CHAPTER IV
THE CONCEPT OF CULTURE IN MATTHEW ARNOLD:

The concept of perfection was then the direction that Matthew Arnold’s mental and spiritual development took. His struggle in life was to find a meaning for life. He found that it lay in the direction of the establishment of an ideal pattern of harmonious perfection for the individual and for the whole society. The term 'concept' is used to denote a general notion regarding a class of ideas. Matthew Arnold's 'Concept of Culture' is spoken of not as a theory worked out to the minutest detail. It is merely a collection of various statements made by Matthew Arnold in the course of his writings, brought together to form a unified hypothesis. It is not a theory that is propounded as foolproof or unassailable. It is merely a totality of his beliefs put together to form a postulate and nothing more.

It was in May 1867 that Matthew Arnold delivered his final lecture, as Professor of Poetry, at Oxford. This lecture entitled 'Culture and its Enemies' became the first chapter of 'Culture and Anarchy' under the title 'Sweetness and Light'. This lecture was first published in the July number of 'Cornhill Magazine'. But he was not satisfied with the mere publication of the lecture as it evoked a
highly critical response. He thought it better to
develop some of his ideas from the Oxford lecture and
answer his critics in detail. The result was the five
parts of 'Anarchy and Authority'. They were published
in the January, February, June, July and September 1868
issues of 'Cornhill Magazine'. The first two of these
parts were later published in 1875 in the second edition
of 'Culture and Anarchy' as the second and third chapters,
entitled 'Doing as one Likes' and 'Barbarians, Philistines
and populace'.

'The six articles, which provoked the liveliest
discussion as they came out, were then revised slightly,
brought together in one volume and published in January,
1869 with a long preface written during the Christmas
holidays, as "Culture and Anarchy: an essay in political
and social criticism", by Smith, Elder & Co., who also
issued "Friendship's Garland".'¹ In the words of J.Dover
Wilson, 'Culture and Anarchy' was: 'But the culmination
of it all - I do not say the best thing he ever wrote
but certainly his most characteristic utterance - is
"Culture and Anarchy", which is at once a masterpiece
of vivacious prose, a great poet's great defence of
poetry, a profoundly religious book, and the finest
apology for education in the English language.'² That
almost sums up Arnold's chief composition in the field
of social criticism.

¹. Matthew Arnold, Culture and Anarchy, ed.J.Dover Wilson
². Ibid.,
Matthew Arnold expressed his concern about society at large in his letters to his friend, Arthur Hugh Clough. This concern found expression also in his major poems. The feeling of despair was strongly expressed in his 'Essays in Criticism' and was also seen in his lectures on Celtic literature. The years between 1853 and the earlier part of 1860 may be termed as a period of retrenchment and preparation between Arnold's career as a poet and his emergence as a prophet of culture. During this period, he dedicated himself to create conditions under which a vibrant culture could flourish in England. He wanted an 'intellectual deliverance' of the age and this urge could be clearly felt in his 'The Modern Element in Literature' of 1857. This is evidently an indication of his broadening social and cultural interests. By the time he published 'Culture and Anarchy' in 1868, he disentangled himself from his concern with classical literature. He got himself deeply involved in advocacy of Hellenism which alone he strongly believed was vital to the survival and development of British Culture. But at the same time he continued to be a fervent admirer of Goethe, the German seer, whom he had revered as a young poet. It appeared almost as if his conception of culture was an extension of his Goethean ideals.

Matthew Arnold was in an aimless and unsettled state of youth about 1844. He made his 'melancholy
passage during the next six years through a deepening of inner convictions and a rearrangement of his spiritual loyalties. His letters after 1847 reveal a rapid development of intellectual and spiritual growth. His fear relating to English response to events in France was expressed as: 'I was in the great mob in Trafalgar Square,' he wrote his mother on March 7, .... 'but they did not seem dangerous .... I see a wave of more than American Vulgarity, moral, intellectual, and social preparing to break over us.' It was a period of universal political excitement and uncertainty and he wanted a spiritual defence against these. Thus 1848 marked a definite turn in the attitude of Matthew Arnold towards a more introspective dependence upon himself. Matthew Arnold was an excellent analyst of the deficiencies of his age and particularly the stock notions of his age. He saw also the consequence of this: the danger of spiritual anarchy when individual assertion was the only standard; the danger of social anarchy as the rising class exerted its power.

In a very candid manner, he diagnosed the situation of his world - 'Wandering between two Worlds, one dead/The other powerless to be born' - and this led to a series of questions which could not be answered satisfactorily: What is to take the place or fill the

gap left by the decay of religious faith in both emotional and moral contexts? How can democracy provide scope for expression for individuality? Matthew Arnold lived his real life in introspection and his hidden self. This is because he wanted to sever himself from absorption in the stream of time. The turmoil in his mind is revealed in a letter to Clough* '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 ('Bhagavad Gita').'

A growing tendency to quietism in the midst of universal turmoil is being cultivated by Arnold and the passage quoted gives a clear indication of that. He sought some philosophy of life to anchor his mind in the midst of anxieties and uncertainties. Hindu philosophy, as revealed in the 'Bhagavad Gita', especially that aspect of it which he recommended to Clough, appealed to Arnold as a way to quietism in the midst of universal turmoil.

Matthew Arnold characterized his era as one of 'spiritual discomfort', lacking in 'moral grandeur'.

He remarked further: 'Into the feelings of a man so situated, there entered much that we are accustomed to consider as exclusively modern; how much, the fragments of Empedocles himself which remain to us are sufficient

atleast to indicate. What those, who are familiar only
with the great monuments of early Greek genius, suppose
to be its exclusive characteristic, have disappeared: the
calm, the cheerfulness, the disinterested objectivity have
disappeared: the dialogue of the mind with itself has
commenced; modern problems have presented themselves:
we hear already the doubts, we witness the discouragement, of Hamlet and of Faust.' Arnold's feelings regarding
the unfavourable reception he received as a poet must
have also been strengthened by Goethe's idea of the
'Zeitgeist'—meaning the 'temper of the times' with
'time...a local, changeable, phenomenon opposing
eternal values.' Alluding to the Goethean 'Zeitgeist'
in an 1848 letter to Clough, Arnold had contrasted his
inability to adapt his poetry to the 'alternating
dispositions of the fickle Time-spirit with clough's
tendency to get breast to breast with reality.'6
Increasingly, Arnold lamented the deeply 'unpoetical'
age, decrying its 'blankness and barrenness, and un-
poetrylessness.'7

There were certain elements in the personality
of Matthew Arnold which ran counter to his cosmopolitanism.
The result was a conflict in himself which might be diagnosed
as a symptom of Romantic melancholy. He himself could
understand the cause of this inner conflict to be his

H.F. Lowry (London: Oxford University Press, 1932),
March 22, 1831, P. 82.
7. Ibid., P. 86.
absorption in contemporary controversies with his passions let loose. In order to check this, he turned towards stoicism and eastern philosophy so that he can continue to live in his world calmly without being affected by the raging controversies around him. Goethe and other German intellectuals of the late 18th century put before him the cultural ideal of the full, harmonious development of all our human capabilities. Matthew Arnold propounded this cultural ideal as the 'social idea' of culture in view of the rapid political, economic and social transition experienced in England of his days. This social idea involves not only personal development but also the quality of the culture of the whole society. Arnold's literary endeavours where directed towards application of this social idea to English society. He received philosophic support in this endeavour from German culture, especially from the works of Goethe and Heine. The driving force behind this effort of Arnold was his intense love of England. His patriotic fervour made him keenly feel the want of 'ideas' in English society. Absence of a consistent world-view and the untenable Christian interpretation of man and society made him accept the influence of German culture. He wanted a single and all-embracing ideology and this he found in the concept of culture. The Grecian notion of the complete man with a harmoniously developed personality, as propounded by classical humanistic
ideal, also attracted the attention of Matthew Arnold. This notion took a strong hold of his mind and he developed it fully in his concept of culture. Out of an anarchic society, the creation of a homogeneous and united people was possible only through the adoption of a programme of cultural nationalism. This was his firm belief as a nationalist. He held up the continental practice as a model. He rejected the 19th century philosophy of liberalism. This is exemplified by his attack on the Deceased Wife's Sister's Bill, a parliamentary measure of his day.

The Reform Bill of 1867 gave franchise to the worker in towns and thus almost doubled the electorate. The Bill was the result of much mass agitation and even a little disorder. Arnold was in general sympathy with the democratic movement. He wanted to help the transition. The change should take place without the destruction of the whole social fabric. The particular 'anarchy' confronting Arnold during the composition of this 'Essay in Political and Social Criticism' (1867) was the anarchy associated with this transition to a democratic setup. But these were to him only symptoms of that deeper anarchy of the spirit to which he opposed the idea of 'culture'. The French and Industrial Revolutions destroyed the old world. There was no centre of control, no sense of direction
in the democratic setup that succeeded the old world. There was only the worship of Mammon and machinery, supported by a faith in the virtue of 'Doing as one likes'. Material progress was the sole aim vigorously pursued. Arnold wanted to see the emergence of order from this chaos and the establishment of communication with the past and the future. 'Things in England being what they are,' he wrote soon after the book was published, 'I am glad to work indirectly by literature rather than directly by politics.'

Arnold was convinced of 'the beneficent function' of literature, and speaks of the 'immense work it has to do in the middle region between religion and science': 'I do hope that what influence I have may be of use in the troubled times which I see before us as a healing and reconciling influence.'

The dark blot on the record of industrial progress was the urban and rural poverty and misery and this is also a factor that led to the composition of 'Culture and Anarchy'. Matthew Arnold was criticized much as being aloof from all vulgar actuality. But the fact is that he had shown his awareness of it even in his earlier poetry and prose. The latest indication was a sonnet entitled 'East London' (1863). It is reflected also in 'Culture and Anarchy'. Matthew Arnold saw in one of the poorest districts of London 'a multitude

9. Ibid., P.41.
of children eaten up with disease, half-sized, half-fed, half-clothed, neglected by their parents, without health, without home, without hope. The anxiety of Arnold lay in the shortcomings and excesses of the English mind, character and civilization in all the strata of society. In an ironical way, he presents himself as 'properly a philistine', who finds in his 'own ordinary self' the baneful impulses of all the three classes. 'All of us, so far as we are Barbarians, Philistines, or Populace, imagine happiness to consist in doing what one's ordinary self likes.'

'Estote ergo Vos Perfecti! 'was the motto of "Culture and Anarchy". It loudly proclaims that our aim should be 'the true perfection of our humanity'. He wishes that the public at large should pay heed to this message. His purpose in "Culture and Anarchy", he writes, is to 'recommend culture as the great help out of our present difficulties; culture being a pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know, on all the matters which most concern us, the best which has been thought and said in the world, and, through this knowledge, turning a stream of fresh and free thought upon our stock notions and habits, which we now staunchly follow but mechanically, vainly imagining that there is a virtue in following them staunchly which makes up for the mischief of following them

11. Ibid., P.106.
12. Ibid., P.107.
This important definition of culture gives a name to the tradition of culture. He states further: 'Culture, which the study of perfection, leads us...... to conceive of true human perfection as a HARMONIOUS perfection, developing all sides of our humanity; and as a GENERAL perfection, developing all parts of our society.' Culture, then, is both a study and pursuit of perfection. It is not merely the development of 'literary culture' but of 'all sides of our humanity'. Nor is it an activity concerning individuals alone, or some section of society. It is, and must be, essentially GENERAL.

Culture, with its study of perfection, has an important function to discharge in the world, for its civilisation is in an abundant degree mechanical and external. In England, the mechanical and outward character of the civilisation appears the greatest, and hence all the greater need is there for culture. The character of English civilisation was, in his opinion, such that it opposes the characteristics of culture at all points. In the first place, the mechanical and material character of the civilisation will not tolerate that inward perfection which culture aims at. Next, the passion for individual liberty is opposed to the idea of a general or collective perfection. Finally, the

over-emphasis of one-side of human nature, a characteristic of the present-day civilisation, the incapacity to see more than one side of things, is opposed to the character of harmonious perfection which culture aims at.

The opposition on all these points is so strong that men of culture, bent on their mission of spreading its ideas, will find it a hard task. But, if they persevere, they may be able to do good at the end. But insuperable difficulties, engendered among Englishmen for a long time, confront them. For example, one of them is their faith in machinery. The term 'machinery' is used by Arnold in the sense of the means or methods one adopts in securing some end. Ultimately, this results in the means being mistaken for the end. Arnold mentions some of the means adopted to secure happiness. They are the passion for freedom, the production of coal, the construction of railways, the pursuit of wealth, the increase of population, the love of bodily health and vigour and finally their rigid adherence to their religious institutions. They have so zealously pursued these objects that they have identified these pursuits themselves with happiness. Such is the mechanical and external character of their civilisation.

Englishmen take pride in the liberty that everyman has to say what he likes. 'The Times' praises just this
liberty of Englishman to do just as he likes. But, according to Arnold, liberty is not to be valued for the freedom it gives to the individual to express his ordinary self but to express what is really worth saying. Their mechanical pursuit of the production of coal consists in believing that coal is the real basis of their national greatness. But it is forgotten that greatness is an internal condition. Similarly wealth has become an end in itself. Nine out of every ten Englishmen believe that the greatness and welfare of England are proved by their being very rich. But the people who possess this wealth are Philistines who are petty, selfish and narrow-minded. They live merely by their ordinary selves. Culture, insisting on an inward perfection, is dissatisfied with this pursuit which produces outward happiness only. Englishmen take pride in their increasing population, ignoring the appalling poverty and ignorance of the masses.

Their love of bodily health or vigour is not made subordinate to the development of the mind or morals. Giving oneself up to things merely related to the body exhibits lack of a finely tempered or refined nature. A truly refined nature will attempt to develop itself harmoniously and will strive to attain a perfection in which the aspects of beauty and intelligence, or sweetness and light, are both manifest. Finally, Englishmen rely on their
religious organisations to save them. Religion, of course, teaches one to conquer one's animality and holds up the ideal of the perfection of human nature on the moral side. It is characterised by great fervour and devout energy. Yet, it falls short of the perfection at which true culture aims. The best art and poetry of the Greeks, based on religion, held up the ideal of sweetness united with light and therefore it was true culture. But in England, sweetness and light have been sacrificed to strengthen the moral fibre and hence the religious organisations of Englishmen cannot be said to lead them to true culture. Since Englishmen believe to the contrary, their faith in them must be characterised as mechanical. These are the various factors that impelled Matthew Arnold to turn to the pursuit of perfection.

Culture is both a study and pursuit of perfection. It is not merely the development of 'literary culture', confined to 'belles lettres'; but of 'all sides of our humanity'. It is not an activity concerning individuals alone or some part of society. It is general in essence. Culture does not merely mean a selfish, personal cultivation of perfection as is generally made out. The improvement of the State need not wait on the process of this internal perfection. Arnold has emphatically declared: 'The culture we recommend is, above all, an inward
operation..... culture ..... places human perfection, in an internal condition.'\textsuperscript{15} Arnold, as a true democrat, is a believer in equality. Hence he asserts that 'perfection, as culture conceives it, is not possible while the individual remains isolated. The individual is required, under pain of being stunted and enfeebled in his own development if he disobeys, to carry others along with him in his march towards perfection, to be continually doing all he can to enlarge and increase the volume of the human stream sweeping, thitherward.'\textsuperscript{16} 'So all our fellowmen, in the East of London and elsewhere, we must take along with us in the progress towards perfection, if we ourselves really, as we profess, want to be perfect.'\textsuperscript{17} This is in agreement with the basic attack on Industrialism. Critics of Matthew Arnold, who criticise him as a preacher of policy of 'cultivated inaction', forget his arguments as well as his life. As an Inspector of Schools, and independently also, his effort solely directed towards the establishment of a system of general and humane education.

Culture is right knowing and right doing. It is a disinterested endeavour to see things as they are. It wishes to see the reason and the will of God prevail. He declares further: 'Now, then, is the moment for culture to be of service, culture which believes in making reason

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., P.48.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., Pp.192-193.
and the will of God prevail, believes in perfection, is the study and pursuit of perfection, and is no longer debarred, by a rigid invincible exclusion of whatever is new, from getting acceptance for its ideas, simply because they are new. Further 'culture looks beyond machinery, culture hates hatred, culture has one great passion, the passion for sweetness and light.' Modern civilization has become 'mechanical and external, and tends constantly to become more so.' 'Culture', like religion, 'places human perfection in an internal condition, in the growth and predominance of our humanity proper, as distinguished from our animality.'

Culture conceives the character of perfection to be: 'Not a having and resting, but a growing and becoming, is the character of perfection as culture conceives it; and here, too, it coincides with religion.' He stresses repeatedly that culture aims at perfection of the individual: 'But culture indefatigably tries, not to make what each raw person may like, the rule by which he fashions himself; but to draw ever nearer to a sense of what is indeed beautiful, graceful, and becoming, and to get the raw person to like that.' He clarifies further that culture does not mean as 'that fine speaker and famous Liberal, Mr. Bright, supposes, "a smattering of

19. Ibid., P.69.
20. Ibid., P.49.
21. Ibid., P.47.
22. Ibid., P.48.
23. Ibid., P.50.
the dead languages of Greek and Latin". It is 'a study of perfection'; so understood, it may help to build a dam against 'the common tide of men's thoughts in a wealthy and industrial community.' It may 'save the future, as one may hope, from being vulgarized, even if it cannot save the present.' This comment is enough to reveal Arnold's intense love of England and his concern for its future.

The grim alternative before Arnold was 'Culture and Anarchy' or 'Culture or Anarchy'. Arnold was careful to point out that his use of the term 'culture' does not signify what the word commonly does, a belletristic gentility. In his opinion, it means nothing less than reason which is experienced as a kind of grace by every citizen, the conscious effort of each man to come to the realisation of his complete humanity. Anarchy can be prevented only by this 'possible Socrates' in each man's breast. In Arnold's opinion, culture is an attitude of the spirit trained to receive truth. A moral reorientation, involving will, imagination, and faith has to take place for this to be effective. Culture prepares the whole personality to see reason. Culture is merely the addition of critical intellect to religion. Culture seeks to 'render an intelligent being yet more intelligent.' He quotes Montesquieu in this context: "Montesquieu says:

'The first motive which ought to impel us to study is the

25. Ibid., P.52.
26. Ibid.
desire to augment the excellence of our nature, and to render, an intelligent being yet more intelligent.'

But it 'moves by the force, not merely or primarily of the scientific passion for pure knowledge, but also of the moral and social passion for doing good.' This is even its most important part: 'the love of our neighbour, the impulses towards action, help, and beneficence, the desire for removing human error, clearing human confusion, and diminishing human misery, the noble aspiration to leave the world better and happier than we found it'.

Thus, according to Matthew Arnold, culture has its practical aspect too and is not mere acquisition of bookish knowledge.

The utterances of Bishop Wilson are recalled by Arnold to stress the importance of the aims of culture: 'To make reason and the will of God prevail!' Arnold makes clear what he means by 'will of God'. It means: 'the universal order which seems to be intended and aimed at in the world, and which it is a man's happiness to go along with or his misery to go counter to, -.'

Thus culture asserts that truth exists and can be known. It provides a test also - happiness or misery - by which its apprehension is acknowledged. Both culture and religion conceive perfection to be an 'inward' condition.

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28. Ibid., P. 45.
29. Ibid., P. 44.
30. Ibid., P. 45.
31. Ibid., P. 46.
of the individual. 'Religion says: "The Kingdom of God is within you"; and culture, in like manner, places human perfection in an "internal" condition, in the growth and predominance of our humanity proper, as distinguished from our animality.'

But culture never excludes the realities of the outer world. Arnold emphatically declares that culture is possible of perfection only as a mass movement and not as an individual effort. Culture, like religion, insists on continual development of the individual. Arnold insisted that culture went even beyond religion. Religion, as it generally operates, emphasizes only one aspect, the moral one.

One prerequisite to culture is 'seeing the object as in itself it really is'. 'Seeing the object as in itself it really is' involves knowing 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'.

Introspection, and the development of mildness and sweetness are involved in inward perfection. Arnold observes: 'But meanwhile it has plenty of well-intentioned friends against whom culture may with advantage continue to uphold steadily its ideal of human perfection; that

this is an inward spiritual activity, having for its characters increased sweetness, increased light, increased life, increased sympathy.' Arnold says that general perfection is also broader in its sphere. He says: 'As I have said on a former occasion: "It is in making endless additions to itself, in the endless expansion of its powers, in endless growth in wisdom and beauty, that the spirit of the human race finds its ideal. To reach this ideal culture is an indispensable aid, and that is the true value of culture". Culture, a dynamic perfection, considers men and society as a whole: 'It seeks to do away with classes; to make the best that has been thought and known in the world current everywhere; to make all men live in an atmosphere of sweetness and light, where they may use ideas, as it uses them, itself, freely, - nourished and not bound by them. This is the social idea; and the men of culture are the true apostles of equality.'

The 'men of culture are the true apostles of equality. The great men of culture are those who have had a passion for diffusing, for making prevail, for carrying from one end of society to the other, the best knowledge, the best ideas of their time; who have laboured to divest knowledge of all that was harsh, uncouth, difficult, abstract.

35. Ibid., P.47.
36. Ibid., P.70.
professional, exclusive; to humanise it, to make it efficient outside the clique of the cultivated and learned, yet still remaining the best knowledge and thought of the time, and a true source, therefore, of sweetness and light.' Arnold almost sums up his concept of culture in the above passage. To prove that his concept of culture is not a myth but a practicality, he spoke of Abelard of the Middle Ages and Lessing and Herder of Germany at the end of 18th century in the following words: 'Because they humanised knowledge; because they broadened the basis of life and intelligence; because they worked powerfully to diffuse sweetness and light, to make reason and the will of God prevail'. They would be remembered with reverence in their countries because of the above activities.

The practicality of culture is further stressed when Arnold says that it is a method of historical interpretation leading to political action. Arnold's explanation of why culture rejects 'Jacobinism' gives us a clue here. Arnold means by Jacobinism the 'violent indignation with the past, abstract systems of renovation applied wholesale, a new doctrine drawn up in black and white for elaborating down to the very smallest details a rational society for the future, - these are the ways of Jacobinism.'

38. Ibid., P. 71.
In the opinion of Arnold, Benthamism and Comtian Positivism were only different aspects of Jacobinism.

Arnold rejects system-making, because of his belief in the conception of the 'order of the universe' which may also be called the 'will of God'. 'Culture is always assigning to system-makers and systems a smaller share in the bent of human destiny than their friends like.' This order or process, Arnold believes, may help us to establish moral life on very firm ground and thus enable to suppress the 'ordinary self' in favour of what he calls 'the best self'. The work of culture is to ascertain the dominant current of the universe itself. Culture thus, seeks to move with the current of history. That is why Arnold rejects system-making. In the opinion of Arnold, it is our 'best self' that should help us to be sensitive to these currents of history, to go along with them and further them. Culture, which has separated 'the best self' from 'the ordinary self', will show 'the best self' its method of action. He says in this regard: 'But by our best self we are united, impersonal, at harmony, we are in no peril from giving authority to this, because it is the truest friend we all of us can have; and when anarchy is a danger to us, to this authority we may turn with sure trust....... So that our poor culture, which is flouted as so unpractical, leads us to the very ideas

capable of meeting the great want of our present embarrassed times! When the action of the best self fails, the ordinary self will take the lead and this is a "contravention of the natural order" producing "as such contravention must always produce, a certain confusion and false movement, of which we are now beginning to feel, in almost every direction, the inconvenience. In all directions, our habitual courses of action seem to be losing efficaciousness, credit and control, both with others and even with ourselves; everywhere we see the beginnings of confusion....."

The pragmatism of Arnold is seen again in his opposition to the Real Estate Intestacy Bill. In the chapter entitled 'Our Liberal Practitioners'in 'Culture and Anarchy', Arnold remarks that sweetness and light, namely beauty and intelligence, can even make a feudal class quietly and gradually drop its feudal habits. Arnold turns a fresh stream of thought upon the doctrine of free trade also. Here culture notes an anomaly which Liberalism had ignored. Free trade has not made the already existing poor man's bread cheaper and more abundant, as it has created poor men to eat it. This, Liberalism believes, is a mark of progress and hence is rejected by Arnold.

42. Ibid., Pp.143-144.
Arnold's early and continued attachment to Epictetus is recalled when he refers to the wise man's effort to go along with the providential order of the world. This is the ancient stoic doctrine. He comments further: 'At the bottom of both the Greek and the Hebrew notion is the desire, native in man, for the reason and the will of God, the feeling after the universal order, - in a word, the love of God.' Behind these utterances, there lies the concept not merely of reason, but 'of right reason', a phrase Arnold continually uses throughout 'Culture and Anarchy'. According to Arnold, 'right reason' is not only the source of authority but also a defence against anarchy. He uses the phrase 'right reason' interchangeably with his own phrase 'our best self', as opposed to 'our ordinary self'. 'So whatever brings risk of tumult and disorder, multitudinous processions in the streets of our crowded towns, multitudinous meetings in their public places and parks, - demonstrations perfectly unnecessary in the present course of our affairs, - our best self, or right reason, plainly enjoins us to set our faces against.' Right reason provides an ideal of thought, feeling and action. Arnold thus wanted to perfect a combination of the old with the best of the new. Thus, his definition of culture insists upon fresh knowledge and critical scrutiny of traditional wisdom and stock notions.

According to Arnold, life itself is impoverished due to the absence of some centre of authority. An influx of new and fresh ideas freshens the whole of social life. Arnold's concept of culture was thus pragmatic in contrast to Newman's idea of 'liberal knowledge'. Arnold was very clear that culture served a social purpose despite its detachment and inwardness. His notion of culture was not one of social selfishness.

Arnold appreciates very greatly the extent to which 'becoming' (social action) is enriched by the nature of 'being' (the richness of the individual's understanding). Arnold lays stress on 'being' because the enrichment of society is possible only by a personal enrichment. It is possible only then to turn a stream of fresh and new ideas on the stock notions of society. The difference between mechanical and vital knowledge was clearly grasped by him just as he understood clearly the difference between means and ends. Certain types of action, he conceived, as only means to an end: 'faith in machinery is, as I said, our besetting danger; often in machinery most absurdly disproportioned to the end which this machinery, if it is to do any good at all, is to serve; but always in machinery, as if it had a value in and for itself...... Now almost every voice in England is accustomed to speak of these things as if they were precious ends in themselves, and therefore had
some of the characters of perfection indisputably joined to them.' Arnold thus displays the capacity of a cultured mind which can distinguish between means and ends.

The word 'culture' is used, in modern times, mainly in the anthropological sense. It might be construed in a derisive manner if used in Arnold's sense. This hostility to the usage of the term is an inheritance from the critics of Arnold, such as John Bright, Henry Sidgwick and Frederick Harrison. They pictured him as an embodiment of sheltered literary gentility who was quite ignorant of the actual conditions. They alleged that he thought that the ills of the nation can be cured by a wide scattering of the classical 'belles lettres'. It appears surprising that such charges could be brought against an individual who, in his capacity as an Inspector of Schools, knew the middle and the poorer classes thoroughly. Thus he had a first hand knowledge of the condition of England of his days. But attacks on intellectualism and snobbery were always popular, however much unfounded. Arnold was the victim of such an attack. The fact that Arnold's concept of culture is not bookish is brought out by the statement: 'If a man without books and reading, or reading nothing but his letters and the newspapers, gets nevertheless a fresh and free play of the best thoughts upon his stock notions and habits, he has got culture'.

46. Ibid., Pp.6-7.
It is significant that Arnold's earlier definition of criticism is almost identical with his definition of culture. The only difference is that culture must work on a broader scale and affect more people in all spheres of their lives: 'The whole scope of the essay is to recommend culture as the great help out of our present difficulties;...... I say again here, what I have said in the pages which follow, that from the faults and weaknesses of bookmen a notion of something bookish, pedantic and futile has got itself more or less connected with the word culture, and that it is a pity we cannot use a word more perfectly free from all shadow of reproach..... This inward operation is the very life and essence of culture, as we conceive it.'

For Arnold, mere personal liberty is quite inadequate. It should not be glorified as an end in itself. It smacks thus of the English worship of 'machinery'. Selfishness leading to indifference to anarchy and violence is the consequence of 'Doing as One Likes'. Unfortunately, it is the motto of the three classes of English society, the Barbarians, the Philistines and the Populace. It is the law of the jungle. Arnold is concerned not with natural rights but with duties, duties as understood by enlightened minds. The essential virtues of such minds are intellectual curiosity, aptitude for fruitful knowledge and disinterested

examination of old and new ideas. Arnold wanted the setting right of economic injustices. More than that, he laid stress on better and widespread facilities for education for the sake of intellectual and cultural enlightenment, harmony and fulness of life, and happiness. He stressed that culture is concerned with the individual with his search for knowledge and wisdom which require constant self-scrutiny. But the main feature of the study of perfection is 'the noble aspiration to leave the world better and happier than we found it.' It involves also 'the moral and social passion for doing good'. Arnold is of the opinion that culture must spread widely since men are all members of one great whole: 'It is not satisfied till we all come to a perfect man; it knows that the sweetness and light of the few must be imperfect until the raw and unkindled masses of humanity are touched with sweetness and light.'

We might say that the great American philosopher Emerson, was Arnold's teacher in the sense that many of Arnold's ideas were already hinted at by him. Emerson had prophesied that morals must replace religion and that culture was at the basis of character. He had also predicted that a natural aristocracy of individuals must replace the 'grand style' of the departed aristocracy and that the 'remnant' was the source of all that was good.

49. Ibid., P.45.
50. Ibid., P.69.
Arnold was persuaded that 'culture' alone provided for individuality and excellence in a democratic set up. He was also clear about the function of a critic being that of a sound link between culture and society. But Arnold could not be scientifically exact in his definitions or too metaphysical or theological in his writings.

Arnold was attracted towards a neat pair of categories like Hebraism and Hellenism since it offered him an excellent opportunity of analysing the English society of his day. He found that Hebraism and Hellenism alternated throughout the ages. The decline of one brought about the rise of the other. But neither constituted the whole concept of human development. Thus the Hellenism of the pagan world was replaced by the Hebraism of the early Christianity. The Renaissance period saw the revival of Hellenism only to be replaced by the Hebraism of the Reformation. In England, Puritanism checked the progress of Hellenism. Arnold felt that England was not in the main stream of the continent because of its puritanical tendencies. The increasing complexity of the modern world demanded Hellenism rather than Hebraism. The perfection of man was the aim of both but they differed in their means. Hebraism concerned itself primarily with obedience to a law of conduct and with strictness of conscience. Hellenism concerned itself
primarily with seeing things as they are and with spontaneity of consciousness. Beauty and rationality of the ideal, was the chief concern of Hellenism. Hebraism, lacking this optimism, was marked by a sense of sin and was pessimistic of perfection. It doubted whether man was indeed a gentle, lovable and noble person. Hellenism's sense of the wholeness of the human personality fascinated Arnold much. But critics of Arnold pointed out that Hellenism did not give sufficient importance to morality. Hellenism concerned itself with morality only in relation to the rest of the human faculties. Hellenism was aware that the external life is indicated by the inner life which is determined by intelligence, imagination and the sense of beauty. This relationship or interdependence between the inner and outer life is exactly what is not taken cognizance of by Hebraism. It is indifferent to the external world. It seeks the one thing needful - the 'Porro Unum est necessarium' of St. Peter. It wants to conform to this law which cuts off morality from all other human faculties. Its great error was to make conduct an end in itself rather than the means to the end of a perfect, good life.

According to Arnold, the source of England's confusion is this inversion of values. Hebraism lies at the root of anarchy, when it is extended into public life. Many instrumental things like coal, increase in population
religious organisations were made an end in themselves along with conduct. Aristotle distinguished 'results' from 'activities' and 'Culture and Anarchy' reflects Aristotle's distinction. This is reflected in Arnold's concern about the value given to personal liberty by contemporary England due to confusion of means with ends. He says: 'the rough has not yet quite found his groove and settled down to his work, and so he is just asserting his personal liberty a little, going where he likes, assembling where he likes, bawling as he likes, hustling as he likes.' He remarks further: 'The moment it is plainly put before us that a man is asserting his personal liberty, we are half-disarmed; because we are believers in freedom, and not in some dream of a right reason to which the assertion of our freedom is to be subordinated.'

The consequence of this was seen in the destruction of the Hyde Park railings, the labour disturbances in Manchester and the bloody riots incited by the vituperative Mr. Murphy whom the authorities would not stop. Arnold saw all these as the signs of an anarchy, caused by the mechanical treatment of the idea of personal liberty. A principle of authority, sufficiently strong to judge and control the excesses of doing as one likes, was absent in England of Arnold's day.

Perfection, in the opinion of Arnold, was a long way off with things as they were, with liberal doctrines

52. Ibid., P. 78.
encouraging the increase of 'vast, miserable, unmanageable masses of sunken people.' Hebraism is powerless against the deficiencies of Liberalism. 'Hebraism builds churches, indeed, for these masses and sends missionaries among them; above all it sets itself against the social necessitarianism of the 'Times', and refuses to accept their degradation as inevitable.' But its own necessitarianism limits the scope of Hebraism. Hebraism was appropriate to the Jewish times when population increase was a necessity and hence its interpretation of the Bible to the contemporary England was not applicable. It has only a pointless morality to show to the swarming multitudes of the East End of England. Arnold remarks: 'And yet surely, so long as these children are there in these festering masses, without health, without home, without hope, and so long as their multitude is perpetually swelling, charged with misery they must still be for themselves, charged with misery they must still be for us, whether they help one another with a cup of cold water or no; and the knowledge how to prevent their accumulating is necessary, even to give their moral life and growth a fair chance.' This remark illuminates the whole of Arnold's concept of culture and rescues it from the charge of vagueness. Arnold realized that moral life and growth require a fair chance and cannot be achieved merely by the Christian doctrine of abstinence. This is the outcome of the principle of culture. Arnold's sound faith was

54. Ibid., pp.194-195.
that a man can perfect himself and become a whole human being by his wits and virtue, leading to harmonious perfection of all faculties.

Arnold's own 'Hellenic' ideal, 'to know things as they really are' is only a prerequisite. Not stopping short at 'curiosity', he pressed on with faith, ardour and a plentiful supply of wit. He wanted thus to enlighten and refine his countrymen through his knowledge and wisdom.

A contact with the 'best that has been thought and said in the world' would bring a certain kind of taste and appreciation. That means it is self-acquired. This is what Arnold calls 'culture'. At the same time, it involved a protest against the romantic idea that the source of enlightenment lay wholly within the self. It involved a submission to a creative, refining and external discipline. In his opinion, genuine creativity was the product of a co-operation between the man and the moment. 'The creative power has, for its happy exercise, appointed, elements, and those elements are not in its own control.' 55

Something much more than the perfection of the self was needed. Genuine, creative literary genius, he thought, lay 'in the faculty of being happily inspired by a certain intellectual and spiritual atmosphere, by a certain ordering of ideas, when it finds itself in them; of dealing divinely with these ideas, presenting them in the most effective and

attractive combinations, making beautiful works with them, in short. But it must have that atmosphere, it must find itself amidst the order of ideas, in order to work freely; and these it is not easy to command.

Mid-Victorian England did not have this kind of atmosphere certainly. Hence the importance of books and reading. Arnold was quite clear that what was really required was a society 'permeated by fresh thought, intelligent and alive, and this state of things is the true basis for the creative power's exercise.' As this was not possible in the England of his day, he insisted on the point that 'Even when this does not actually exist, books and reading may enable a man to construct a kind of semblance of it in his own mind, a world of knowledge and intelligence in which he may live and work.' He stresses hence the importance of the need for the exercise of critical intelligence to help in the creation of 'a quickening and sustaining atmosphere of great value'. A centre of enlightened opinion, which would help to sustain this atmosphere and which would also correct 'provinciality' also becomes essential.

For Arnold, the term 'culture' stands for almost all that he valued deeply: religion and sound learning, criticism and poetry, the idea of the State, the National

57. Ibid., P.29.
58. Ibid., P.29.
Establishment and the University of Oxford. Oxford symbolized for him all that a University should stand for. It worked silently upon the mind of the country. It has kept up 'communications with the future'. The charm of Oxford, Arnold felt, draws humanity nearer to the goal of all, to the ideal, to perfection. The life-long quest of Arnold was 'the true perfection of our humanity'. He was inspired by the Rugby of his father, the spell of Newman and the prompting of an Oxford Hellenist. The sensibility of a poet in close touch with the philistine England and its illiberal and dismal life was the driving force. He sought it also with that same detachment and that inward poise which make 'Culture and Anarchy' a searching analysis of contemporary society.

The motives of true culture are the scientific passion of curiosity and the moral and social passion for making reason and the will of God prevail upon earth. Curiosity, a term of disparagement in the modern sense, is 'a liberal and intelligent eagerness about the things of the mind.' It is, in brief, 'the desire after the things of the mind for their own sakes, and for the pleasure of seeing them as they are.' Such a passion implies a balance and regulation of the mind to be attained through fruitful effort. Culture's first passion is to know and
its next the desire to do. Culture is not content with mere knowing; it seeks to make that knowledge prevail. This is its social virtue as distinct from the scientific virtue of seeking knowledge for its own sake. The aim of culture is perfection. It seeks to make the world better and happier than it is. Therefore, men of culture desire to remove human error, to clear human confusion and diminish human misery. In this respect, culture seeks, in the words of Bishop Wilson, 'to make reason and the will of God prevail.' There is the danger of the passion for doing or acting unthinkingly or imperfectly. Hence culture lays stress on thought first, before action.

The ends of culture are two-fold: individual and collective. On the individual plane, culture seeks perfection by a harmonious development of all the faculties of man. It acts, according to the consensus of ages, as expressed in art, in science, in poetry, in history, in Philosophy as well as in Religion. Culture recognizes that man is composed not only of soul, but of body, of mind and of heart as well and that all these should be harmoniously developed to perfection. Here it goes even beyond religion which places the moral perfection of the individual as its ideal. The other end of culture partakes of a social character. An eternal sympathy binds man to man, and no one can be said to be on the way to
perfection who does not take others along with him. Thus, culture is a striving to enlarge the happiness of human kind.

Culture is a pursuit of perfection, a quest for sweetness and light which Swift had called 'the two noblest of things'. Of necessity, it is an endless quest. Arnold ridicules the Non-conformists of his day by saying that their drab, uncivilized, righteousness cannot satisfy this need for culture. He has also a dig at 'our Liberal Practitioners' by saying that their dependence on popular nostrums like trust in freedom, a muscular Christianity, population, coal, wealth cannot also satisfy the need for culture. They are all mere faith in machinery, and hence unfruitful. Arnold is not impressed with the technological progress, which again is merely 'machinery'. It is signified by the glory of frequent and rapid trains which carry people 'from an illiberal, dismal life of Islington to an illiberal, dismal life at Camberwell.' Culture refuses to accept external and material proofs of wellbeing as signs of culture. Culture aims at harmonious development and direction of all human powers and opposes overdevelopment of any one aspect. In Arnold's opinion, the one-sided over-development of middle-class, philistine 'Hebraism' most needs correction as it involves the sacrifice of all

sides of human nature to the religious side, to 'strictness of conscience'. In Victorian England, Hebraism meant a narrow, crude, rigid, anti-intellectual and anti-aesthetic inheritance from puritanism. Hence the motto of the chief non-conformist newspaper was 'the Dissidence of Dissent' and 'the Protestantism of the Protestant religion.' What England required was the opposite ideal of Hellenism, 'spontaneity of consciousness', the free, critical and disinterested play of the informed mind on all issues and traditions. Yet, Arnold believed that Hellenism, by itself, could not survive without moral stability. This was also testified by the last phases of ancient Greek history. Arnold never condemned the religious ideal of perfection in its higher and purer forms. He had even exclaimed in his lectures on Celtic Literature: 'But what a soul of goodness there is in Philistinism itself!' He exclaims at the end of the preface to 'Culture and Anarchy': 'To walk staunchly by the best light one has, to be strict and sincere with oneself, not to be of the number of those who say and do not, to be in earnest, - this is the discipline by which alone man is enabled to rescue his life from thraldom to the passing moment and to his bodily senses, to ennoble it, and to make it eternal. And this discipline has been nowhere so effectively taught as in the school of Hebraism.'


These sober words are a pointer to his forthcoming religious works. Arnold's labels of Hebraism and Hellenism, however qualified, signify the dominant strains, religious zeal and detached intellectual curiosity. For Arnold, both ideally seek perfection, 'the partaking of the divine life'.

The purpose of Matthew Arnold in writing 'Culture and Anarchy' made it necessary for him to heighten and simplify his class-views and to give them a symmetry of form. Arnold's love for England was great and he wanted to see her regain the 'geist'. He was the first to argue that the spiritual health of a society depended on there being a sufficient number of civilized human beings devoted to the idea of spreading culture. He was dismayed to find the lack of an informed and highly cultivated intelligentsia in England. Their presence is necessary to set standards of refinement of taste and conduct for the nation at large.

Arnold's classification of English society into Barbarians, Philistines and Populace is well-known. Arnold surveys the English scene, analysing the structure of English society and the characteristic ideas of each class to find out if any one of the three classes can serve as an organ of culture and as a nucleus of the new order. The
aristocracy seemed the only possible centre of authority to Carlyle. Some others, like Lowe, thought that the middle class can play that role. The Reform League was in favour of the working class as the only centre of authority. But Arnold rejects the aristocracy as a worn-out class. The Barbarians were not fit for leadership in times of swift change. In more stable periods, their fine qualities of high spirit and distinguished manners helped them to seats of power. The aristocracy was 'inaccessible to ideas' in Arnold's day. Culture rejects them saying that they possess one chief ingredient of culture, but not the other: beauty but not intelligence; sweetness and not light. The aristocracy, as a class, were interested in defending the status quo. They were inaccessible to the free play of new ideas on account of the very vigour with which they defended their position.

Attachment to an external mode of civilization made the middle class, the philistines, also not eligible to form the desired centre of authority. 'Culture and Anarchy' was chiefly written by Matthew Arnold to preach several things to that very class of citizens. The harmonious and general pursuit of perfection is impossible in their case because of their faith in 'machinery' like wealth, industry, production and progress. The philistines are too smug, too self-satisfied and too 'Hebraic' to form the desired 'centre'. The working class, the Populace,
shared with the middle class the attachment to external civilization. They wanted also to become philistines as quickly as possible. They were raw, blind, degraded and brutal. Darkness rather than light pervaded their world.

The members of each of the three classes were intent only upon exercising their birth right of 'Doing as they Liked'. It only meant that they wanted to follow the dictates of their 'ordinary selves'. But culture desires every one to develop his 'best self' in opposition to his 'ordinary self'. The State must be the organ of the collective best self and culture. It is to be the true centre of authority in the new world. The argument against State power depends on who is the 'State'. Burke is recalled in this context by Arnold: 'He who gave our nature to be perfected by our virtue willed also the necessary means of its perfection: He willed therefore the State.' Arnold repeats Burke's argument that the State is 'centre of light and authority, the organ of the 'best self'. But coming to practical terms, Arnold tells us how his centre is to be composed as an organ of the 'best self'. Looking at each class in the English society, he could find none to be the centre. State power cannot be the embodiment of the interest of one or another of these classes. Arnold's solution depends on what he termed as the 'remnant'. He argued that in each class, there
existed a minority of 'aliens' who were not disabled by the ordinary notions and habits of their class: 'persons who are mainly led, not by their class spirit, but by a general HUMANE spirit, by the love of human perfection.' The 'best self' is active in such men. They can awaken the latent 'best self' in all men. Poetry, education and criticism will be the means of awakening. The 'best that has been thought and written in the world' will form the base of education. An adequate general knowledge and a standard of effective thinking will be created by the 'best self' of humanity. A standard of 'beauty and of a human nature perfect on all sides' is set by poetry, which can be considered as a distinct organ of the 'best self' of man. A lasting and actual standard of the 'best self' can be provided by poetry by the addition of religious and devout energy and working on a broader scale of perfection. It can thus influence a larger number of men. Finally, criticism creates a proper atmosphere for the free play of intelligence and thus asserts the authority of the best self.

In the opinion of Arnold, the State becomes merely the embodiment of the influence of the best individuals. He quotes Wilhelm Von Humboldt extensively in this regard: 'Humboldt's object in this book, "The Sphere and Duties of Government" is to show that the operation of Government ought to be severely limited to what directly
and immediately relates to the security of person and property. Wilhelm Von Humboldt, one of the most beautiful souls that have ever existed, used to say that one's business in life was first to oneself by all the means in one's power, and secondly to try and create in the world around one an aristocracy, the most numerous that one possibly could, of talents and characters'.\textsuperscript{63} This proves clearly that Arnold did not live in the realm of theory. His suggestions cannot be dismissed as impossibilities. They have a practicality in their approach to the problems of his day.

Thus, the State as a 'centre of authority and light' should be created through its own agency. Yet the difficulty arises due to the prevalent, inadequate social structure which may prove to be a deadlock. Further, Arnold adds: 'But for us, - who believe in right reason, in the duty and possibility of extricating and elevating our best self, in the progress of humanity towards perfection, - for us the framework of society, that theatre on which this august drama has to unroll itself, is sacred; and whoever administers it, and however we may seek to remove them from their tenure of administration, yet, while they administer, 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.'\textsuperscript{64}

\textsuperscript{63} Matthew Arnold, Culture and Anarchy, ed.J.Dover Wilson, (London: Cambridge University Press,1979), P.126.

\textsuperscript{64} Ibid., Pp.202-203.
Arnold categorises the aristocracy, the middle class and the working class as the Barbarians, the Philistines and the Populace. The very categorisation as class implies imperfection which is bound to discover more faults than virtues. But Arnold overcomes this problem by suggesting that in each class there are men freed from the faults of their origins and not led by their 'class spirit'. They have the talent for seeking perfection. Arnold admits that they are without power. They are dependent on their respective classes to strengthen their number or virtue. Hence Arnold goes from the individual best self to the national best self which is a greater concept. It must be 'the national right reason' and the State must be founded on it.

The Philistines, the great middle class and the most influential section of English society were the solution to the problem, in the opinion of Arnold. He knew them well, especially the Dissenting part, in his official capacity as Inspector of Schools for nearly thirty years. He had to visit only the non-conformist schools. Puritanism or Protestant Dissent thwarted the full perfection of humanity. According to Arnold, Puritanism, which held sway over England for over two centuries after the Renaissance, had plenty of fire, strength and conscience. Liberty of conscience was established by Protestant Dissent. But it has
failed in civilising social action. It was also insignificant in positive intellectual action. According to Arnold, the remedy lay only in culture. He remarks: 'Culture without character is, no doubt, something frivolous, vain and weak; but character without culture is, on the other hand, something raw, blind and dangerous'. He adds further: 'Look at the life imaged in such a newspaper as the 'Non-conformist', - a life of jealousy of the establishment, disputes, tea-meetings, openings of chapels, sermons; and then think of it as an ideal of a human life completing itself on all sides, and aspiring with all its organs after sweetness, light and perfection!' Industry and the love of liberty which are the cherished virtues of the Philistines do not allow them to find and keep high ideals. Hence its ideal of perfection is narrow and incomplete. It had 'Hebraism', the principle of conduct, but not 'Hellenism', the principle of sweetness and light. The moral fibre and the instinct for honesty and purity of the people is due to it, as they form a part of conduct. But conduct constitutes only three-fourths of life and hence is inadequate. According to Arnold, the Hebraizing Philistines were mainly responsible for the defects of contemporary England: Parochialism, Provinciality, vulgarity, lack of centrality and lack of contact with the great movements on the continent. Thus Arnold holds the puritanical dissidents responsible for the then deplorable anarchic

condition of England. Hence he bitterly attacked the non-conformist religious organisations of contemporary England, the home of 'the Dissidence of Dissent and the protestantism of the protestant religion'. He declares that it is not 'an ideal of a human life on all sides and aspiring' with all its organs after sweetness, light and perfection.'66 Arnold explains also the reason for this partial attitude of the puritans. They considered themselves to be perfect as they were in possession of the one thing needful, the 'Unum Necessarium' and hence felt free to follow the lead of their ordinary selves in all other things. Thus they vulgarised their acquisitiveness and Mammonism.

Arnold fully realised that the transition to a democracy would result in a disaster if the English persisted in the assertion of individualism. Hence to prevent anarchy, Arnold, a keen observer of contemporary England, believed that 'Englishmen should acquire the notion so familiar on the continent and to antiquity, of the STATE—the nation in its collective and corporate character, entrusted with stringent powers for the general advantage, and controlling individual wills in the name of an interest wider than that of individuals.'67 The idea of the State as representing the 'best self' or essential 'humanity' of all its citizens was clear in the mind of Arnold. There was

67. Ibid., P.75.
no vagueness about it. He compared the State to an academy representing the intellectual conscience of the nation at large. He wanted Englishmen to devote themselves to the establishment of such a centre of authority by trying to face the larger issues confronting them rather than to immediate private tasks.

He insisted that high ideals can be realized only through the enlightened guidance and power of the State. He is recalling thus Burke's definition of the State: 'the nation in its collective and corporate character' or 'its best self'. The old fear of Governmental despotism or a new fear of vulgar Americanization could be discarded. The modern spirit is modifying national character and creating openness and flexibility of mind which are the first of virtues at such a time. In 'A French Eton' or 'Middle Class Education and the State', written in 1864, Arnold tries to break down a prejudice held by the middle classes that State power must not go beyond police function. The responsibility for a wise use of the enlarged power of the State, he believed, rested with the middle class. In the opinion of Arnold, there was no hope for United States which was almost wholly populated by middle class philistine disciples of Hebraism. Arnold liked to quote a double maxim from the 18th century Bishop Wilson: 'First, never go against the best light you have; secondly, take care that your light be not darkness.'

class, having a large surplus of Hebraism, needs a large infusion of Hellenism. But Arnold hated 'all over-preponderance of single elements.' He wanted an ideal balance and totality. Arnold felt sorry to note that the Hebraist set of mind still continued to persist strongly. He was insistent that it should also go as he was intent upon a radical change. Arnold claimed himself to be 'a Liberal, yet I am a liberal tempered by experience, reflection, and renouncement....' He was concerned with duties as understood by enlightened minds. Arnold pleaded for intellectual curiosity, the appetite for fruitful knowledge, disinterested examination of old and new ideas as much as he pleaded for the setting right of monstrous injustices, more and better education for the sake of intellectual and cultural illumination, harmony, happiness and fulness of life. The search for knowledge and wisdom and continual introspection are the beginning of cultural awakening in an individual. The main part of the study of perfection is 'the noble aspiration to leave the world better and happier than we found it.' Bishop Wilson's injunction 'to make reason and the will of God prevail' is interpreted by Arnold as the moral and social passion for doing good, being guided by informed intelligence. Reasonableness in men is to be understood as that flexible and tolerant open-mindedness which is essential to civilized man.

71. Ibid., P.44.
Arnold believed firmly that a greater social equality than that which prevailed in his time should be promoted by this firm State power. His long stay on the continent on official business in 1859 had made him realise that such 'signal inequality of classes and property' as existed in his own country was a great obstacle to civilisation. 'Equality', the second of his 'Mixed Essays' (1879) is his classical statement of it. He argues 'that the great inequality of class and property..... which we maintain because we have the religion of inequality..... has the natural and necessary effect, under present circumstances, of materializing our upper classes, vulgarizing our middle class, and brutalizing our lower class. And this is to fail in civilisation.' Thus he repeatedly stressed in his prose writings the importance of the State as the agent of general perfection. Thus he advocated the State as the agent of general perfection and wanted a smooth transition to democracy but not through the ways of Jacobinism. He elaborates further his views regarding the agents of culture.

In his day, State action of any kind, was viewed with suspicion. He saw clearly, at such a time, the need for more and more central planning, more enlightenment at the heart of the body politic, and above all, State education for the middle classes and the masses. He asserted, with all the force at his command, that culture was no class perquisite to be enjoyed by the exclusive and privileged few.
It was the best friend of equality as it could function effectively only when it permeated the whole mass. He writes that 'the men of culture are the true apostles of equality.' Culture, by throwing a free play of new and fresh ideas on to all stock notions, seeks to do away with class altogether. Arnold's ideal is government by a State, closely resembling but more modern in outlook than Oxford and spread of culture over the whole country 'by an indefinite multiplication of non-residential Rugby schools under State supervision.' Arnold's fundamental political belief was that 'moral causes govern the standing and the falling of the States.' Arnold thus put his faith in all that he meant by culture - which included religion as well as education, the quest for perfection and light in all things.

Arnold wrote to his wife in 1851 a few days after assuming duty as Inspector of Schools, about the great importance of schools 'in civilising the next generation of the lower classes, who, as things are going, will have most of the political power of the country in their hands.' This is indeed a testimony to the clear foresight of Arnold. He gave society, in a period of transition, the practical counsel it needed for new problems and responsibilities. He could be seen in all his prose writings as an educator. He laboured always to drive away the insular complacency

and inertia by comparing England with other countries in matters relating to education and literary criticism. Arnold's practical thesis was that the education of the English middle class could be greatly improved only through schools created by the State. As an Inspector of Schools, he knew, by practical experience, that elementary education was in good shape. His concern was always with secondary schools. The so-called 'Public Schools' catered for the upper classes. The middle class was left to what he called 'private adventure schools'. He stated: 'our middle classes are nearly the worst educated in the world.' Charles Dickens's 'David Copperfield' was praised by him as giving a true picture of the middle class educational system.

He was of the opinion that State schools would bring enhanced dignity, through participation in democracy, to pupils and their respective families. The middle class will then become the centre of culture, of intellectual life by transforming and affirming itself. The great question was whether the middle class can comprehend this point of view. The middle class can carry the lower class upward with it if it can become a cultured, liberalised, ennobled and transformed class. Arnold is thus making a concrete plea for State schools as essential agents of deliverance and enlightenment. Repeating his plea in 1859, Arnold

declares that English civilization 'the humanizing, the bringing into one harmonious and truly human life, of the whole body of English society - that is what interests me. I try to be a disinterested observer of all which really helps and hinders that.' Thus he felt that three things were necessary for proper development of England: 'a reduction of those immense inequalities of condition and property amongst us, of which our land system is the base; a genuine municipal system; and public schools for the middle classes.' That is how he wanted to see the spread of culture in England. He insisted that the middle class must be educated and that too only through the medium of State Schools.

In the opinion of Arnold, the Welfare State, besides redressing economic and social injustice, promotes good life. Humanisation of man in society was the aim of good life and civilization. This can be achieved only with the individual's self-enlightenment, leading to a change. It is an ethical, intellectual and aesthetic transformation of the individual. This is the 'best-self' or 'right reason' for Arnold. The acceptance of raw self or 'ordinary self' leads only to a continuing conflict and confusion. Hence he advocated the State as the centre of authority as the right step for the individual on the road to perfection.
Arnold summed up his own career, declaring that he had won no battles but had succeeded in keeping open the lines of communication. Commenting on this in 'The Return of Matthew Arnold', 1925, Eliot said: 'this is the Arnold who is capable of being a perpetual inspiration. His "party" has no name, and is always, everywhere and inevitably, in the minority. Were he alive today, he would find Populace and Barbarians more Philistinized, and Philistia more barbaric and proletarianized than in his times. The only possible victory for Arnold and his disciples is to continue to "keep up communications" with the future and with the past.' But Eliot made it explicit in 'For Lancelot Andrews' (1928) that Arnold's work was not in vain. He remarked further: 'It is not to say that Arnold's work was vain if we say that it is to be done again; for we must know in advance.... that the combat may have truces but never have a peace.' What Arnold did was to keep the cause of culture a live issue before the public.

Arnold's own faith was a sound one. His fundamental belief was that man, by his wits and his virtues, may perfect himself to become a whole human being. He had and ideal of order and of unity. He remarked, in a very pragmatic manner, in 'Democracy': 'Undoubtedly we are drawing on towards great changes; and for every nation the

thing most needful is to discern clearly its own condition, in order to know in what particular way it may best meet them. Openness and flexibility of mind are at such a time the first of virtues.... perfection will never be reached; but to recognize a period of transformation when it comes, and to adapt themselves honestly and rationally to its laws, is perhaps the nearest approach to perfection of which men and nations are capable. 76

Arnold tried to link the worship of the past with the future of culture. The loss that progress entailed, namely the relaxation of personal energy and courage, the slavery to artificial want and the dull, mechanical character of man's life were attacked by him through this traditional worship of the past. He attacked also urbanization, science and collectivism, materialism in all forms and individuality. Thus, Arnold was a spokesman for cosmopolitanism. In Arnold's opinion, thought also was a kind of action. He thus silenced his critics who commented that he was always complaining and never acting. To the objections from practical English politicians, he replied: 'But with the increasing number of those who awake to the intellectual life, the number of those also increases, who having awoke to it, go on with it, follow where it leads them. And it leads them to see that it is their business to learn the real truth about important men and things, and books, which interest the human mind. For thus is gradually

to be acquired a stock of sound ideas, in which the mind will habitually move and which alone can give our judgments security and solidity.'

Thus Arnold exercised his deepest influence and appeal as a social critic.

In the opinion of Arnold, Liberalism did not cater enough for the human desires for beauty, manners and intellectual accomplishments. The cause of eradication of extreme inequalities, its true objective, was forgotten in the pursuit of wrong ones such as the Deceased Wife's Sister's Bill etc. Arnold prophesied as a Liberal of the future that '... so long as the liberals do only as they have done hitherto, they will not permanently satisfy the community.'

Arnold tried to strengthen Liberalism by Criticism.

'Culture and Anarchy' is sometimes described as a philosophic defence of liberalism. Arnold had an organic conception of society and the individual happens only to be a particular aspect of an integral whole. The individual springs from society and is endowed by it. Hence his rights cannot be thought of as distinct from those of society as a whole. Arnold saw in England's judgement of the things of the mind a growing inclination to consider all things as of equal value. He advised the acceptance of right reason and best self and avoidance of conflict. It is thus


possible to check the effect of ordinary self.

He observes: 'And, on the other hand, we have another philosophical theory rife among us, to the effect that without the labour of perverting ourselves by custom or example to relish right reason, but by continuing all of us to follow freely our natural taste for the bathos, we shall, by the mercy of Providence, and by a kind of natural tendency of things, come in due time to relish and follow right reason.' Hence the new instrument of 'culture' as the principle of authority is evolved by Arnold: 'And I say that the English reliance on our religious organisations and on their ideas of human perfection just as they stand, is like our reliance on freedom, on muscular Christianity, on population, on coal, on wealth, - mere belief in machinery, and unfruitful; and that it is wholesomely counteracted by culture, bent on seeking things as they are, and on drawing the human race onwards to a more complete, a harmonious perfection.' Thus he saw culture as the only salvation. Culture begins with the realization 'that the sweetness and light of the few must be imperfect until the raw and unkindled masses of humanity are touched with sweetness and light.' Arnold's democratic insight can be perceived here. Self-salvation of an enlightened man depends upon a general development of his fellow-men. Arnold says: 'If I have not shrunk from

80. Ibid., Pp.59-60.
81. Ibid., P.69.
saying that we must work for sweetness and light, so neither have I shrunk from saying that we must have a broad basis, must have sweetness and light for as many as possible. Again and again I have insisted how those are the happy moments of humanity, when the whole of society is in the fullest measure permeated by thought, sensible to beauty, intelligent and alive. 82

Arnold wanted to make knowledge simple and pure by purging it of whatever was abstract, exclusive and professional. He desired to humanize it by taking it outside the clique of the cultivated and the learned. This may as well be accepted as the definition of a man of culture.

Arnold pleaded for the inculcation of the tone and temper for literature as the remedy for the narrow influences of special interests of partisanship. Literary men thought that he was degrading literature to a training ground for the practical affairs of life, sacrificing disinterestedness in literature. But Arnold's plea for disinterestedness never implied an aesthetic detachment. His was a plea for the attitude of Socrates seeking the good of Athens. The views of Patrick Parrinder, as set out in his 'The Failure of Theory' 83 are relevant in this context. The reputation of Socrates as an educator rests upon his conviction that he was wise only in his awareness of his

his own ignorance and that he must examine other men about what they knew. The Socrates of 'Apology' embodies the notion of 'disinterestedness' and 'free play of the mind' which, in the opinion of Matthew Arnold, are the necessary conditions for the critical thought. Arnold invokes the historical Socrates in 'Culture and Anarchy'. Emphasis has to be laid on Arnold's stress on the possible Socrates in every man's breast. Arnold, reacting against the bourgeois culture of his own time, argued that the critic's disinterestedness and mental freeplay should always be circumscribed by 'urbanity' and 'tact'. Arnold does not agree with the obstinacy of the cross-examiner in the Socratic tradition. He believed that the right tone will persuade everyone to agree. Thus, disagreement is judged by the quality of disinterestedness among other things. Arnold, thus, stressed the extent to which the Socratic cross-examination should be turned upon itself. Literature and a free play of consciousness were his means of discipline. Arnold realized that his public policies were impracticable for the state of British public opinion of his day. Hence his insistence to attempt the transformation of the middle class mind rather than to propose measures. Literary culture would be able to see inadequacy of middle-class education and the futility of mere machinery.

The breakdown of culture in contemporary England was seen by him in general terms. It is to the credit of
Arnold that even when he attacks the Barbarians, the Philistines and the Populace of his day, he never forgets the fact that they are human beings to be treated with courtesy and dignity that human beings deserve. In his world, there is always a possibility of reformation for the better and hence his optimistic outlook has a note of sincerity. Even the most unregenerate can be reclaimed, according to Arnold. Arnold's concepts are embodied in his style. There is a consistency between what he advocates and his voice of pleading. He carefully chooses words suffused with sweetness and light for which he vehemently argued.

Goethe's influence on Arnold can be seen in his attitude towards the 'Zeitgeist'. 'The New English Dictionary' defines the term Zeitgeist as 'the spirit or genius which marks the thought or feeling of a period or age'. This definition is rather inadequate.

Arnold gave a special meaning and character to the term, 'Zeitgeist' just as he gave a special meaning to terms like 'philistine' and 'culture'. We find reflected in Arnold's writing the phenomenon of time, the periodicity of history and the relation of the individual to the age in which he finds himself. These interests are expressed by Arnold by means of terms like the 'River of Time', or 'Wave'
or 'stream' and 'tendency'. 'Epoch of concentration' and 'Epoch of expansion' are also such terms. 'The movement of the River of Time in "The Future" reveals an Arnold divided between an idea of happiness conceived in terms of human social progress and an idea of happiness dependent upon intimate relations of the individual with something spiritual in origin. The oratorical ending of 'A French Eton' (1864) glows with a vision of the ascent of "the arduous ladder whereby man climbs towards his perfection"; but Arnold and the Gypsy Scholar of "Thyrsis" (1866) seek a "fugitive and gracious light" tentatively and in solitude. And the essays of the last decade suggest a diminished interest in historical process and causation. Yet Arnold's Time-spirit is an evidence of his 'interest in the phenomenon of change'. Arnold's meanings for the term are inconstant. Some times, it is used to denote the temper of the times, with the additional idea that time is a local, changeable phenomenon opposing eternal values, as in his letters to Clough. At other times, it is used to denote an aspect of the eternal, promoting change as a manifestation of its own being, as in his writings on Church and the Bible. It begins to emerge as the agent of necessary change in the realm of intellect, a role that is established more firmly in "St. Paul and Protestantism" and yet more insistently in "Literature and Dogma". The term that in 1848 expressed the dulness of the World to be overcome

84. Fraser Neiman, 'The Zeitgeist of Matthew Arnold', PMLA, 72, 1957, p.979.
expressed in the 1860's the plastic stress itself."

'Intellectual ideas, which the majority of men take from the age in which they live, are the dominion of this time-spirit; not moral and spiritual life, which is original in each individual.'

In Arnold's opinion, the Hebraisers 'have little notion of letting their consciousness play on things freely, little ear for the voice of the "Zeitgeist"'.

Thus, Arnold makes Zeitgeist an important aspect of perfection or culture. The term is associated with the compulsion of a principle of change. In isolated passages in 'Literature and Dogma', Zeitgeist seems to be satisfactorily equated with 'reason'. 'And in the period of Arnold's greatest interest in intellectual change, especially as manifested by new interpretations of Christian doctrine, the figure of the Zeitgeist signifies a cosmic spiritual power that wills the development of human reason and that reveals development in the sequence of historic time. In Arnold's essays on religion, the expression has its special usefulness both as a rhetorical device connoting a supernatural agency that favours Arnold's views and as a means of suggesting, without firm assertion, the probability that the wisdom of the best man is ultimately the wisdom of God.'

His own unfavourable reception as a poet must have been explained by the Zeitgeist.

85. Fraser Neiman, 'The Zeitgeist of Matthew Arnold', PMLA, 72,1957, P.982.
86. Ibid., P.985.
88. Fraser Neiman,The Zeitgeist of Matthew Arnold, PMLA, 72,1957, P.
As Zeitgeist signifies a cosmic spiritual power that wills the development of human reason, it has an important role to play in Arnold's concept of culture. The cultural condition of England will improve as an effect of operation of the Zeitgeist, in the opinion of Matthew Arnold.

'Culture and Anarchy' exhibits the wide philosophic perspectives and aims of Arnold. Arnold concerned himself with fundamental questions, chiefly shortcomings and excesses, of the English mind, character and civilization at all levels.

Arnold was good in exposition and argument, combining his serious message with a kind of satirical wit and quiet irony. He employed these weapons effectively as he felt that they were necessary to make his ideal of perfection effective. In February, 1868, he wrote to his mother that 'the one arm they (the Barbarian and the aristocrats) feel and respect is irony; whereas the puritan middle class at whom I have launched so much, are partly too good, partly too gross, to feel it. I shall tell upon them, however, before I have done.' The problems dealt with in 'Culture and Anarchy' are enduring issues examined in a large perspective. Arnold's comforting positive ideal of a society in which all individuals may attain full and harmonious development of all their powers is important.

Several charges are levelled against Arnold. One charge is that he has said much of sweetness and light but less of the other essential element of culture—strength. It is a defect inherent in all literary men turned into social critics. It is a slow, imperceptible change that a social critic is able to effect and hence his social criticism does not appear to have much of 'strength'. But what has been said has been effectively said without mincing words and hence may be said to possess strength also. It is perhaps a fault in Arnold that he understressed the necessity of learning from communion and action.

Another charge is that the conflicts he deals with are those which affect his taste rather than the fundamentals of human existence. This is inherent in the statement of T.S.Eliot when he denies to Arnold 'the vision of the horror and of the glory.' It is also charged that the comparative narrowness of Arnold's outlook is revealed in his remark about the Populace, the lower classes: 'And so they are thrown back upon themselves, upon their beer, their gin, and their fun.' That is why T.S.Eliot remarks: 'Arnold's notion of life, in his account of poetry, does not perhaps go deep enough.'

Much controversy is centred about the very definition and meaning of the word 'culture'. It is a
confused debate dating back to the beginning of the Nineteenth Century. The word 'culture' can be thought of in two ways. One is to apply it to the whole way of life of a community and its institutions, expressing its basic values. This is the broad and anthropological sense of the word. The other way is to think of 'culture' as the product of a small minority. It is of direct interest only to a somewhat larger minority. Whether this minority culture can exist without deep roots in the common life of all is a question under debate. The dubious modern life of an industrialized society makes it much more complex. Both the broader and narrower senses have their own respective supporters and critics. F.R. Leavis defends the narrower sense and argues: 'In any period, it is upon a very small minority that the discerning appreciation of art and literature depends. Upon them depend the implicit standards that order the finer living of an age, the sense that this is worth more than that, this rather than that is the direction in which to go, that the centre is here rather than there. In their keeping is the language, the changing idiom, upon which fine living depends, and without which distinction of spirit is thwarted and incoherent.' Raymond Williams defends 'culture' in the wider sense. His thesis is that a small group of people attempt to mould all life into their own image and that results in minority culture. The common social experience of a people, the whole fabric of society assimilating into itself diverse skills and attitudes and the 'tending of natural growth' constitutes the wider culture
in his opinion. The wider culture is a comprehensive one including the multiplicity of life. All should live as members of a society which implies keeping the channels of growth clear.

One of the charges frequently levelled against Arnold is that his notion of 'State' is vague and impossible in practical terms. It is doubtful whether any State, expressing the power of one or all of the three classes, could undertake the function of perfection of human beings. Arnold's attitude to the working class further complicates the issue. The working class was just then organising itself. Arnold puts it as: 'The rough has not yet quite found his groove and settled down to his work, and so he is just asserting his personal liberty a little, going where he likes, assembling where he likes, bawling as he likes, hustling as he likes.'

This reaction is typical and Arnold's fears run deep. He adds further: 'And thus, that profound sense of settled order and security, without which a society like ours cannot live and grow at all, sometimes seems to be beginning to threaten us with taking its departure.' So great is the threat that he declares in emphatic terms: 'But for us,—who believe in right reason, in the duty and possibility of extricating and elevating our best self, in the progress of humanity towards perfection,....... we steadily and with

91. Ibid., P.82.
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.  

It is alleged that Arnold is surrendering to a stock notion or habit of his class at so vital a point. It should be remembered that the demonstrating and organizing working class was not aiming to destroy society as such. They were only aiming to change the order of society then prevalent by means available to them. The remedy of some particular grievance was often aimed at. But Arnold seems to have confused the particular ordering of interests with human society as such. His analysis of contemporary events went wrong at this stage. The existing framework of society, a piece of 'machinery', should have been known to Arnold as such. He is ready for a change but only by recourse to 'a due course of law'. But Arnold can be defended from this charge by saying that his concern was to ensure the sustenance only of the necessary, minimum order which would allow the civilizing and humanizing process to develop unhampered. But the crux of the problem is that so great a State power becomes dangerous and disabling when there is a confusion between the ideal State as an agent of perfection and the actual State concentrating in its hands particular power. Arnold's failure in this regard may be treated as the typical liberal failure evading the crude

issue of power, which is always shunned by sensitive and reasonable men as a harsh reality. Arnold's efforts may best be thought of as an experiment of light rather than as an experiment of fruit. However, Arnold himself protested at this: "And thus man's two great natural forces, Hebraism and Hellenism, will no longer be dissociated and rival, but will be a joint force of right thinking and strong doing to carry him on towards perfection. This is what the lovers of culture may perhaps dare to augur for such a nation as ours." 93

We have to conclude that in this particular case, Arnold's 'right reason' is overcome by a prejudice on account of a deep emotional fear. But, unfortunately, Matthew Arnold was able to see his magnified image of the rough only.

But to come back to Arnold's conception of the State, the problem is how can a State, which is a fair and impartial umpire, be created. Arnold faced a time of strong class feeling. He was afraid of a class struggle. He wished to have his State founded on the 'best self' of each individual, devoid of class interest. This appears to be a fallacy because the essence of a class is its special interest. Class ceases to have a meaning when once its interest is taken away. Hence a society without

class interest becomes a classless society and this was not aimed at by Arnold at that time. He is thinking of a class State void of interest as a logical possibility and thus takes us to the field of epistemology. Power is supposed to be made reasonable by placing power and reason in the same agent. This is for the good of the majority of people. In the end, Arnold is forced to turn to possible Socrates in each man's breast and make reason wait upon his consent. Natural growth, development and the knowledge of his felt necessity will create this Socrates. This results in a confusion in a circle. This confusion lies in the nature of the problem dealt with by Arnold.

It is alleged that Arnold laid so much of emphasis on the importance of knowing and so little on the importance of acting and thus there is a danger of allowing culture to become a fetish. Culture is a process and tries to suggest certain known absolutes. Culture which disparages science and politics evoked an opposition and made Arnold appear a prig when he used the term 'culture'.

For Arnold, culture was a process. But Arnold could not find the material of the process in the society of his own day. Then, against the intention of Arnold, the process thus became more and more an abstraction without any absolute ground. The difficulty can be seen in a
paragraph like this: 'Perfection will never be reached; but to recognize a period of transformation when it comes, and to adapt themselves honestly and rationally to its laws, is perhaps the nearest approach to perfection of which men and nation are capable. No habits or attachments should prevent their trying to do this; nor, indeed, in the long run, can they.' Arnold desired the study of humanities for their own sake and questioned the claims of science to provide a satisfactory education.

In November, 1867, the 'Fortnightly Review' Published a satirical retort to the first chapter of 'Culture and Anarchy' from the pen of Frederick Harrison. It was entitled: 'Culture: A Dialogue'. Harrison ironically assumed the role of the expounder and defender of culture and assigned to Arnold's own Arminius of 'Friendship's Garland' the task of savagely demolishing all the fine sentiments in favour of culture. The simple question of instrumentality was the weapon used in a very effective manner by the renegade Arminius. How is culture to work in the task of social amelioration when it meant only internality, personal enlargement and cool application of reason? Culture must show what it can 'do'. This type of satire delighted Arnold much and he demonstrated the practicability of his gospel of culture. He says: 'Because we habitually live in our ordinary selves, which

do not carry us, beyond the ideas and wishes of the class to which we happen to belong. And we are all afraid of giving too much power to the State, because we only conceive of the State as something equivalent to the class in occupation of the executive government, and are afraid of that class abusing power to its own purpose.95

He adds further: 'But by our best self we are united, impersonal, at harmony.'96 We find no basis for a firm state-power in our ordinary selves; culture suggests one to us in our best self...... But our best self inspires faith, and is capable of affording a serious principle of authority.'97 Harrison's satire is thus answered with a practical solution and his theory of State is justified in practical terms.

Because of his advocacy of State as a centre of authority, Arnold is attacked as the insidious proponent of a tyrannical authoritarianism by Leonard Woolf in his work 'After the Deluge'. Letter IV of 'Friendship's Garland' is a good refutation of this charge as well as the charge that Arnold was an advocate of monarchy, especially of the Prussian model. Arnold's practical recommendations rescue him also from the charge of reactionary tendencies. He followed Burke's tradition of slow, almost imperceptible change because he believed in a 'revolution by due course

96. Ibid., P.95.
97. Ibid., Pp.96-97.
of law*. That Arnold was far from being a reactionary can be easily grasped if we peruse a chapter in 'Culture and Anarchy' entitled 'Our Liberal Practitioner's'. In this chapter, he analyses middle class legislation and brings out the unreasonable nature of such a legislation.

Arnold desired that the new current in the history of Europe can be perceived by culture. Lack of righteousness and faith in religion must be supplied by culture. There is a charge that Arnold himself did not in actual practice exemplify the virtues of mind he praised in his writing. Despite his talk of disinterestedness, he himself was passionate often. Arnold had a passionate dislike of system. Arnold was more concerned with refining relatively good minds than fighting wicked minds. As a critic he would rather pressurise his friends rather than destroy his enemies. He looked with coolness upon action because he knew it was a way of escaping thought, and went beyond itself. In an age when intellectuals believed that thought was inferior to action, Arnold believed that action did not require the suspension of reason.

It is often alleged that Arnold's vision of the future was too simple and too genteel to be complete. Of course, Arnold's Hellenism and belief in the Anglicanism of Bishop Wilson as the sum of modern morality were partly
responsible for this charge. His attitudes and ideas were those of an Englishman applicable to his own particular class of his own day. This implies that he was more a mirror of his times rather than a critic of his world. But Arnold was a firm believer in the ennobling power of literature, especially the ancient classics. He believed that the end of education and life was wise and virtuous action, resulting in the moulding of a peaceful, harmonious society rising above individual, nationalistic and religious struggles for power. He was close to the humanists in all these aspects.

It is also alleged that Arnold's notion of life was not deep enough and this weakness cuts him off from all aspects of human experience. Arnold is alleged to have thus avoided the discipline of suffering. Life is made up of horror, boredom and glory. But according to T.S. Eliot, 'The vision of the horror and the glory was denied to Arnold, but he knew something of the boredom.' Arnold thus never went deep enough.

Separating Arnold's religious writings from others, T.S. Eliot felt that the greatest weakness of Arnold's culture was his weakness in philosophical training. The 'will of God' that is spoken of so much by Arnold seems to become superseded in importance by

'best self' or 'right reason' to which authority has to be given.

The purpose of 'Culture and Anarchy' made it necessary for Arnold to heighten and simplify his class-views and to give them a symmetry of form, which they, in fact, did not possess. They were the changing and complicated products of his complete experience. His family and school background partly shaped the point of view from which he saw himself and his society. Rugby and Balliol, made a 'stratified' society seem the 'natural' one. He sought always to mitigate the abuses of the class and to soften the charges made against it. He insisted more on its virtues than on its vices. His views regarding the populace were infected by the age's fear of revolt.

Thus, Arnold has been able to evoke dissent from many quarters for different reasons. Arnold felt helpless, as revealed in his 1853 preface, in the face of hostile criticism and the Zeitgeist. Arnold's 'Culture and Anarchy' is to be considered as his best social criticism incorporating his life's aim and attitudes.