CHAPTER III
Among the intellectuals of his day, Carlyle, J.S. Mill, Ruskin, Cardinal Newman and his father, Dr. Arnold of Rugby and European Writers like Sainte-Beuve were the most notable among those who exercised influence on Matthew Arnold.

As a man of letters, Matthew Arnold himself can be said to stand in the fore-front among the intellectuals of the Nineteenth Century. He claimed in a letter to his mother in 1869 that his poems "represent, on the whole, the main movement of mind "of the previous quarter of the century. Indeed his importance as a flexible, non-specialist, intellectual cannot be denied. He wrote on a variety of subjects like literature, education, politics, religion and society and thus encouraged a free play of the mind upon the material before it, resulting in a giving up of stock notions hampering the thought of his readers. On account of his wide experience of contemporary England and his urbane wit, his comments upon literature and life of his day happen to be stimulating and engaging.

Among the continental thinkers, Sainte-Beuve happens to have influenced him most. Sainte-Beuve's biographical-critical essays, which had begun to appear
in French Journals in 1824 to continue till his death in 1869, were the source of critical inspiration for Matthew Arnold. Sainte-Beuve's 'portrait litteraire' is the structural model for an Arnoldian essay in criticism. As in Samuel Johnson's 'Lives', most of these studies begin in biography and end in criticism. The two principal components are so totally merged that it is impossible to seek the moment of separation and hence their uniqueness. An individual personality, which is far more than the sum of biographical details, is portrayed. Sainte-Beuve's prescription seeks to recreate the past not as it was, but as it is for us: 'to see the object as in itself it really is'. Of course, the poem as a document in time, 'as it really was' may appear to be neglected here. The deep and strong influence of Sainte-Beuve can be seen when we examine the Arnoldian essays in criticism which appear to be an interpretation of life and letters, often with a brief, generalizing opening.

Matthew Arnold's final opinion regarding Sainte-Beuve is reflected in his obituary notice on him, written in 1869, the year of "Culture and Anarchy". Arnold's admiration is still undiminished, but he is forced to acknowledge that Sainte-Beuve, because of his character and especially "his date, his period, his circumstances", "stopped short at

1. Matthew Arnold, On Translating Homer, Lecture II, 1861. Matthew Arnold quotes his own phrase in the first paragraph of 'The Function of Criticism at the Present Time'. 

curiosity and the desire to know things as they really are, and did not press on with ardour and faith to the various and immense applications of this knowledge which suggested themselves, and of which the accomplishment is reserved for the future". The influence of French ideas seems to have worked so strongly that Matthew Arnold gives precedence to a mediocre Frenchman like Joubert over even Coleridge. He observes in "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" showing how rootedly provincial the English society was: "This makes Byron so empty of matter, Shelley so incoherent, Wordsworth even, profound as he is, yet so wanting in completeness and variety." The distinction seems to be one of social maturity. His disgust, it should be noted, at the establishment of the Commune in 1871 is largely a moral one. French licentiousness — what he called Lubricity — had become a bugbear for him. By now, he had lost much of his old love of France.

In Arnold's intellectual tradition, the next influence is that of the German writer, Goethe. The year 1848 marked a definite turn towards a more introspective dependence on himself and in this Goethe was of much help to him. "I have been returning to Goethe's life, "he wrote his mother on May 7 of that year, "and think higher of him than ever. His thorough sincerity — writing about nothing

that he had not experienced - is in modern literature almost unrivalled*. The Goethean "inner form" was his objective too. He regarded it as the outward manifestation of objectivity, balance and unity. These are called by him in "Resignation" the "wide" rather the "deep" (or subjective) vision. He himself desperately sought cultural, spiritual and poetic wholeness and he perceived these in Goethe. For him, Goethe stood out "in the modern age of dissociated and frustrated human fragments, as the nearest approach to a complete man."

Arnold seems to have adopted Goethean solution to his own problems. Arnold's attitude towards politics and 'zeitgeist' seems to have been inspired by Goethe. Even his turning to Spinoza for answers to his spiritual problems was inspired by Goethe. He wished to reach the wholeness of the German poet by imitating his stages of development. The preface to that unsuccessful drama "Merope" tells us Arnold's meticulous search for a classical content and this is similar to Goethe's aptitude for classical subjects. The concluding arguments of 1853 preface prove Arnold's proneness to imitate Goethe with regard to poetic ideals and requirements. The theory that contemporary poets should merely preserve the values of the past in an age that cannot sustain great art seems to have stemmed from Goethe's concept of the 'Zeitgeist'. 
Matthew Arnold persistently moralized Goethe and read him according to his own preconceptions. But he seems to have been much more influenced by Carlylean attitude toward Goethe as the following observation reveals: "we all remember how Mr.Carlyle...... betook himself to Goethe for light and help, and found what he sought, and declared his gratitude so powerfully and well, and did so much to make Goethe's name a name of might for other Englishmen also, a strong tower into which the doubter and the despairer might run and be safe." The strongly autobiographical tone of Arnold's comment suggests that when, as he wrote in 1883, "the greatest voice of the century - came to us in those youthful years through Carlyle: the voice of Goethe." Thus Goethe showed to Arnold that what he feared, namely "the din and whirl and brutality" of the world could be transcended.

Arnold followed also the tradition of Rousseau, even though Arnold himself was for slow and imperceptible change. But Rousseau was considered the prophet of revolution. Lionel Trilling, in his work on Matthew Arnold, suggested that the tradition of Rousseau strongly worked in Arnold. Rousseau's "general will" can be seen to have similarities with Arnold's concept of the "best self" of a nation.

Matthew Arnold was very much influenced by the positive philosophy of Comte. From him, he learned 'the law of three stages', the necessary stages in social evolution. He held that Comte alone had given us the clue to history by discovering the law of the successive transformation of human opinion. He believed, with Comte, that the last transition, the positive stage, had produced in the modern world a distinctive intellectual anarchy. Old received opinions had lost prestige and no new ones had yet gained enough authority and value to take their place. Arnold, J.S. Mill and others felt in the same way.

Matthew Arnold also learnt from Comte that freedom from theological fetters was necessary but not the liberty to do and think as one likes. Control by a few select minds was the greatest necessity of the time. Freedom of enquiry is necessary but should be compatible with social order. Equality is necessary but all men are not equal. The achievement of the positive school of philosophy was uniting order with progress and this is exactly what Arnold desired. The union of past and present into a harmonious whole while recognizing the fundamental law of continuous human development was aimed at by the positive philosophy of Comte and this marks him as a fore-runner of anti-liberalism of Matthew Arnold. Comte called for the surrender of the 'Vagabond liberty of individual minds' which results
only in anarchy. Positivism admits the existence of disinterested affection as a genuine fact of human nature and this is in line with the thinking of Matthew Arnold. Effective positive education and disciplining of industry will result in the triumph of altruism over egoism and this is the desire of Matthew Arnold when he speaks of the 'best self' triumphing over 'ordinary self'. The stress which positivism laid on systematic control of education is in accordance with the views of Arnold regarding the emphasis to be laid on a national system of education. Throughout the period of modern anarchy which resulted due to preoccupation with practical and material ends, leading to a neglect of morality and a decline in love, women have unconsciously preserved the best medieval tradition and so have helped to save moral culture. This view of Comte's is in line with the thinking of T.S. Eliot also who believed that family is the channel or medium for preserving and passing on culture. The cult of sociolatry (Comte's own term) is expressed and symbolized and its necessary emotions fostered by the private and public worship of the Religion of Humanity. We come back to Matthew Arnold's veering towards Religion of Humanity.

Among the British intellectuals who influenced Arnold, John Henry Newman comes first. The testimony of Matthew Arnold himself is there: In 1875, Matthew Arnold
had written to Newman in a mood of reminiscence: "There are four people, in especial, from whom I am conscious of having learnt - a very different thing from merely receiving a strong impression - learnt habits, methods, ruling ideas, which are constantly with me; and the four are - Goethe, Wordsworth, Sainte-Beuve and yourself." The influence of John Henry Newman can be best summed up in the words of J. Dover Wilson: "Matthew Arnold cared little for the ecclesiastical problems which agitated Newman, Pusey, and other Tractarians, but Newman won his whole-hearted respect both as a man and as a writer, and when he was made a cardinal, Arnold was found among the crowd to pay him homage. Thus the spirit of the Oxford Movement, which he associated with the traditions and beauty of the city itself, "spreading her gardens to the moonlight and whispering from her towers the last enchantments of the middle ages" may be seen in every thing he wrote. And but for Newman's Idea of a University' it is likely that 'culture and Anarchy' would never have seen the light; different as the two books are in tone and in the circumstances which produced them, their hearts beat as one. These two men - Thomas Arnold and John Henry Newman, were Matthew Arnold's chief Teachers; and when he speaks of 'culture' he is thinking of the "liberal education" of which Newman writes made available for the whole of England by an indefinite multiplication of non-residential Rugby Schools.

under state supervision."\(^7\)

It was the same kind of liberalism that Newman fought against that was attacked by Matthew Arnold later in his own day. Matthew Arnold remarks: 'But what was it, this liberalism, as Dr. Newman saw it, and as it really broke the Oxford movement? It was the great middle class Liberalism, which had for the cardinal points of its belief the Reform Bill of 1832, and local self-government in politics; in the social sphere, free-trade, unrestricted competition, and the making of large industrial fortunes; in the religious sphere, the Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion. I do not say that other and more intelligent forces than this were not opposed to the Oxford movement; but this was the force which really beat it; this was the force which Dr. Newman felt himself fighting with; .... And who will estimate how much the currents of feeling created by Dr. Newman's movement, the keen desire for beauty and sweetness which it nourished, the deep aversion it manifested to the hardness and vulgarity of middle class Liberalism the strong light it turned on his hideous and grotesque illusions of middle class protestantism, - who will estimate how much all these contributed to swell the tide of secret dissatisfaction which has mined the ground under the self-confidant Liberalism of the last thirty years, and has prepared the

way for its sudden collapse and suppression? It is in this manner that the sentiment of Oxford for beauty and sweetness conquers, and in this manner long may it continue to conquer". Thus Matthew Arnold felt a sort of kinship with John Henry Newman in every aspect.

The charm and power of Newman's personality indeed affected very deeply Matthew Arnold and he expressed it in the following words: "Forty years ago, when I was an undergraduate at Oxford, voices were in the air, which haunt my memory still. Happy the man who in that susceptible season of youth hears such voices; they are a possession to him for ever. No such voices as those which were heard in our youth at Oxford are sounding there now. The name of Cardinal Newman is a great name to the imagination still; his genius and his style are still things of power. But he is over eighty years of age; he is in the oratory at Birmingham; he has adopted, for the doubts and difficulties which beset men's minds today, a solution which, to speak frankly, is impossible. Forty years ago, he was in the very prime of life; he was close at hand to us at Oxford; he was preaching in St. Mary's pulpit every Sunday; he seemed about to renew what was for us, the most national and natural institution in the world, the Church of England. Who could resist the charm of that spiritual apparition, gliding in the dim after-noon light through the aisles of St. Mary's, rising

into the pulpit, and then, in the most entrancing of voices, breaking the silence with words and thoughts which were a religious music—subtle, sweet, mournful?" So spoke Matthew Arnold in 1883, introducing his American discourses on Emerson. The general estimate of Newman in England ran on similar lines. None has expressed it as memorably as Matthew Arnold. Newman's thought and work belong to the main line of 19th Century development and it has to be examined in that context with regard to its influence on the intellectual development of Arnold. Matthew Arnold was most impressed by the range and coherance of Newman's vision, the intensity of his feeling and the sincerity of his belief.

Matthew Arnold's concept of culture appears to have been developed within the tradition of Newman. It is a tradition which puts up an ideal of perfection against the Utilitarian concept of education. In Newman's words, the ideal of perfection is: "There is a physical beauty and a moral; there is a beauty of person, there is a beauty of our moral being, which is natural virtue; and in like manner, there is a beauty, there is a perfection, of the intellect. There is an ideal perfection in these various subject matters, towards which individual instances are seen to rise, and which are the standards for all instances whatever...." Arnold appears to have adopted, in at least

some of his writings, this demanding ideal of perfection, a notion developed by Newman.

The precise tone of Arnold's attitude towards a number of important matters can best be understood only with reference to Arnold's relation to Newman. Newman maintained that culture cannot guarantee morals: "Quarry the granite rock with razors, or moor the vessel with a thread of silk; then may you hope with such keen and delicate instruments as human knowledge and human reason to contend against those giants, the passion and pride of man".11

Matthew Arnold shared Mill's fundamental doctrine of psychology. It was the belief in 'the formation of all human character by circumstances, through the universal principle of Association, and the consequent unlimited possibility of improving the moral and intellectual condition of mankind by education."12 Matthew Arnold also believed in the beneficial results of education of the philistines and the populace. Mill, who experienced an inner tension in the autumn of 1826, changed his outlook in some ways. First, although he never abandoned the theory that 'happiness' is the test of conduct and end of life, as a true Benthamite philosopher, he was now convinced,

'this end was only to be attained by not making it the direct end.' 'Ask yourself whether you are happy, and you cease to be so.' 'Aim at something else, then, at something other than your own happiness, the happiness of others, the improvement of mankind, or 'some art of pursuit', - and you will find happiness by the way. 'This is almost similar to Matthew Arnold's idea of general perfection. Secondly, Mill now gave due weight, amongst, the conditions of well-being, to 'the intellectual culture of the individual'. He stopped giving 'exclusive importance to the ordering of outward circumstances' and to 'speculative training'. He says that 'the cultivation of the feelings, became one of the cardinal points in my ethical and philosophical creed.' Thus he became the fore-runner of Matthew Arnold in talking about the internal culture in the sense of harmonious development of all the faculties and a general perfection in society. Even the revolutionary age previous to Mill aimed at the improvement of the human lot by the removal of ancient prejudice and dogmatism and this was the path chosen by Mill and later by Matthew Arnold. At the same time, Mill acknowledged the wisdom of received opinions. But Mill desired that action should be within the framework of parliamentary democracy. Thus, like Arnold, he was a true democrat, who desired old prejudice to be swept away by fresh streams of thought.
Mill says in a passage, which might come from "Culture and Anarchy": "I confess that I am not charmed with the ideal of life held out by those who think the normal state of human beings is that of struggling to get on. In the stationary state, where men have ceased to be engrossed by this material struggle, there will be more room for improving the art of living, and much more likelihood of its being improved. The true purpose of mechanical inventions will then appear; not to increase wealth, but to abridge labour, and create leisure for cultivating the graces of life. The stress here again is on an effort towards internal perfection which agrees with Arnold's views. Mill's assertion of the value of solitude is reflected in Arnold's love of nature. Mill observes: "solitude, in the sense of being left alone, is essential to any depth of meditation or of character; and solitude in the presence of natural beauty and grandeur, is the cradle of thoughts and aspirations which are not only good for the individual, but which society could ill do without......" The general concern for the improvement of society as well as the individual which is reflected in Mill's statements quoted had influenced Arnold to a great extent in moulding his own thoughts regarding these issues. Mill chose as the motto for his most famous essay "On Liberty" which

states: "The grand, leading principle, towards which every argument in these pages directly converges, is the absolute and essential importance of human development in its richest variety." Mill is here dealing with internal human perfection which is shared by Matthew Arnold also. Mill discusses also 'the nature and limits of the powers which can be legitimately exercised by society over the individual' in the same essay. The concept of the state was also most important in Arnold's writings about society. Arnold, in accordance with the intellectual climate of his time, claimed it to be morally neutral and stated in 'Democracy' : "This movement of democracy, like other operations of nature, merits properly neither blame or praise. Its partisans are apt to give it credit which it does not deserve, while its enemies are apt to upbraid it unjustly."\(^{15}\) Arnold saw the State as the only possible mechanism in a democracy which could both provide ideals and promote them in society. He depended principally on Burke's definition of the State as 'the nation in its collective and corporate character.'\(^{16}\) The question of who would administer and govern the state became his main pre-occupation. In his opinion, the middle class, after transformation to a higher culture through education, were the most fitted for the task. Arnold's claim is that the State is the representative of 'the best self' and 'right reason'. Arnold's concept of the


State was not based on a philosophical theory but on a practical assessment of the current situation. Arnold wished to see in England an Academy, not merely of literature, but of life. Trilling suggested that Arnold's concept of the State was rather like Plato's concept of the Republic. The basic conflict in Arnold's position appears to be between his liberal commitment to the idea of equality and his basic fear, or nervousness, about the masses. Arnold's only solution seems to be to rely on the good-ness of the individual and more generally, on his conception of culture; the ideal which leads man beyond himself so that the conflicting demands of the individual and society are subordinated to higher concerns. But it should be noted that his arguments bear no resemblance to those of Mill in this regard.

But Mill craved for the free play of mind upon all subjects but found that, in England, it was not in accordance with good breeding to discuss serious topics in society. Arnold's definition of culture includes the destruction of old nostrums by a stream of fresh thoughts.

Mill argues that there can be a moral regeneration of mankind only when pagan virtues like magnanimity, sense of honour, highmindedness, sense of duty to mankind and State are combined with modern secular standards of
chivalry and gentlemanliness and with those of Christianity. These views must have helped, to a great extent, in shaping Matthew Arnold’s leanings towards religion of humanity. Mill believed that liberty in living must go along with liberty in thinking, provided always that the individual does not make himself a nuisance to other people. Mill examines here the limits of the power of the State over the individual. Mill makes a distinction between self-regarding and public actions. Individuals must be left free in all that affects themselves but the State may only intervene to prevent antisocial behaviour. These views must have influenced Matthew Arnold in his thinking over the powers of the State. He must have also been influenced by Mill in his thinking regarding the middle class or the philistines. A new bondage was proceeding from the very liberty or the rule of average mediocrity.

'Society has now fairly got the better of individuality. The general tendency of things throughout the world is to render mediocrity the ascendant power among mankind.'¹⁸

The atmosphere of freedom in which genius and originality of thought and conduct can freely breath was fast vanishing from the modern mass civilization. Mill is driven, like Carlyle, for rescue to 'the highly-gifted and instructed one or few' to guide 'the sovereign many.' This leads us to the 'best self' of Matthew Arnold, on which he set so much store.

¹⁸. Ibid., P.123.
Mill warns against the evils of standardisation and this brings us to Eliot's theory of Elites and Matthew Arnold's stress on the best self of the wise or nobler few or remnant, as he calls them. Mill observes:

'The circumstances which surround different classes and individuals, and shape their characters, are daily becoming more assimilated....... A more powerful agency than even all these, in bringing about a general similarity among mankind, is the establishment, in this and other free countries, of the ascendancy of public opinion in the state.......' Both Arnold and Eliot are against the evil of standardization as it would kill originality and genius. Standardization especially works against the theory of Elites put forward by Eliot.

Matthew Arnold is aware of Mill throughout his book "Culture and Anarchy" though Mill's essay "On Liberty" is not mentioned explicitly. Mill, a fine and sensitive spirit, wrote in defence of fineness and sensibility and Arnold knew it. "Have you seen Mill's book of Liberty?" he wrote in 1859. "It is worth reading attentively, being one of the few books that inculcate tolerance in an unalarming and inoffensive way." There were many similarities between the two books. They shared an assumption of human progress. To both Arnold and Mill, it seemed clear that man's duty was to aim at moral and spiritual
improvement. The development of personality to its fullest potentiality was important to both. Wilhelm Von Humboldt's treatment of the idea of development of the whole personality in his "Sphere and Duties of Government" had considerable influence on both Mill and Arnold. "The true end of Man, or that which is prescribed by the eternal and immutable dictates of reason, and not suggested by vague and transient desires, is the highest and most harmonious development of his powers to a complete and consistent whole".

Matthew Arnold and Mill looked to Periclean Athens as the ideal condition for it; both had read Tocqueville and were affected by his fear that personal development would be prevented by democracy's dull sameness. Finally, both shared a profound reliance upon reason. But Mill thought that nothing might be done to establish it apart from its exercise and free utterance. Arnold, on the other hand, believed so firmly in reason that he was certain it justified the use of its anti-thesis, force. Arnold and Mill founded their opposing theories of authority and the state, upon this difference in their estimates of reason. Mill inclucates liberal tolerance for diversity of opinion, but sees liberty as only absence of constraint; it has no positive content or direction. For Arnold, it has. Arnold was wholeheartedly opposed to the Utilitarian and laissez-faire doctrines of his age.
The influence of Dr. Thomas Arnold, the famous Headmaster of Rugby on his famous son is a little difficult to analyse as the attitude of the son toward the father went on changing. After reading Sir J.T. Coleridge on Keble, Matthew Arnold 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." This might be discounted as filial piety in the author of the "Rugby chapel", an elegy written in honour of his father. A few lines can be quoted to display the ring of sincerity in them:

"That word, gloom, to my mind
Brings thee back in the light
of thy radiant vigour, again; (Ls.16-18)

"Seasons impaired not the ray
of thy even cheerfulness clear.
Such thou wast! (Ls.21-23)

For fifteen years,
we who till then in thy shade

Rested as under the boughs
of a mighty oak, have endured
Sunshine and rain as we might,
Bare, unshaded, alone,
lacking the shelter of thee. (Ls. 30-36)

...... ...... ...... ......

Still, like a trumpet, dost rouse
Those who with half-open eyes
Tread the border-land dim
'Twixt vice and virtue; reviv'st
Succourest! - this was thy work,
This was thy life on earth. (Ls. 52-57)

A cursory comparison of these lines with the
mocking ironies of Lytton strachey in 'The Eminent
Victorians' reveals only the reaction of a disenchanted
generation after the First World War out to find
scapegoats. Debunking the Nineteenth Century was a favou-
rite pastime of Lytton Strachey. Mockery of the earnest-
ness, the high tone and moral thoughtfulness of the
Nineteenth Century intellectuals mark the work of Lytton
Strachey and hence he need not be taken seriously. As
made out by Lytton Strachey, Thomas Arnold was not a
high-minded intellectual but a blundering and conventional
prig. The picture given by Matthew Arnold in the lines
under quotation seems to be nearer the mark. Earnestness,
zest and moral thoughtfulness were the leading traits of his character, all of which he communicated to his son.

Iteration, a feature of the style of the father became a more marked mannerism in the son. Dr. Thomas Arnold believed that it is for religion to teach us where in 'good' consists and how to realize it in our individual lives and in society. He defined religion as a system with sovereign authority and most efficacious influence. In a Christian country, therefore, a knowledge of Christianity is essential even for intellectual education. The opinion of the father regarding the aim and object of education influenced the son to such a great extent that Matthew Arnold, the Inspector of Schools, wanted the spread of Rugby type of schools for all children. He wanted these schools to be maintained at state cost.

It is in his "Essay on the Right Interpretation of the Scriptures" that Arnold most clearly shows that quality designated by his son as "wonderfully European". Arnold was one of that very small group of scholars and clergymen who, by study of Coleridge's writings and independently, were aware of German criticism and could realize its meaning for the future of Protestantism. This opening of the mind to German literature and criticism was inherited by the son from the father. Arnold
rises to his best level of insight, however, when he is applying his distinction between 'questions of criticism' and 'questions of religion'. Here his most deeply felt certainty, the conviction that the true basis of religion was moral and spiritual, served him well and gave him a firm foothold. It is this fundamental belief that we find reflected in the son many a time.

His life was not all 'unhasting, unresting diligence'. He turned periodically for solace to Foxhow, the holiday home he had built very near to Wordsworth's mountain retreat, Rydal Mount. 'The unsurpassable dullness of Rugby' made Arnold think highly of the retreat. This love of nature we find reflected in 'Scholar Gipsy' and 'Thyrsis' of the son. Matthew Arnold had presented in an earlier sonnet, entitled 'Quiet Work' "How in nature we have 'action in inaction' and 'Inaction in action'. He speaks of 'two duties kept at one,'

'Of toil unsever'd from tranquility!
Of labour, that in lasting fruit outgrows
Far noisier schemes, accomplish'd in repose,' and nature's sleepless ministers moving on
'Their glorious Tasks in silence perfecting.'

This attachment to the countryside which he had explored in youth with Hugh Arthur Clough and other Oxford companions lasted throughout his life. 'The Scholar Gipsy' and 'Thyrsis' present the well-loved scenes in vivid and attractive colours. Two stanzas from the above two elegies prove his symbolic presentation of natural scenes:

"those wide fields of breezy grass
Where black-wing'd swallows haunt the glittering Thames."
("The Scholar Gipsy") (Ls.93-94).

"the mowers, who, as the tiny swell
Of our boat passing heaved the river grass,
Stood with suspended scythe to see us pass."
("Thyrsis") (Ls.127-129).

The scenes are presented with a sort of sensuousness which is Keatsian. A longing for freshness and spontaneity, hard to find in the matter-of-fact world, can also be observed. To Arnold, nature presented perfection which he found lacking in the mundane world of his day and hence nature's symbolic presentation in his poetical pieces. Arnold makes a link between perfection and nature when he makes his observations on Oxford. Oxford, like the Grande Chartreuse, may be part of the
dead world. It may also be the home of lost causes and impossible loyalties. Yet, Matthew Arnold finds it "steeped in sentiment as she lies, spreading her gardens to the moon light, and whispering from her towers the last enchantments of the Middle Age, who will deny that Oxford, by ineffable charm, keeps ever calling us nearer to the true goal of all of us, to the ideal, to perfection?"

Being the son of Thomas Arnold, he had continually before him an attachment and an example which could not be easily brushed aside. His father was an object of respectful attachment. He was a man of deepest religious convictions but open to the light of modern ideas. Arnold, the founder of English modernism as he has been called, was aiming "to preserve a spirit of sober piety and rational religion..... in opposition to the fanatic enthusiasm and senseless canting then in vogue" and 'to consider the christian religion as a doctrine sent by God both to elevate and sweeten human nature." Arnold's aim was to awaken the English from their unconscious provinciality and this task was continued by the son.

Of course, uncharitable critics point out that the tribute to his father "Rugby Chapel" was dated 'November 1857', even though the poem was published ten years after the death of his father. The occasion which called forth 'Rugby Chapel' was Fitz Stephen's 'ill-treatment', as
Matthew Arnold called it, of Thomas Arnold in his review of 'Tom Brown's School Days'. Fitz Stephen had criticized the elder Arnold for his humourless evangelicalism. In 'The Letters of Matthew Arnold to Arthur Hugh Clough', Prof. Lowry prints a letter which Matthew Arnold wrote to his mother in 1867 telling her that Stephen's representation of Dr. Arnold as a 'narrow bustling fanatic' had stirred him to the composition of 'Rugby Chapel.' The point to be considered here is the exact nature of Matthew Arnold's attitude toward his father. It went on changing. There cannot be a doubt that filial piety existed at the beginning. He learnt from his father the nature of authority, the necessity for it and the resentment it arouses in those on whom it is imposed. A stratified society was made to appear a natural one by the two training grounds for the established order, namely, Rugby and Balliol.

The composition of 'Sohrab and Rustum' had raised many eye-brows. The attitude of the son toward the father underwent a subtle change from now onwards. He seems to be not pleased with the composition of the poem as it stood. Arnold equated, by 1853, the painter's techniques with structural principles of poetry. This is revealed by the following comment to Clough: "I have written out my 'Sohrab

and Rustum' and like it less - composition in the painter's sense - that is the devil. And, when one thinks of it, our painters cannot compose though they show great genius - so too in poetry is it not to be expected that in this same article of composition the awkward incorrect Northern nature should show itself? though we may have feeling-fire- - eloquence-as much as our betters."

On this point, Prof.Seturaman remarks as follows in his introduction to his edition of 'Selections from Matthew Arnold': "His mother who had 'celtic' blood in her gave him perhaps his poetry; and his father his liberalism and the broad European outlook...... His father gave him too his sense of religion and his wisdom born of a knowledge of history. Matthew Arnold, ofcourse, like most sensitive children, resisted the moral pressure of his father. His stay at Oxford and the impression he produced on his friends showed how much his sub-conscious and unconscious mind disliked and resisted the authoritarianism of his father. (There may be some justification for the psycho-analytical interpretation given his 'Sohrab and Rustum'). It may be mentioned, in passing, that the discipline of Dr.Arnold had a far worse effect on his friend, Arthur Hugh Clough, whose spirit suffered and revolted."


The question that arises is whether Matthew Arnold was an embittered man because of his failure in life. His failure to win a sinecure and his long, frustrating career as an Inspector of Schools can be cited as reasons for his being an embittered man. Lionel Trilling found 'a shadowy personnal significance' in 'Sohrab and Rustum', where 'the strong son is slain by the mightier father'. The great themes are of solitude and isolation in the midst of men ("The Scholar Gipsy", "Thyrsis", the "Marguerite Poems"), most fittingly portrayed in 'Sohrab and Rustum', where the young Sohrab seeks his father through the world and meets him only in mortal combat. Arnold's father was also his headmaster, Thomas Arnold of Rugby, himself a propagandist for classical tradition in English schooling; and Arnold's fast-fading, self-questioning career as a young romantic poet may have found its apt model, at the age of thirty, in the persian fable of the young warrior who dies at the hand of the very father he has long sought out, while his dying injunction to Rustum reads like Arnold's injunction to his own society to revive for itself the classical mode:

'Do thou the deeds I die too young to do,
And reap a second glory in thine age;' (Ls.775-776)

And old Rustum's answer, not less aptly, seems to acknowledge the hopelessness of the task:
'And the great Rustum drew his horseman's cloak
Down o'er his face, and sate by his dead son.'
(Ls. 858-859).

Plainly, the poem draws its inspiration from Arnold's 'Buried Life'. The troubled age evoked in him discomfort and uncertainty and they find elegiac expression in the poem, despite his declared rejection of such sentiments in one who wished to enthuse his contemporaries. But the pressure of personal feeling at certain critical point can be perceived. One example can be the description of the fight. So the conclusion is that 'Sohrab and Rustum' is in part an unconscious imagainative projection of the conflict between the sensitive son and the formidable father.

Arthur Hugh Clough, his youthful companion, is spoken of by Arnold himself thus: "It is not always pleasant to ask oneself questions about the friends of one's youth."24 This was especially true of Clough, with whom he had become deeply disillusioned. He tried to come to terms with the dead Clough in "Thyris". He wrote to Clough: "Do not dream of my using you as food for speculation; that is simply a morbid suspicion."25 Matthew Arnold's letters to Clough reveal the similarities as well as the dissimilarities between the two. The same themes appealed to both. The theme of duty, for example

is treated by them in their poems. Clough's "High Courage" and "Life is struggle" can be compared with Arnold's "Courage" and "Duty" respectively. Life is symbolised by both of them as a river. But the similarity stops there. Clough's river has a course whose termination is indeterminate whereas Matthew Arnold's inevitably flows in to the "Infinite Sea". Mysticism of a Spinozistic type appealed to Matthew Arnold and is reflected in his poems like "The Youth of Nature". Clough was not influenced by mysticism. Matthew Arnold expressed this difference in their temperament and outlook in "The World and the Quietist", in "To Critias" and in the three sonnets, "To a Republican Friend, 1848". He wished to dissociate himself from the passionate republicanism which had seized Clough and which had made him renounce even Oxford.

The influence of Carlyle on the intellectual development of Matthew Arnold reveals a duality which is hard to explain. We find in Arnold's poetry a relationship with Carlyle's early writings. The voice of Carlyle had been for Arnold one of the "four" voices he had heard at Oxford in the early 1840s. But later, Arnold turns his keenest critical instruments against Carlyle. There is a persistent ambivalence in his attitude toward Carlyle. On one side, there is a conscious and half-conscious borrowing of ideas and key expressions from Carlyle to be found.

in passage after passage. On the other side, there is depreciation of Carlyle, amounting to almost concealment of his influence.

We find in Arnold's critical writings, especially those of 1860, Carlyle's influence which is very much a matter of "habits, methods, ruling ideas". He might have met Carlyle for the first time in 1847-48. In a letter of March 7, 1848 to his mother, Matthew Arnold writes: "How deeply restful it comes upon one, amidst the hot dizzy trash one reads about these changes everywhere...... The source of repose in Carlyle's article is that he alone puts aside the din and whirl and brutality which envelope a movement of the masses, to fix his thoughts on its ideal in visible character." 27 Arnold's early conception of the Zeitgeist as "the temper of the time with the additional idea that time is a local, changeable phenomenon opposing eternal values" was derived from Carlyle. 28 Later, Arnold presents the Zeitgeist as "an aspect of the eternal, promoting change as a manifestation of its own being."

On too many issues, the analysis and solution of the crisis of their time provided by Carlyle and Matthew Arnold coincided. Carlyle haunts very much the

pages of Matthew Arnold's writings in the 1860s. A key illustration is provided by Arnold's frequent use of the term 'philistine'. In 'Heinrich Heine', Arnold suggests that he is the first to introduce the term to English. He observes: "'philistine' must have originally meant, in the mind of those who have invented the nickname, a strong, dogged, unenlightened, opponent of the chosen people, of the children of light." In his 1824 essay on 'Goethe', Carlyle observes: "Philistine in the dialect of German Universities corresponds to the brute, or snob, of Cambridge; designating every non-student." Using these hints, Arnold mounts his massive attack on British philistinism - "on the side of beauty and taste, vulgarity; on the side of morals and feelings, coarseness; on the side of mind and spirit, unintelligence." Several more instances of Carlylean borrowings can be cited to prove that Arnold is deeply enmeshed in Carlylean terminology and ideas. Arnold was clearly pleased and even flattered by Carlyle's favourable reception of "My Countrymen" of February 1866. Arnold wrote his mother on 23rd February: "I think I told you of Carlyle's being so full of my article...... Carlyle almost wholly approves, I hear. I am going to see him." Both men offer, with differing emphases, a version of the expanded "State" as the solution to the rejection of the

alleged ability of the aristocracy to assume leadership in the future. The two men agreed in advocating an increased reliance on a heaven-sanctioned state-action, and in seeing the advance of democracy, with differing degrees of hopefulness, as inevitable.

The characteristic phrasing and ideas which Arnold uses in his critique of the Nineteenth Century society are derived bodily from Carlyle's early writings. Arnold's most obsessive use of the terms "machinery" and "Mechanical" had its origin in Carlyle's "Signs of the Times". In "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" (1864), Arnold echoes Carlyle when he observes that "our august constitution" is in fact "a colossal machine for the manufacture of philistines". Carlyle had insisted that "this age of ours" is "the Age of Machinery in every outward and inward sense of that word." 32 Arnold repeats Carlyle's description of 'this faith in Mechanism' when he insists that "faith in machinery is, I said, our besetting danger." 33 Arnold learned from Carlyle the possibilities of widening the definition of the term.

An early essay of Carlyle's, "Characteristics", (1831) was intimately known to Arnold and became a major source for many of his writings, especially "Culture and its enemies", "Anarchy and Authority" and "Stanzas from the

Grande Chartreuse" (1849-52). The last named has stanzas which "amount almost to conscious quotation."\(^{34}\) Carlyle's analysis of the dualism inherent in human morality is paralleled in the dual nature of Arnold's culture. Carlyle explains how 'the First Table of Law" (The "Duties of Man to Himself") cannot be grasped without understanding the second (the "Duties of Man to His Neighbour").\(^{35}\) In his first full elaboration of this notion of two selves in "Culture and Anarchy", Arnold implicitly follows Carlyle's discussion in "Characteristics" of two very similar selves. Carlyle's "our first individual life" seems linked to Arnold's "our ordinary selves", and Carlyle's "new collective individual" with "a second all embracing life" closely parallels Arnold's "our collective best self", "united, impersonal, at harmony". There occurs a sentence in "Characteristics" a sentence which sums up a surprising amount of Arnold's later attitudes towards literature: "Literature is but a branch of Religion, and always participates in its character; however, in our time, it is the only branch that still shows any greatness; and as some think, must one day become the main stream".\(^{36}\) In his conclusion, Arnold adopts part of the same tone: "for us the frame work of society, that theatre on which this august drama has to unroll itself, is sacred;"\(^{37}\)

36. Ibid., p.23.
Lionel Trilling, after discussing the agitation preceding the Second Reform Bill of 1867, as it is reflected in George Eliot's 'Felix Holt' (1866) and Carlyle's "Shooting Niagara" says: "out of a political situation sufficiently disturbing to call forth such pronouncements as George Eliot's and Carlyle's sprang 'Culture and Anarchy'\(^\text{38}\). In fact, Arnold's treatment of the Hyde Park riots of July 1866, in the first instalment of "Anarchy and Authority" closely followed, in method and tone, Carlyle's treatment of them in "Shooting Niagara". But a necessary caution is provided by J. Dover Wilson in his introduction to his edition of "Culture and Anarchy" when he says that a comparison of "Culture and Anarchy" and "Shooting Niagara" proves "the essential liberalism of Arnold's attitude". (P.xxiv) Arnold remains, in the matter of the exercise of State authority, strikingly close to Carlyle in feeling, and terms. Near the end of the final instalment of "Anarchy and Authority", Arnold quotes a passage of his father's on the suppression of disorder, as fierce as anything in Carlyle. Arnold, speaking of those who administer society, asserts: "we steadily and with undivided heart support them in repressing Anarchy and disorder; because without order there can be no society, and without society, there can be no human perfection". Arnold is heavily but silently dependent on "Shooting Niagara", a crucial essay of Carlyle's.

Arnold's use of the word "anarchy" does not begin until several months after the appearance of "Shooting Niagara". Carlyle's 1867 August essay in "Cornhill" had made the toleration of 'Anarchy' its central issue. Carlyle's repeated use of the term in "Latter-Day Pamphlets" (1850) suggests that Carlyle in the chief, if indirect, shaper of Arnold's argument. The pattern of argument is provided by Carlyle, though to different conclusions. In "Jean Paul Richter", an essay of 1827, Carlyle tells us that "the great law of culture" is expansion and "harmonious development of being"; "For the great law of culture is: Let each become all that he was created capable of being; expand, if possible, to his full growth; resisting all impediments, casting off all foreign, especially all noxious adhesions; and show himself at length in his own shape and stature, be these what may."39 Carlyle continues: "A harmonious development of being, the first and last object of all true culture, has been obtained; if not completely, at least more completely than in one of a thousand ordinary men."40 In Arnold's "Culture and Anarchy" occurs Carlylean emphasis on duty and disparagement of talk about human rights: "Now does any one, "he asks, "if he simply and naturally reads his consciousness, discover that he has any rights at all? For my part, the deeper I go into my own consciousness, and the more simply I abandon myself to it, the more it seems to me that I have no rights at all, only duties;

40. Ibid., P.20.
and that men get this notion of rights from a process of abstract reasoning."\textsuperscript{41} This remarkable passage strongly echoes passages in "Sartor Resartus" where duty is declared to be a "divine messenger and guide".\textsuperscript{42} As for "rights", Carlyle had made perfectly clear in "The Nigger Question" (1849): "For the rest, I never thought the 'rights of Negroes' worth much discussing, nor the rights of man in any form."

For complex reasons, Arnold never frankly acknowledged the extraordinary extent of his indebtedness to Carlyle, in ideas, attitudes, terms and presentation. A major reason was no doubt Arnold's uneasiness over Carlyle's conservatism. To this can be added Arnold's dislike of open controversy. The process of disengagement was so thorough that Arnold had to suppress, consciously or otherwise, the degree of his agreement with Carlyle's views on the nature of the social and moral crisis of the Nineteenth Century, as well as some of its solutions.

There is the unmistakable note of personal aggrievement in his references to Carlyle because of the bitter sense of high youthful hopes dashed and betrayed. Arnold's "Emerson" makes clear that Carlyle was of little help in the supreme effort of Arnold's public life, to locate "the joy whose grounds are true." The public and private


dissatisfactions are related. The persistent misrepresentation of the larger shape and effect of Carlyle's writings may have also been due in great measure to Arnold's self-designed "delicate chastisement" of the eccentric and self-willed critic, who not merely "mistook the central current of German literature" but, far more importantly, failed to discern, for his youthful readers the "new hope" which "must dawn at last". 43

Another explanation for the duality of Arnold's attitude towards Carlyle is partly attributable to basic differences in temperament which in turn affected the conception each had of the role he would play in society, as well as the manner in which he would play it. A hint is given in the Emerson lecture when Arnold says: "There was the puissant voice of Carlyle; so sorely strained, over-used, and misused since, but then fresh, comparatively sound, and reaching our hearts with true, pathetic eloquence." 44 Carlyle's example, if rather negatively, is crucial since the 1860s are the years of Arnold's sustained consideration of the Condition of England question, the decade during which Arnold gradually came to define his own critical tasks.

In the final instalment of 'Friendship's Garland', dated 26 November 1870, we have Arminius' dying advice to Frederick Harrison: "to avoid Carlylese as he would the

Devil*. What he was describing was an ideal of 'impersonality' in criticism, the very opposite of Carlyle's "self-will".

Arnold's permanent conscious attitude is one of rejection. This psychological phenomenon can be explained as Arnold found a Carlylean view of happiness "not what we want". Secondly, Carlyle's manner ran directly counter to the "disinterested" standards of Criticism he had worked out for himself. Thirdly, he felt a need to dissociate his own ideas and practice from those of the man whose voice was now so "sorely strained, over-used and misused". Arnold's disagreement with Carlyle over the role of the aristocracy in the rapid development of a new broad-based democratic state was even more sustained. The occasion for Arnold's most public break with Carlyle was the latter's "Shooting Niagara; And After" which appeared in August 1867. Carlyle asks, in his essay, how the aristocracy will fare in a "rampant" democracy. He answers: "This were a way of by degrees reinstating Aristocracy in all the privileges, authorities, reverences and honours it ever had in its palmiest times." (xxx, 37). Arnold considers the claims of the aristocracy to lead and takes Carlyle's essay as his text: 'so when Mr. Carlyle, a man of genius to whom we have all at one time or other been indebted for refreshment and stimulus, says we should give rule to the aristocracy,

mainly because of its dignity and politeness, surely culture is useful in reminding us, that in our idea of perfection the character of beauty and intelligence are both of them present, and sweetness and light, the two noblest of things are united. Allowing, therefore, with Mr.Carlyle, the aristocratic class to possess sweetness, culture insists on the necessity of light also, and shows us that aristocracies being by the very nature of things inaccessible to ideas, unapt to see how the world is going, must be somewhat wanting in light, and must therefore be, at a moment when light is our general requisite, inadequate to our needs." This may appear to be a misrepresentation of the argument developed by Carlyle. The actual complexity of Carlyle's views on the aristocracy had been made perfectly clear in the earlier works of his. Carlyle repeats his argument thus in "Latter-Day Pamphlets": "It is tragically evident to me, our first want...... is that of a new real Aristocracy of fact, instead of the extinct imaginary one of title, which the anarchic world is everywhere rebelling against."  

Carlyle had died on 4 March and on March 25 Arnold wrote Ernest Fontanies, the French theologian: 'I never much liked Carlyle. He seems to me to be 'carrying coals to Newcastle', as our proverb says; preaching earnestness

to a nation which had plenty of it by nature, but was less abundantly supplied in several other useful things." This ungenerous sentiment is reflected in "Culture and Anarchy" where he remarks that Carlyle is the very type of Hebraism without Hellenism. Arnold concludes: "Yet even Carlyle is not in my judgement, to be called a great writer; one cannot think of ranking him with men like Cicero and Plato and Swift and Voltaire." To Arnold, Carlyle's work lacked that classical 'Architectonic' which he had recommended in the Preface to the poems of 1853, Carlyle's work appeared to him a stream of disjointed 'sallies'. The reason is elaborated thus by Arnold: "For Carlyle's sallies, as a staple of literary work, become wearisome; and as time more and more applies to Carlyle's work, its stringent test, this will be felt more and more.... Carlyle is too wilful for this, too turbid, too vehement." Thus Arnold's attitude went on changing. But we cannot deny the fact that Carlyle influenced in his own way, though unconsciously, the attitude of Matthew Arnold.

The role of Matthew Arnold as a critic is considered to bring out his theories of disinterestedness and detachment. Arnold concluded "Culture and Anarchy" saying that men of

52. Ibid., Pp.117-118.
culture should adopt a similar role as that of Socrates who, by his disinterested play of consciousness upon 'stock notions and habits' provided an excellent example for the rest of the society. Men of culture, if they were to follow this example, would be the sovereign educators, although their influence may not be felt now, it would be in the immediate future. Thus Arnold insisted that the spiritual health of a country depended on its men of culture. Arnold was the first modern critic who declared in no uncertain terms that literature could comfort and change people. This depended on understanding which was the finest literature and hence the importance to be attached to the role of a literary critic. The quality of life must be the concern of the critic. Arnold's famous definition of poetry was 'poetry is at bottom a criticism of life'. Hence a critic should also be a moralist. That is why the work of Matthew Arnold as a critic depicts the state of his own society and the terrible inadequacy of its culture. That is the reason for the extensive range of his critical field from education to the essence of culture of his own day.

To restrain himself, a critic required, Arnold declared, two especial qualities, namely disinterestedness and a sense of what is relevant. He must belong to no party, whether intellectual or religious. He judges all activity by ideal standards through learning to think objectively. To sift the relevant from the irrelevant, he must rid his own mind of

Idiosyncrasies. Thus the ultimate duty of a critic was to discriminate, namely to point out which was the best.

Matthew Arnold wishes criticism to testify to the existence of true and impersonal standards of value. These two lectures, "The Literary influence of Academies" and "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" made their earliest attempt in the first series of "Essays in Criticism" (1865). In 'The Function of Criticism at the Present Time', perhaps his finest essay, he wants criticism to reinvigorate the intellectual life. This is "simply to know the best that is known and thought in the world, and by in its turn, making this known, to create a current of true and fresh ideas." Doing this, it will contribute to the production in time of an intellectual and spiritual situation which would be a cogenial atmosphere for creative genius to flourish. If criticism is to be a freely-ranging, open-minded curiosity, it must be disinterested. 'Ulterior, political, practical consideration' must be firmly put aside to enable the critic to view an object detachedly, to see it 'as in itself it really is'. Dispassionate appraisal, instilled by literary criticism, can be of the widest social utility.

The title of 'Literature and Dogma' suggests its connection with his work as a literary critic. The religious

transformation he looked for could only be achieved by applying to the Bible and the Creeds "the qualities of flexibility, perceptiveness, and judgement, which are the best fruits of letters." 'Culture' in fact, could yield 'a better apprehension of religious truth than theological acumen'. Thus Matthew Arnold applies the test of disinterestedness, namely flexibility, even to religion.

The critic must be disinterested in the sense that he should pursue only the ends of cultural perfection, and should remain uninfluenced by the coarser appeals of the philistine. Arnold has put before the critic for his guidance a majestic ideal of intellectual and spiritual excellence, in accord with the best that has been known and thought in the world.

Indian philosophy shaped Arnold's ideas regarding disinterestedness: "'In action', it has been said, 'the personality is the inevitable and indispensable intermediary' of the Divine will, and so, 'the stronger, the more complex, powerful, individualized and conscious is the personality, the more powerfully and usefully can the instrument serve.... But by ......... the very character of personality, it easily tends to be drawn in to the fatal illusion of its separate existence and become little by little a screen between the
Divine will and its manifestation, distorting the perspective. This separative thought, feeling sensation, would like to appropriate to itself the result of the action and in the process defile the action itself. Hence the direction, given by the Scriptures, not to bother about the fruits of action and in 'a condition of Grace' when we are just channels for Divine action transparent and clear. This giving up of the fruits of action and of the tendency to appropriate the action to oneself (forgetting that we are only instruments) in detachment or disinterestedness, an absence of attachment both to the action and its fruits. The condition of Grace is the condition of instrument in its purity, transparency, carrying out (without attachment even to the work) the will of God. But the egoism of the man who feels he is the instrument of God and is doing God's work as His chosen instrument is worse than other kinds of egoism. Arnold knew that the self-righteous man of culture is the source of all anarchy; and the anarchy of culture may be more dangerous. To Arnold, this 'inwardness' was possible because he had learnt from his study of the Indian Scripture, the Bhagavad Gita, the virtue of detachment or what he chose to call disinterestedness where the first step is to stand back from action and contemplate the impulse to action. It takes us 'inward', enables us to see the 'will' infected.

Matthew Arnold established a tradition that insisted upon cultural pluralism, political liberalism, and a literary criticism connected to ideas, on the one hand, and to experience, on the other. Arnold had diminished the disparity between criticism and creation, arguing that criticism was an art rather than a science. In his opinion, thought was a kind of action. He had connected criticism with ideas and the total human situation, giving criticism a wide range and flexibility. It is Arnold's classicism - his love of Hellenic culture, art and literature - which is reflected in his critical writings that has to be appreciated. His essay "The Study of Poetry" reflects not only his classicism but also his views on the grand style and his theory of poetry.

Arnold turned to the concept of culture as the only saviour in an age of despair. Having failed to see unity in an age of different creeds and loss of faith simultaneously, Arnold turned to culture as the only way out of the morass in which humanity was bogged down. A feeling of disenchantment, which set deeply in him made him turn towards the concept of culture.

In the section headed 'My Countrymen' in "Friendship's Garland" (1871), Arnold contrasts England's great moment, the year 1815, with her condition half a century later. In 1815, England had the secret of the way
things were moving. Her aristocracy still led and resistance to change was then needed to check Napoleonism. Since then the Aristocratic class had lost its power and the middle class ruled the destinies of England. It had no ideals except those of doing a roaring trade and being left to itself. As a result, England had lost its prestige on the Continent and she was treated with contempt for her sermonising to the foreigners. Nations can only be great if they are 'bottomed on some vital idea or sentiment'.
The German Arminius serving as the spokesman for Arnold's reasoning is a sign of the degradation of England. England had to get its 'geist' and that can happen only when the middle class becomes more intelligent and realizes her present plight, making human life more just and widely rational. "Hardly a German newspaper can discuss territorial changes in Europe but it will add, after its remarks on the probable policy of France 'in that event': 'England will probably make a fuss, but what England thinks is of no importance." The future was with America which was fast outstripping England spiritually as well as materially. Arnold had 'a longing for this old and great country of ours to be always great in herself, not only in her progeny.'

"Yes, we arraign her; but she,
The weary Titan, with deaf
Ears, and labour-dimm'd eyes,

Regarding neither to right
Nor left, goes passively by,
Staggering on to her goal;
Bearing on shoulders immense,
Atlantean, the load,
Well nigh not to be borne,
Of the too vast orb of her fate." 57

In 'Numbers' in his "Discourses in America"
is also reflected this disenchantment. He remarks: "Here,
so many miles from home, I begin to reflect with tender
contrition, that perhaps I have not, - I will not say
faltered the patriotism of my own countrymen enough, but
regarded it enough. Perhaps that is one reason why I have
produced so very little effect upon them." 58 He ironically
remarks 'I think your numbers afford a very real and
important ground for satisfaction.' 59 Stressing the
futility of the 'remnant', he remarks: "Plato's account
of the most gifted and brilliant community of the ancient
world, of that Athens of his to which we all owe so much,
is despondent enough. 'There is but a very small remnant',
he says, 'of honest followers of wisdom, and they who are
of these few, and who have tasted how sweet and blessed a
possession is wisdom, and who can fully see, moreover, the
madness of the multitude, and that there is no one, we

57. Matthew Arnold, Friendship's Garland, (London:
Macmillan, 1871), P.156.
58. Matthew Arnold, Discourses in America, (London:
Macmillan, 1912), P.3.
59. Ibid., P.5.
may say, whose action in public matters is sound, and no
ally for whosoever would, help the just, what,' asks Plato,
'are they to do? They may be compared, ' says Plato, 'to a
man who has fallen among wild beasts; he will not be one
of them, but he is too unaided to make head against them;
and before he can do any good to society or his friends,
his will be overwhelmed and perish uselessly.'\textsuperscript{60} Arnold
concurs with this saying: "Plato was right after all;
the majority were bad, and the remnant were impotent."\textsuperscript{61}
But still he cautions: "Nevertheless, as to his grand point,
Isaiah, I say, was right. The majority in the Jewish
State, whatever they might think or say, whatever their
guides and flatterers might think or say, the majority
were unsound, and their unsoundness must be their ruin".\textsuperscript{62}
Arnold proposes the remedy for such a situation: "And in
our great modern States, where the scale of things is so
large, it does seem as if the remnant might be so increa­
sed as to become an actual power, even though the majority
be unsound. Then the lover of wisdom may come out from
under his wall, the lover of goodness will not be alone
among the wild beasts. To enable the remnant to succeed,
a large strengthening of its numbers is everything."\textsuperscript{63}
He cautions further: 'A failure in justice is a source of
danger to States.' '.... the failure in amiability, too,
is a source of danger and insecurity to States, as well as

\textsuperscript{60} Matthew Arnold, \textit{Discourses in America}, (London:
Macmillan, 1912), P.8-10.
\textsuperscript{61} Ibid., P.14.
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid., P.18.
\textsuperscript{63} Ibid., P.26.
the failure in justice. And we English are not amiable, or at any rate, what in this case comes to the same thing, do not appear so.'

"Every thing, in this case, depends upon the 'remnant,' its numbers and its power of action."

"She must recover through a powerful and profound renewal, a great inward change, brought about by 'the remnant' amongst her people; and, for this, a remnant small in numbers would not suffice.

He admonishes the Americans in the following lines and lays his finger on the cause of fall of states: "But I suppose that in a democratic community like this, with its newness, its magnitude its strength, its life of business, its sheer freedom and equality, the danger is in the absence of the discipline of respect; in hardness and materialism, exaggeration and boastfulness; in a false smartness, a false audacity, a want of soul and delicacy.

He administers a final warning in these lines: "And the philosophers and the prophets, whom I at any rate am disposed to believe, and who say that moral causes govern the standing and the falling of States, will tell us that the failure to mind whatsoever things are elevated must impair with an inexorable fatality the life of a nation, just as the failure to mind whatsoever things are just, or whatsoever things are amiable, or whatsoever things are pure, will impair it;"

"Mere multitude will not give us a saving remnant with certainty."

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65. Ibid., P. 37.
66. Ibid., P. 64.
67. Ibid., P. 66.
68. Ibid., P. 67.
69. Ibid., P. 68.
This analysis of and warning to the American situation equally applies to his contemporary England and hence his disenchantment.

Arnold wrote the greater part of his poetry before he was thirty three and practically all of it before he was fortyfive. In the main, it is conspicuously the work of a young man suffering from a painful sensation of limitation, finding it difficult to adjust his longings and expectations, to the despotism of fact. The two sonnets 'To a Republican Friend' (1848), the Marguerite poems, 'Stanzas in the Memory of the Author of Obermann', and 'Empedocles on Etna' alike turn very largely on this conflict between desire and necessity.

His first collection of poems, 'The Strayed Reveller' reveals a bright young man, just down from Oxford, as a melancholy romantic in love with solitude and this certainly shocked his friends. He says:

"Ah, cool night-wind, tremulous stars!
Ah, glimmering water,
Fitful earth-murmur,
Dreaming woods!"  (Ls.281-284)

His "Empedocles on Etna" is a drama of solitude and it was replaced in 1853 by the miniature epic "Sohrab
and Rustum". He confessed to Clough that 'The Scholar Gipsy', written in 1852, 'at best awakens a pleasing melancholy. But this is not what we want.' Arthur Hugh Clough, while reviewing "Empedocles on Etna and other poems" and "The Strayed Reveller and other poems" in "North American Review" in 1853, charged that the poet was too introspective, self-searching, self-doubting; "There is a disposition to press too far the finer and subtler intellectual and moral susceptibilities, to insist upon falling out, as they say, to their logical consequences, the notices of some single organ of the spiritual nature." 

Prof. Howard Foster Lowry's collection of 62 letters of Matthew Arnold helps us to outline what Arnold himself called his "melancholy passage" from an aimless and unsettled youth to firm convictions about life and nature of poetry. Lowry's book supplies concrete evidence how, from 1847 to 1853, Arnold developed his own conception of poetry and of his own role as a poet by seeking objects of contemplation and technique for his spiritual life which would save him from the flux of contemporary influences and events. Arnold lived his real life in the shadowy region of his inner self. He lived a life, which for a few years was hidden even from his closest friend:

"Yes! in the sea of life enisled,
With echoing straits between us thrown,
Dotting the shoreless watery wild,
We mortal millions live ALONE'. 72 (Ls.1-4).

During the six years after 1844, Arnold made his melancholy passage from his aimless and unsettled state of youth to a deepening of inner loyalties and a realignment of his spiritual loyalties. To save himself from aimless distractions, he discovered techniques of security to keep himself from the anxieties of an unsettled period. He gives us a picture of the life and world he would like to fly away in 'The Scholar Gipsy'. It is a world in which men are 'Light half-believers' of their 'Casual Creeds'. The world is one of 'sick hurry' and 'divided aims', of 'heads overtax'd' and 'palsied hearts'.

'Dover Beach', which is a short poem, discloses Arnold's melancholy preoccupation with the thought of the inevitable decline of religious faith. The opening lines suggest the serenity, poise and stability which Arnold desires for himself.

'The sea is calm to night.
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits;—on the French Coast the light

Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,
Climmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.' (Ls.1-5).

Then the noise and movement of the sea are rendered,
touching the note of sadness:

'Listen! You hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.' (Ls.9-14)

The last line of the stanza strikes the key note
of the poem. Arnold's comment on the world of his day is
also contained in the line. The reason for the plight
of the world is given in the following lines:

'The Sea of Faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar' (Ls.21-25)

Faithlessness is reasoned out to be the cause for the
state of melancholy. In his last stanza, he appeals to
his companion to be true to each other. The loss of religious
faith makes it necessary to seek in human love those values which are not to be discovered elsewhere. The lovers must be true to one another and support each other if they are to live in the modern world without any disaster overtaking them:

'Ah, love, 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;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.' (Ls.29-37).

The last line startles us by its brevity and becomes the most memorable poetic comment of the author on the modern world. It is exactly 'this strange disease of modern life' that he speaks of in 'The Scholar Gipsy'. The elegiac strain and the melancholiness of the poet are unmistakable in the poem. It is an experience to be shared by everyone who has ever responded to the sea's 'eternal note of sadness' as the poet presents the emotion not as peculiar to himself on an exceptional occasion.
Arnold was conscious that his life had been thrown upon 'an iron time of doubts, disputes, disputations, fears'. He allows himself to mourn for the days

'O born in days when wits were fresh and clear,
And life ran gaily as the sparkling Thames;
Before this strange disease of modern life,
With its sick hurry, its divided aims,
Its heads O'ertax'd, its palsied hearts, was rife -
Fly hence, our contact fear!' 73 (Ls. 201-206)

The diagnosis is of the melancholy that prevails in the world of his days and in himself. He was not an 'escapist' but only a 'foil'd circuitous wanderer' 'between two worlds, one dead, / The other powerless to be born.' He had felt in his heart the deep malady of his time and for that very reason could diagnose it and spend his life in trying to cure it. As an Inspector of Schools, coming into close contact with the poorer sections of society, his one thought was how 'to give their moral life and growth a fair chance'.

Arnold had come upon the scene when the Western world was flooded with German scholarship and he served as an anti-dote to the pedantry of this type. It was so because of his non-metaphysical and common-sense approach

to literature. Arnold managed to reconcile the con­
diction in the impulses to joy and cheer and action on
one side and towards melancholy, loneliness and despair on
the other. His own, close friends were surprised, as a
result, that their non-serious, flamboyant companion had
produced the melancholy lyrics. Even his closest sister
confessed her surprise. Arnold's reflections on the
melancholy-or on the contradictions of experience caught
the attention of everyone.

Arnold never gave way to ultimate despair because
he turned towards perfection or culture as the way out of
the muddle. In his Praface to the 'Essays in Criticism'
(First Series), Arnold says: "...... Mr.Wright, however,
would perhaps be more indulgent to my vivacity, if he
considered that we are none of us likely to be lively
much longer. My vivacity is but the last sparkle of
flame before we are all in the dark, the last glimpse
of colour before we all go into the drab - the drab of
the earnest, prosaic, practical, austerely literal future.
Yet, the world would soon be the philistines'! and
then........ we shall all yawn in one another's faces with
the dismallest, the most unimpeachable gravity." Thus,
in both his prose and poetical compositions, we find
Matthew Arnold giving expression to his melancholy dispo-
sition. Arnold characterized his era as one of "spiritual
Arnold lamented the deeply "unpoetical age". The authoritarian tone, imperious pronouncements, the bravado and bluster of 1853 preface fail to mask Arnold's sense of helplessness and hesitation in the face of hostile criticism, the zeitgeist and the limitations of his own creative powers. Thus comes to be born a sense of disenchantment with his time. In a touching passage, Arnold's feelings break through as he asserts that what the "Young Writer" (that is, he himself) wants is a "hand to guide him through a confusion, a voice to prescribe to him the aim he should keep in view". Arnold warns that "such a guide the English writer at present day will nowhere find."  

The years between 1853 and 1860 constitute a crucial period in the literary career of Matthew Arnold. It can be considered as a period of preparation for his future role as a prophet of culture. He remained aloof from the Zeitgeist during the above period. "The Modern Element in Literature" (1857) foreshadows his later broad, social and cultural interests. By 1868, with the composition of "Culture and Anarchy" he had moved far from his original position to advocate the cultural regeneration of England through Hellenism. In his diagnosis of the contemporary situation, Matthew Arnold

75. Ibid., P.8.
saw the degeneration of standards through recognition of the distinction to be made between means and ends. The year 1848 marked a definite turn towards a more introspective dependence upon himself. The cause was his state of melancholy. It is also reflected in his 'Buried Life'. In 1849, he sadly traversed the haunts of Senancour. His profound inwardness, the austere sincerity of "Obermann", the delicate feeling for nature which it exhibits, and the melancholy eloquence of many passages in it attracted and charmed Arnold very much. His reaction is conveyed in the following lines: "we look within and what do we find? Two desires feverishly excite the blood of the modern poet: one drives him to the society of men where they congregate in multitude, the other to solitude such as thou, Senancour, hast sought. Which of these shall the modern mind follow: in which does the flow, the thrill of life abound? But I, Senencour, will answer: not in the world, not in the strife of men shall strength be found: in solitude shall it be found, and in high silence. He only lives with the world's life who hath renounced his own life: not he who hath shared but he who hath watched the fight, knows how the day hath gone....... But enough of this! Away, Away, these dreams of peace that only deceive. How good, were it possible, to live, even in the midst of men, bearing about in one's heart, the calm and peace of these mountains! So adieu, sad Guide adieu; I go, for I may not stay here; Fate
drives me. But I leave half of my life with you; to Fate
I give myself, nor can I do otherwise. For I, like all
other sons of men, move on a rigorous line, in some unknown
Power’s control, can neither resign nor enjoy when I will.
I must go back to the strife of men. I must live in the
world. If thou canst see me as thou minglest with the
joyful ones whom the world could not tame, all thou wilt
ask is, Art thou unspotted by the world? There, in the
company of the serene, thou wilt see me, I who no longer
obey thy spell but who desire to rest, like thee, unsoiled.
And so, farewell! farewell!" Thus does Matthew Arnold
unburden his soul of the melancholy that had permeated
deeply. 'The movement of mind which these few guides
of the spirit disclose deepended his reliance in two
directions: first, on an inner state of spiritual
equilibrium which might be attributed to the effect
of the Bhagavad Gita and the transcendental Emerson;
and second, a dependence upon "morality" or inner inte-
grity and character in his relations with the outer
world of action which might be attributed to the effect of
his devotion to Epictetus and to Marcus Aurelius.' We can
almost say that he had attained inner poise. Spinoza
equipped him with the technique of living, thinking, and
composing which he badly needed and thus he completed the
story of his melancholy passage from his 'buried life' to
a life of inner poise. ProfessorLowry’s remark reveals
Arnold's state of mind: "Perhaps the most startling thing about the letters to Clough is their revelation that.... In the period from 1843 to 1853 in which one thinks of Arnold as far removed from religious certainty, he had already set his course and caught the significance of what he later was to teach others. He tells us, too, who his helper was. It was Spinoza."

Arnold was well aware that his age was devoid of a world-view and that nothing as yet had been found to replace the Christian interpretation of man, society and history which had become out-dated. During his career as a prose writer, his aim was to search for an idea, a key or a pattern which would give meaning to the world and life. Arnold inherited a tradition which saw life in terms of conflict rather than of evolutionary development. It enabled Arnold to see the discrepancy between the 'natural' man and 'moral' man, a discrepancy which he expressed in the form of the distinction between 'ordinary self' and the 'best self'. His social experience and his duty as Inspector revealed many aspects of social life to him. He turned to the moral philosophies of stoicism and Spinozism to put a distance between himself and his emotions. These philosophies taught him to view conflicting parties or passions as part of a larger whole and turned him in the direction of a holistic philosophy of universe.
Hegel provided the necessary modernization of Spinozism. He derived his standards of literary criticism also from this world-view. He turned to Nature also as a means of solace.

As early as 1848, the year of revolutions in Europe, Arnold had written to his mother that "the hour of the hereditary peerage and eldest sonship and immense properties has, I am convinced, ...... struck." The incapacity of the middle class to meet its new realities was brought out with force by the Second Reform Act of 1867. Industrial progress had not helped to lessen the Urban and rural poverty and misery. Matthew Arnold in his earlier prose and poetry, had shown his awareness of this poverty and misery. His critics had remarked that the elegant prophet of culture had remained aloof from all vulgar actuality. But this was disproved by a late sonnet of his "East London" (1863), the occasion for which was recalled in a paragraph of "Culture and Anarchy".

He concerned himself with fundamental qualities, chiefly shortcomings and excesses, of the English mind and character and civilization, on all levels. "With mixed irony and candour, Arnold presents himself as 'properly a philistine' who finds in his own "ordinary self" the baneful impulses of all three classes." Mistaken ideals are attacked by Matthew Arnold because of their complacency and fanaticism.

78. Ibid., P.145.
He wished to see reflected in society the inner poise that he attempted to attain. He believed that an individual cannot improve unless society was improved first. The inner poise that he tried to gain was partly due to Eastern influence. His letters to Clough reveal this influence. One relevant point in this context is Arnold's attitude towards action. The conflict between peace and struggle, leads, according to oriental wisdom, to disinterestedness and not disenchantment. Arnold looked with coolness upon action because he knew that action goes beyond itself, becomes a means of faith, a way of escaping thought and what seem to be the limitations of doubt. Arnold is opposed to the idea that thought is inferior to action and may be even opposed to it. He is against the belief that taking a side settles things or revives the suspension of reason. But Arnold realized that those who can best serve the world are those who are capable of abstracting themselves from immediate happenings which would enable them to see a problem in a wider context and from a vantage point. It is a necessary check against coarse and ill-regulated action. It is this capacity for detachment that marks out Arnold.

He wrote his mother on March 7, 1848: 'I see a wave of more than American Vulgarity, moral, intellectual, and social, preparing to break over us.' He thus expressed
his fears concerning English response to events in France. It is not surprising that at this crucial point in his career he should have been attracted by Hindu philosophy. Distressed by Clough's restlessness at Oxford, he urged upon him "the Oriental Wisdom". There was pointed suggestion in his comment: "The Indians distinguish between meditation or absorption - and knowledge: and between abandoning practice and abandoning the fruits of action and all respect therefore. This last is a supreme step, and dilated on throughout the poem." This remark shows a growing tendency to quietism in the middle of excitement and uncertainty. He wisely sought some philosophy to fix his mind in quietness and to serve as a spiritual defence against over-excitement and anxiety. Hindu philosophy, as revealed in its essence in the 'Bhagavad Gita', especially that aspect of it which he recommended to his friend Clough, appealed greatly to Arnold as a means of escape from absorption in the hurry of contemporary life. That it did contribute to the shaping of his point of view may be seen in his poems 'Resignation', and the three 'Sonnets to a Republican Friend, 1848' among others as well as in his first lecture at Oxford, two years later, 'On the Modern Element in Literature'.

From his reading of the 'Bhagavad Gita', he might have derived, as an undergraduate at Oxford, the concept of disinterestedness from Plato. He met Emerson in London in April 1848. His tendency to quietism must have been
strengthened if we may judge from the sonnet "To Emerson", written probably about this time.

There was a decisive break in his poetic career from the moment of his suppression of 'Empedocles' in 1853 on the ground it did not 'rejoice the reader'. By 1863 he seems to have cautiously effected a 'rapprochement' with the abandoned Christianity of his youth declaring it to have provided, "an inspiration, a joyful emotion, to make a moral action perfect." 79 The consummation of Arnold's doctrine of joy appears in his chief religious work of the 'Seventies, 'Literature and Dogma'. For Arnold, religion itself is 'morality touched by emotion'; the corollary is "to righteousness belongs happiness" or "right conduct gives joy." 80 So strong is his principle, "Happiness is our being's end and aim" that happiness becomes "the witness and sanction" of right conduct." 81

Having failed to see perfection in real life, he turned towards culture as a means of correction of the deficiency. He developed a forceful concept of culture as the basis of his social critique and the focus of his social vision. He found his job as Inspector of Schools tiring and often frustrating. He was writing at a time of

81. Ibid., P.88.
significant change in society. The Education Act of 1870, which introduced education for all, formed part of a more general thrust by the state to intervene in the running of society. Following the change in the structure of society was the decreasing significance of the Church and of religion in the lives of the general population. This is in addition to the straightforward result of the challenge of science. Changes such as these and developments in the intellectual world shaped the nature of his concerns. Arnold was sensitive to the potential impact of these developments and his ideal of perfection needs to be examined in this context.

Arnold saw clearly the cultural consequences of there being no centre of enlightened opinion. The absence of such centre affected not only the comparatively narrow field of literary composition and taste. It affected the very fabric of social life which needed to be constantly freshened by an influx of new ideas. Thus, Arnold's idea of culture was pragmatic. He was also aware of the necessity of a certain detachment from the social scene. Yet, in spite of this insistence on detachment and inwardness, Arnold was very clear that culture served a social purpose. His conception of society was a larger one than the practical minds of the age allowed. The aim of men of culture was 'to make reason and the will
of God prevail." It was necessary to stand aside from many of the more immediate demands of society to do so. It is this capacity for detachment and for seeing that culture was not a matter of selfish ease that marks out Arnold's contribution. Culture was directly related to the quality of living at any one time, much more so in a society which laid stress on action for action's sake. Arnold's purpose of education is distinguished by the extent to which 'becoming' (social action) is enriched by the nature of 'being' (the richness of the individual's understanding). Only by a personal enrichment could the individual in turn enrich the society of his time. He would then be enabled to turn a stream of new and fresh ideas on his society and this implies a sense of detachment.

An additional factor which led Arnold to seek a centre of enlightened opinion, which would act as a guide for society, was his fear of 'Americanization'. Trilling described Arnold's fear in terms of a fear of vulgarity, loss of distinction and above all the eccentricity of thought arising from an application of the democratic doctrine of equality. De Tocqueville's warnings about democracy was the source of Arnold's apprehensions. Do Tocqueville, writing about the nature of democracy in 1836, had considerable impact on English social thought.

in the 19th century. He used America as a case study to analyse the possible dangers of democracy. Thereafter, Americanization stood for what was most dangerous in the development of modern industrial society. J.S. Mill suggested that American people represented an exaggeration of the English middle class. Hence Arnold sought to refine democracy by emphasizing that culture should counteract democracy's weaknesses. It should guarantee that democracy was not just rule by the masses. Through it, the masses have to be humanized. English democracy would then be one of dignity and intelligence. Arnold continued to return to the concept of Americanism at various stages throughout his writings as it meant a tendency towards fragmentariness due to the absence of a powerful authority. In Arnold's opinion, this phenomenon coincided with the popular doctrine of doing as one likes, and a lack of interest in strict standards of excellence. All this resulted in the diminution of the stature of man's spirit. Culture is the force which encouraged the development of man's spirit. This development should be promoted by the State. Arnold's social analysis was confined to questions of the moral and cultural health of society and its cultural regeneration. Arnold's view of the state was not formed on the basis of a philosophical theory of the state. It was a practical assessment of the contemporary situation and a desire to see in England an Academy, not merely of literature.
but of life. The Academy's function would be educative. It would set ever-advancing standards to act as an inspiration towards perfection which, Arnold believed, should be the goal of all human endeavour.

The way in which Arnold sought to have this ideal of perfection recognized was through education. In the most simple terms, Arnold believed education to be the promoter of culture. He was opposed to the instrumental view of education. Education, he claimed, is a humanising process whose aim coincides with that of culture: the pursuit of perfection. At the organizational level, Arnold claimed that education was the province of the State. He argued vehemently against the prevalent 'Laissez-Faire' attitude towards education. A programme of universal education is basic to the economic progress of the country. As a humanizing process, education would counteract the interest in the commonplace which characterizes, 'Americanism'. A few days after he took up his duties as an Inspector, he wrote to his wife about the immense importance of the schools 'in civilizing the next generation of the lower classes, who, as things are going, will have most of the practical power of the country in their hands.'

Matthew Arnold was attracted to a classical humanistic ideal, that of the Greek notion of the

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complete man, the harmoniously developed personality. Arnold in his views both on culture and religion was concerned to promote the view that man should be committed to something beyond himself. In religion, this commitment is to God as He is the embodiment of the ideal of perfection which Arnold developed in his ideas on culture. Arnold was concerned with the Goethean ideal of seeking a complete and harmonious development of the potentialities of each individual to its fullest extent. Such a notion is akin to the romantic ideal developed by Rousseau. Following the ideas and language of Burke, he recommends the State as the agent of general perfection. Arnold imagined the State as 'the centre of light and authority', the organ of the 'best self'.

Whatever subject he handled he tried to expose some popular error or prejudice and persuade his countrymen to be less rigid, less provincial, more open minded, more willing to learn from the experience of other countries, or from antiquity and to liberate themselves from partisan polemics.