chapman, Newman--it is upon the latter that Arnold's attack is most directed. Since Newman misunderstands the spirit of Homer, he has missed the most notable quality of Homer--nobility. In spite of his knowledge of Homer and the Greek language, Newman lacks taste as is shown in his belief that Homer's verse can affect us "like an elegant and simple

melody from an African of the Gold Coast" (CPW, I, 211). In his translation Newman has demonstrated an inability to understand his subject. His intention is to present to the English public of his time a translation of Homer which can have a similar effect to that of the original. Newman, nevertheless, has failed to achieve his main goal. Arnold criticizes him for using in his translation some words of Latin origin which do not fit the simplicity of Homer. His use of plump for mass, bulkin for calf, bragley for proudly fine are clear instances of his poor translation. Newman's unsuccessful attempt to choose the right vocabulary magnifies his complete misunderstanding of Homer's style. Homer, for Newman, is "direct, popular, forcible, quaint, flowing, garrulous." Again: "Homer rises and sinks with his subject, is prosaic when it is tame, is low when it is mean" (CPW, I, 119). Four words are picked by Arnold from the above statement: quaint, garrulous, prosaic, low. "Search the English language for a word which does not apply to Homer," Arnold says, "and you could not fix on a better than quaint, unless perhaps you fixed on one of the other three" (CPW, I, 119). Arnold appreciates, however, Newman's handling of Homer's syntax more than his vocabulary. "It is simple, direct, and natural, and so far it is like Homer's" (CPW, I, 124).

Nevertheless, Newman fails to see Homer's nobility. His failure, according to Arnold, results in a translation, in Trilling's words, "which veils all of Homer's stature

and delicary and brings him into incongruous approximation to the worst tastes and tendencies of the age."[39] Whereas Homer presents his thought naturally, Newman presents his thought in the style of ballad-poetry which is not Homeric (CPW, I, 125). Arnold has come to the conclusion that whereas Homer exhibits the grand style, Newman does not. To write with nobleness, Arnold thinks, is to write in the grand style. He defines "nobility" as not only the "zeal for learning, zeal for thinking, and zeal for liberty" (CPW, I, 189) which Newman also possesses, but also as "the poetical gift, the divine faculty" (CPW, I, 188). Arnold, at the same time, does not define clearly what he means by the grand style. He shows us that one has to feel it in order to know it and "woe to those who know it not" (CPW, I, 188). The grand style should be understood and cannot be defined. He points out, however, two kinds of grand styles: the simple and the severe. It arises in poetry "when a noble nature, poetically gifted, treats with simplicity or with severity a serious subject" (CPW, I, 188). Homer is "the best model of the grand style severe," whereas Dante embodies both.

> The severe seems . . . the grandest, so long as we attend most to the great personality, to the noble nature, in the poet its author; the simple seems the grandest when we attend most to the exquisite faculty, to the poetical gift. (CPW, I, 190)

Since the simple is more magical and intellectual and since it gives scope to the free play of mind, it is therefore preferable to the severe. The grand style arises from a "noble or powerful nature" (CPW, I, 189). This implies "the noble and profound applications of ideas to life," ideas, Arnold quotes Wordsworth, "on God, on Nature, and on Human life" (CPW, I, 210-211).

The grand style is also associated with Arnold's notion of architectonics in poetry which he treats in the "1853 Preface." Arnold finds the grand style as well as the architectonics embodied in the works of Sophocles, Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, Goethe, and Wordsworth. Whereas the architectonics of a poem is seen in its overall structure, its grand style is in the "movement and manner of individual lines." Arnold employs his touchstone method by giving illustrations from different authors. This method is used to evaluate the distinctive characteristics of a poet's expression. According to Arnold, it is very possible that a poet can write in the grand style without achieving the higher excellence of architectronics. The great poet is the one who can combine the two in his poetry. Whereas architectonics is associated in Arnold's mind with the formal expression of the intellectual aspect of human nature, style is the formal expression of its moral power.

Arnold's notion of the grand style; his dissatisfaction with the English translations of the Iliad; his insistence on pointing out the failure of the translators and the

defects of their translation; all of these, as the previous discussion implies, have more significance and meaning for Arnold than what appears on the surface. Arnold is not actually talking only about style in the literary sense; he is in fact talking also about life and more specifically about the life of Victorian England. The defects which he sees in the translations of Homer's Iliad represent for him general defects in the English culture during his age in general and in the English individual's mind and character in particular. "His exposition on the 'grand style' in art, "as Trilling also suggests, "has in view the virtues of a grand style in life."[40] Therefore

> when Arnold speaks of Homer's grand style; he has in mind, whether or not he says so, the mean style in which the British conduct their education; when he speaks of the simplicity of Homer's style he has in mind not only the clutter of contemporary poems but also, we must suppose, the clutter of contemporary life; and when he speaks of Homer's rapidity he has reference to what he elsewhere refers to as a middle class with business.[41]

Therefore, as Dale says, Arnold's

> principal poetic or formalistic criteria, architectonics and grand style do not exist in

> formalistic vaccum, but are intimately linked in his mind with specific elements in his concept of the Best self.[42]

Arnold's stress on nobility as a major quality of the grand style reflects his concern with the moral function of literature. Literature, and especially poetry, should be regarded "not as an object of mere literary interest but as a living, intellectual matter" (CPW, I, 140). True poetry should possess the "Homeric qualities" of "out-of-doors freshness, life, naturalness, buoyant rapidity" (CPW, I, 216). The distinctive quality of the grand style in poetry is that it does what works of literature, philosophy, and religion should.

The four stylistic qualities which Arnold identifies with Homer and the grand style foreshadow the four powers in "Literature and Science" that Arnold wishes to establish as a basis for his ideal of the complete human nature. They embody also Arnold's longing for unity, order and integration of the social order as well as of works of art.

As in Arnold's earlier writings we find also in these lectures clear evidence of Arnold's doubt about the difficulty of applying his synthetic ideal of the grand style to his age. In his view the failure of the translators, especially Newman, to see all these qualities in Homer's Iliad is a result of failure of "English intellect." The failures of Newman, for example, are not merely

personal but they embody an inadequacy in the intellect of his nation as a whole. Accordingly, Newman becomes one of Arnold's symbols of the eccentricity and provinciality of the British people, of their ignorance, and their inability to see the whole aspect of a thing. "The eccentricity . . . the arbitrariness, of which Mr. Newman's conception of Homer offers so signal an example," Arnold emphasizes, "are not a peculiar failing of Mr. Newman's own; in varying degrees they are the great defect of English intellect, the great blemish of English literature" (CPW, I, 140). Newman's divided mind is a symbol for Arnold not only of the divided Victorian culture but also for his [Arnold's] mind. Newman is also a symbol of democracy, in which Arnold, at this time of his career, sees a great danger. Newman is, as his biographer suggests, a democrat. His deep concern is with the people. "The people! the people. What are 'the people' suffering; what are their needs . . . the people are the very life essence of the Nation, its real motive power."[43] Newman is very individualistic. His individualism exemplifies, to a large extent, the individualistic tendency of the Victorian society. He offers Arnold a complete picture of the English individual who is determined not only to do what he likes to do but also to disregard any kind of authority or order and to ignore any attempt at reconciliation.

The individualism and provincialism which Arnold has associated with the English man have created also an

eccentric and arbitrary literature in his time. Therefore, he considers Victorian literature inferior to that of the Elizabethan period. Moreover, he ranks Victorian literature only third in Europe, after that of France and Germany (CPW, I, 140). Arnold's tendency to compare contemporary England with other periods of English history and with the rest of the continent, in the same lectures where he stresses the classical ideas of Homer, is also a clear indication of his uncertainty about applying the classical principles to his age. As in "On the Modern Element in Literature," Arnold begins to give more emphasis to the time in which he lives.

In comparing English literature of the Victorian period with that of the Elizabethan, Arnold regards the latter the golden age of English literature: "whatever be the defects of Elizabethan literature," he says, "we have no development of our literature to compare with it for vigour and richness" (CPW, I, 112). Victorian literature lacks the spirit and power of their [Elizabethans'] genius. "In dealing with works of profane literature, in dealing with poetical works above all," he maintains, "one may say that the minds of the Elizabethan translators were too active; that they could not forbear importing so much of their own" (CPW, I, 113). Arnold stresses the need for an academy. The absence of an academy results from the lack of intellect. Therefore there is no "public force of correct literary opinion, possessing . . . a clear sense

of what is right and wrong, sound and unsound" (CPW, I, 172). Arnold's notion of academy reflects his desire for order and authority in life as well as in literature. To this ideal (academy) Arnold devotes an entire essay: "The Literary Influence of Academies."

Arnold's dissatisfaction with the quality of Victorian literature leads him also to compare it with the literature of the rest of the continent, especially France and Germany. The French and Germans, Arnold affirms, have been distinguished by "a critical effort; the endeavour, in all branches of knowledge,--theology, philosophy, history, art, science,--to see the object as in itself it really is" (CPW, I, 140). The provincialism and fancy individualism of the English, on the other hand, stand against their making this critical effort: "almost the last thing for which one would come to English literature is just that very thing which now Europe most desires--criticism" (CPW, I, 140). It is very important, Arnold thinks, to have a thorough criticism. The critic "should have the first tact, the nicest moderation, the most free, flexible and elastic spirit imaginable" (CPW, I, 174).

Arnold's notion of the lack of the spirit of criticism in Victorian England and the task he assigns to the critic leads him to attempt, in the next decade of his career, to help the Englishman to develop his intellect. His previous remarks about criticism will be the starting point, four years later, in his essay "The Function of Criticism at

the Present Time." Indeed most of the ideas which Arnold has discussed in these lectures will be developed and enlarged in his Essays in Criticism: First Series. He will continue his struggle to find elements of synthesis and unity and to suggest ways of compromise among the individual, society, and literature. Because of the great attention to much individualism in his age Arnold's doubt about applying the classical principles of unity to his society will remain constant. Arnold's uncertainty will be more evident, above all, in his tendency to compare England and English writers with continental cultures and writers instead of that of the Greeks. The emphasis on the continent reflects the movement of Arnold's thinking more and more toward the importance he will give later to the immediate and present experience.

NOTES

[1] See also "Preface to Merope" (1858) and England and the Italian Question (1859). CWP, I, pp. 38-64, 65-06.

[2] Ruth Goldmark, Studies in the Influence of the Classics on English Literature (New York: Columbia University Press, 1918), p. 99.

[3] Johnson, p. 181.

[4] Masao Miyoshi, The Divided Self: A Perspective on the Literature of the Victorians (New York: New York University Press, 1969), pp. 183-184.

[5] Sidney Coulling, "Matthew Arnold's 1853 Preface," Victorian Studies, VII (March 1964), 233-234.

[6] N. W. Garrod, "Matthew Arnold's 1853 Preface," Review of English Studies, XVII (July 1941), 310.

[7] Douglas Bush, Matthew Arnold: A Survey of his Poetry and his Prose (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1971), pp. 26, 28.

[8] Martin Corner, "Arnold, Lessing, and the Preface of 1853," Journal of English and Germanic Philology, LXXII (April 1973), 223.

[9] J. A. K. Thomson, The Classical Background of English Literature (New York: Collier Books, 1962), p. 221.

[10] Alba H. Warren, Jr., English Poetic Theory,

1825-1865 (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1950), p. 152.

[11] The Treatise of Aristotle, to which Arnold is indebted, consists of: "Plot . . . [is] the ordering of particular actions"; "tragedy is a mimesis of a complete, that is, of a whole action." "The poet should be considered as maker of plots, not verses." See Poetics in Ancient Literary Criticism, ed. A. O. Russell and M. Winterbottom (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), pp. 97-103.

[12] William A. Jamison, Arnold and the Romantics (Copenhagen, Rosenkilde and Bagger, 1958), p. 152.

[13] John P. Farrell, Revolution as Tragedy: The Dilemma of the Moderate from Scott to Arnold (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1980), p. 253.

[14] Benjamin Ifor Evans, Tradition and Romanticism Studies in English Poetry from Chaucer to W. B. Yeats (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1964), p. 172.

[15] Hugh Kingsmill, Matthew Arnold (London: Duckworth, 1928), p. 120.

[16] See Letters to Clough, pp. 65, 124.

[17] Victor N. Boutellier, Imaginative Reason: The Continuity of Matthew Arnold's Critical Effort (Switzerland: A Franche AG Verlag Born, 1977), p. 12.

[18] The same emphasis on the ancients is continued in the "Preface to Merope" (1858). Arnold indicates that his purpose of choosing the subject of Merope from the past is "to attempt . . . to come to closer quarters with the

form which produces such grand effects in the hands of the Greek masters" and "to try . . . how much of the effectiveness of the Greek poetical forms [he] could retain in an English poem constructed under the conditions of those forms" (CPW, I, 39).

[19] Gwilyan James, Matthew Arnold and the Decline of English Romanticism (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), pp. 64, 65.

[20] E. K. Brown, "Matthew Arnold and the Eighteenth Century," University of Toronto Quarterly, IX (Jan. 1940), 213.

[21] Vincent Buckley, Poetry and Morality: Studies on the Criticism of Matthew Arnold, T. S. Eliot and F. R. Leavis (London: Chatto and Windus, 1959), p. 25.

[22] Warren, p. 153.

[23] David Daiches, A Critical History of English Literature, II (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1960), p. 978.

[24] F. L. Lucas, "Matthew Arnold," Victorian Literature: Modern Essays in Criticism, ed. Austin Wright (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 55.

[25] Johnson, p. 187.

[26] Arnold was appointed a professor of poetry at Oxford on May 5, 1857; and he had delivered his inaugural lecture, "On the Modern Element in Literature," on November 14, 1857. It was not published until 1869, when it appeared in Macmillan's Magazine. See CPW, I, 225. For a brief

summary of this lecture see the review of Merope in Saturday Review (London), XIX (Jan. 2, 1858).

[27] This letter is published by R. L. Lowe, "Two Arnold Letters," Modern Philology, LII (May 1955), 262-264.

[28] Dale, p. 107.

[29] Arnold is to maintain the same opinion about Pericles twelve years later in Culture and Anarchy. See CPW, V, 228.

[30] This view of Sophocles recalls Arnold's sonnet "To a Friend" (PW, p. 2) and Arnold's letter to Clough, dated March 1, 1849 (Letters to Clough, pp. 100-106).

[31] Trilling, p. 166.

[32] This letter is addressed to Crabb Robinson. Quoted by Super in "Critical and Explanatory Notes," CPW, I, p. 225.

[33] Warren D. Anderson, Matthew Arnold and the Classical Tradition (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1965), p. 79.

[34] George Edward Bateman Saintsbury, Matthew Arnold (Elinburgh: Blackwood, 1899), p. 68.

[35] H. A. Mason, "Arnold and the Classical Tradition," Arion, 1 (Autumn 1962), 79.

[36] Geoffery Tillotson, "Matthew Arnold: The Critic and the Advocate" in Essays by Divers Hands, XX (London, 1943), p. 30.

[37] Super, CPW, I, 239.

[38] A reviewer in the Spectator, Feb. 16, 1861. Quoted

by Super in CPW, I, 240.

[39] Trilling, p. 178.

[40] Trilling, p. 429.

[41] Lionell Trilling, ed. The Essential Matthew Arnold (London: Chatto and Windus, 1949), p. 23.

[42] Dale, p. 152.

[43] I. Giberne Silveking, Memoir and Letters of Francis W. Newman (London, 1909), pp. 257-58. Quoted by Trilling in Matthew Arnold, p. 172.

CHAPTER IV

TOWARD INTELLECTUAL DELIVERANCE

Essays in Criticism: First Series[1]

Arnold's central purpose in Essays in Criticism: First Series is to help the Englishman to develop his intellect by opening his mind to foreign thought, especially that of the continent. "It is the educational side of the question [of intellectual deliverance]," Arnold says in a letter to Sir Joshua Fitch,

> that I particularly care for. It does not matter whether or no one thing more or less is produced which in literature is happy and brilliant, there is so much of this in literature already, but whether the people get hold of a single thing in high literature, this point of education is of immense matter.[2]

As he announces here, Arnold has begun to apply his earlier theoretical pronouncements about Hellenic ideals to Victorian life and thought. He becomes more critical of the Englishman's character, civilization and literature. Arnold's earlier stress on the ancients, especially the Greeks, begins to decrease somewhat, and an emphasis on

continental writers becomes increasingly apparent. The importance which Arnold gives to the continent reflects not merely a modification of his views of the ancients but also intensifies his doubt about the applicability of Greek ideals to his age. Perhaps intellectual deliverance will be found to be closer to the English than to the Greeks.

The central problem in Victorian England is lack of ideas. Therefore Arnold in Essays in Criticism, First Series continues the criticism expressed in a letter to his sister "K" in May, 1848. In comparing England to the rest of the continent, Arnold says that England is "far behind the continent." The English lack "wide reading and thinking" (Letters, I, 10). England, he says to Fan (Miss Arnold) seventeen years later, is "losing immeasurably in all ways" "declining" "for want of . . . ideas, for want of perceiving how the world is going and must go" (Letters, I, 360).

To a general humanistic impulse, Arnold has added a patriotic note to help the Englishman to develop his intellect by opening his mind to foreign knowledge. "I think in this concluding half of the century," Arnold says to Mrs. Foster November 14, 1863, "The English spirit is destined to undergo a great transformation; or rather, . . . to perform a great evolution." His main interest is to "charm" and to "convert" "the wild beast of English philistinism" by whom he is "being torn to pieces" (Letters, I, 240). This is also Arnold's major concern in Essays in

Criticism: First Series.

In most of these essays Arnold undertakes to preach his earlier principle of Hellenism, of what he calls in Culture and Anarchy (1869), the "platonic instinct" for a "firm intelligible law of things" (CPW, V, 177).[3] Their central theme, in Arnold's words, is "to inculcate intelligence, in a high sense of the word, upon the English as what they most want."[4]

Arnold believes that this intellectual transformation will be brought about in the nature of the English, as he says to his brother Thomas.[5] It will also affect English literature. "It is a great deal to give one true feeling in poetry," Arnold says to his mother on November 19, 1863, "but I do not at present very much care for poetry unless it can give me thought as well" (Letters, I, 241-242, Arnold's emphasis). The insularity of the English individual has affected the quality of English literature, as he says in a letter to Clough, August 2, 1855. For example, Tennyson's 1865 Volume of Poetry (Maud and Other Poems) is "a lamentable production, and like so much of our literature thoroughly and intensely provincial not European" (Letters to Clough, 147). "With all his temperament and artistic skill," Arnold says five years later, Tennyson "is deficient in intellectual power," which Arnold thinks is very essential for modern poets.[6]

Arnold believes that it is through pursuing literature that man can develop his knowledge. Literature, for Arnold,

as René Wellék indicates, "educates, . . . forms man, makes him see things, makes him know himself, gives him serenity."[7] It is through literature, Arnold says to Mrs. Foster, that "I shall do what I can . . . freer perhaps in that sphere than I could be in any other" (Letters, I, 240). It is only by means of literature, he indicates to his mother on December 7, 1864, that his ideas can "ever gain any access" in his country (Letters, I, 282). Arnold has no other goal than to say what he thinks to be the truth about things. "To try and approach truth on one side after another," he declares in the "Preface to Essays in Criticism," "not to strive or cry, nor to persist in pressing forward, on any one side, with violence and self-will." His purpose, he affirms in the same Preface, is "to pull out a few more stops in that powerful but at present somewhat narrow, toned organ, the modern Englishman" (CPW, III, 286, 287). It is therefore through criticism, he indicates in "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time," that he can pull out these stops by means of denouncing self-satisfaction and by pointing out all that "will nourish us to growth towards perfection" (CPW, III, 284). Englishmen can only reduce and conquer "the hard unintelligence," Arnold also points out in On the Study of Celtic Literature (1866), "by culture, by a growth in the variety, fulness and sweetness of their spiritual life" (CPW, III, 386). It is upon England that the main focus of these essays lies. As science becomes a powerful influence in the world, he says to his sister Jane on

January 6, 1865, he wishes that England "may run well in this race." Therefore the purpose of his writing is "to stimulate her and to make her feel how many clogs she wears, and how much she has to do" (Letters, I, 285-286).

In spite of the various subjects which these essays explore, they are distinguished by a remarkable unity. "The subjects" of the essays, as a reviewer of the Reader pointed out on April 8, 1865, "have no obvious connexion with each other. Yet the book leaves on the reader's mind an impression of completeness and unity . . . Every one of his articles . . . helps to interpret the rest; the greater the diversity of topics, the more they conduce to the general spirit."[8] In addition to their common unity the essays are also distinguished by the employment of a common method.[9] The portraits which Arnold uses in his essays, in Brown's words, are quite similar to "the human ideals presented in various guises in Arnold's poetry." Maurice de Guérin, for example, exemplified the quality of the scholar-Gipsy, the austere calm of Marcus Aurelius, all of them "disinterested."[10]

In almost all of these essays Arnold discusses the relationships between poetry and criticism, literature and life. Indeed his chief concern is to open theEnglishman's mind to ideas about life in general: its social, religious and philosophical aspects. "The main interest in the Essays," as Harvey points out, "is life, rather than literature, . . . man rather than style. Arnold was . . . an

'ardent lover,' not a 'professional critic.' These are the judgments of a mind in close contact with life, and a mind of perfect balance."[11] Arnold treats, for example, the connection between the task of the poet and that of the critic ("The Function of Criticism at the Present Time"). His notion, in the lectures on Homer, that "the noble and profound application of ideas to life is the most essential part of poetic greatness" is associated with his view that poetry is "simply the most beautiful, impressive, and widely effective mode of saying things" ("Heinrich Heine," CPW, I, III, 110). The same view is identical with his notion of poetry as a "criticism of life" ("Joubert," CPW, III, 209). The connection between literature and life is also related to his idea that "the grand business of modern poetry" is "a moral interpretation from an independent point of view of man and the world" and that "the inevitable task for the modern poet . . . is to interpret human life afresh, and to supply a new spiritual basis to it" ("On the Study of Celtic Literature," (CPW, III, 380, 381). These same definitions will continue in his later criticism, especially in the essay "Wordsworth," where he defines poetry as "the most perfect speech of man in which he comes nearer to utter the truth" and in "The Study of Poetry," where his notion of poetry as "a criticism of life" reappears (CPW, IX, 39, 163).

Though some of these essays deal with classical writers and cultures ("Marcus Aurelius" and "Pagan and Medieval Religious Sentiment"), it is upon the continent that Arnold's

major focus lies. "Maurice de Guérin," "Eugenie de Guérin" and "Joubert" are three French examples: "Heine" is a German example.[12] This series of essays, as E. K. Brown indicates, is "a bridge thrown across the channel. With it Arnold opened to the island Philistines new vistas of continental literature and culture."[13] Arnold's aim is to attack English provincialism through continental writers. By breaking the English insularity, he wishes to establish his ideal of human perfection and the best self,[14] which he will explore in Culture and Anarchy.

Nevertheless, the strong individualism of the Englishman stands firmly opposed to intellectual deliverance. "To an eminently decorous clerical journal [like the Guardian]," Arnold writes to his mother on May 19, 1853,

> my tendency to say exactly what I think about things and people is thoroughly distasteful and disquieting. However, one cannot change English ideas so much as, if I live, I hope to change them, without saying imperturbably what one thinks and making a good many people uncomfortable. The great thing is to speak without a particle of vice, malice or rancour. (Letters, I, 225)

Indeed, as the following discussion of some of the essays points out, Arnold attempts to speak very openly about the deficiencies of Englishmen, English society and English

literature during his time. But the indifference of his countrymen to his ideals makes it hard for him to achieve his goal of harmonizing the English individual, society and literature.

In "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time"[15] Arnold establishes the central themes and sets the general tone of Essays in Criticism: First Series.[16] He fully explores and works the continual conflict in his mind between his duty to his society and his duty to himself. Arnold comes to the conclusion that it is not in isolation but in accordance with the needs of his society that his literary task can be performed.[17]

Arnold's starting point in this essay as well as in the other essays is that the Englishman during the Victorian age was not critical. He uttered his views in isolation without attempting to relate or to perceive his opinion in relation to other ideas. Criticism "has so little kept in the pure intellectual sphere, has so little detached itself from practice" (CPW, III, 261). The English like only what is English and ignore what is foreign. Arnold cites the remarks of Sir Charles Adderley to the Warwickshire farmers in order to show not only an example of the individualistic tendency and the narrow view of the English people, but to illustrate also the reasons for his doubt in applying his ideal of criticism. Referring to the English race Sir Charles says: "The old Anglo-Saxon race, are the best breed in the whole world." The English, Sir Charles maintains,

are also "superior to all the world" (CPW, III, 272). These remarks of Sir Charles, Arnold declares, are quite similar to those of Mr. Roebuck. "I look around me and ask what is the state of England?" Mr. Roebuck says to the Shoffield cutlers, "Is not property safe? Is not every man able to say what he likes? . . . I ask you whether, the world over or in past history, there is anything like it? Nothing. I pray that our unrivalled happiness may last" (CPW, III, 272). The liberal voice of Mr. Roebuck, according to Arnold, is not Roebuck's alone but characteristic of almost all the English people.

England, as he says also in Friendship's Garland, does not believe in ideas. She plays with ideas "like counters, taking them up and laying them down at random." The great weakness of the English is their insularity, which has produced a tremendous decay in their intellect. Because England is in need of more intelligence than energy, she has lost her prominent place among nations. She has no respect for the rest of the continent, and therefore she fails to see the right way the world is going.[18] Arnold's essay "The Function of Criticism" is, in Hoctor's phrase, "a cry for freedom from any kind of 'national and provincial partiality,' factionalism, or thick headed dogmatism."[19]

"Criticism" or "Culture" is the means by which the English individual can overcome his intellectual provincialism. "The swallowing up of provincial nationalities," Arnold says in On the Study of Celtic Literature, "is a consummation

to which the natural course of things tends; it is a necessity of what is called modern civilization" (CPW, III, 296, 297). Since England is not all the world, Arnold says in "The Function of Criticism," "The English critic of literature, therefore, must dwell much on foreign thought" (CPW, III, 283, 283). Arnold wants the English individual to transend his narrow sectarian passions in the interests of intellectual power. "The criticism which alone can much help us for the future," he says,

> is a criticism which regarded Europe as being, for intellectual and spiritual purposes, one great confederation, bound to a joint action and working to a common result and whose members have . . . a knowledge of Greek, Roman, and Eastern antiquity, and of one another (CPW, III, 284).

Therefore in this essay, as Charles Harvey suggests, Arnold is concerned with the need for a sound body of culture.[20] Arnold's dissatisfaction with the absence of the spirit of criticism or culture is expressed from the very opening of the essay. He contrasts the presence of the critical spirit in the continent and its absence in England. Unlike the English "whose critical faculty is lower than the inventive," the main effort of the European mind has been a critical effort; "the endeavour, in all branches of knowledge, theology, philosophy, history, art, to see the object as in itself it really is" (CPW, III, 259, 258).

The complexity of the Victorian world, Arnold thinks, needs a critical effort to stand behind the creative effort or poetry will be a "poor, barren, and short-lived affair." It is the critic who possesses imaginative insight through which he grasps comprehensively the whole of his own time and interprets for his age "the best that is known and thought in the world irrespectively of practice, politics, and everything of the kind" (CPW, III, 262, 268). "The critic's duty," in the words of Thorpe, "is constantly to broaden his knowledge for the sake of strengthening his ideas and insight and refining his 'disinterestedness' . . . in order to transmit sound standards of judgment and appreciation to the public."[21] The critic should be detached from parties, interests and prejudices of every kind. He should be in the world of politics while not of it (CPW, III, 274-275). The goal of criticism is similar to science. It helps one to understand the truth. The critic, however, is more valuable than the scientist or the philosopher. He is not isolated and is possessed with a profound sense of responsibility. Whereas science or philosophy has an analytical character, literature has a synthetic character (CPW, III, 261).

The importance which Arnold gives to the critical spirit in relation to the creative one reflects a major shift in his humanistic thinking. Whereas previously he considers it the task of the poet to deliver his age,[22] now it is upon the critic, the man of ideas, that the intellectual and

moral deliverance of the Victorian age depends. Without the critical spirit, the creative effort of a period fails. Besides seeing "the object as in itself it really is," the task of the critical power is also to make "an intellectual situation," to establish "an order of ideas" and to make "the best ideas prevail" (CPW, III, 261). Whereas in the "1853 Preface" the elements with which the creative power works are "actions," now they are "ideas," "the best ideas, on every matter which literature touches, current at the time" (CPW, III, 260). Therefore Arnold, as H. W. Garrod thinks, is "a singularly successful advertiser agent for ideas."[23] The term "ideas" is Arnold's central conception of human creativity. "Ideas," as Murray Krieger suggests, make Arnold "the humanist per excellence who readies man to live, imaginatively and self-sufficiently, in a ruthlessly objectified world that lacks the awareness of subjects."[24]

To the previous purpose of criticism Arnold adds intellectual curiosity and disinterested objectivity: a desire "to know the best that is known and thought in the world" and the "disinterested love of a free play of the mind, on all subjects for its own sake" (CPW, III, 268). Arnold's notion of "disinterestedness" is a continuation of his views of "an idea of the world" (Letters to Clough, 97), and "actions" ("The 1853 Preface"), and is analogous to his idea that the subject of poetry should deal with "human nature developed in a number of directions, politically, socially, religiously, morally" ("On the Modern Element in Literature," (CPW,

I, 28). It anticipates his ideal of "imaginative Reason" ("Pagan and Medieval Christian Sentiment"), the "State" (Culture and Anarchy), poetry as "a criticism of life" ("Joubert"), and the four "powers" in "Literature and Science."

Criticism, thus defined, is not an abstraction but an attitude of mind. It is an attempt and a goal to be achieved.[25] It should be involved with the major issues of the time or what T. S. Eliot calls "the Mystery of Life."[26] Thus Arnold's references to social issues are as various as those to the literary questions. The social emphasis in this essay, as Trilling says, makes many readers wonder whether Arnold is talking about literary criticism at all. Most of Arnold's instances are drawn from actual aspects of political and social life rather than from literature.[27] Indeed Arnold does not accept any separation between literary, social and cultural criticism. As Michael Thorpe says, Arnold "would have been proud to say with Sainte-Beuve, whom he called 'the most notable critic of our time' . . . I hold very little . . . to literary opinions; . . . what does occupy me seriously is life itself and the object of it."[28] Whenever Arnold speaks of literary critics or literary criticism he "prefixes, like Keble, Newman and Ruskin, a derogatory phrase and speaks of 'mere' literary criticism, the 'mere' literary critic."[29]

Arnold finds his ideal of disinterested criticism especially embodied in Germany and France. They are the

countries, he indicates to Mrs. Foster on January 6, 1865, in which "intellectual life has been carried further" (Letters, I, 285). From Germany, for example, Arnold is influenced by Goethe's poetic form, style and subject matter. They shared a passion of ideas and a hatred of unintelligence on the side of mind and spirit.[30] Arnold's idea of the lack of the creative power in his age has its origin in Goethe. "That creative state . . . through which alone everything great can flourish," Goethe says in Eckermann,

> is no longer possible. The critical journals appearing daily in fifty different places and the nonsensical clap trap they produce among the public will allow nothing healthy to grow . . . And then how tame and feeble life itself has become in the last few miserable centuries! Where will you find unhidden an original nature today. . . . This reacts on the poet, however, who has to find everything within himself while he is left stranded by everything outside.[31]

Arnold's interest in the intellectual aspect of human nature is identical also with Goethe's belief that "a great deal of intellect and sound culture should be current in a nation."[32]

Unlike Goethe, the English Romantic poets, according to Arnold, are incapable of making use of contemporary ideas. Their lack of the critical spirit makes their work deficient in material and the stimulation which society can provide for

the poet. They are very much involved in their own personal experiences. They give importance to their private inspiration, which will finally lead to spiritual anarchy. Traditional authority and comparative values no longer exist. Even Wordsworth, who was "a great critic," "has not left," as much criticism as Goethe (CPW, III, 259, 260). Similarly, "Byron's poerty," in comparison with Goethe's, "had so little endurance in it." Unlike Goethe's creative power, "Byron's" was not "nourished by a great critical effort [not] providing the true material for it." Byron and the rest of the Romantic poets know less than Goethe about "life and the world" (CPW, III, 262). Unlike Goethe, the Romantic poets are not thinker-poets. They do not believe that "the little that is done seems nothing when we look forward and see how much we have yet to do" (CPW, III, 272). Moreover, Romantic poetry, unlike Goethe's, lacks the "proper data" and "materials." "The English poetry of the first quarter of this century--with plenty of energy, plenty of creative force," Arnold insists, "did not know enough"; even Wordsworth was "wanting in completeness and variety" (CPW, III, 262).

Heinrich Heine is another example of the German writers in whom Arnold finds his ideal of intellectual curiosity. Arnold's essay "Heinrich Heine"[33] is directed at the need for developing intellectual control and the application of the modern spirit in literature. "Modern times," Arnold says

> find themselves with an immense system of institutions, established facts, accredited dogmas, customs, rules, which have come from times not modern. In this system their life has to be carried forward; yet they have a sense that this system is not of their own creation . . . The awakening of this sense is the awakening of the modern spirit (CPW, III, 109).

The critic's purpose, therefore, is "to ascertain the master-current is the literature of an epoch, and to distinguish this from all minor currents" (CPW, III, 107). Arnold's goal in writing about Heine reflects his desire to mark his [Heine's] significance "in modern European literature, the scope of his activity, and his value" (CPW, III, 117).

Heine's greatness, for Arnold, does not only lie in his being the "most effective soldier in the Liberation War of humanity" but also in his method of fighting which embodies Arnold's standards for criticism. Arnold admires him for the "intrepid application of the modern spirit to literature. To the ideas with which the burning questions of modern life filled him, he made all his subject-matter minister." Heine is the successor of Goethe, "the manifest centre of German literature" through whom "many rivers of [intellectual influence] flow." Goethe "puts the standard, once for all, inside everyman instead of outside him"; Heine

carried on "a life and death battle with philistinism" (CPW, III, 107, 119, 108, 110, 111). In his attack on philistinism Heine embodies Arnold's notions of disinterestedness, curiosity and the need for opening one's mind to the whole world. This is especially seen in Heine's attempt to establish a common intellectual relationship between Germany and France. "It is because he thus operates a junction between the French spirit, and German culture that he [Heine] found something new, opens a fresh period and deserves the attention of criticism . . ." (CPW, III, 120). Heine's distinctive quality of disinterestedness has led him to know "all the culture of Germany; in his head fermented all the ideas of modern Europe" (CPW, III, 132). Above all, Heine embodies the two major traditions of Western thought, Hellenism and Hebraism. "By his perfection of literary form, by his love of clearness, by his love of beauty, Heine is Greek; by his intensity, by his untamableness, by his longing 'which cannot be uttered,' he is Hebrew" (CPW, III, 118).

Thus, England suffers by comparison; Victorian England is deficient in the modern spirit which is well manifested in Goethe's and Heine's work. The English do not have "the German wealth of ideas" (CPW, III, 120). England was not always so intellectually disabled, however. In comparing the Victorian age with the Elizabethan, Arnold praises the latter because English society at that time "was accessible to ideas, was permeated by them, was vivified by them, to a

degree which has never been reached in England since" (CPW, III, 121). That is the reason for Shakespeare's greatness and his unique place in English literature. It is also the reason for the greatness of his contemporaries. Unlike the Elizabethans, the Victorians are not "powerfully upheld by the intellectual life of their nation." They do not apply modern ideas in their literature (CPW, III, 121). Carlyle, for example, fails to apply the task which Arnold sets for the critic. His failure is related to his lack of "justness of spirit." He has "a little too much of the self-will and eccentricity of a genuine son of Great Britain" (CPW, III, 108).

Arnold was also affected by French culture and writers. His first series of essays in criticism, as E. K. Brown points out, "is almost a eulogy of the French mind, French institutions, French religion, French culture, and the French character, as opposed to their English analogues."[34] For Arnold, France is "the country in Europe where the people are most alive" (CPW, III, 265). Intelligence in France, as he says to Clough, is "wide and deepspread" and ideas affect the imagination of "the commonplace man as well as . . . the Genius" (Letters to Clough, 72-73, the emphasis is Arnold's). Arnold considers the French Revolution as "the passion with which it could inspire a multitude for [its ideas]" (CPW, III, 265-65). Because she regards the ideas of 1789 as the rationale of her state, Arnold points out also in "Democracy" (1861), France is a

great power in Europe. France alone "has remodelled her institutions with an eye to reason rather than custom, and to right rather than fact" (CPW, II, 11).

Arnold has wondered about the reasons which make the Romantic period barren and empty of ideas in spite of the fact that the French Revolution precedes it. The main reason is that Romantic poets such as Byron and Wordsworth "had their source in a great movement of feeling, not in a great movement of mind." Unlike the French Revolution, the "English Revolution of Charles the First's Time" does not find "its motive power in the intelligence of man [but] in their practical sense." Therefore the English Revolution is less spiritual than the French Revolution. It does not appeal "to an order of ideas which are universal" (CPW, III, 264). Accordingly the Englishman, unlike the Frenchman, "values what is political and practical so much that ideas become objects of dislike in his eyes." "Practice" for the English is everything, "a free play of the mind is nothing." For the notion of criticism as the exercise of curiosity and disinterestedness England has no sympathy. The word curiosity has "no sense of the kind" throughout the English language (CPW, III, 268). Provincialism is especially prominent in Victorian journalism. Unlike the Revué des Deux Mondes, the Edinburgh Review, the Quarterly Review and the Times are not concerned with "the best that is known and thought in the world" or with the "free play of mind" but with practical interests of their

own parties. "Through all the various fractions, political and religious, of our society, every fraction has . . . its organ of criticism, but the notion of combining all fractions in the common pleasure of a free disinterested play of mind meets with no favour" (CPW, III, 270, 271).

Arnold associates the practical view of things and the tendency against the free play of mind with the epoch of expansion which stands against the development of all powers of man. An epoch of expansion eliminates the instinct of human nature and stands against the humanization of man. In contrast to the epoch of expansion Arnold sets the spoch of concentration. He considers Burke as the great voice of that epoch in England. He "brings thought to bear upon politics." "His ideas were at the service of an epoch of concentration, not an epoch of an expansion." Furthermore he lived in "the world of ideas, not the world of catchwords and party habits" (CPW, III, 266, 267). Thus Burke exemplifies Arnold's principle of disinterestedness. He is one of the very few through whom social change, according to Arnold, can take place. "Whoever sets himself to see things as they are will find himself one of a very small circle; but it is only by this small circle . . . that adequate ideas will ever get current at all" (CPW, III, 264).[35]

In "The Literary Influence of Academies"[38] Arnold compares English and French habits of mind and intelligence and comes to the conclusion that the English are deficient.

"How prevalent all around us," he says, "is the want of balance of mind and urbanity of style! How much . . . it is to be found in ourselves, . . . in each of us! . . . everyone can see it clearest in his contemporaries" (CPW, III, 250). Therefore, Arnold presents his notion of academy as the embodiment of that balance which he seeks.

An academy, he declares, is a recognized authority which imposes on the individual and works of art a high standard on questions of intellect and taste (CPW, III, 235), It can be very valuable in achieving the function of criticism. It can determine the best thought of the age. Moreover an academy has an ethical and moral function. It does not only affect style in language but also the individual's temperament and character (CPW, III, 234). It suggests man's need for general standards of order by which human nature can be controlled. Arnold indicates that man must be very willing to admit and accept a higher standard than his own in intellectual matters: "a high standard of action, an ideal authoritatively correcting his everyday moral habits" (CPW, III, 236).

Arnold found his ideal of an academy well embodied in French society and literature (especially its prose). The French individual possesses the same qualities which were characteristic of the Athenian people. Unlike an Englishman, "a Frenchman has . . . what one may call a conscience in intellectual matters; he has an active belief that there is a right and a wrong in them" (CPW, III, 236).

It is upon an openness of mind and intelligence such as is displayed in France, that "the form, the method of evolution, the precision, the proportions, the relations of the parts to the whole, in intellectual work" mainly depend (CPW, III, 238). An openness of mind and intelligence are also very important in the development of the human spirit.

In France, the academy serves as an intellectual center and authority which sets "standards in a number of directions . . . and creates a force of educated opinion" (CPW, III, 241). Since order and centrality in France are embodied in the State, Arnold's advocacy of the French academy carries him toward political matters. As Bush says, Arnold "is carrying on the old humanistic tradition of order and standards that are not only intellectual and aesthetic but ethical and social."[37] Arnold's main intention, as Thorpe also declares, is to arrive at "his ideal of a sane and balanced "culture,' the shadowy ideal which . . . hovers over the pages of Culture and Anarchy."[38]

The English in Arnold's view already lack important prerequisites for establishing an academy. In the first place, any effort at establishing such an academy "has many enemies in human nature. We, all of us, like to go our own way, and not to be forced out of the atmosphere of commonplace habitual to most of us." The English, unlike the French, do not have "an open and clear mind, nor a quick and flexible intelligence" (CPW, III, 237). It is very difficult to create intellectual order in English

society because the individual disregards any kind of authority outside himself. This is especially seen in the provincial spirit which dominates his character and mind. The English insist on disregarding anything not English. This provincial spirit has led the English individual to be inaccessible to ideas. His spirit is too passionate. It is mainly interested in the senses and not in the spirit of intellect. Such a spirit "does not persuade, it makes war"; it has not urbanity, the tone of the centre" (CPW, III, 249).

The English people, unlike the French, are dissociated from the center. They "are isolated, they form no powerful body of opinion, they are not strong enough to set a standard" (CPW, III, 242). Shakespeare and Newton, great as they are, were dominated by their energy. Furthermore, English prose, unlike French prose which is characterized by perfection of form and order, is distinguished by its ornamental and imaginative self-indulgence and "its note of provinciality." England, above all, possesses "the eruptive and aggressive manner in literature" (CPW, III, 249).

Arnold's "Eugenie de Guérin"[39] deals also with the intellectual aspect of human nature. In comparing Eugenie de Guérin with her brother Maurice[40] Arnold indicates that Eugenie, unlike her brother, never "expresses herself without grace and intelligence." When she speaks of the natural world her words bear "intellectual signs." She is concerned with the "mind." The charm of her expression" is

"an intellectual charm" (CPW, III, 86, 90).

In "Joubert"[41] Arnold stresses his theme of the need for the individual to open his mind to what has been said about past cultures and their great thinkers. He refers also, for the first time, to his famous phrase that literature is at bottom "a criticism of life." "The end and aim of literature," he declares, "is, in truth, nothing but that" (CPW, III, 209). Arnold finds his ideal of literature as "a criticism of life" embodied in the French writer Joubert. Joubert possesses those qualities of excellence which Arnold wishes to establish in the Englishman's character and mind. He is a disinterested critic and a seeker for truth for its own sake. His greatness is seen "in the union of soul with intellect, and in the delightful, satisfying result which this union produces" (CPW, III, 208).

In comparing Coleridge with Joubert, Arnold points out that Coleridge has "less delicacy and penetration than Joubert." The doctrine of Coleridge is less "intelligible" and less "receivable" than Joubert's. The sense of form in the work of Coleridge is not perfect. He does not perceive clearly that "beauty and light are properties of truth, and that truth is incompletely exhibited if it is exhibited without beauty and light." Moreover there is not in England, as in France, "a sympathy with intellectual activity." Therefore Coleridge's effort in England is not similar to that of Joubert in France (CPW, III, 189, 193, 196, 193).

In his essay "Marcus Aurelius"[42] Arnold shows us that

though Aurelius possesses "moral deliverance" he lacks the intellectual deliverance which can "enable him to see Christianity as it really was" (CPW, III, 145).

In "Spinoza and the Bible"[43] Arnold admires Spinoza's intelligent and critical mind in scriptural criticism. According to Spinoza the love of God consists in our knowledge of Him. God is manifested in nature and it is by knowing all laws of nature that we love Him. "This is not," Arnold maintains, "what the Christian means by the love of God. Spinoza's ideal is the intellectual life, the Christian ideal is the religious life" (CPW, III, 178). Spinoza's notion of religion is being more Hellenic than Hebraic.

In spite of Arnold's attempt to help the English individual to develop his intellect by opening his mind to foreign thought, especially that of the continent, Arnold is uncertain about the application of his ideals of criticism among his countrymen. In "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" Arnold predicts the response of his readers to the ideals he sets in these essays. "It will be said [by some] that it is a very subtle and indirect action which I am thus prescribing for criticism" (CPW, III, 274). "Away with the notion of proceeding by any other course than the course dear to the Philistines," others will say, "let us have no nonsense about independent criticism, and intellectual delicacy, and the few and the many. Don't let us trouble ourselves about foreign thought;

we shall invent the whole thing for ourselves as we go along" (CPW, III, 276). "But stop," still others will say, "all of this talk is of no practical use to us whatever . . . when we speak of critics and criticism, we mean critics and criticism of the current English literature of the day" (CPW, III, 283). Arnold's direct contact with his countrymen and his involvement with their conditions lead him to think that "the mass of mankind will never have any ardent zeal for seeing things as they are; very inadequate ideas will always satisfy them. On these inadequate ideas reposes, and must repose, the general practice of the world" (CPW, III, 274).

In "Pagan and Medieval Christian Sentiment,"[44] my last example from Essays in Criticism: First Series, Arnold continues to give the "thinking power" an essential importance in the development of human nature, but he introduces a new term: imaginative reason. By drawing a series of comparisons between paganism and Christianity, Catholicism and Protestantism, the senses and understanding, the imagination and sentiment, Arnold concludes that "the main element of the modern spirit's life is neither the senses and understanding, nor heart and imagination; it is the imaginative reason" (CPW, III, 230).

Arnold is moving toward a greater relativism in his search for the right way to bring the Englishman intellectual deliverance for his journey toward realizing the authority of his best self. In spite of his reference to Greek

poets, from Pindar to Sophocles, as those who "have made their works so well-balanced . . . who have so well-satisfied the thinking power, satisfied the religious sense" (CPW, III, 222-223, 231) Arnold says, at the end of the essay, that the Victorian age has its own conditions and demands which are not necessarily similar to those of the Greeks or even to any previous period of English literature. "The present," Arnold indicates, "has to make its own poetry, and not even Sophocles and his compeers, any more than Dante and Shakespeare are enough for it." Therefore Arnold "will not dispute; nor will [he] set up the Greek poets, from Pindar to Sophocles, as objects of blind worship" (CPW, III, 231).

The significance of Arnold's term, "imaginative reason," reflects, however, his continuing desire, at this time of his life, for cultural synthesis. In Arnold's view the term "imaginative reason" signifies the need to make use of the past in the present and see life as a continuous process, past, present and future. Accordingly it anticipates the goal of "culture," "total perfection" and the ideal of the "best self" in Culture and Anarchy. Arnold's phrase "imaginative reason," as Douglas Bush indicates, recalls not only Sophocles "'who saw life steadily and saw it whole' . . . it is another term for literature, for poetry, as a criticism of life, and it carries us on to 'high seriousness' and to Arnold's insistent appeal to our 'best self' and right reason."[45]

NOTES

[1] It was not referred to as "First Series" until after his death, when his publisher gathered a number of his later articles as Essays in Criticism: Second Series (1888). It runs through three editions: 1865, 1869, and 1875. It includes nine essays and a general preface for the occasion. See Super, CPW, III, 399xF.

[2] Quoted by R. C. Townsend in "Matthew Arnold, H. M. I., on the Study of Poetry," College English, XXX (October 1968), 212.

[3] Arnold's interest in the question of intellectual deliverance distinguishes, in addition to Essays in Criticism: First Series, most of his writing before 1870.

[4] Quoted by Super, CPW, III, 403.

[5] See Lowe, 262-63.

[6] See his letter to Miss Arnold, dated December 17, 1860. Letters, I, p. 147.

[7] René Wellék, A History of Modern Criticism, 1750-1950: The Later Nineteenth Century (London: Jonathan Cape, 1966), p. 156.

[8] Quoted by Sister Thomas Marion Hoctor, ed. Matthew Arnold's Essays in Criticism: First Series (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1964), p. vii.

[9] For a detailed study of the unity and common method of these essays, see F. A. Donovan's "The Method of Arnold's Essays in Criticism," PMLA, LXXI (1956), 922-31.

[10] Brown, Matthew Arnold, pp. 85-90.

[11] Charles H. Harvey, Matthew Arnold: A Critic of the Victorian Period (1931, rep. London: James Clarke and Company, Ltd., 1969), p. 115.

[12] "A Persian Passion Play" appears also in the 1875 edition. Two other essays ("The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" and "The Literary Influence of Academies") are included in this series. They deal primarily with English subjects. See Super, CPW, III, 399xF.

[13] E. K. Brown, "The Critic as Xenophobe," Sewanee Review, XXXVIII (July 1930), 301.

[14] In reference to his theme of human perfection in this series of essays, Arnold indicates that he is "struck by the admirable riches of human nature that are brought to light in the group of persons of whom they treat, and the sort of unity that a book to stimulate the better humanity in us the volume has" (Letters, I, 287).

[15] It was delivered as a lecture on October 29, 1864; published for the first time in The National Review of the same year, and in 1865 he put it as the introductory essay to his collection Essays in Criticism: First Series. See Super, CPW, III, 472-474.

[16] "There is so much inviting us!," Arnold says in this essay, "What are we to take? What will nourish us towards

perfection? That is the question which . . . the critic has to answer . . . In this idea of the critic's business the essays . . . had their origin; in this idea, widely different as are their subjects, they have, perhaps, their unity" (CPW, III, 284).

[17] Paul Marx, "Matthew Arnold and Culture," Essays in Arts and Science, 4 (1975), 56.

[18] See CPW, V, pp. 153, 149, 134-136. See also Letters, I, 360 and CPW, I, p. 84.

[19] Hoctor, p. x.

[20] Harvey, pp. 110-111.

[21] Michael Thorpe, Matthew Arnold (New York: Arco, 1969), p. 101.

[22] See, for example, Arnold's letter to Clough, December 1847; or early part of 1848. Letters to Clough, 64-65. See also "On the Modern Element in Literature," CPW, I, 18-37.

[23] H. W. Garrod, Poetry and the Criticism of Life (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1931), p. 73.

[24] Murray Krieger, "The Critical Legacy of Matthew Arnold: Or The Strange Brotherhood of T. S. Eliot, I. A. Richards, and Northorp Frye," Southern Review, V (April 1969), 471.

[25] Sidney M. B. Coulling, "The Background of the Function of Criticism at the Present Time," Philological Quarterly, XLII (1963), 53.

[26] T. S. Eliot, "Preface to 1928 Edition," The Sacred

Wood (London: Mathuen Co., Ltd., 1948), p. x.

[27] Trilling, Matthew Arnold, p. 429.

[28] Thorpe, p. 101.

[29] Geoffry Tillotson, "Matthew Arnold: The Critics and the Advocates," Criticism and the Nineteenth Century (London: University of London, Athlone Press, 1951), p. 44.

[30] For Arnold's acknowledgment of the influence of Goethe upon him, see, for example, a letter written to his mother on May 7, 1848, and a letter to J. Dykes Campbell written on September 22, 1864 (Letters, I, II, 278).

[31] Quoted by James Simpson in "Arnold and Goethe," Matthew Arnold, ed. Kenneth Allott (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1975), pp. 306-307.

[32] Quoted by Edward Alexander in Matthew Arnold and John Stuart Mill (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), p. 159.

[33] "Heinrich Heine" was delivered as a lecture at Oxford on June 13, 1863. It was published at the Cornhill in August of that year. See Super, CPW, III, 433.

[34] Brown, Matthew Arnold, p. 94.

[35] Arnold's notion of the few reappears in many of his later writings such as Culture and Anarchy (1869) and "Numbers" (1883).

[36] "The Literary Influence of Academies" was delivered by Arnold on Saturday, June 4, 1864. A revised version was published in The Cornhill Magazine in August, 1864. See Super, CPW, III, 463.

[37] Bush, Matthew Arnold, p. 107.

[38] Thorpe, p. 107.

[39] "Eugenie de Guérin" was published in The Cornhill Magazine, June 1863. See Super, CPW, III, 427-28.

[40] Arnold devotes a separate essay to Maurice de Guérin. It appeared in Fraser's Magazine, January 1863. Ibid., pp. 407-408.

[41] "Joubert" appeared in The National Review, January 1864. Ibid., pp. 451-52.

[42] "Marcus Aurelius" was published in the Victorian Magazine, November 1863. Ibid., pp. 440-441.

[43] Its original title was "A Word More About Spinoza." It was published in Macmillan's Magazine, December 1863. It appeared in its present form in the first edition of Essays in Criticism, Ibid., pp. 445-446.

[44] The original title of this essay was "Pagan and Christian Religious Sentiment." It was delivered on March 5, 1864. The original title was not changed until the essay appeared in Essays in Criticism. Ibid., p. 458.

[45] Bush, Matthew Arnold, p. 101.

CHAPTER V

TOWARD THE AUTHORITY OF THE "BEST SELF"

Culture and Anarchy

Arnold's ideal of the best self is one with his ideal of right reason and the state. Right reason combines the best elements of each class into one body, which he identifies with the best self and is embodied in the State. If an individual possesses the qualities of high reason and detached objectivity, he will never be corrupted by the idiosyncrasies of class. He calls such individuals the aliens. In them the best self is very active, and they can help in awakening the best self in all men. But because these men are few, they at present have little power.

It is with helping the English individual and society to establish the authority of the best self that Arnold is concerned at this time of his career. It is particularly in Culture and Anarchy (1869) that Arnold explores his notion of the best self. It is also in Culture and Anarchy that English individualism is strikingly intense. The clash between Hellenism and English individualism forms the dynamics for Culture and Anarchy, a clash which Arnold tries to resolve in the idea of the best self.

The Englishman's ability to say what he likes, Arnold writes to his mother on March 10, 1866, is nothing to boast of unless he is really made better by it. Strong individualism in itself is "no virtue, it confers no excellence" (Letters, I, 372). "Everywhere," Arnold says three years later in Culture and Anarchy, "we see the beginnings of confusion, and we want a clue to some sound order and authority." "Without order," he emphasizes, "there can be no society, and without society there can be no human perfection" (CPW, V, 175, 223). The greatness of any nation springs from the respect of its individuals for a higher ideal.

Therefore Arnold became more interested not merely in the question of intellectual authority but in social and moral authority as well. The spirit of insularity and provincialism, which he attacks specifically in Essays in Criticism, First Series, not only isolates the Victorian Englishman intellectually from the rest of the continent but also creates a sense of revolt against the presence of any authority within Victorian England itself.

Arnold saw Victorian England as unsettled, increasingly threatened by social disintegration: "that profound sense of settled order and security . . . sometimes seems to be beginning to threaten us with taking its departure" (CPW, V, 123). "Disbelief in right reason and in a paramount best self," as a lawful authority, is the most salient feature of the English individual. Arnold sees in the demonstrations

and riots which took place, for example, at Trafalger Square and Hyde Park in 1867 "the seeds of trouble." Against the rioter, whom he calls "a playful giant," "the lovers of culture may prize and employ fire and strength" (CPW, V, 222, 224). He attacks the liberals who think that "rioting" and "popular demonstrations" are useful to the public interests. In Arnold's view demonstrations are not adequate solutions to the problems of Victorian England; "That monster--processions in the streets and forcible irruptions into the parks . . . ought to be . . . forbidden and repressed; and that far more is lost than is gained by permitting them" (CPW, V, 223).

He believes that social order must be maintained by a rationally ordered State--"a state in which law is authoritative and sovereign" for "a firm and settled course of public order, is requisite if man is to bring to maturity anything previous and lasting for the future" (CPW, V, 223). Arnold thinks that if conditions in England are to be improved, Englishmen should be united in their complete trust in the State. It is a time for synthesis and unity. The State has replaced the academy as the centre of authority.

Arnold's work as a school inspector[1] had strongly contributed to his concern for the social condition of England. Therefore Culture and Anarchy, as R. H. Super indicates, grows from the political restlessness of Victorian England which resulted from the industrial revolution and its

consequent depression of the lower classes.[2] Arnold thinks that all human values and emotions are, in Trilling's words, "of social growth if not of social origin." He sees the cause of human isolation as "not merely a religious problem . . . though that too . . . but a social problem."[3]

Culture and Anarchy is Arnold's first extended work of social and political criticism. It is also, Walcott points out, his most ambitious attempt to deal with British degeneracy and to propose cultural reforms.[4] It is considered by Thorpe to be Arnold's most coherently argued essay in social criticism.[5] According to Keating, Arnold makes a strong assault "on the imperviousness of the English to the natural and inevitable movement of social change."[6]

It is the function of culture to open the Englishman's mind and also to break down the imperviousness that leads to anarchy. Culture is therefore central to Arnold's notion of order and authority as it becomes embodied in the best self. "Upon no subject," as William Dawson indicates, "is Matthew Arnold more stimulating . . . to his countrymen . . . than upon culture."[7] Culture, for Arnold, as Himmelfarb says, is "the sum of all good things." It is his "real religion."[8] It is through his views of culture that Arnold establishes his ideal of the best self. "The argument of Culture and Anarchy," as Frye says,

> is to the effect that what is of greatest cultural value . . . is central to society and demands to

> be placed at the center. Society itself presents a conflict of class interests, and culture for Arnold operates . . . as a harmonizing principle creating a new kind of order out of this conflict. Those who support it have to begin by isolating themselves from class conflict, which means isolating themselves from the present structure of society.[9]

As Dwight Culler also points out, Arnold finds in culture a system of value, larger than the self, through which he hopes to cure the diseases of his countrymen from "the eccentricities of Romantic individualism" and "the partisan zeal of political and religious conflict."[10]

It is culture, in Arnold's words, which "shows us that there is nothing so very blessed in merely doing as one likes, that the really blessed thing is to like what right reason ordains and to follow her authority" (CPW, V, 123). Only when man learns to use reason, "a comprehensive adjustment of the claims of both the sides in man, the moral as well as the intellectual, of a full estimate of both, and of a reconciliation of both" (CPW, V, 179), can his lower or ordinary self be controlled by a higher or a best self.

In Arnold's view culture helps the individual to achieve his best self. Culture means the ability and power of the individual to use his mind and personality in order to

find out the real meaning of human life and then, converting this meaning into purpose, to move toward achieving his best self. Culture places human perfection in "an internal condition," in "the growth and predominance of our humanity proper" and in "the general harmonious expansion of these gifts of thought and feeling, which make the peculiar dignity, wealth, and happiness of human nature" (CPW, V, 94). Accordingly the term culture is connected with his idea of man's self-regeneration. It is the power by which man's inner life is developed. Culture destroys the threat of anarchy by substituting the individual's will to right reason (the best self). It helps man to strive in an endless quest toward perfection. It insists on the development of man, "not a having and a resting, but a growing and a becoming" (CPW, V, 94).

As in his literary criticism, Arnold says that "curiosity" and "disinterestedness" are the essential qualities for the development of man's best self. By "curiosity" he means "a desire after the things of the mind simply for their own sakes and for the pleasure of seeing them as they are." The intellectually curious mind helps man to come to the truth about things and to discover the best ideas in the world. By "disinterestedness" he means the "free play of consciousness," which helps the individual to get a complete understanding of man's experience in life in every possible way (CPW, V, 91). Thus Arnold's concept of culture, as Brown says, "is a composite concept. One part of it is the

outcome of a wide ranging curiosity. . . . The other part of it issues in a desire to translate one's ideas into social realities, to communicate them to a wide audience."[11]

In the struggle toward the authority of the best self culture helps man to consider the best ideas available to him and apply them in improving his current situation. The task of culture is therefore an extension of the task of criticism, which is to preserve the integrity of man. Both, in Delaura's words, "are overlapping and chronologically continuous terms; the latter [culture] absorbs the former . . . and adds to it an ideal of man's total - . . moral and intellectual . . . perfection."[12] The analogy of criticism and culture reflects the singleness of Arnold's mind. "Never quite distinct," as Lubell points out, "the two roles [of literary and social critic] became one for Arnold, for more and more he tended to see literature as a social product, a product representing society's highest wisdom for self-guidance and spiritual self-renewal."[13]

In helping man to establish the authority of his best self, culture, as "an inward perfection," is similar to religion. Culture, however, goes beyond religion in its search for perfection "through all the voices of human experience . . . of art, science, poetry, history, as well as religion." Whereas religion stresses the moral part of human nature, culture insists on "a harmonious expansion of all the powers . . . and is not consistent with the over-development of any power at the expense of the rest" (CPW,

V, 93, 94). Man has to use actively his mind and personality in his movement toward fulfilling the aim of culture, "the best self." James Simpson describes Arnold's "effort at integration"

> the important distinction between wholeness and fragmentation in art has led Arnold to an analysis of the modern situation which concluded that one basic cause of man's discomfort lay in the overdevelopment of "intellect" at the expense of "feeling." The balance could only be restored by the reintegration of the personality through the development of all its elements in a harmonious whole: from "feeling" and "reason" to "imaginative reason." The effort at integration may be the driving force behind Arnold's social criticism.[14]

Thus culture is concerned with the harmonious development of the whole man (his best self) or what Arnold calls later, the four powers of intellect, social life and manners, love of beauty, and conduct.[15] Until the whole man is perfect, the ends of culture are not realized in him. Until all men are perfect, culture cannot be said to prevail.

Culture involves the individual with the whole society. Human perfection is not possible if the individual remains isolated from his society, even isolated in his strict class. The individual is required therefore "to carry others along

with him in his march toward perfection" (CPW, V, 94). Human values are realized by the mutual relationships among the individuals in a society. It is through this common bond that truth exists and good has meaning. "The love of our neighbour . . . the desire for removing human error, clearing human confusion, and diminishing human misery, the noble aspiration to leave the world better and happier than we found it," all of these, Arnold contends, are social motives which "come in as part of the grounds of culture" (CPW, V, 91). Culture conceives of no perfection which is not "a general perfection." It is a perfection in which humanity consists of members of one body. If one member suffers, all the rest suffer with it (CPW, V, 215).

Men are to work toward perfection in the light of "the best principles, the best ideas, the best knowledge: the perfect; the ideal; the complete."[16] Culture, thus conceived, as Trilling declares,

> is not merely a method but an attitude of spirit contrives to receive truth. It is a moral orientation, involving will, imagination, faith; . . . culture is reason involving the whole personality . . . in search of truth. It creates both a cosmology and a philosophy of history to assure its effectiveness. It is the scope . . . from the mere understanding to the creative reason. Culture may best be described as religion with

the critical intellect superseded.[17]

Arnold sees that in order for man to pursue his goal toward perfection or the best self, he must reconcile in himself the characters of "sweetness and light," "Hebraism and Hellenism." They are essential needs to the harmonious development of human nature.

By "sweetness" Arnold means morality. By "light" he means ideas or intellectuality. Man should consider the best ideas and use them in his battle toward discovering the best self. Culture begins with the realization "that the sweetness and light of the few must be imperfect until the raw and unkindled masses of humanity are touched by sweetness and light" (CPW, V, 112). Sweetness and light help to make "a feudal class quietly and gradually drop its feudal habits because it sees them at variance with truth and reason, while fire and strength are for tearing them passionately off" (CPW, V, 205).

"Hebraism" and "Hellenism," the two main forces which regulate human life, offer Arnold, Trilling continues, "a splendid means of analyzing English society by quantity rather than quality."[18] Moreover they supply him with a distinction upon which everything in his work depends. "The chapter on Hellenism and Hebraism," Arnold himself says to his mother, forms "a kind of centre for English thought" (Letters, II, 13). Hellenism alone is not therefore a force sufficient for creating the best self. If the two forces do

not proceed in "mutual understanding and balance, the side which is uppermost does not really provide in a satisfactory manner for the seeds of the side which is undermost, and a state of confusion is . . . the result" (CPW, V, 177).

By Hebraism he means the Hebraic-Christian tradition in general, and Puritanism in particular. Though Hebraism shares with Hellenism the aim, "the desire . . . for reason and the will of God, the feeling after the universal order" (CPW, V, 165), it pursues its aim of perfection by giving priority to doing rather than thinking. It is the force which is primarily concerned with conduct and obedience to a law of conduct. Lacking Hellenism's sense of wholeness, it insists "on perfection in one part of our nature and . . . putting off . . . the case for being complete at all points." It subordinates all sides of human nature to religion and "strictness of conscience." It is associated with a narrow and anti-intellectual view of life. It aims at self-conquest through its "conformity to the image of a self-sacrificing example." Its emphasis on sin thwarts man's effort to get rid of his ignorance and to see things in their reality and beauty (CPW, V, 163, 165, 185, 167, 169, 168).

Hellenism, on the other hand, which expresses "spontaneity of consciousness" and the desire to see things as they really are, is an optimistic view of life. It is concerned with the sense of wholeness of human personality. Its impulse lies in "connecting and harmonizing all parts

of [man], perfecting all, leaving none to take their chance." Though it may fail in "moral strength and earnestness," "it opposed itself to the notion of cutting our being in two, of attributing to one part the dignity of dealing with the one thing needful, and leaving none to take their chance." Though it may fail in "moral strength and earnestness," "it opposed itself to the notion of cutting our being in two, of attributing to one part the dignity of dealing with the one thing needful, and leaving the other part to take its chance, which is the bane of Hebraism" (CPW, V, 165, 184).

In Arnold's view England's present difficulties are derived from the overdevelopment of the Hebraic at the expense of the Hellenic spirit. Sweetness and light are required to bring balance and a sense of the whole to England. With this the authority of the State or the best self will control the excessive individualism of English society. What the Englishman should consider is

> a larger concept of human nature, showing him the number of other points at which his nature must come to its best, besides the points which he himself knows and thinks of. 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. (CPW, V, 180)

Culture is important to freedom. Any perfect freedom, Arnold says, is "an elevation of our best self . . . a harmonizing [of] all the multitudinous, turbulent, and blind impulses of our ordinary selves" (CPW, V, 225, 207). Culture teaches man to subordinate his "ordinary self" to his "best self." Man's ordinary self is "separate, personal, at war." In contrast, his best self is impersonal, united and at harmony with other men (CPW, V, 134). There is no threat to freedom in giving authority to the best self. The best self, Arnold says, is "the truest friend we all of us can have; and when anarchy is a danger to us, to this authority we may turn with sure trust" (CPW, V, 134).

The best self finds its center of authority in the State, beyond class and the personal. The State is the central force which must regulate and control the activities of the individual and help him to achieve his humanity. It is the expression of one's best self which is not "manifold . . . vulgar . . . unstable . . . contentious, and evervarying" but "one . . . noble . . . secure . . . peaceful, and the same for all mankind" (CPW, V, 224). In brief it is the nation in its collective character. It is above all classes and sects, reconciling their differences and resolving their problems. Once this self becomes classless and disinterested, it will make the State a national best self.

But Arnold's ideal of the best self, like his earlier ideals of poetry and criticism, prove to be inapplicable to

his age. Undoubtedly, as he perceived the failure of his attempt to substitute right reason for individualism and sectarianism, Arnold's doubts about the efficacy of classical ideals in modern times increased. Even before Culture and Anarchy, though he does not abandon the principle of right reason, Arnold admits that the untutored may have an inviolate authority of their own.

> I saw that I had been making a great mistake. Instead of confining myself to what alone I had my business with--the slow and obscure work of trying to understand things, to see them as they are--I had been meddling with practice, proposing this and that, saying how it might be if we established this or not. So I was suffering deservedly in being taunted with hawking about my nostrums of State schools for a class much too wise to want them, and an Academy for people who have an inimitable style already. ("My Countrymen," CPW, V, 6)

This statement, written in 1866, applies to his attitude in Culture and Anarchy (1869). The challenge of his countrymen to his ideals was increasingly intense. Arnold's critics, both in England and America, described the ideals which he sets in Culture and Anarchy as impractical and "all moonshine." They mockingly called the whole book "the religion of culture . . . a religion

proposing parmaceti . . . as a cure for human miseries; a religion breathing a spirit of cultivated inaction . . . filling [its believers] with antipathy against the reforms and reformers which try to extirpate them" (CPW, V, 115). "Let us have as few theories as possible," says the Times, "What is wanted is not the light of speculation." The Daily Telegraph accused Arnold of indulging himself "with aesthetic and poetical fancies." The Daily News considered Arnold's argument for authority as having "a non-intellectual root." "It is very easy to sit in one's study and find fault with the course of modern society," an American journal (The Nation) also says, "but the thing is to propose practical improvement for it" (CPW, V, 211, 115, 159-160, 115).

This criticism, in addition to other attacks made by different newspapers, leads Arnold to emphasize that

> the day will never come (and, indeed, why should we wish it to come?) when one man's particular sort of taste for the bathos shall tyrannize over another man's; nor when right reason . . . shall absorb and rule them all (CPW, V, 157).

In the meantime, the path of right reason is strewn with formidable obstacles: the materialistic spirit and the "mechanical character" of English civilization; "strong individualism"; "hatred of all limits"; "everyman for himself"; "want of flexibility"; "inaptitude for seeing more

than one side of a thing"; the "intense energetic absorption in the particular pursuit"; "freedom"; "population"; "coal"; "religious organization"; "railroads"; "wealth"; all of these reflect a very powerful opposition to the authority of the best self (CPW, V, 95, 96). Sweetness and light need strength for this battle. "But, Oh: cry many people," Arnold says, "sweetness and light are not enough; you must put strength or energy along with them, and make a kind of trinity strength" (CPW, V, 90, 178).

In Arnold's view there is also an alliance between the spirit of religion and the spirit of business. Their alliance stands firmly against any attempt at cultural synthesis. Labor is merely devoted to materialistic goals and economic ends. "Nine Englishmen out of ten," believe that their greatness and prosperity are proved by their being so very rich (CPW, V, 97). The individual's passion for making money is associated with the mechanical Puritan conception of religion. Arnold shows how Mr. Smith, an insurance employer, commits suicide because he "laboured under the apprehension that he would come to poverty, and that he was eternally lost." The example of Mr. Smith, Arnold emphasizes, is "a kind of type . . . of all the strongest, most respectable, and most representative part of [the English] nation" (CPW, V, 186). To the Puritan, material or commercial failure means spiritual failure. Consequently the Puritanical character of Victorian England "stand[s] to Hellenism in a relation which dwarfs it, and

to Hebraism in a relation which magnifies it" (CPW, 171).

Cultural synthesis is hard because the Englishman is also a strong believer in freedom and "not in some dream of right reason" (CPW, V, 120). Unbridled freedom is an impediment to order because it suppresses the best self. "Any public authority" for the English, Arnold says also in "Democracy,"

> is a trust delegated by themselves, for certain purposes, and with certain limits . . . no one dreams of removing a single constitutional control, of abolishing a single safeguard for securing a correspondence between the acts of the government and the will of the nation. (CPW, II, 18-19)

Arnold indicates that the familiar notion on the continent and in antiquity of the "state," as being capable of controlling the "individual while in the name of an interest wider than that of individuals," is lacking in England (CPW, V, 117-118). He thinks that the social spirit in France, unlike England, produces the sense of equality among the French people which, in turn, magnifies the ideal of society. In a letter to his wife, written May 1859, Arnold expresses his admiration for the complete harmony that exists between the individual citizen and the State in France. His illustration is perhaps not as striking as he seems to think

> The enthusiasm of the French people for the Army is remarkable; almost every peasant we passed in the diligence took off his hat to this officer, though you never see them salute a gentlemen, as such; but they feel that the army is the proud point of the nation and that it is made out of themselves. (Letters, I, 97)

Whereas a Frenchman "feels that the power which represses is the State, is himself, here [England] a man feels that the power which represses him is the Tories, the upper class, the aristocracy, and so on" (Letters, I, 390). Unlike France, Arnold points out also in On the Study of Celtic Literature (1866), England does not have the spirit of society or equality. Therefore, the English did not succeed in establishing a "vital union" between themselves and the races they had conquered (CPW, III, 392, 394). Unlike the Frenchman, the Englishman regards the State as an enemy that deprives him of his political right and power. The Englishman despises the State because he is afraid that it does not recognize his bent toward sectarianism.

In his indifference to the authority of the State, the Englishman, Arnold says in The Popular Education in France (1861), shares the same attitude with the American. Like the English, the American people, though well-educated, powerful and energetic, are

> 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. (CPW, II, 160, 161)

Almost all the English, Arnold stresses in Culture and Anarchy, like to act as they please and "do not like the trouble of thinking and severe constraint of any kind of rule." This individualistic tendency is supported also by educated opinions. The Times, for example, urges that "everyone should be free to do and to look" "just as he likes" (CPW, V, 116, 96).

The English classes ignore authority and right reason. Arnold says that "we can as little find in the working class as in the aristocratic or in the middle class our wanted source of authority, as culture suggests it to us" (CPW, V, 133, 134). Self satisfaction blinds all of them. Each class wants to be the center of authority. They insist upon disregarding any kind of authority outside themselves. "Happiness," for them, consists "in doing what one's ordinary self likes." "There is nothing more admirable," Arnold says ironically, "than our ordinary self, whether our ordinary self happens to be Barbarian, Philistine, or Populace" (CPW, V, 145, 153).

Arnold's position as private secretary to Lord

Lansdowne[19] not only introduced him to the political and social life of his time; it provided him also a good chance to observe the aristocracy, the class in power. "The barbarians," Arnold remarks, "brought with them that staunch individualism . . . and the passion for doing as one likes for the assertion of personal liberty." In addition they do not like the idea of a State-authority greater than themselves (CPW, V, 145, 153, 117-118). Their culture is entirely exterior and materialized. They possess a kind of "sweetness" and "beauty," but they lack ideas. They have no gift for harmonizing and reconciling new interests. Hence, for an epoch of concentration in which energy is wanted, an aristocracy is eminently fitted. But for an epoch of expansion, when new ideas and interests demand the application of intelligence, an aristocracy is not fitted. It is their "insufficiency of light" or ideas which is the secret of their lack of success in modern times (CPW, V, 142). Arnold thinks that the days of aristocracy are numbered. It lacks, in Simpson's words, "the breadth of vision to understand or to direct the irresistible, historical movement towards a democratic society, and its almost exclusive possession of the land made social equality impossible."[20]

The vast portion of the working class is almost one in spirit with the aristocracy. As a school inspector Arnold was in close contact with their children daily in the schools, "children eaten up with disease, half-sized,

half-fed, half-clothed, neglected by their parents, without health, without home, without hope" (CPW, V, 217). Like the aristocracy, the working class asserts "an Englishman's heaven-born privilege of doing as he likes, and is beginning to perplex us by marching where it likes, meeting where it likes, bowling what it likes, breaking what it likes" (CPW, V, 143). Arnold associates this class with destructive anarchy. He calls the people of this class the "English rough," "Hyde Park Rioter," and "the mob . . . bent on mischief" (CPW, V, 224).

It is upon the middle class, which he considers "the heart of the English nation," that Arnold's criticism is most heatedly directed. As Harvey observes, Arnold's criticism of the lower class and the upper class is light in comparison with his ceaseless war upon the Philistines.[21] Ironically it is the same class with which Arnold identifies himself. Indeed he considers himself as "an illustration of defect in those forces and qualities which made [this] class what it is." Nevertheless he does not think that the term Philistine, which he associates with the middle class, applies to him. "I myself am properly a Philistine," he admits, but "I have, for the most part, broken with the ideas and tea-meetings of my own class" (CPW, V, 138, 144).

Arnold considers the middle class "nearly the worst educated in the world" (CPW, II, 88). It is a class, Arnold says in "My Countryman," "testy, absolute,

ill-acquainted with foreign matters" (CPW, V, 11). Its lack of intellectuality and its Puritan and Hebraic character keep it "from culture and totality" ("Preface" to Culture and Anarchy, CPW, V, 243). The middle class is not only distasteful to culture but is also a danger to the State. The middle class "dreads a powerful administration which might somehow interfere with it" (CPW, V, 118). It is happy and satisfied with its material achievement. Its love of wealth and industry, Arnold says in "My Countryman," "is certainly prodigious; and their example has done [England] a great deal of good" but it is "drugged with business" (CPW, V, 19). There is a continuous growth of commercial immorality in this class. Its aim is to get rich very quickly. Success in business, for the middle class, is a sign of virtue and failure is a sign of vice. The middle class man, Arnold continues

> thinks it the highest pitch of development and civilization when his letters are carried twelve times a day from Islington to Camberwell, and from Camberwell to Islington, and if railway-trains run to and fro between them every quarter of an hour . . . such is the life there. (CPW, V, 21-22)

Therefore Arnold thinks that the materialistic spirit of all these classes and their insistence upon asserting their personal freedom make it difficult for them "to get

beyond the notion of an ordinary self at all, or to get the paramount authority of a commanding best self or right reason recognized" (CPW, V, 147).

The challenge to Arnold's Greek ideals of human perfection or the best self does not only intensify his doubts about their application to his age; the challenge shows also a significant development in his thinking. Though Arnold thinks that "both Hellenism and Hebraism are profound and admirable manifestations of man's life," he admits also that "we can hardly insist too strongly on the divergence of line and of operation with which they proceed." "Underneath the superficial agreement the fundamental divergence still subsists" (CPW, V, 166, 167). Arnold begins to move more and more toward adopting the principles of modern humanism. "What is the use for ever talking about the Greeks and Hellenism," Arnold says to M. E. Gant Duff on September 4, 1868, "if nine people out of ten can have no notion at all, from practical experience, what they are like and wherein is their power?" (Letters, I, 460). "Apparently it was the Hellenic conception of human nature," Arnold suggests tentatively in Culture and Anarchy, "which was unsound, for the world could not live by it." Among the things in which the Greeks failed is "to give satisfaction to the claims of man's moral side" (CPW, V, 169, 179).

It is the question of the inward moral being that most of Arnold's future work addresses. It is also

through his unique interpretation of morality that Arnold can be considered a modern humanist.

NOTES

[1] Arnold married and accepted an appointment as an Inspector of Schools in 1851. He remained an inspector for thirty-five years, until two years before his death.

[2] Super, "Critical and Explanatory Notes," CPW, V, 413.

[3] Trilling, Matthew Arnold, p. 113.

[4] Fred G. Walcott, The Origins of Culture and Anarchy (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1970), p. xii.

[5] Thorpe, p. 134.

[6] P. J. Keating, "Arnold's Social and Political Thought," Matthew Arnold, ed. Allott, p. 217.

[7] William Harbutt Dawson, Matthew Arnold and His Relation to the Thought of Our Time (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Son, 1904), p. 35.

[8] Milton Himmelfarb, "Hebraism and Hellenism Now," Commentary, XLVIII (July 1969), 50, 51.

[9] Northorp Frye, "Problem of Spiritual Authority," in Literary View: Critical and Historical Essays, published for William March University (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1964), p. 156.

[10] A. Dwight Culler, The Imperial Intellect: A Story of Newman's Educational Ideal (New Haven: Yale University

Press, 1955), p. 235.

[11] Brown, Matthew Arnold: A Study in Conflict, p. 130.

[12] David J. DeLaura, "Matthew Arnold and John Henry Newman: The 'Oxford Sentiment' and the Religion of the Future," Texas Studies in Literature and Language, VI (1965), 626.

[13] Albert J. Lubell, "Matthew Arnold: Between Two Worlds," Modern Language Quarterly, XXII (Sept. 1961), 260.

[14] Simpson, "Arnold and Goethe," p. 314.

[15] See Arnold's "The Future of Liberalism" (1880) and "Literature and Science" (1882), CPW, IX, 144 and X, 63.

[16] Connell, p. 169.

[17] Trilling, Matthew Arnold, pp. 265-66.

[18] Ibid., 256.

[19] Arnold was appointed to this position in 1847. Lord Lansdowne's duties included those which were to become the duties of the Minister of Education.

[20] Simpson, "Arnold and Goethe," p. 313.

[21] Harvey, p. 181.

CHAPTER VI

EXPERIENCE: THE MORAL BASIS OF AUTHORITY

Arnold's doubt about the application of the Hellenic ideals of order and unity which he explores in Culture and Anarchy and in most of his work before the seventies, is confirmed in the next two decades of his career. Though Arnold never questions the validity of these ideals, he now recognizes fully the difficulty of their application to his age. This insight is evident in the new emphasis, tone, directions and interests of his work after Culture and Anarchy.

Arnold's Greek ideal of the State or the best self, as an absolute power which can control the Englishman's individualism and sectarianism, is replaced by an emphasis upon human experience as the moral basis of authority. In his attack upon the doctrine of the Orthodox theologians, Arnold argues, for example, in Literature and Dogma (1873) that

> Now it is simply from experience of the human spirit and its productions, from observing as widely as we can the manner in which men have

> thought, their way of using words and what they mean by them, and from reasoning upon this observation and experience, that we conclude the construction theologians put upon the Bible to be false and ours to be the truer one. (CPW, VI, 370)

The shift in Arnold's tone is strikingly evident in "A Speech at Eton" (1879). In this speech, though Arnold attempts to defend classical education and the classical ideal of harmoniously developed human nature, he concludes with a deep awareness of the inadequacy of the Hellenic principles for transforming Victorian life. He seems to agree completely with the opinion of the judicious historian of Greece, Professor Curtius, whom he quotes in this speech. "The popular faith," says Professor Curtius,

> was everywhere shaken, and a life resting simply on the traditional notions was no longer possible. A dangerous rupture was at hand, unless the ancient faith were purged and elevated in such a manner as to meet the wants of the age. (CPW, VIII, 32-33)

In Arnold's modified view the wants of one's age can be met only when one gives his attention primarily to the development not of intellect but of the moral aspect of one's nature. It is the moral element of human nature that "we all need," and Victorian England needs it more than any

other nation (CPW, VIII, 35). Consequently Arnold refers to the "moral inadequacy" of Greek life. He indicates that "the Greek flexibility was really not flexible enough, because it could not enough bend itself to the moral ideas which are so large a part of life" (CPW, VIII, 34).

Arnold's criticism of the Greeks in "A Speech at Eton" and his realization of the difficult attempt of applying their ideals to all details of every day life is characteristic of most of his later writings. Arnold begins to think that, measured in terms of his time, Hellenism can hardly flourish. Arnold's thinking about the best self is shifted more and more toward the lines of modern humanism. He is moving more and more toward asserting the doctrine of individualism, which is central in modern humanism. In order to show how Arnold's later work adopts to a larger extent the same tone and interest in modern humanism, a clarification of its major principles is necessary.

One of the most controversial ideas of modern humanism is that, unlike classical humanism, which counts on established authority in expressing and expounding its ideals, it opposes any forms of historic tradition or established order as a source of authority. The emphasis of modern humanism is on man's need for a new angle of vision and a new source of inspiration which enables him to find his allegiance to life from within. Therefore, central to modern humanism is a belief in man's intrinsic value, self-reliance, free thought and an original relationship to the world. As an

individual human being, man is committed to his own freedom of will. He shapes his own destiny.

Equally important to modern humanism is the principle that values exist within man's own mind and can be proved only through his day-to-day immediate experience. All knowledge and existence depend upon experience. Modern humanism is having a strong faith in the possibilities latent within this world rather than longing for the past world or hoping in the world to come. "Any meaningful human action," as Ketcham points out, is conditioned by two things: "the world-here-and-now" in which man "finds" and "throws" himself; and man's relationship to Being through which he becomes aware of any possibilities. "The search for meaning, for a New Humanism," Ketcham also indicates,

> does not begin by first asking, "Where are we going?," though direction is important. Nor does it begin by determining by what laws mankind must go at all, though order is necessary to avoid chaos. The search . . . begins by asking the twin questions of identity and authenticity. "Who am I?" and "How can I be myself?" For all the New Humanists, the point of contact with reality is the point of immediate personal context.[1]

Modern humanism is also moral in its focus of attention. The whole classical idea of conforming to some established

code of conduct is, in fact, the very antithesis of the modern principles of self-reliance and creativity. Thus a staunch confidence in human freedom and progress is essential to modern humanism. Modern humanism gives importance to the natural rights of man--each person is born free and each has an innate moral right to exercise his freedom. Moral virtue must depend on man's emotion or direct experience. Man does not need a separate supernatural moral sense in order to apprehend and appreciate what is morally sound. Neither the authority of the state nor that of the church can be counted upon to serve man's best interests. Although Modern Humanism denies the existence of God and the divinity of Christ, it believes in Christ's gospel of love. Accordingly "Modern Humanism," in the words of Kurt Baier,

> can be regarded as a descent of Renaissance humanism. Both emphasize man's capacity to improve his condition in this earthly life through his own efforts within a framework of suitable political organization. Both oppose established and critically accepted authority, including that of the church, and both accept the ideals of human dignity, autonomy and freedom.[2]

"Tradition," as Ketcham says, "becomes an empty word, or at best a synonym of repetition which . . . offers neither insight into the present nor wisdom for the future."[3]

Reason also is reduced in importance. Though reason

is not wholly excluded from the religious and moral outlook of modern humanism, moral judgment is based on feeling rather than reason. Therefore, central to modern humanism is also a belief "in the widest possible development of art and the awareness of beauty, including the appreciation of Nature's loveliness and splendor."[4] What Richard Ellmann and Charles Fiedelson, Jr. state in the Preface of their anthology, The Modern Tradition, can serve as a brief outline of the ideas of modern humanism. They say:

> Modernism strongly implies some sort of historical discontinuity, either a liberation from inherited pattern or . . . deprivation and disinheritance. In an essay on "The Modern Element in Literature," Lionel Trilling singles out a radically anti-cultural bias as the most important attribute of the modern imagination. Committed to everything in human experience that militates against custom, abstract order, and even reason itself, modern literature has elevated individual existence over social man, unconscious feeling over self-conscious perception, passion and will over intellectism and systematic morals . . . In these and other ways it has made the most of its break with the past, its born challenge to established culture.[5]

In his shift toward modern humanism, Arnold is very

much affected by the general temper and attitude of his age. Man's longing for freedom and change was challenged by the spirit of tradition. There was no agreement among the Victorians, and therefore it is very difficult, Young declares, to find "any assumption which was not at some time or other fiercely challenged."[6] The relativity of knowledge and the subjective character of thought is the most characteristic feature of the Victorian period during the seventies.[7] The Englishman's scepticism and uncertainty regarding any traditional and historical values increased. As Mallock points out, "Nobody knows what to believe and most people believe nothing."[8] Moreover, "one no longer asked, what do I think of this? is it good? is it true?," Walter Pater says in Plato and Platonism,

> for once everything was thought relative, good or true only for a particular society at a particular stage in its cultural evolution, the right questions became: How shall I account for it? Why did men believe that it was good or bad?[9]

The scientific revolution during the seventies and eighties also reached its climax. It affects the whole thought during that period. The emphasis in education, for example, is on scientific rather than on literary studies. In "Science and Culture" (1880), for example, Huxley insists on the scientific method. He refuses to admit "that either

nations or individuals will really advance, if their outfit draws nothing from the stores of physical science."[10] In his address "Science and Education" Huxley's attack on Arnold's concept of culture reflects the general tendency of the Victorian age, particularly during the eighties, to revolt against traditional views. "Neither the discipline nor the subject matter of classical education," Huxley points out, "is of such direct value to the student of physical science as to justify the expenditure of valuable time upon either. . . ." He continues"

> We cannot know all the best thoughts and sayings of the Greeks unless we know what they thought about natural phenomena. We cannot appreciate their criticism of life unless we understand the extent to which that criticism was affected by scientific conceptions. We falsely pretend to be the inheritors of that culture, unless we are penetrated . . . with an unhesitating faith that the free employment of reason . . . is the sole method of reaching truth.[11]

With the reason captured by the tone of sceptical relativism, Arnold begins to redefine truth in terms of conduct rather than intellectual knowledge. In his religious writing of the seventies Arnold considers the unique experience of the individual as the means of arriving at truth about things. "All roads, says the proverb, lead to

Rome: and one finds in like manner." Arnold points out in "Irish Catholicism and British Liberalism" (July 1878), "that all questions raise the question of religion." "Questions of good government, social harmony, education, civilization" cannot be treated "without returning to treat of religion" (CPW, VIII, 321).

It is in Arnold's treatment of the question of religion that his unique interpretation of morality emerges. In Arnold's notion of morality, we see not only the signs of his revolt against Hellenic and other traditional ideals of order but also the source of his new concepts. Arnold's emphasis on culture which is characteristic of his writing before 1870, is somewhat diminished by a deep concern with developing the moral aspect of human nature. Arnold becomes more interested in man's character and conduct than in his knowledge. In fact the question of man's conduct dominates Arnold's thinking throughout most of his life. In his "conclusion" to Literature and Dogma (1873) Arnold admits that, though he attacks Hebraism elsewhere, he has always considered man's conduct superior to his intellect. "In praising culture," Arnold points out, he has "never denied that conduct, not culture, is three-fourths of human life." Moreover, he admits that his ideal of harmonizing and unifying Hebraism with Hellenism cannot be accomplished. "Man," he thinks, "is hardly yet ripe" for this merging. Therefore Arnold insists that culture must serve morality. Culture should prepare for an era in which the beauty of the Bible

can never be disturbed by the light of reason. The man of culture must employ his knowledge in preserving the "three-fourths" of life which is conduct (CPW, VI, 6, 407, 408).

Arnold applies the criterion of "natural truth" in his exploration of the grounds of conduct. The traditional notion of religion, Arnold says in the Preface to Last Essays on Church and Religion (1877),

> turns out not to have . . . natural truth, the only truth which can stand. The miracles of our traditional religion, like other miracles, did not happen; its metaphysical proofs of God are mere words. Has or has not Christianity . . . the same want of natural truth as our traditional religion? It is a question of immense importance. (CPW, VIII, 153)

In Arnold's view the modern spirit is the awareness that traditional beliefs and institutions are no longer applicable to Victorian life and thought. The general disbelief in anything consistent or permanent leads Arnold to indicate to his sister Fan (November 1874), that "a great change must come, a great plunge must be taken" (Letters, II, 139). He asserts that a revolution against the Englishman's traditional conception of religion is inevitable. "It cannot be," he says in the "Preface" to Literature and Dogma (1873), "but that the revolution should come, and it should be here [England] felt passionately, profoundly, painfully"

(CPW, VI, 146).

Arnold's own contribution to this religious revolution is reflected in his attempt to restore the Englishman's belief in Christianity by offering him a new interpretation of God and the Bible. In the meantime Arnold wants the Englishman to see the natural truth in religion. He should be aware, as Arnold indicates in God and the Bible (1875), of two psychological facts about Christianity: "One is, that men cannot do without it; the other that they cannot do with it as it is" (CPW, VII, 378). Moreover, Arnold points out in the "Preface" to [the Popular] Edition (1883) of Literature and Dogma, that his goal is

> to re-assure those who feel attachment to Christianity, to the Bible, . . . not by disguising or extenuating the discredit which has befallen miracles and the supernatural, but on insisting on the natural truth of Christianity. (CPW, VI, 142-143)

In "Bishop Butler and the Zeit-Geist" (1876), Arnold says that "everything is conventional, when no one looks very clearly into himself or into what is told about his moral nature" (CPW, VIII, 37). And he reminds us that Hebraism does not hold the answer. "The triumph of Puritanism," he says in St. Paul and Protestantism (1871), "will be the triumph of [Man's] ordinary self, not the triumph of Christianity; and that the type of Hebraism it will

establish is one in which neither general human perfection, nor yet Hebraism itself, can truly find their account" (CPW, VI, 124).

Arnold searches for a new morality to "grasp the spiritual essence of his age" and to be "a reconciling and healing influence" upon those who strive to find a new basis for morality and faith.[12] As he says to his sister Fan in November 1874, he wants to "give something positive which to a great many people may be of the very greatest comfort and service" (Letters, II, 138).

He begins by grounding religious truth in experience (his word is experimentally). In "The True Greatness of Christianity" he states this principle as follows:

> Now, as we say that the truth and grandeur of the Old Testament most comes out experimentally--that is, by the whole course of the world establishing it, and confuting what is opposed to it--so it is with Christianity. Its grandeur and truth are far best brought out experimentally; and the thing is, to make people see this. (Literature and Dogma, CPW, VI, 395-396)

We must keep this modern temper in mind when we hear Arnold talking about tradition at this time. Tradition is valid only after it has been brought to the bar of experience--or tested experimentally, to use Arnold's word with its scientific overtones. Therefore Arnold's system of morality

begins with an assumption similar to that of traditional Christianity. The Bible is the saving power for man, and it is the true Book of God. Its function is to regulate the Englishman's conduct and to bring him peace and joy. Referring to the truth of the Bible, Arnold says: "Disbelieve it, and you will find out your mistake . . . Believe it, and you will find the benefit of it" (Literature and Dogma, CPW, VI, 370).

Arnold's notion of God and the Bible, however, is at variance with the traditional and customary Christian faith in the existence of supernatural and miraculous elements. In "The God of Miracles" Arnold shows the inadequacy of metaphysical evidences of God's existence. Any belief in a general God from the miracles "one cannot but dismiss with tenderness, for they belong to . . . a beautiful and powerful fairy tale." Like miracles, "Metaphysics," he points out in "The God of Metaphysics," "have convinced no one . . . they have given joy to no one" (God and the Bible, CWP, VII, 199, 202). Therefore neither "The God of Miracles" nor "The God of Metaphysics" is capable of providing a solid ground for modern belief in the spiritual value of the Bible.

In Arnold's moral system the truth of religion cannot be based on reason alone. It cannot be established according to external or logical truth. Only a few people with a certain kind of mind can absorb Christianity through its established dogma. For the majority of the English public, with whom Arnold is more emotionally involved, these dogmas

are inadequate. The belief in miracles as the basis of Christianity is also at variance with the internal truth which the gospel of Christ teaches. Miracles, because they are external, do not lead to the truths of Christianity. They cannot give valid interpretation of the gospel.

Therefore the moral message of Arnold's religious writing is that there should never be any external moral code of conduct imposed on man from without; rather, man is encouraged to develop his own moral outlook in accordance with his own experience. The truth and grandeur of the gospel are "brought out experimentally." For Arnold, as Trilling says, "it has never been enough to have only the movement of man toward the order of the universe; what is needed is also a movement of the universe toward man."[13] The existence of God must be proved through human experience and supernatural proofs must disappear. There is in us, Arnold declares in St. Paul and Protestantism, "a central moral tendency" and a "central clue in our moral being which united us to the universal order" (CPW, VI, 31).

Arnold's constant religious argument is that if Christianity is to flourish and to attract the attention of its believers, it must be based on facts of human experience rather than on miracles. Religion must give man a natural feeling and a sense of freedom from the material world and the natural order. "That there is a Great Personal First cause is unverifiable . . . But that there is an enduring power, which makes for righteousness, is

verifiable . . . by experience; . . . It is so! Try, and you will find it to be so!" (Literature and Dogma, CPW, VI, 375).

Therefore, the starting point of Arnold's moral system is the importance he begins to give human experience and the human heart. Like Newman before him, Arnold thinks that "to gain religious starting points . . . we must interrogate our hearts, and (since it is a personal individual matter) our own hearts,"[14]

Like modern humanism, Arnold's moral system favors man's unique experience and free will over any rational and philosophical arguments. There can be no moral action without choice or will. A man's choices must be always determined by those things in his own character. It is with the psychological and anthropological aspects of man and not of God that Arnold's moral system is therefore concerned. Man is the source of his authority. Religious truth is grounded in man's own feelings, emotions and passions. "Religion," Arnold points out in Literature and Dogma,

> is ethics heightened, enkindled, lit up by feeling; the passage from morality to religion is made when to morality is applied emotion. And the true meaning of religion is thus, not simply morality, but morality touched by emotion. (CPW, VI, 176)[15]

Thus Arnold seeks to establish the sanctions of religion "not in a book, nor in a system of thought, nor in a human institution, nor in a body of dubious external fact but in the emotional and moral needs of man."[16] Because human will is incapable of changing the course of history, man has to begin reforming what is within his own inner nature. Virtue or righteousness can be learned not through divine laws but through man's experience. Through his long experience man can discover for himself those actions which satisfy the instinct to live. "The important question," Arnold says in God and the Bible, is that as soon as man satisfies himself that he cannot build on miracles, he should "begin to build on something surer" (CPW, VII, 163-164). Henceforth Arnold gives a liberal or free thinking view of Biblical interpretation. His emphasis is on the necessity of liberating the individual conscience.

Arnold's interpretation of the Bible alters the Hellenic quality of his humanism. He considers the Bible "the great inspirer" of morality and conduct (Literature and Dogma, CPW, VI, 216). It can be appreciated and enjoyed if it is judged only as a source or moral authority and not of miracles. When it is read aright, the Bible "will be found to deal . . . with facts of experience, most pressing, momentous, and real" (God and the Bible, CPW, VII, 143). What is wanted, is "more inwardness, more feeling." "The very power of religion, lies in its bringing emotion to bear on our rules of conduct . . . and follow them heartily and easily"

(Literature and Dogma, CPW, VI, 216).

Arnold thinks that the method of Jesus is inward. The traditional Christian notion of "the three creeds" and "so-called Orthodox theology," Arnold says in Literature and Dogma, "are founded upon words which Jesus [himself] . . . never uttered." The attention of Jesus was fixed solely upon the "inwardness and sincerity in the conscience of each individual man" (CPW, VI, 344, 351). Jesus possessed moral and psychological insights into things, which distinguished him from his time. Like Coleridge, Arnold asserts that "the truth revealed through Christ, has its evidence in itself, and the proof of its divine authority is in its fitness to [man's] nature and needs."[17] Man should not be told what to believe or disbelieve. Man's conduct must reflect his own understanding.

Since man has his own genuine freedom and moral responsibility, God's existence must be proved through human experience and supernatural proofs must disappear. Arnold rejects the Puritan vision of a magnified and capricious God who insists on predestination and election and who emphasizes the materialistic quality of the Puritan catchwords, "convenient," "reason," "redeem," "purchase," and "bargain" (St. Paul and Protestantism, CPW, VI, 11-12). "That Jesus is the son of a Great Personal First Cause . . . and that there is a Great Personal First Cause," Arnold points out also in "our 'Masses' and the Bible," are "unverifiable." "But," he maintains,

> that there is an enduring Power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness, is verifiable . . . by experience; and that Jesus is the offspring of this Power is verifiable from experience also. (Literature and Dogma, CPW, VI, 375)

God, Arnold says in St. Paul and Protestantism, is "that stream of tendency by which all things seek to fulfill the law of their being." God is "in the world and the workings of the world . . . [the] element in which we live and move and have our being" (CPW, VI, 10, 37).

In Arnold's moral view there is also a close relationship between virtue and happiness. Man's happiness depends upon his obedience to the natural faculty of his conscience. "No one knows the truth about the Bible, who does not know how to enjoy it" (God and the Bible, CPW, VII, 148).

One important contribution of Arnold's religious writing is the opening-up of a more psychologically realistic interpretation of man, freedom, and democracy. The traditional belief in the authority of miracles, dogma, etc. has virtually ignored the possibility of grasping the concepts of man, freedom and democracy in the way the artist sees them, i.e., with poetic feeling and imagination. In Arnold's view religious truth is basically poetic, that is "concrete." "And the moment one perceives that the religious language of the human race is in truth poetry," Arnold says in the "Preface" to God and the Bible, "one cannot make

it an objection to this language that it is concrete. That it has long moved and deeply engaged the affections of men" (CPW, VII, 396). The Bible must be restored through its poetic truth and beauty. It should not be regarded as a work of science or history. "I am persuaded that the transformation of religion," Arnold says in "Preface" to Last Essays in Church and Religion (1877),

> can be accomplished only by carrying the qualities of flexibility, perceptiveness, and judgment which are the best fruits of letters . . . and by procuring the application of those qualities to matters where they are never applied now. (CPW, VIII, 148)

Religious truth is simply the connection of imagination with conduct. The purpose of Arnold's criticism of traditional religion, as he points out in God and the Bible, is "to re-unite man's imagination with virtue and conduct, when the tie between them has been . . . once broken" (CPW, VII, 378). It is through reading the Bible as literature that it can appeal truly to man's emotion and conduct. The main purpose behind Arnold's religious writing is

> To recommend that the Bible, when read as literature rather than as a work of divine revelation, is still the one sure sanction for man's moral nature and the source from which he can best

derive satisfaction of his spiritual needs.[18]

"The language of the Bible," Arnold says in God and the Bible, should be treated similarly to the language of letters, "language approximative and full of figures, not language exact" (CPW, VII, 202). The language of the Bible, Arnold indicates also in Literature and Dogma, is not "rigid, fixed, and scientific" but it is "fluid, passing, and literary" (CPW, VI, 152). It covers more of what man seeks to express than the language of science. The word of God is by no means a scientific term, but a term of poetry and eloquence (CPW, VI, 189, 171). In short, Arnold thinks that poetry can infuse life into religious doctrine and scientific knowledge. The qualities which Arnold wishes to establish in his religious criticism are the same qualities which his literary criticism explores. Arnold, as Garrod declares, "found theology a science and left it an art."[19] In Cockshut's view Arnold "accepted the whole Christian system as if it were a work of art, of saving art."[20]

It is clear therefore that Arnold's earlier Hellenic ideals of order and intellectual deliverance assume a diminished significance. His definition of morality gives man a natural feeling and a sense of spiritual freedom from established dogma and the traditional way of order. It is conduct and not cultural Hellenism which is, after all, "three fourths" of life. "Whatever progress may be made in science, art, literary culture," Arnold insists in

"Preface to Last Essays on Church and Religion," "Christianity will be still there . . . as the indispensable background, the three-fourths of life (CPW, VIII, 162). Moreover "the ideas of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount are surely profounder and more true than the ideas of the theologian of the Athenian creed" (CPW, VIII, 161). The problem of conduct is not an intellectual problem. Man needs not only to learn the rules but also--and this becomes more important for Arnold--to feel these rules and to apply them in real practice. In Arnold's view God should no longer be seen in his "magnified" majesty--"a non-natural man" (Literature and Dogma, CPW, VI, 372). God must not be thought of in terms of oneness, perfection, or omniscience. Mere intellectual knowledge of God or the Bible is not necessarily connected with man's conduct. Instead God is a moral power whose presence can be proved not through abstract dogma but through man's experience and emotion. Man's love for God can be expressed through morality. What is more important is man's moral intuition rather than his moral obedience. Arnold's new humanistic outlook of life is therefore formulated through his notion of morality.

Arnold's religious writings, as Trilling points out, conclude the pattern of his intellectual life. He has moved from poetry to literary criticism, thence to politics and finally to religion. "Each stage of his activity grows with a charming logicality out of the one before, and perhaps as much as anything else that accounts for his

continuing interest for us, it is this unity of his life in its diverse activities."[21]

NOTES

[1] Charles B. Ketcham, The Search for Meaningful Existence (New York: Weybright and Talley, 1968), pp. 68, 56-57.

[2] Kurt Baier, "Freedom, Obligation, and Responsibility," Humanist Ethics: Dialogue on Basics, ed. Morris B. Storer (Buffalo, New York: Promethean Books, 1980), p. 75.

[3] Ketcham, p. 11.

[4] Corliss Lamont, The Philosophy of Humanism, 5th ed. (New York: Fredrick Ungar Publishing Co., 1965), p. 13.

[5] Richard Ellman and Charles Fiedelson, Jr. eds., The Modern Tradition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. vi.

[6] G. M. Young, Victorian England: Portrait of An Age (New York: Doubleday Anchor Book, 1954), p. 7.

[7] Walter E. Houghton, "Character of the Age," The Victorian Frame of Mind, 1830-1870, p. 14.

[8] William Hurell Mallock, The New Republic; or Culture, Faith, and Philosophy in an English Country House, ed. J. Max Patrick (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1950), p. 50.

[9] Walter Pater, Plato and Platonism (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1901), p. 6.

[10] Thomas H. Huxley, "Science and Culture" (1880),

Science and Education: Essays, III (Originally published in 1898 by D. Appleton and Co. Reprinted in New York 1968 by Greenwood Press, Publishers), p. 144.

[11] Quoted by William S. Knickerbocker in "Victorian Education and the Idea of Culture," Backgrounds in Victorian Literature, ed. Richard A. Levine (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Company, 1967), pp. 164-165.

[12] R. H. Super, The Time Spirit of Matthew Arnold (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1970), p. 90.

[13] Trilling, Matthew Arnold, p. 347.

[14] John Henry Newman, The Life of John Henry, Cardinal Newman, ed. Wilfrid Philip Ward (New York, etc.: Longmans, Green and Co., 1912), II, 331.

[15] Arnold develops the essential insights of his moral views on human emotion early in his life. For example, in a letter to Clough, 1845, he sets "passion" against "the growing popularity of a strong minded writer." In another letter to Clough, November 30, 1853, Arnold says: "A thousand things make one compose or not compose: composition seems to keep alive in me a cheerfulness . . . which I think the present age is fast losing--this is why I like it" (Letters to Clough, 59, 146). In his poetry we find also many examples in which Arnold thinks that the truth of morality can be confirmed by the test of man's inner and spiritual experience. In Empedocles, for instance, he says:

Once read thy own breast right,

> And thou hast done thy fears;
> Man gets no other light,
> Search he a thousand years.
> Sink in thyself; then ask what ails thee at
> that shrine.
>
> (PW, 251)

In the 1853 "Preface" Arnold thinks that the poet has to select excellent actions "which most powerfully appeal to the great human affections; to those elementary feelings which subsist permanently in the race, and which are independent of time" (CPW, I, 4). In "Dante and Beatrice" (May, 1863), the most distinctive quality which Arnold admires in Dante is his "sacrificing the world to the spirit, of making the spirit all in all (CPW, III, 4). In "Eugenie de Guérin" (June 1863) Arnold shows us that Eugenie is distinguished not only with intelligence and a capability of literary expression but also for the display of "extraordinary force of character, and extraordinary strength of affection; and all these under the control of a deep religious feeling" (CPW, III, 91). In "Marcus Aurelius" (November 1863) Arnold points out the central theme of his religious books. He emphasizes "the necessity of an inspiration, a joyful emotion, to make moral action perfect," "the paramount virtue of religion is, that it has lighted up morality" (CPW, III, 134). In "Spinoza and the Bible" (December 1863) Spinoza attracts both Goethe and Arnold "by

the width and grandeur of his view of nature" and "the moral lesson he draws from his view of nature." "A moral lesson not of mere resigned acquiescence, not of melancholy quietism, but of joyful activity within the limits of man's true sphere" (CPW, III, 177). In "Pagan and Medieval Christian Sentiment" (April 1864) Arnold compares Theocritus's poem "Hymn to Adonis" with St. Francis's The Canticle of the Sun and concludes that unlike Christian ceremonies, "nothing whatever" in Theocritus's paganist poem "is elevating . . . consoling, nothing that is in our sense of the word religious" (CPW, III, 222).

Arnold continues, however, to embellish these and other views in the final decades of his life. Indeed he finds more and more applications for them in his religious writing as well as in his later criticism.

[16] Leon Gottfried, Matthew Arnold and the Romantics (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963), p. 58.

[17] S. T. Coleridge, "Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit," quoted by Trilling in Matthew Arnold, p. 327.

[18] E. D. H. Johnson, "The Role of the Artist" in Levine's Backgrounds to Victorian Literature, p. 177.

[19] H. W. Garrod, "The Theology of Matthew Arnold," The Oxford and Cambridge Review, VI (1909), 22.

[20] A. O. J. Cockshut, The Unbelievers: English Agnostic Thought 1840-1890 (London: Collins, 1964), p. 72.

[21] Trilling, Matthew Arnold, pp. 432-33.

CHAPTER VII

TOWARD THE AUTHORITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Though Arnold's last decade of work deals mainly with literary criticism, it is actually concerned with developing and establishing the uniqueness of the individual's experience as the moral basis of authority. "What I wished to say has been said," Arnold says in "The Preface" to Last Essays on Church and Religion" (1877), "and in returning to devote to literature . . . what remains to me of life and strength and leisure, I am returning after all, to a field where work of the most important kind has now to be done, though indirectly, for religion" (CPW, VIII, 148).

Indeed what Arnold says in "The Preface" to Last Essays on Church and Religion can be applied to almost all the literary work of the last decade of his life. Arnold develops and enlarges the idea of natural truth even when he is writing about Greek literature. "Strength and success are possible by taking one's law not from the pressure of the passing day, but the living forces of our own genuine nature" (CPW, VIII, 375).

Arnold's revolt against conventional religious dogma and other traditional concepts and his emphasis upon human experience as the basis of morality are a bold step toward

his recognition of the individual's psychological freedom. Arnold places man's independence above conformity to established authority. He begins to believe in a man-centered theory of life. It is actually toward regarding the individual as the center of life and the measure of all things that Arnold's later criticism, with its variety of subjects and interests, is mainly directed. "Man feels himself to be a more various and richly endowed animal than the old religious theory of life allowed," Arnold wrote to M. Fontanes on March 25, 1881. Man, Arnold maintains,

> is endeavouring to give satisfaction to the long suppressed and still imperfectly understood instincts of his varied nature. I think this revolution is happening everywhere; it is certainly happening in England, where the sombreness and narrowness of the religious world, and the rigid hold it long had upon us, have done so much to provoke it. I think it is, like all inevitable revolutions, a salutary one, but it greatly requires watching and guiding. (Letters, II, 220)

Arnold's insistence on the freedom of the individual from any external restrictions is related also to the growing sense of nationalism in his thinking. He begins to believe strongly in the significance of this life. His focus begins to be more and more directed toward the practical world and

the particular time and place in which he lives. He starts to affirm that art must mainly depend on the spirit of one's nation. Arnold's nationalist spirit is made strikingly manifest. His earlier praise of Greek and continental cultures and writers is replaced in his later criticism by an admiration of English and American life and writers. The critical and sometimes harsh voice of his earlier writing becomes more relaxed and more at ease in his later work. Though he still believes in the need for social order [Arnold is known for his urbanity], he begins to advocate man's essential need for freedom. The improvement of the general conditions of Victorian England, he says, relies mainly on the liberation of the Englishman from any external forces. The Englishman should be given the chance to depend on himself and to be his own master.

In his quest to establish the authority of the individual, Arnold stresses the primacy of conduct, morality and emotion in the development of human nature. In "The Study of Poetry" (1880), for example, though Arnold deals generally with poetry and criticism he is indirectly concerned with the individual. This is quite evident in his emphasis upon the emotional effects of poetry on human nature and the need of freeing man's emotions from any rational or logical limitations. Arnold warns against the temptation of interpreting poetry in relation to its historical values. Instead he favors the intrinsic estimate because it appeals to man's emotions and satisfies his inner desires. Poetry

is the medium through which the artist can communicate the religious sentiment to the modern world. Moreover great poetry, more than anything else, is capable of dealing with and presenting human experience in all its aspects. Poetry has the power to console, elevate and delight man's psyche. Therefore, he considers poetry "a criticism of life." The complexity of life requires poetry to be a moral agent. "The future of poetry is immense," and "more and more mankind will discover that we have to turn to [it] to interpret life for us, to console us, to sustain us" (CPW, VIII, 163, 161).

In "A Liverpool Address" (1882), as another example, Arnold continues the thesis of his religious writings by re-emphasizing that "conduct is three-fourths of life, and a man who works for conduct . . . works for more than a man who works for intelligence" (CPW, X, 85).

Thus, Arnold regards the question of man's moral character as a very important step toward realizing the authority of the individual. This is quite clear in his modified views about the continent. Arnold begins to attack the continent.

It is especially on France and French literature that Arnold's attack in the final decade is directed. In his attack Arnold stresses the indifference of French society to the moral qualities which he considers important to the ideal individual. Starting with the Franco-Prussian war (1870-1871) Arnold begins to shift from his earlier

admiration of France because he sees France as undergoing an extreme spiritual crisis. As Trilling indicates, Arnold has lost "his old love of France; French licentiousness." What Arnold calls "lubricity" has become "a bugaboo for him" and to it Arnold attributes "the French defeat in the just concluded war."[1] According to Donovan, Arnold also becomes "disillusioned with the French character, had turned his back on his French master, Sainte Beauve, and was proclaiming the virtues not of intelligence, but of conduct as "three-fourths . . . of human life."[2]

The fall of France, as Arnold writes to his mother in January 1871, is basically related "to that want of a serious conception of righteousness and the need of it." The same want of "righteousness," he maintains in the same letter, is also behind "the fall of Greece, the fall of Rome, the fall of . . . Italy of the fifteenth century" (Letters, II, 55). In Renan's "La Reforme intellectuale et morale de la France" (1871) Arnold finds the modern principles of "moral consciences, self-control, seriousness, steadfastness" which are very essential for the progress of any nation. He does not think, however, that France sees their significance. Though "character," Arnold writes in the same essay, is "surely the most important point in a ruler" there is an exaggeration in France of its country's intellectual rank in the world. France "is the plat del sal, the dish containing the salt without which all the other dishes of the world would be savourless" (CPW, VII,

45, 47). In "Equality" (1878), though Arnold praises France for having the power of social equality, he thinks that she "suffers" from "demoralization and intellectual stoppage." "The power of conduct" in France "has not greatly deepened." In addition, the French do not have an adequate sense of the power of intellect and beauty (CPW, VIII, 292).

What France actually needs, Arnold says in "A Liverpool Address" (1882) is "morality." France is also in great need of "seriousness" and of "reverence." Voltaire, for example, "did a great deal of harm in France . . . by his want of seriousness, his want of reverence, his want of sense for much that is deepest in human nature" (CPW, X, 84, 85). France does not care for chastity. The French, Arnold says in "A Word More About America" (1885), are worshippers of the "great goddess lubricity." Though French institutions are republican, their "ideas and morals" are not (CPW, X, 202, 201). The moral decay of French civilization, Arnold points out in "Numbers" (1884), results in the loss of "her powers of soul and spirit, her intellectual productiveness, her skill in counsel, her might for war . . . and the life of that famous state will be more and more impaired, until it perish" (CPW, X, 163).

The indifference of the French people to the question of religion and their tendency to worship the goddess are evident also in French literature. "The highest art which "possesses religiousness the French have never had" ("Numbers," CPW, X, 157, 158). Unlike French literature of the

eighteenth century, which is "a revolutionary literature," French literature of the nineteenth century, Arnold points out in "Numbers," has "less soundness and perfection, and it exerts much less influence." France, Arnold continues, is "suffering from a dangerous and perhaps a fatal disease; and that is not clericalism which is the real enemy to the French so much as their goddess." The most recognized force in French literature and art is the goddess. In French novels, plays and newspapers "one is tempted to make a goddess out of a word of their own." The chief source of moral ideas is drying up in France and what remains "are the sources of Gaulish salt . . . quickness . . . sentiment . . . sensuality, and rationality" (CPW, X, 157, 159, 161, 155, 154, 157). Arnold sees in Hugo and in Zola, for example, the sensual and impassioned men (CPW, IV, 307). In his essay "Wordsworth" (1879) Arnold also attacks Theophile Gautier, one of the most popular French poets. In him Arnold sees a poet "who has taken up his abode at an inn, and never got further" (CPW, IV, 107).

Arnold's disappointment in the French character and French society leads him to hope, as he writes to his mother March 20, 1871, that "the present generation of French men may pass clear away as soon as possible and be replaced by a better one" (Letters, II, 60). What France needs, he points out to M. Fontanes twelve years later, is "men with a passion for the plain virtues, and capable of inspiring this passion in others" (June 29, 1883, Letters,

II, 249). France can never attain its perfection except through the inward chance of its individuals. France "must recover through a powerful and profound renewal, a great inward change, brought about by 'the remnant' amongst her people" ("Numbers," CPW, X, 162).[3]

At this time of his career Arnold is not only disillusioned with French culture and writers; he is also critical of German culture and writers. For example, he attacks the Germans for overemphasizing the element of scholarship. "In the German mind as in the German language," Arnold indicates in Literature and Dogma, there does seem to be something splay, something blunt-edged, unhandy and infelicitous, some positive want of straightforward, sure perception" (CPW, VI, 158). In "Equality" (1879) Arnold thinks that the conditions which the Germans accept for their life are different from those which the English demand. The Germans have "so much junkerism, militarism, officialism." Moreover Germany does not have "the English freedom of bequest" (CPW, VIII, 281). In "A Liverpool Address" (1882) Arnold finds that the great need of Germany is civil courage (CPW, X, 84).[4]

Arnold sees the qualities which distinguish the German character at variance with his own ideals of the individual. His disillusionment with German society is reflected also in his changing views of Goethe. Whereas in "the 1853 Preface" Arnold regards Goethe as "the greatest critic of all times" (CPW, I, 8), in "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" (1864) Goethe is only "one of the greatest

critics" (CPW, III, 259-60). In Literature and Dogma (1873) Goethe is criticized for having "less of quick, keen tact" than other great men from other nations (CPW, VI, 158). In "A French Critic on Goethe" (1878), though Arnold praises Goethe for being "the clearest, the largest, the most helpful thinker of modern times," Goethe's greatness is not seen in his poetic achievement. With the exception of his short poems, Arnold does not favor Goethe's artistic productions. He considers, for example, the first part of Faust, "Goethe's best work," too fragmentary and episodic to "produce [a] single [and] powerful impression." Goethe's prose also does not possess "those positive qualities of style which give pleasure." Instead it is "loose, ill-knit, diffuse" (CPW, VIII, 275, 273). In "Emerson" (1884) though Arnold still thinks of Goethe as great, he is also at times "the stiff, and hindered, and frigid, and factitious Goethe who speaks to us too often from those sixty volumes of his" (CPW, X, 167).

The modification of Arnold's earlier views regarding the continent reflects to a large extent the growth of his national spirit. He begins to be more interested in the uniqueness of English individualism. Consequently his attention is directed solely to the practical interests of his own country. The focus of most of his later criticism is upon England and English literature. Arnold's task in his later criticism, as Farrell points out, is

> to secure the right understanding of English

> literature, to place this tradition above the literature of every other modern nation, and to represent its claim to the same kind of redemptive power that those educated in the classical language could find in the literature of the Greek.[5]

Whereas Arnold's earlier criticism (for example, Essays in Criticism: First Series) deals mainly with the ancients ("Marcus Aurelius") and the continent ("Heine," "Joubert," etc.), Arnold's later criticism (for example, Essays in Criticism: Second Series) is concerned mostly with recent authors, especially English. For example, he deals with Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Gray, and Milton. Though Milton is not a recent writer, he is chosen because he is an English author and because Arnold considers him a good model for English writers. Arnold's later criticism also centers on English life and thought.

Arnold's preference for England and his decreased interest in Greece and the Continent is quite evident in his insistence on the need for a guide to English literature. "The literature most accessible to all of us [English], touching us most nearly," he says in "A Guide to English Literature" (1877), "is our own literature, English literature." "To get at the best in English literature," he maintains, "nothing can be more helpful to us than a guide who will show us . . . the growth of our literature,

its series of productions, and their relative value" (CPW, VIII, 238). In "Johnson's Lives of the Poets" (1878), he predicts for England "an age of poetry" which not only eclipses its "age of prose" in glory but also fixes the future conditions and character of English literature. Arnold indicates that the English should place their pride "in the Elizabethan age and Shakespeare, as the Greeks placed theirs in Homer" (CPW, VIII, 315-316).

Whereas in his earlier criticism he admires the intellectual achievement of French culture, now he begins to celebrate the poetic spirit in England. He begins to consider English literature superior, greater and more imaginative than that of France. In "The French Play in London" (1879), for instance, Arnold considers English drama more popular than and superior to French drama. Unlike the theatre in France, the English theater plays a very significant role in transforming the English middle-class. Unlike England, France has no "Shakespeare to open [her] eyes to the insufficiencies of Corneille and Racine" (CPW, XI, 217-218).

Arnold's raising of English literature in relation to that of the continent and the Greeks is embodied also in the various subjects and through the different individuals that he treats in his later essays. In most of these essays Arnold's earlier criticism of the Englishman's character and civilization is somewhat diminished. Moreover he attempts to define the character and the significance

of each author by comparing him, in most cases, not with ancient or continental writers but with English writers. In "Johnson's Lives of the Poets" (1878) Arnold shows a very sympathetic and affectionate attitude toward Johnson, praising the human qualities of Johnson's mind and life. He considers him also a good model among his contemporaries. "The more we study him," Arnold asserts,

> the higher will be our esteem for the power of his mind, the width of his interests, the largeness of his knowledge, the freshness, fearlessness, and strength of his judgments. The higher too, will be our esteem for his character. . . . Human dignity . . . he maintained . . . through the whole long arduous struggle of his life. (CPW, VIII, 319).

In "A French Critic on Milton" (1877) Arnold considers Milton England's "first-rate master in the grand style." Milton is "as truly a master in his style as the great Greeks are, or Virgil or Dante." In his final address on Milton (1888) Arnold considers him a good model for Victorian writers. Indeed he regards him a great source for English writers. He says,

> If to [the] English race an inadequate sense for perfection of work is a real danger, if the discipline of respect for a high and flawless

> excellence is needed by [the English], Milton is of all [English] gifted men the best lesson, the most salutary influence." ("Milton," CPW, XI, 330)

Arnold praises Milton's diction and rhythm. His style is high and pure. Poets such as Thomson, Cowper and Wordsworth have followed and adopted Milton's form. Milton also carries on the great tradition of the ancient poets. He embodies the high artistic qualities of the Hebrew, Greek and Latin writers (CPW, XI, 330, 332). Therefore if Victorian readers "are ever to gain any sense of the power and charm of the great poets of antiquity, their way to gain it is not through translations of the ancients, but through the original poetry of Milton" (CPW, XI, 332). Arnold associates the strength of Milton's style with a moral quality in his [Milton's] character ("A French Critic on Milton," CPW, VIII, 183-184).

The moral qualities which Arnold associates with Milton's character are also characteristic, in Arnold's view, of the English people as a whole. Unlike the French, the English have a strong faith in morality. "Whenever and wherever" the individual Englishman is "called upon to do his duty," Arnold says in "Preface" [to Discourses in America (1885)], he does it with energy, courage and virtue. What Englishmen have actually gained "in the ground of [their] being," is "a firm faith in conduct" (CPW, X, 241).

It is also the moral qualities of Wordsworth's poetry

which have led Arnold to admire Wordsworth and to consider him a good representative of the Englishman's notion of personal freedom. In "Wordsworth" (1879) we see a significant shift in Arnold's humanistic thinking. Arnold's increasing nationalism is clearly expressed. Whereas in Essays in Criticism: First Series and especially in "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" (1864) Arnold criticizes Wordsworth's lack of knowledge, now he gives him high praise. He regards him as "one of the very chief glories of English Poetry." Wordsworth, after Shakespeare and Milton, is the most significant English poet since Elizabethan times, and even in Europe Arnold places him immediately after Moliere and Goethe.[6] Wordsworth's place will be recognized not only in England but also throughout Europe (CPW, VIII, 55, 40-41).

The reason for Wordsworth's superiority resides in the fact that "he gives us so much to rest upon, so much which communicates his spirit and engages ours" (CPW, VIII, 41, 43). In tracing the greatness of Wordsworth, Arnold returns to some remarks he made earlier in On Translating Homer (1861) that "the noble and profound application of ideas to life is the most essential part of poetic greatness" (CPW, VIII, 44). Whereas these remarks are used in On Translating Homer interchangeably with his Greek ideal of intellectual deliverance, now they are presented in the context of his developed notion of man's moral nature. Wordsworth deals with the essentials of modern life. His

greatness is in his "noble and profound application of ideas to life." Ideas "on man, on nature, and on human life" (CPW, VIII, 44).

One of the many things which Arnold admires in the work of Wordsworth is the sense of a divine presence in the natural world. Arnold believes that in Wordsworth's poetry man is an integral part of nature and is not separated by any supernatural power. Nature awakens a divine spirit within each man. This awakening helps man to realize his own individuality. Hence, Wordsworth's poetry is a moral poetry. It deals with the essentials of man's life. The source of Wordsworth's greatness lies also in "the joy offered to us in nature" and "in the simple primary affection and duties" (CPW, VIII, 46, 51). Thus the joy which Wordsworth's poetry evokes in the human soul does not reside in the physical world alone but in a harmony of nature and man. Wordsworth's poetry, Arnold stresses in "Byron" (1881), "has an insight into permanent sources of joy and consolation for mankind" (CPW, VIII, 236).

Arnold praises also the originality and the immediacy of Wordsworth's poetic achievement. The natural world is a powerful element in his style. He shares the life of the physical world and creates cheerfulness out of his involvement with nature. "It might seem that Nature not only gave him the matter for his poems, but wrote his poems for him" (CPW, VIII, 52). By exploring the beauty of nature Wordsworth not only makes the materials of the physical world

available to everyone; he also enriches the aesthetic experience of man. His poems offer modern man the feeling of delight and harmony with nature of which he has been deprived.

Arnold's acceptance of physical nature reflects his recognition of the psychological impulses in man. In his projection, through nature, of man's own inner and irrational desires, Wordsworth exemplified Arnold's belief that man's impulses should not be suppressed or controlled by any powers other than himself.

In the concluding section of "Wordsworth" Arnold reaffirms the high place of Wordsworth within the modern tradition. Though Arnold indicates that "the ancients are far above us," he acknowledges that "there is something that we demand which they can never give." It is Wordsworth who can give what modern man needs. "I know not where else, among the moderns," Arnold says, "we are to find his superiors" (CPW, VIII, 55).

Arnold's tendency in this decade of his career to appreciate English writers and English literature can also be seen in other essays. Whereas Byron, for example, is attacked in "Heinrich Heine" (1863) for the narrowness of his mind and his need for foreign influences,[7] in "Byron" (1881) "the time has come for [him] when he must take his real and permanent place" (CPW, IX, 21). Arnold finds in "Byron's personality" the embodiment of the major qualities which he [Arnold] begins to identify with the ideal

individual. Byron possesses a personality which distinguishes him "from all the rest of English poets, and in the main greater," "a personality in eminence such as has never been yet, and is not likely to come again" (CPW, IX, 231).

The uniqueness of Byron's personality is manifested in "the excellence of sincerity and strength" [Arnold's emphasis] which Arnold strongly recommends as the very qualities essential to freeing and liberating the English individual from any external forces. According to Arnold, Byron is distasteful and hateful to the old order, both at home and abroad, with "its narrow and false system"; "its established facts and dominant ideas"; "its cant, selfishness, and cynicism." Because he is a strong and sincere individual, Byron "battles" against "the falsehood, cynicism, insolence, misgovernment, oppression" of his own class (aristocracy) and British philistinism (CPW, IX, 232, 233).

Byron's powerful personality affects also his poetic achievement. He possesses a high poetic gift. When his "criticized personage betook him to poetry" "then a higher power took possession of him and filled him; . . . with his direct strokes, its ever-welling force, its satire, its energy, and its agony" (CPW, IX, 233). Like Wordsworth, Byron stands "first and pre-eminent in actual performance" among his contemporaries. Like Wordsworth's, Byron's poetry is glorious. Though Wordsworth's poetry is superior to Byron's, "Byron's poetry" "will always, probably find more readers than Wordsworth's and will give pleasure more

easily." Byron has a prominent "passion," "a strong and deep sense for what is beautiful in human nature . . . action and suffering." As he does with Wordsworth, Arnold appreciates Byron's treatment of the natural world. The whole physical world for Byron, as for Wordsworth, teaches man the higher moral or spiritual law. It is a spontaneous inspiration which enables man to find his own nature totally from within. As with Wordsworth "nature herself seems to take the pen from him . . . and to write for him . . . with her own penetrating simplicity." The greatness of Byron's poetry is also embodied in its power of portraying "a single incident, a single situation," of "grasping it as if it were real" and "of making us see and feel it" (CPW, IX, 236, 234, 220).

In the concluding section of "Byron" Arnold re-emphasizes his admiration of Byron's personality and sees in him a good model of the ideal revolutionary English individual. He says,

> We shall turn our eyes again, and to more purpose, upon this passionate and dauntless solider of a forlorn hope, who . . . waged against the conservation of the old impossible world so fiery battle . . . waged it with such splendid and imperishable excellence of sincerity and strength. (CPW, IX, 236)

Keats, whom Arnold also attacks earlier for his

romanticism and his violation of the classical principles of wholeness,[8] is now presented differently. In "Keats" (1880) Arnold considers him "one of the very greatest of English poets." Arnold admits that there is in Keats something more than sensuousness. Keats's "yearning passion for the Beautiful . . . is not a passion of the sensuous or sentimental poet"; it is "an intellectual and spiritual passion." Arnold finds in Keats also the elements of high character and virtue. The effort to develop these elements "is frustrated and cut short [only] by misfortune . . . disease and time."

Like Wordsworth and Byron, Keats can participate in the life of nature. He has a deep feeling for beauty and is quite capable in relating that with truth and joy. The connection which Keats makes between beauty and truth, his insight that "a thing of beauty is a joy for ever," alone gives him an outstanding place among English poets. Keats's poetry possesses a natural magic and "naturalistic interpretation." Accordingly Arnold ranks Keats with Shakespeare.

"No one else in English poetry, save Shakespeare," Arnold says, "has in expression quite the fascinating felicity of Keats, his perfection of loveliness" (CPW, IX, 207, 213, 207, 214, 215).

In "Thomas Gray" (1888) Arnold indicates that, though Gray "was isolated in his country," and in spite of the small amount of his poetry, Gray's reputation is very high. "Seriousness," "knowledge," "sentiment," and "humor" are

the most distinctive qualities of his character. In comparing the poetry of Gray with that of his contemporaries, it "may be said to have reached in style, the excellence at which he aimed" (CPW, IX, 200, 189, 197, 204).

The interesting sense of the nationalist spirit in Arnold's later criticism is reflected also in his affectionate attitude toward America. Arnold thinks that nowhere does the virtue of individualism find a more enthusiastic welcome than in America. America's belief in democracy and progress, its optimism and idealism all fit into Arnold's modified humanistic thinking. Therefore he chooses America, instead of France or Germany, as a good model for the English people. As J. H. Raleigh indicates, "Arnold began his career talking about the French, but he concluded it by talking about the Americans."[9]

Arnold's shift toward America, as P. J. Keating points out, "is clearly a change of emphasis which represents a cultural shift of outstanding significance."[10] But contrary to Keating's view, Arnold is no longer warning the Englishman against the dangers of the American way of life as he did in his earlier criticism.[11] Arnold is not now terrified that England will be too much affected by the American notion of democracy. Instead he begins to see in the American way of life the embodiment of his own ideal of a free society and free individuals.

Arnold's critical tone toward America is softened in this final decade. He is probably thinking of England and

America as one nation. Indeed he regards the people of the United States as English. In "A Word About America" (1882) he calls them "the English on the other side of the Atlantic" (CPW, X, 2). In "Numbers" (1884) America is "that great country of English people on the other side of the Atlantic, amongst whom [Arnold] was born" (CPW, X, 143). In "A Word More About America" (1885) he refers to the Americans as those "English of the old country" and to the American philistine as a brother to the English (CPW, X, 203).

Like England, America has "the sense for conduct and religion . . . industry . . . and liberty." America, however has dispensed with classes ("A Word About America," CPW, X, 21). In America the doctrine of self-reliance is firmly rooted in its belief in social and democratic equality. There is no division between poor and rich ("A Word More About America," CPW, X, 195). America, Arnold points out also in "Equality" (1878), is " a republic with the republican sentiment for equality." There is not in America "the system of classes and of property which faudalism established in Europe" (CPW, VIII, 282). American people are "homogeneous" and live in an "epoch of expansion" ("A Word More About America," CPW, X, 202). There is also a complete harmony in American institutions. In Arnold's view democratic institutions are the modern solution for the political problem. Therefore, he praises the "institutions" of America and shows how they fit its people. He

admired, for example, the state governments in America and particularly their ways of providing the American people "with the fullest liberty of managing their own affairs" ("A Word More About America," (CPW, X, 198). "The vast scale of things in America, its numbers, the rapidity of its increase," Arnold says in "Numbers," "strike one's imagination and are a common subject of admiration" (CPW, X, 144). In short, as far as political and social problems are concerned, "the American people of the United States does appear to [Arnold] to have solved, . . . with undeniable success" (CPW, X, 217).

In spite of its success in resolving political and social problems, Arnold points out in "A Word More About America," America still needs to solve the human problem. In "Civilization in the United States" (1888), Arnold defined the "human problem" as that want "of what is elevated and beautiful, of what is interesting." Nevertheless the future of America is of great importance to England. The English have a good deal to learn from the Americans (CPW, X, 217; XI, 363), especially the sense of immediacy.[12]

In this he is similar to Thoreau. "Nothing must be postponed," says Thoreau.

> Take time by the forelock. Now or never! You must live in the present, launch yourself on every wave, find your eternity in every moment. Fools stand on their island opportunities and

> look toward another land. There is no other land; there is no other life but this, or the like of this.[13]

To make his humanism fully modern and fully applicable to political affairs, Arnold had to accept Huxley's challenge. Huxley had attacked Arnold's "culture" as outmoded and inapplicable in the face of the scientific spirit.[14] Arnold was sensitive on this point. He had a more than passing interest in anthropology and philology. His notorious theory of race and literature is actually based on respectable thinking of that time.[15] He was also interested in an orderly description of human mental powers. The division of the mind into four "powers" which he first stated in 1880,[16] is an attempt to find a practical description of mental activity.

Consequently, despite the ironic tone with which he refers to science in the address, "Literature and Science" may be considered on the whole as acceptance by Arnold of the fact that this is a new world we live in and that the humanist must come to terms with it as realistically as possible.

In "Literature and Science" (1882)[17] Arnold's purpose is to describe a way to unite the "power of intellect" (now, scientific knowledge) with "the power of beauty," "the power of conduct" and "the power of social life and manners."

> We experience, as we go on learning and knowing . . . the need of relating what we have learnt and known to the sense which we have in us for conduct, to the sense which we have in us for beauty. (CPW, X, 63)

It is through poetry that these powers can be harmonized. "If we know the best that has been thought and uttered in the world," Arnold maintains,

> we shall find that the art, and poetry and eloquence of men who lived, perhaps, long ago . . . have in fact not only the power of refreshing and delighting us. . . . they have a fortifying, and elevating, and quickening, and suggestive power, capable of wonderfully helping us to relate the results of modern science to our need for conduct, our need for beauty. (CPW, X, 68)

Nevertheless we find in the same essay contradictions in Arnold's mind as to the adequacy of this faith in ancient poetry. The growth of scientific studies and the indifference of his countrymen to the humanities strengthen Arnold's doubt about the practicality of a classical education in a scientific age. The scientific discoveries and the industrial revolution during the Victorian age make it very difficult

> to inflict this education [classical] upon an industrial modern community, where . . . the mass . . . is bound . . . to plain labour and to industrial pursuits, and the education in question tends necessarily to make men dissatisfied with these pursuits and unfitted for them. (CPW, X, 54)

Throughout the essay Arnold reiterates the idea that science is the most practical subject of education in an industrialized and advanced age. Science appeals to the present needs of the Victorian society whereas the humanities are out-dated. ". . . I admit," Arnold declares,

> that Plato's world was not ours . . . that he had no conception of a great industrial community such as that of the United States, and that such a community must and will shape its education to suit its own needs. (CPW, X, 55)

Despite the ironic tone, Arnold is serious about the impracticality of classical education. He acknowledges that practical accomplishment in science and business is the major goal of Victorian life. Nevertheless, Arnold insists that it is through literature that man's moral, emotional and aesthetic tendencies can be estisfied. Human nature must not be restrained by scientific logic or by any other authoritarian discipline. Therefore, by emphasizing

man's psychological needs, Arnold is clearly subjecting all authority to the judgment of the individual. The individual must feel free to question, decide, and examine anything for himself.

As has been indicated above, it is clear therefore how Arnold begins to affirm that almost all forms of external oppression over the minds of men are morally intolerable. Neither the State nor the Church nor any other kind of established order has any authority to impose on man's beliefs and practices. Unless man's will is self-determined or free, he can have no dignity or moral character of any worth. It is through free individuals that the conditions of Victorian society as a whole can be improved. Therefore Englishmen must be freed and liberated from any external authority or long-established tradition.

In the "Preface" to Mixed Essays (1878), for example, Arnold stresses the essential need for human expansion. "First and foremost of the necessary means toward man's civilization," Arnold points out, is "expansion." Arnold likens man's need for developing the instinct in him for expansion to the needs of light in the growing of plants. This manifestation of the instinct for expansion, which the Englishman knows most, is associated with "the love of liberty." To go against this instinct is to go against nature. Thus man's instinct for expansion or his love of freedom must not be "tyrannized" or defeated by any kind of external authority. Man should not be enslaved by any

force outside himself. Man cannot be civilized or humanized if any kind of external power thwarts his vital interests--"It is found that the ruler cannot in the long run be trusted" (CPW, VIII, 371).

In "Numbers" (1883) Arnold develops a very similar thesis. In the reference he makes to the ideal source of authority which should exist in a society, he affirms his ntoion of self independence. He says:

> It may be better, it is better, that the body of the people, with all its faults, should act for itself, and control its own affairs, than that it should be set aside as ignorant and incapable, and have its affairs managed for it by a so-called superior class, possessing property and intelligence. (CPW, X, 143)

In "A Liverpool Address" (1882) Arnold advocates also the modern principle of self-reliance or independence. This is especially evoked through his praise of some remarks made by the physician Sir Astley Cooper to a young student. Sir Astley preaches to his student the virtue of individuality. He shows him that no organized authority is necessary. None must be allowed to stand between man and his own power. "That, sir, is the way to learn your business," Sir Astley says, "look for yourself, never mind what other people may say; no opinion or theories can interfere with information acquired from dissection" (CPW, X, 82).[18]

Moreover, Arnold's use, in the same essay, of scientific or medical terminology such as "the true and perfect balance of health cannot be attained without nervous excitement of divers kinds"; his speech about money-making and business, (CPW, X, 83), reflect his growing interest in the needs of his own time and place.

It is in his essay "Emerson" (1884) that Arnold's doctrine of individualism finds its most powerful expression. Arnold considers Emerson the best exponent of and spokesman for the modern moral point of view. In Emerson's ideas of self-reliance, human experience, human spirit, soul, will, freedom, happiness, hope and optimism, Arnold finds the expression and the embodiment of his own developed views. Indeed Emerson becomes perhaps the most important single influence on Arnold's thinking, especially during the final decade of his life. "I have a strong sense of [Emerson's] value, which I am glad to say has deepened instead of diminishing on re-reading him," Arnold says to his sister in the autumn of 1883. "I always found him of more use than Carlyle, and I now think so more than ever." Arnold admires Emerson to the extent that, as he writes to his sister, he would like "to slip away from New York and see Concord, and the grave where Emerson is buried" (Letters II, 218).

Arnold describes Emerson as one of the four "voices" heard at Oxford forty years before. In Emerson's voice Arnold finds "a clear and pure voice" which brings to his

ear "a strain as new, and moving, and unforgettable, as the strain of Newman, or Carlyle, or Goethe" (CPW, X, 167). In his stressing the "human voice," we see the importance Arnold gives to the human presence. In Arnold's view Emerson is a man of "soul" and "genius" who is visible in the flesh and present in the heart and the imagination (CPW, X, 167).

In Emerson Arnold finds a symbol and an exponent of an immediate and modern humanism that does not have to go back to the ancients for its expression. Arnold admires Emerson's optimism and his faith in man's ability to reform himself and overcome all limitations and adversities. The source of Emerson's charm and the root of his greatness is his "persistent optimism." Emerson's joyful, hopeful, beautiful and serene temper is the secret of his effect. Emerson's abiding word, by which he yet speaks to us, is this: "that which befits us . . . is cheerfulness and courage, and the endeavour to realise our aspirations" (CPW, X, 176, 181, 182). Arnold admires Emerson's gospel of "happiness in labour, righteousness and veracity in all the life of the spirit." Emerson is "the friend and aider of those who would live in the spirit" (CPW, X, 184, 177). The sense of happiness and hope makes Emerson's work invaluable. Because Emerson evokes a sense of joy, happiness and cheerfulness throughout his work, he is even more important than Carlyle, whose work embodies a transcendental doom. Indeed Arnold considers Emerson's

Essays "the most important work done in prose" "as Wordsworth's poetry is . . . the most important work done in verse" in the nineteenth century. In his conviction that in the life of the spirit is happiness, Emerson, Arnold points out, "will prove in the end to have been right" (CPW, X, 184, 182, 185).

Emerson's ideal of character and self-reliance appeals strongly to Arnold at this time of his life. Arnold appreciates Emerson's faith that each man is born free and equal and that each man has an innate moral right to live his life, exercise his freedom and pursue his happiness. Like Emerson, Arnold thinks that "character is everything." "That which all things tend to educe, which freedom, cultivation, intercourse, revolutions, go to form and deliver," Arnold quotes Emerson, "is character." Arnold agrees with Emerson when he says that the individual is the measure of all things. "Trust thyself!," Arnold quotes Emerson. He also quotes the following famous phrases: "every heart vibrates to that iron string"; "trust thyself"; "what attracts my attention shall have it"; "though thou shouldst walk the world over, thou shalt not be able to find a condition inopportune or ignoble"; "what we call vulgar society is that society whose poetry is not yet written, but which you shall presently make as enviable and renowned as any" (CPW, X, 177, 179). Emerson's points," Arnold says,

> are in themselves true . . . and fruitful. And

> the right work to be done . . . was to affirm them generally and absolutely. Only thus could he break through the hard and fast barrier of narrow, fixed ideas which he found confronting him, and win an entrance for new ideas. (CPW, X, 180)

Arnold not only affirms the validity and practicality of Emerson's ideals; he also recommends them as the source of authority. He says:

> let no one object that it is too general; that more practical, positive direction is what we want; that Emerson's optimism, self-reliance, and indifference to favourable conditions for our life and growth, have in them something of danger. (CPW, X, 179)

Emerson's view of the need for a free and self-reliant human being leads Arnold to recommend Emerson's ideas as the basis of improving English conditions during the Victorian period. In the concluding section of "Emerson" Arnold makes a highly emotional statement about Emerson. We get the sense that it is not Greek ideals but Emerson's ideas which have become the central focus of Arnold's thinking. Arnold admires Emerson to the extent that he considers him the best model and guide to be followed by both England and America. Emerson, Arnold declares,

has lessons for both the branches of our race [English and American]. I figure him to my mind as visible upon earth still . . . but of heightened stature and shining feature, with one hand stretched out toward the East, to our laden and labouring England; the other toward the ever-growing West, to his own dearly-loved America,--'great, intelligent, sensual, avaricious America.' To us [English] he shows for guidance his lucid freedom, his cheerfulness and hope: to you [America] his dignity, delicacy, serenity, elevation. (CPW, X, 186).

NOTES

[1] Trilling, Matthew Arnold, p. 296.

[2] Robert Donovan, "The Method of Arnold's Essays in Criticism," PMLA, LXXI (1956), 931.

[3] Arnold's notion of the "remnant" is associated with his idea of the few which he points out in some of his earlier criticism. For example, in defining the historical role of the "individual genius" and its relationship to the 19th century Arnold says, in "The Bishop and the Philosopher" (Jan. 1863) that,

> knowledge and truth, in the full sense of the words, are not attainable by the great mass of the human race at all. . . . Old moral ideas leaven and humanize the multitude: new intellectual ideas filter slowly down to them from the thinking few; and only when they reach them in this manner do they adjust themselves to their practice without convulsing it. (CPW, III, 44)

In "Dr. Stanley's Lectures on the Jewish Church" (Feb. 1863), Arnold continues the same thesis: "A very few of mankind aspire after a life which is not the life after

which the vast majority aspire (CPW, III, 65-66). In "Heinrich Heine" (August 1863) Arnold says: "There is so much power, so many seem able to run well, so many give promise of running well;--so few reach the goal, so few are chosen. Many are called, few chosen" (CPW, III, 132).

Arnold continues also his idea of the few in "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" (1864) and in Culture and Anarchy (1869).

The term "remnant," however, has a more accurate and comprehensive name. This group represents a minority of intellectual leaders. It is through the "saving remnant" that any significant change in a society can take its place. She has the capacity to guide the majority for moral leadership. "Everything . . . depends upon the remnant, its numbers and its powers of action" (CPW, X, 154).

[4] In a letter to his sister, July 17, 1865, Arnold also finds the German people lacking in civil courage. He says: "Our German cousins talk, and lament and do nothing--have not indeed our genius for doing something, and just the something most likely to embarras the Government and to be successful" (Letters, I, 339).

[5] Farrell, p. 201.

[6] The important value which Arnold begins to associate with Wordsworth is expressed also in a letter he wrote to Miss Arnold on April 14, 1879. Wordsworth, he says, "can show a body of work superior to what any other English poet,

except Shakespeare and Milton, can show." Moreover "Wordsworth's body of work . . . is superior to the body of work of any continental poet of the last hundred years except Goethe" (Letters, II, 182).

[7] In "Heinrich Heine" (August 1863), for example, Byron is shown as unsuccessful in applying the modern spirit to English literature. He is outstanding "only by his genius, only by his inborn fire; he had not the intellectual equipment of a supreme modern poet . . . an ordinary nineteenth-century English gentleman, with little culture and no ideas" (CPW, III, 121, 132).

[8] In "Heinrich Heine" (1862) Keats not only fails stylistically to come up to classical standards; by devoting his great gifts to naturalistic interpretation, he fails also in applying "modern ideas to life" (CPW, III, 122).

[9] Quoted by P. J. Keating in "Arnold's Social and Political Thought," Matthew Arnold, ed. Kenneth Allott (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1975), p. 231.

[10] Ibid., p. 230.

[11] See, for example, Arnold's essay "Democracy," CPW, ii, 18.

[12] "I find that having been in America," Arnold says to his sister Jane in 1884, "wonderfully increases my interest in their men and politics. In some points they are certainly our superiors" (Unpublished Letters, p. 54).

[13] Quoted by Joel Porte, Emerson and Thoreau: The

Transcendentalists in Conflict (Middle Town, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1966), p. 154.

[14] Huxley, "Science and Culture" p. 144.

[15] See Arnold's "Literature and Science," CPW, X, 53-73.

[16] See Arnold's "The Future of Liberalism," CPW, IX, 144.

[17] "Literature and Science" (1882) is the most famous of the three lectures which Arnold delivered in his American tour. Arnold lectured sixty-five times in that tour in 1883-84. He delivered "Literature and Science" twenty-nine times, "Numbers" and "Emerson" eighteen times each. See CPW, X, 462xF.

[18] A similar notion is expressed in "Heinrich Heine" (1863). Referring to Goethe, Arnold says:

> Goethe's profound, imperturbable naturalism is absolutely fatal to all routine thinking, . . . When he is told, such a thing must be so, there is immense authority and a custom in favour of its being so for a thousand years, he answers with Olympian politeness, 'But is it so? is it so to me?" (CPW, III, 110)

CHAPTER VIII

AFTERWARD

Contrary to almost all the prevailing opinions which consider Arnold's attempt at cultural synthesis applicable to the Victorian age, this study has attempted to take a different approach. Though it acknowledges, throughout, both the Romantic and the Classical influences on Arnold's thinking, this study makes clear that Arnold does not embrace always for the classics or the romantics.

In tracing the development of Arnold's humanistic vision, this study gives a sense of a progression in Arnold's thought: a progression from mere doubts about any cultural synthesis, especially in his writings before 1870, to a complete affirmation of these doubts, in his later religious and critical works.

The chapter about Arnold's poetry and letters up to 1853 not only describes the anti-Hellenic forces which were characteristic of Victorian life and thought; it also establishes the general tone that lies behind Arnold's uncertainty about any cultural fusion. His central themes of alienation, division and fragmentation intensify the general individualistic tendency of the whole Victorian age.

Chapters three, four and five have attempted to explain how Arnold's humanistic thinking was developed within the classical tradition. Focusing on Arnold's major works of the eighteen fifties and sixties, these chapters point out how Arnold's thinking was modelled on approved masters from the Greek (as in the 1853 "Preface," On Translating Homer [1861] and Culture and Anarchy [1869]) and the continent (especially in Essays in Criticism: First Series). These chapters give a good deal of consideration to the examination of the major Hellenic ideals of unity, order and self-control which Arnold's critical and social writings explore. Among the ideals discussed are the following: the need for the moderns to imitate excellent actions of the past, the "grand style," "criticism," "academy," "imaginative reason" and "culture" or the "best self."

Moreover, these chapters have also shown that Arnold's chief concern before 1870 was with the question of intellectual deliverance. His purpose is to educate Englishmen by opening their minds to foreign thought. His major focus, during this period, is on "the pure intellectual sphere" and "the life of intelligence" (CPW, III, 271, 268).

Above all, these chapters have indicated that, although Arnold intends, in essay after essay, to define and analyze these Hellenic ideals, the suggestion that they are inapplicable to his age is increasingly apparent. Arnold fully acknowledged the challenge of modern life and

thought to a classical synthesis. He admitted that the harmonious life of the Greeks, the way in which they worked as a whole, their combination of life and thought could hardly be attained in the Victorian world. Similarly, he realized that a Greek work of art which exemplified an ideal unity with nature could not be achieved in Victorian life and thought.

Arnold's doubts are related to the increasing sense of individualism among his countrymen--their indifference to any kind of established authority and their disregard of anything not English. All of these factors affected Arnold's thinking and led him to modify his earlier Hellenism.

Chapter four has considered Arnold's tendency to compare England with the continent instead of the Greeks as a very important step toward his willingness to accept the main currents of life and thought of his own time and place. Consequently, in chapter five, a strong emphasis is placed on Arnold's recognition of the essential need for abandoning traditional forms of authority and for creating new ones.

Chapters six and seven have shown Arnold's insistence on a humanistic vision which takes into consideration the significance of human personality as an original center and determiner of value and action.

In his religious writings of the seventies, which chapter six deals with, Arnold discovers an order in human experience. He makes natural experience stand for

everything that needs to be human. His faith in an active human nature leads him to insist on the superiority of man's moral and aesthetic life to the contemplative and intellectual life.

Therefore, chapter seven has attempted to place Arnold entirely in the context of the modern tradition. It develops and enlarges Arnold's belief in man's freedom to project his own life. The discussion of Arnold's later criticism relates also Arnold's faith in democracy to the growth of his nationalism. Arnold's continuous dissillusionment with Greek and continental cultures (as in "A Speech at Eton" [1879] and "Numbers" [1883]) and his increasing nationalism were essential conditions for his faith in individualism. Arnold's nationalism provided him with a positive sense of English identity (particularly in "A Guide to English Literature" [1877], "Johnson's Lives of the Poets" [1878], "The French Play in London" [1879], "Wordsworth" [1879], "Byron" [1881], "Keats" and "Shelley" [1888]).

Each age, Arnold asserts throughout his later writings, has its own brand of experience. Therefore, he commits himself to the actual existence of a practical Victorian world. He draws our attention simultaneously to the world here and now. Values are rooted in the present and in man's subjective experience. Man is also part of nature ("Wordsworth," "Byron" and "Keats"). He is quite capable of shaping his own life and controlling

his own destiny.

As has been indicated, as Arnold grows older his ideal of the best self is increasingly individualized. In his view human shortcomings cannot be corrected by tradition unless it draws upon self-reliance. Arnold argues that man is not the creature of the past but can make his own life. This conviction finds its most powerful expression in "Emerson" (1884).

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