A reading of Strachey's life of Arnold only reveals that Strachey regarded the Doctor as a failure in life. He attempted to do many things but was unsuccessful each time though he himself was not conscious of this failure. He was satisfied with the idea that he was doing good to the society. That Arnold would be a self-satisfied man is hinted right at the beginning of Strachey's essay when he writes that Arnold's letters home suggested, even when he was very young, that he would "grow up into a prig." ¹ His father was also responsible for it to some extent when he gifted twenty-four volumes of Smollett's History of England to a child of three. Naturally the child grew up with the idea that he was of great potentiality and had a high opinion of himself.

After his education at Oxford he received the Oriel fellowship. At this time there appeared nothing to disturb the smooth flow of his daily life, but suddenly he began to have 'religious doubts.' But just by following Keble's advice he got over his doubts easily. Strachey slights Arnold further when he writes that at this time he could never get himself to

¹. E.V., p. 178.
rise early without any effort. Strachey juxtaposes his religious doubts with it with an intention to ridicule Arnold. Strachey attacks the personal appearance of Arnold. Arnold's legs are made shorter with a purpose to make Arnold's character appear stunted.

Strachey introduces a puzzled look on Arnold's face to give stress to his final argument that the Doctor failed to accomplish the task for which he was set, namely to bring about reforms into the public school. Everyone including the guardians and the educational authorities felt the need for changes in the existing public schools which were then considered to be the very seats of vices. Arnold was chosen head master at this needful moment. He himself saw the needs for changes, but Strachey writes that like the others he too failed to see in which field this reform was required.

He did not care for intellectual development. It ranked third in his scheme of proposed work. First he sought to make his pupils religious with good moral characters, in fact he wanted to make Rugby a place of "really Christian education"; secondly, he wished to instil into the boys "gentlemanly conduct", then only he looked after their "intellectual ability". Here Strachey is attacking Dr. Arnold's intellectual inferiority.

2. Ibid., p. 182.
To hide his deficiency he showed a lesser interest in the intellectual quality of his boys. There is a hit at all the parents who sent their children to public schools. They were fools to be guided by Dr. Arnold's notion of education. The parents were ignorant; hence they could remain unconcerned at the changes taking place in the outside world. That their sons were learning ancient languages and becoming good Christians were more than enough for them. But Strachey wonders how it could be Dr. Arnold's outlook too. Strachey accuses Arnold of ruling Rugby like Jehovah in the Old Testament. He ruled from above and his rage came down like thunder on the evil doers. His pupils were aware of the fact. He remained an unseen force and Strachey writes that, to implement this idea of ruling the Chosen People like Jehovah, he employed the Sixth Form boys. This was the "Prospostor" system. He left the internal management of the school to these boys who were only responsible to him. Strachey tries to suggest how aloof the headmaster was from his boys. Yet he was believed to have accomplished so much for the public school. Strachey raises objection at the reforms introduced by Arnold. They were more spiritual than educational in nature. Arnold cared less for how much his boys knew than for what kind of people they turned out to be. For this reason Strachey finds fault at the curriculum introduced.

3. Ibid., p. 183.
by Arnold. Strachey accuses Arnold of anti-intellectualism; to him Arnold sought to develop the characters of the boys at the expense of their learning. He did nothing new in the field of education he simply followed the traditional method. This made even the Queen his admirer.

Strachey attacks Dr. Arnold not only as Rugby's headmaster but also in the other fields where his activities were spread. He is out to prove Dr. Arnold a hypocrite when he writes that though Dr. Arnold pretended and declared that he was a Liberal yet his acts denied him the title. Being a Liberal he supported hereditary peerage. He sympathized with the poor and separated them into the "good poor", for whom he was most concerned. He despised the others for their involvement in Trade Unions.

Strachey describes the books and works which Arnold undertook to write or attempted to write. But it seems that Strachey wishes to say that Arnold professed to do many things but ended up in doing nothing. Through his great work on Church and State, he sought to purge the society of many evils; he made various protests but none seemed to take heed. Much against his wish Jews were taken into Parliament, a Jew was appointed Governor of Christ's Hospital, and Scripture was not made a

4. Ibid., p. 191.
compulsory subject at the London University.

The attack becomes more serious when Strachey writes that in his planned work there were points which were not plain to Arnold. He carried out many correspondences but it came to no help. He remained puzzled and perplexed and it was reflected upon the features in his face. It deepened the frown on his forehead and the pursing of his lips was intensified. He could not take firm decisions and was thus left helpless. He started one great work of writing after another but soon left the proposed work incomplete and busied himself with other things. These are surely not the signs of eminence. Arnold advocated the restoration of the Orders of Deacons but it was never restored, so he tried his hand in other things, he urged in a "weighty pamphlet" to authorise military officers in congregations to administer Eucharist and also Baptism where the presence of clergy could not be procured. Next he began a weekly newspaper but soon gave it up. He began to write a commentary on the New Testament and introduced a method of Scriptural interpretation. Strachey writes that though Arnold was so confident about his Scriptural beliefs he could not convince others. W.G. Ward was not satisfied with his arguments. Even before he could finish his Commentary on the New Testament or his work on Church and State he turned his attention to the study of Philosophy and

5. Ibid., p. 194.
history. He started writing the Roman History. He also turned to the study of Sanskrit and Slavonic languages and to an "elaborate edition" of Thucydides, and carried out a "voluminous correspondence" upon a multitude of topics, with a large number of men of learning." 7

Strachey introduces this series of failures of Arnold as a writer only to prove that Dr. Arnold was hardly eminent. His use of "great", "weighty", "elaborate", "voluminous" before each work of Arnold is also a kind of attack. Arnold did not appreciate music, but he loved flowers. While on his visit to the Continent he was not happy at the conduct of his own countrymen. To him their moral state was not recommendable though they were advanced scientifically. Strachey does not spare even the persons who came in contact with Dr. Arnold. He is critical of W.G. Ward, Clough and ex-Rugby boys. Describing Dr. Arnold's passing away Strachey writes: "... Dr. Arnold had passed from his perplexities for ever." 8

The perplexed headmaster is perhaps more of Strachey's creation than a reality. Basil Willey in his book writes that today Lytton Strachey's mocking ironic account of Thomas Arnold is not to be taken for granted. Instead Matthew Arnold's tribute

6 & 7. Ibid., p. 197.
8. Ibid., p. 205.
to his father written to his mother describing his father's superiority over others due to his historic sense is to be taken into account. To Matthew Arnold, Thomas Arnold was not bound by any narrow limit. He was a European. Willey says that Strachey wrote at a time when it was the fashion to mock the nineteenth century. His disillusioned generation found comfort in attacking the earnestness, the high tone, the "moral thoughtfulness" of its grandparents. One such object of attack was Arnold and his Rugby. Willey writes, "By the devices of bathos and the subtle misuse of quotation Lytton Strachey produced a skilful and very readable piece of falsification". That Arnold only succeeded in bringing in good form and athletics as reforms in Rugby is an oversimplification. Strachey's Arnold, though highminded, is a blundering and conventional prig.  

10. Ibid., p. 52.  

II ... p.184.
In the second paragraph of the essay, Strachey writes:

It is true that, as a schoolboy, a certain pompousness in the style of his letters home suggested to the more clear-sighted among his relatives the possibility that young Thomas might grow up into a prig; but, after all, what else could be expected from a child who, at the age of three, had been presented by his father, as a reward for proficiency in his studies, with the twenty-four volumes of Smollett's History of England?!!

This conclusion that Arnold will grow up to be a prig just because he was presented with the books, may be considered to be an indication that Strachey will see Dr. Arnold in this light. In mentioning this reward he ignores the cause though it is stated by Stanley, the source of this detail. From his book we get to know that Thomas Arnold was born on June 13th, 1795, and his father died on March 3rd, 1801. He enjoyed the company of his father only for six years. He could not remember his father distinctly. To quote Stanley:

One of the few recollections which he retained of his father was, that he received from him, at three years old, a present of Smollett's History of England, as a reward for the accuracy with which he had gone through the stories connected with the portraits and pictures of the successive reigns; ... 12

11. E.V., pp. 177-178.
Strachey's readers, failing to know the actual cause, will naturally accept what Strachey says, and begin to see Thomas Arnold as a prig from the very start of life. The child's "accuracy" is transformed into a precocious proficiency and the number of volumes is stressed in order to establish the pomposity in Arnold's character. Stanley describes the child Arnold's manner as being marked by "stiffness and formality"; as he grew up these changes to "joyousness and simplicity". But Strachey changes this to priggishness and pomposity.

Before Arnold became the headmaster of Rugby his stay at Laleham deserves special mention. Strachey only tells us that he settled down in the country as a private tutor for youths preparing for the Universities and he remained there for ten years, happy, busy and sufficiently prosperous.

Reading Stanley we come to know that from here as a tutor he gathered all the experience which he was to exert at Rugby. We also find that when he applied for the headmastership, his testimonials were among those that arrived late and was very nearly passed over. But the letter, found among the testimonials, from Dr. Hawkins, the Provost of Oriel, which suggested that Thomas Arnold would change the face of education all through the

public schools in England if selected and upon which Thomas Arnold was chosen was not baseless. It was based upon his mode of coaching his pupils at Laleham.

Stanley gives a general view of Arnold’s work as a private tutor in his own words in 1831, to a friend who was about to engage in a similar occupation:

'I should say, have your pupils a good deal with you, and be as familiar with them as you possibly can, I did this continually more and more before I left Laleham, going to bathe with them, leaping and all other gymnastic exercises within my capacity and sometimes sailing or rowing with them. They I believe always liked it, and I enjoyed it myself like a boy, and found myself constantly the better for it.'

In many respects his method at Laleham resembled the plan which he pursued on a larger scale at Rugby. 15

Every pupil was made to feel that there was work for him to do and this gave them a strange joy to find that they had the means of being useful. Stanley says:

Hence, each pupil felt assured of Arnold’s sympathy in his own particular growth and character of talent; in striving to cultivate his own gifts, in whatever direction they might lead him, he infallibly found Arnold not only approving, but positively and sincerely valuing for themselves the results he had arrived at; and that approbation and esteem gave a dignity and a worth both to himself and his labour. 16

We miss this quality of Arnold’s character while reading

Strachey.

Strachey's description of the personal appearance of the headmaster is not without a purpose. He makes the Doctor's legs shorter than they should have been. Perhaps he wanted his readers to feel that the Doctor's mind was stunted like his legs. Nowhere in his source is this point of the physical deformity of the headmaster mentioned. Strachey's mention of it is closely followed by two rhetorical questions:

His eyes were bright and large; they were also obviously honest. And yet — why was it? was it in the lines of the mouth or the frown on the forehead? — it was hard to say, but it was unmistakable — there was a slightly puzzled look upon the face of Dr. Arnold?

And certainly, if he was to fulfil the prophecy of the Provost of Oriel, the task before him was sufficiently perplexing ...

The two interrogations and the part which follows it are written to puzzle his readers. Strachey himself says that Arnold's outward appearance was the index of his inward character, and the outward description that he gives of the headmaster is nothing pleasing. A note of artificiality runs throughout it; hence we find Arnold struggling to live up to his outward appearance. He pretended to be what he was not.

In Stanley a letter appears written to him by J. T. Coleridge, in September 1843. It deals with the appearance of Arnold:

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Though delicate in appearance, and not giving promise of great muscular strength, yet his form was light, and he was capable of going long distances and bearing much fatigue. 18

This picture of Arnold does not match Strachey's description. Again he errs in his description of Clough who appears in the Arnold essay as an "... earnest adolescent, with the weak ankles and the solemn face, ..." 19 But from the testimony of Clough's wife we come to know that:

... his name is handed down in William Arnold's 'Rules of Football as the best goal-keeper on record. He was also one of the first Swimmers in the school, and was a very good runner in spite of a weakness in his ankles, which prevented his attaining proficiency in many games. 20

He was also remembered as having a "massive figure" 21 at Oxford by Professor Shairp, of Balliol. Probably Strachey made him into a weakling so that he would appear quite a contrast to the strong and sturdy Arnold who dominated over Clough. It is an invention of Strachey to help him in his purpose. His perplexed-looking Arnold is also fictitious. After all why should he look perplexed? He had ample experience in dealing with pupils while at Laleham preparing youths for the Universities. This was an

important period of his life. In preparing youths he was indirectly preparing himself for his future task in Rugby.

Stanley does not say how Arnold looked at this moment, nor is the shortness of the legs mentioned. Rather he deals with the qualities which he earned as a tutor in Laleham and which secured him the post. These do not show the faintest signs of perplexity, instead the burning zeal and optimism within him is revealed. Stanley writes:

The post itself, inspite of the publicity, and to a certain degree formality, which it entailed upon him, was in many respects remarkably suited to his natural taste; — to his love of tuition, which had now grown so strongly upon him, that he declared sometimes, that he could hardly live without such employment; to the vigour and spirits which fitted him rather to deal with the young, than the old; ... 22

Stanley writes that it is true that his system did not attain maturity at once, but he was constantly striving after an ideal standard of perfection. He entertained suggestions from all sides and even listened with the greatest deference to former pupils with regard to the course of reading, or to alterations in his manner of preaching, or to points of discipline.

The zeal for reforming the existing disorderly public schools was seen everywhere; it was felt that Eton under Keate had further gone down the ladder. The guardians felt helpless,

they wanted a change but could not understand where the change was most required. A more liberal curriculum was desired in place of the classical languages. At this critical juncture Thomas Arnold was appointed. He was expected to do the reforming.

It is true that though Arnold introduced Modern History, Modern Languages and Mathematics into the school curriculum it did not form the basis of his educational policy. He preferred to retain the dead classical languages as the boys' main study. What he was really interested in and by which he contemplated to bring about the change was to make the boys truthful Christian gentlemen and to inculcate in them a sense of piousness. For this reason he laid special emphasis on the study of religion. What he could achieve by this method is a point of Strachey's argument. Strachey does not go into the merits of Arnold as a headmaster or how hard he tried to give his ideals a form. According to him he gained nothing, no reform came about; instead under him the ancient system became more firmly rooted. Strachey accuses Arnold of having had a lofty ambition regarding Rugby. To fulfil it he became some kind of a God.

Strachey did not value the athletic Christianity of the public school. He compares Rugby to Keate's Eton. He describes Eton as well, but reserves his sting for Rugby. He depicts Eton as a place of terror, despotism, barbarism, anarchy, flogging
and a place where only Ovid was taught. The social atmosphere mentioned by Strachey matched Eton but we get to know from Lyte that Etonians were taught Homer, Virgil and Horace, as well.

In the same unsympathetic vein, Strachey changes Stanley's "public schools are the seats and nurseries of vice"; into "The Public Schools", said the Rev. Mr. Bowdler, "are the very seats and nurseries of vice". He adds the word "very" for emphasis and has a dig at the complacency of the middle-class guardians. They were demanding reforms, but as soon as Thomas Arnold came upon the scene, bent on the spiritual uplift of their wards, they were overwhelmed with the idea and did not bother about their intellectual development any more.

Strachey oversimplifies Arnold's curriculum in order to make it appear crude. He picks on the point of Arnold's weakness that he cared nothing for the curriculum, all he was interested in was the dead classical languages and to turn every boy into a good and truthful Christian. The intellectual ability of the boys occupied the last place in all that he strove to

accomplish. To Strachey's disgust Arnold got the full support of all the parents. They sent their wards to schools only to be good Christians. To achieve this end, Arnold chose a method, Strachey banteringly says, from the Old Testament itself. "He would treat the boys at Rugby as Jehovah had treated the Chosen People: he would found a theocracy; and there should be Judges in Israel."26 The praepostors were the new Judges. Strachey continues:

This was the means by which Dr. Arnold hoped to turn Rugby into 'a place of really Christian education'. The boys were to work out their own salvation, like the human race. He himself, involved in awful grandeur, ruled remotely, through his chosen instruments, from an inaccessible heaven. Remotely — and yet with an omnipresent force. As the Israelite of old knew that his almighty Lawgiver might at any moment thunder to him from the whirlwind, or appear before his very eyes, the visible embodiment of power or wrath, so the Rugby schoolboy walked in a holy dread of some sudden manifestation of the sweeping gown, the majestic tone, the piercing glance, of Dr. Arnold.27

Strachey goes on to describe that the chief impression created by the headmaster upon the young children "was of extreme fear".28 He also states that the Sixth Form was excused from chastisement; instead it was given the right to chastise.

26. Ibid., p. 183.
27. Ibid., p. 183.
28. Ibid., p. 184.
Strachey accuses Arnold of ruling Rugby from afar. He hints that Arnold did not try to understand his boys, he only communicated with the Sixth Form boys. In other words the Proctors ruled the school on his behalf. According to Strachey Arnold kept himself so aloof that "... it would often happen that a boy would leave Rugby without having had any personal communication with him at all". Stanley also writes that "It would thus often happen in so large a number that a boy would leave Rugby without any personal communication with him at all, ..." Though Strachey imitates Stanley's language word for word, yet his implication is quite different. Stanley implies that Arnold knew the boys so well that he did not have any need to communicate with them personally. He watched them from far and knew each and every boy. He was so quick that he was familiar with the face and manner of every boy in the school. Their traits and actions were sometimes significant to him. Once he told an assistant master seeing two boys walking together, to keep a watch because the headmaster had never seen them together before. He observed with care the company they kept, and the changes that took place in a boy's character.

Stanley remarks that:

29. Ibid., p. 184.
Often before any other eye had discerned it, he saw the germs of coming good or evil, and pronounced confident decisions, doubted at the time, but subsequently proved to be correct; so that those who lived with him, described themselves as trusting to his opinions of boys as to divinations, and feeling as if by an unfavourable judgement their fate was sealed. 31

It was with the boarders that he was more intimate because he saw more of them. In batches they were invited to stay with him as members of his family. As he had to deal with everything it was quite possible that a boy who was not a boarder could easily escape his notice. It becomes clear why he left the boys on their own. He believed in their individuality and was of the opinion that if he left them by themselves they could govern themselves even better; so he did not interfere with their business. But at the same time he kept his watchful eyes open on the boys.

Stanley speaks more of the merit of Arnold's administration and treats it in detail. In his details we find how Arnold respected his pupils and trusted them in everything. He placed implicit confidence in a boy, and then, if a falsehood was discovered, punished it severely. If the offence was repeated the boys of the upper part were expelled. He was not only strict with the boys of the lower form; even the higher forms were

severely dealt with. Strachey's allegation is not fully correct.

On one occasion on seeing the display of bad feelings among the boys he told them that he could not stay on if it was carried on again, and if he had to act as a gaoler, he would resign his office at once. He had no intention to be feared by his pupils. Stanley argues that the reason for leaving as much as possible to the Proctors stemmed from Arnold's strong dislike of intruding on the privacy even of the youngest and from the usual principles of testing the pupils.

His house was open to all his former students who wished to keep in touch with him. Sometimes they spent weeks in his house. He coached them for their University examinations by previous experience of his own. Stanley says that he helped several students, not just one or two, with a large number of books and a large amount of money. Very soon it was realised at the Universities that his pupils, when they first came to college, brought quite a different character with them to Oxford compared to other boys. They were thoughtful, manly, conscious of duty and obligation. Their personal piety and morality were far superior, much to the discomfort of other students. It was all the influence of Dr. Arnold.

Strachey writes that Dr. Arnold's reforms in teaching
were tentative and few. He preferred the study of the dead languages of Greece and Rome and believed that boys do not like poetry. Strachey says that it was Arnold himself who lacked the finer poetical taste. Physical science was not taught at Rugby. The problem of teaching physical science was that it must either take the chief place in the curriculum followed by Christian and moral and political philosophy or the order had to be changed.

Describing in detail how rigorously Dr. Arnold himself along with his pupils followed the Church rituals and prayer ceremonies, Strachey alleges that Arnold was not the least bit concerned with a training in Science which would enable his students to cope with a changing world. While appreciating the advanced literary or scientific knowledge of Englishmen abroad, he deplored their moral state. Probably for this reason he was not keen to include physical sciences in the school syllabus, and continued to emphasise moral education.

Strachey quotes Stanley faithfully to prove Arnold's faith in classical studies as the basis of intellectual training, but skips significant parts which would show Arnold's reforms in teaching Greek and Latin:

'The study of language', he said, 'seems to me as if it was given for the very purpose of forming the human mind in youth; and the Greek and Latin languages,
in themselves so perfect, and at the same time freed from the insuperable difficulty which must attend any attempt to teach boys philology through the medium of their own spoken language, seem the very instruments, by which this is to be effected. ...' Greek and Latin grammars in English, which he introduced soon after he came, he found were attended with a disadvantage, because the rules which in Latin fixed themselves in the boys' memories, when learned in English, were forgotten. The changes in his views resulted on the whole from his increasing conviction that 'it was not knowledge, but the means of gaining knowledge which he had to teach;' as well as by his increasing sense of value of the ancient authors, as belonging really to a period of modern civilization like our own. ... 

Strachey quotes from the passage in this way:

'The study of language', he said, 'seems to me as if it was given for the very purpose of forming the human mind in youth; and the Greek and Latin languages seem the very instruments by which this is to be effected'.

After the word 'languages' Stanley quotes it differently, also it appears more probable because in the following words Arnold explained his reason. Strachey cuts it short and adds the last few words of the quotation after the word 'language'. Thus it acquires a different significance much to the liking of Strachey.

There is a hint in Strachey that Arnold had no regard for his colleagues; he even gave prefects the authority to ignore all other masters but himself. They were only responsible

32. Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 138-139.

to the headmaster. But Stanley is of another opinion:

Of his intercourse with the assistant masters it is for obvious reasons impossible to speak in any detail... It was one of his main objects to increase in all possible ways their importance. By raising their salaries he obviated the necessity of their taking any parochial duty which should divert their attention from the school,... It was his endeavour, partly by placing the boarding-houses under their care, partly by an elaborate system of private tuition, which was introduced with this express purpose, to encourage a pastoral and friendly relation between them and the several classes of boys intrusted to them. What he was in his department, in short, he wished everyone of them to be in theirs, and nothing rejoiced him more than to hear of instances in which he thought that boys were sent to the school for the sake of his colleagues' instructions rather than of his own. 34

Stanley writes that Arnold's interest was so great that the existence of the school merged in him. This was not his intention but it happened because he thought so much of the institution and so little of himself and inspite of his efforts to make it work independently of any personal influence of his own, it became thoroughly dependent upon him. Naturally whatever defects it had were his defects; whatever excellences it had were his excellences. So much so whatever peculiarity of character was impressed on the scholars was derived not from the place but from the genius of the man.

Only within the limits of a few pages Strachey completes his discussion of the intellectual life of Dr. Arnold, his

interest in politics and current affairs; his ecclesiastical writings. He rushes through these points hurriedly. The picture that we get of Dr. Arnold is a stunted one. It remains true to the picture that he draws at the beginning of the essay that there was a frown on the Doctor's forehead and that he had a puzzled look. The picture is reinforced if we read Strachey only. Arnold's whole life appears muddled and without any achievement. But from Stanley's details we get a complete picture of the headmaster as a great writer, thinker and administrator:

And those, who know the intentions which were interrupted by his premature death, will form their notion of what he was as an historian, philosopher, and theologian, not so much from the actual writings which he lived to complete, as from the design of the three great works, to which he looked forward as the labours of his latest years, and which, as belonging not more to one period of his life than another, and as forming, even in his mere conception of them, the centres of all that he thought or wrote or whatever subject, would have furnished the key to all his views — a History of Rome, a Commentary on the New Testament, and, in some sense including both of these within itself, a Treatise on Church and State or Christian Politics.35

He excelled as a writer of Scripture. We miss this quality of Arnold in Eminent Victorians. Strachey seems to judge Arnold by only those works which he achieved. Yet what

Stanley says is that Arnold is not to be judged by his finished work only:

What he actually achieved in his works falls so far short of what he intended to achieve, that it seems almost like an injustice to judge of his aims and views by them. Yet, even in what he had already published in his lifetime, he was often the first to delineate in outline what others may hereafter fill up; the first to give expression in England to views which, on the continent, had been already attained; the first to propose, amidst obloquy or indifference, measures and principles, which the rapid advance of public opinion has so generally adopted, as almost to obliterate the remembrance of who first gave utterance to them.36

Strachey is regardless of those achievements of Arnold which are prompted by his profound faith in God. It is true that the headmaster thought deeply on religious matters and expressed his faith or doubt in many lengthy writings. But the statement as made by Strachey that these religious matters puzzled Arnold and only "... deepened the frown upon the Doctor's forehead and intensified the pursing of his lips"37 is untraceable in Stanley.

The puzzled look, the deepening of the frown or the pursing of lips are all Strachey's inventions. In support of his view that Arnold excelled as an interpreter of Scripture Stanley quotes a letter written to him by one of Arnold's old

pupils named P. Price. Stanley wanted the personal recollections of Arnold's own pupil to convey a truer and a more distinct idea. Some extracts from the letter provide valuable information. The letter says:

'First of all he approached the human side of the Bible in the same real historical spirit, with the same methods, rules, and principles, as he did Thucydides. He recognised in the writers of the Scriptures the use of a human instrument—language; and this he would ascertain and fix, as in any other authors, by the same philological rules. Further too, the Bible presents an assemblage of historical events, it announces an historical religion; and the historical element Arnold judged of historically by the established rules of history; substantiating the general veracity of Scripture even amidst occasional inaccuracies of detail, and proposing to himself, for his special end here, the reproduction, in the language and forms belonging to our own age, and therefore familiar to us, of the exact mode of thinking, feeling, and acting which prevailed in the days gone by.

But was this all? ... In the Bible, he found and acknowledged an oracle of God—a positive and supernatural revelation made to man, an immediate inspiration of the Spirit' ... 38

By omitting this letter, Strachey wants to suppress an opinion in favour of Arnold and the principles he applied in interpreting the Bible.

Stanley states Arnold's suggestions of the revival of daily church services, frequent communions, commemoration to

holy men of all times and countries, and adds:

A society organized on these principles, and with such or similar institutions, was, in his judgement, the 'true sign from heaven' meant to be 'the living witness of the reality of Christ's salvation, which should remind us daily of God, and work upon the habits of our life as insensibly as the air we breathe.' (Sermon, Vol. IV, p.307).

Readers of Stanley are bound to be attracted by Arnold's profoundly religious nature. From Stanley we also get to know that Arnold was devoted to the Church of England and always urged to maintain its sanctity and edification. To him the church was the most divine institution but at the same time he abhorred the priest-craft. There is a lengthy discourse in Stanley regarding Arnold's idea of the perfect Church and State. He quotes a letter from Arnold to James Marshall, Fox How, January 23, 1840, where Arnold states:

'I look to the full development of the Christian Church in its perfect form, as the Kingdom of God, for the most effective removal of all evil, and promotion of all good: and I can understand no perfect Church, or perfect State, without their blending into one in this ultimate form.'

Strachey just mentions that in order to make the public conscious of the existing evils in society and their remedies Arnold started a newspaper. It came to an end very soon and cost the headmaster a huge sum. Strachey is abrupt in his

41. E.V., p. 194.
statement. But there was more to it. Stanley writes about the Paper:

He was the proprietor, though not the sole editor, and he contributed the chief articles in it (signed A.), consisting chiefly of explanations of Scripture, and of comments on the political events of the day. It died a natural death in a few weeks, partly from his want of leisure to control it properly, and from the great expenses which it entailed upon him — partly from the want of cordial sympathy in any of the existing parties of the country. 42

Strachey seems to hint that Arnold lacked the ability to conduct the paper for long. But from Stanley it becomes evident that the fault for stopping the publication was not Arnold's alone.

Strachey's biography gives us no idea of the love for history that moulded Arnold's character. In whatever field he extended his activities whether school administration, theological pursuit or profound interest in political affairs, he was guided by his knowledge of history. He was known to posterity as a great historian. Strachey leaves this point vague when he says merely:

... he began to write a History of Rome, in the hope, as he said, that its tone might be such 'that the strictest of what is called the Evangelical party would not object to putting it into the hands of their children ...' 43

or later, when he makes a passing comment:

43. E.V., p. 179.
Dr. Arnold's active mind was diverted from political and theological speculations to the study of philology and to historical composition. His Roman History, which he regarded as the 'chief monument of his historical fame', was based partly upon the researches of Niebuhr, and partly upon an aversion to Gibbon.  

Strachey does not write of the erudition Arnold acquired through his study of ancient history and also how he wanted others to benefit from these past ages. Strachey's readers are bound to learn that Arnold entered into historical compositions only to oppose Gibbon and prove him wrong by bringing in a high moral note into it.

Stanley, unlike Strachey, gives Arnold his due as a historian. To Arnold human history was one continuous record, every part of which lived on into the present and carried its lesson for living men in their practical life. He retold the story of Rome not merely because it interested him as an ancient tale, he did so for his regard for the practical and the useful. Besides he hoped that without sacrificing impartiality, his history might be the means of teaching sound political principles. If he edited Thucydides, it was to instruct contemporary statesmen and citizens.  

If he felt himself called upon to write the History of Rome, one chief reason was, because it 'could be

44. Ibid., pp. 196-197.

understood by none so well as by those who have grown up under the laws, who have been engaged in the parties, who are themselves citizens of our kingly commonwealth of England.

This makes it clear why he stressed on the point that even the strictest of the Evangelical party would not object to their children reading it. Arnold's was an impartial study, and he hoped by it that the Evangelicals who were against Popery and anything Romish would find nothing harmful in it, in fact, there were lessons to be learnt from these tales of mobblemindedness and highmindedness of ancient days.

The rare gift of Arnold's historical sense cannot be overlooked. Matthew Arnold after reading Sir J.T. Coleridge on Keble wrote to his mother:

my one feeling when I close the book is of papa's immense superiority to all the set, mainly because, owing to his historic sense he was so wonderfully, for his nation, time and profession, European, and thus so got himself out of the narrow medium in which, after all, his friends lived.

About Arnold being made a professor of Modern History at Oxford Strachey has only a sentence to comment on it that

47. Matthew Arnold, quoted in Basil Willey, p. 51.
his efforts at historical studies and writings "... were rewarded, in 1841, by the Professorship of Modern History at Oxford." 48

The reader only gets to know this much he misses the vital point of how popular Arnold became as a professor or how hundreds thronged to hear his Lectures. These details are to be found in Stanley who writes about the Inaugural Lecture, on the day Arnold joined as a Professor:

The day had been looked forward to with eager expectation, and the usual lecture-rooms in the Clarendon Buildings being unable to contain the crowds that, to the number of four or five hundred, flocked to hear him, the 'Theatre' was used for the occasion; and there, its whole area and lower galleries entirely filled, the Professor rose from his place, amidst the highest University authorities in their official seats, and in that clear manly voice, which so long retained its hold on the memory of those who heard it, began, amidst deep silence, the opening words of his Inaugural Lecture.

Even to an indifferent spectator, it must have been striking, ... to see a Chair, in itself one of the most important in the place, — but which, from the infirmities of the late Professor, had been practically vacant for nearly twenty years, — filled at last by a man whose very look and manner bespoke a genius and energy capable of discharging its duties as they had never been discharged before; and at that moment commanding an audience unprecedented in the range of Academical memory: ... 49

48. E.V., p. 197.
Then he writes:

And, accordingly, in the last Lecture he mentioned the various authorities connected with the subject of his intended course for the next year, in 'the hope that many might thus cooperate, and by their separate researches collect what no one man could have collected alone.' Knowing that if 'any one shall learn anything from me, he may be sure also that he may impart something to me in return, of which I was ignorant'.

Stanley's account seems to show that Arnold regarded scholarship as a component activity. Strachey however is intent on exposing Arnold the individualist.

Strachey mentions that Arnold was interested only in improving the condition of the "good poor". He hated and feared the other poor class. He hinted that it belonged to the Trade Unions. Stanley does not write anything about this distinction. Arnold was interested in the poor as poor only. He regretted that hardly anybody thought of this class. He urged the cooperation of good men of all parties to collect information and rouse the attention of the country towards the poor. Stanley quotes a letter written by Arnold to Thomas Carlyle in January 1840:

... I believe you sympathize with me on that most important subject, the welfare of the poorer classes, and because I know, from your History of the French Revolution, that you understand the real nature and magnitude of the evil, which so many appear to me neither to comprehend nor to feel.

50. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 298.
51. E.V., p. 191.
I have been trying, hitherto with no success, to form a society, the object of which should be to collect information as to every point in the condition of the poor throughout the kingdom, and to call public attention to it by every possible means, whether by the press or by yearly or quarterly meetings.\footnote{Stanley, Vol. II, p. 188.}

Strachey's Arnold is much less aware of the problem of the poor than he really was.

Strachey's readers fail to grasp the real Arnold. Strachey's work also omits important information: Arnold's heartfelt concern for educating girls; his praise for a Bill before Parliament which sought to provide better drainage in the locality of the poor; Journal entries regarding the suffering of the people.

Strachey feels that the power which Arnold had over Rugby boys ended in his school, he could not assert his personality over others. In this connection he writes about Ward's experience. Ward's meeting with Arnold and his disillusionment are dramatically narrated. Strachey's source is Wilfrid Ward, but there is nothing dramatic in the latter's description of his father's meeting with Arnold. He says that his father went to discuss his own sceptical difficulties and intellectual problems with Dr. Arnold. But as Dr. Arnold was busy with the
routine of school-work Ward had to wait the whole afternoon relaxing upon a sofa with novels to read. When Arnold arrived the discussion took place, but Ward was not satisfied with Arnold's answers. Arnold, completely exhausted, had to spend a day in bed. Strachey turns this into: "... Dr. Arnold, worried, perplexed, and exhausted, went to bed, where he remained for the next thirty-six hours." Wilfrid Ward's "day" becomes thirty-six hours in Strachey. He distorts in order to mock.

Arnold died very young at the age of forty seven from heart ailment. Strachey comments "Dr. Arnold had passed from his perplexities for ever." He is also of the opinion that Arnold did nothing by way of reforms for Rugby "... the ancient system became more firmly established than ever." He succeeded in making his school boys good Christians, and worshippers of athletics and good form.

Basil Willey thinks that Strachey wrote at a time when it was "exciting and comforting to debunk the nineteenth century."

54. E.V., p. 196.
55. Ibid., p. 205.
56. Ibid., p. 206.
57. Ibid., p. 207.
The first world war left the younger generation disillusioned and aimless. They naturally found fault with the earnestness, the high tone and the moral thoughtfulness of their fathers and grandfathers and opined that the War was the result of bungling by the earlier generation. The writings of the younger generation revealed their dislike for the Victorians and their ways. Following in this vein Strachey picked upon Arnold and his Rugby. Strachey's skilful production is undoubtedly very readable but it does not stand the test of time. Opinions have changed. Many years have gone by after the publication of Strachey's book. The first World War has been succeeded by a Second World War. The feeling of repulsion for the nineteenth century has been replaced by a feeling of nostalgia for it. Hence Strachey is now out of favour, according to Basil Willey. An examination of the writings of Halperin, Simson and Holroyd will help us to decide how far Basil Willey's assessment is correct.

58. Willey, p. 51.

59. Willey overemphasises the effect of the first war on a satirical approach to Victorianism. Such an approach had started before the first World War and went along with the appreciation of new forms and their application in art and literature by Bloomsburians and others. The exposure of Victorian hypocrisy in E.M. Forster's early novels is a case contd ... p.211.
Halperin traces Strachey's dislike of Arnold to his own unpleasant school experiences at Abbot Sholme. Added to it is his dislike of Stanley's biography of Arnold and Thomas Hughes' *Tom Brown's Schooldays* because both books had eulogized the headmaster. Strachey had all the documents before him but Halperin charges Strachey of excluding all those documentary evidence in order to construct his caricature rather than a portrait. He also attacks Michael Holroyd for supporting Strachey's opinion that Arnold was a mediocre educational thinker and reformer. Halperin who has very low opinion about Strachey's historical knowledge writes that Strachey has invented things about Arnold and that his historical judgment of the man is nil. Simson also attacks Strachey on the same issue. It is true that Strachey was out to attack Stanley's *Life of Arnold*, but Simson defends Stanley by writing that it is on the whole fairer than it is usually thought, because he had laid bare a great deal thus giving Strachey plenty of material. He agrees that Stanley wrote from a "negative point-of-view", mixed with the greatest admiration for Arnold but Strachey is no fairer. He is careless in point. The change in biographical modes has been noted in the Introduction; see page 212 (above). The concluding chapter will also show how Strachey's interpretations are supported by recent biographers even when new information is added. See page 323 (Below).

60. Simson, p. 196.
about Stanley's reasonableness. He is not detached. He allows his point-of-view to destroy balanced reasonableness. Simson accuses Strachey of editing out of his diary those passages which would make Arnold appear less pompous, less priggish, and less pedantic. He gives examples to show that in order to achieve the effect of mock wonder at Arnold's death Strachey appropriates the words of his source.

Holroyd does not fit into Basil Willey's characterisation of the post-1945 approach to Strachey. He reserves his comments and quotes instead from Collis' book. Collis thinks that no mockery is enough for such a man as Arnold. Strachey or Max Beerbohm have not mocked him enough; he deserves more. Holroyd quotes Collis with apparent approval. Though opinions are divided, a look at E.M. Forster's "Notes on the English Character" will help to place Strachey's tirade against Arnold in context. In that essay, Forster calls the public-school system "the heart of the middle classes" and goes on to say that the public school produces Englishmen with an undeveloped heart:

An undeveloped heart — not a cold one ...

For it is not that the Englishmen can't feel — it is that he is afraid to

feel. He has been taught at his public school that feeling is bad form. This undeveloped heart causes his difficulties abroad. He has no conception of the "richness and subtlety" of the vast world outside the Anglo-Saxon or public-school orbit. In Forster's criticism we find the Bloomsbury variety of liberalism rejecting the Victorian variety in a language other than Strachey's.

63-64. Ibid., p. 5.