CONCLUSION
Art, criticism and civilization make up Matthew Arnold's Poetics. This relation was hinted at by Northrop Frye, though not about Arnold: "Art for art's sake is a retreat from criticism which ends in an impoverishment of civilisation." Art, as a distinct organ of the 'best self' of humanity, will set a standard of 'beauty and of a human nature perfect on all sides', and it is this that is civilization. Criticism is a part of the same process towards standards, "a creation by the free play of intelligence". This formula has not only been enunciated but also repeatedly and variously demonstrated. In a sense, Arnold is not exclusively a literary critic but has other presuppositions in larger perspective. The whole psychological complex of a poet-critic has been revealed under the influence of zeitgeist. Very few poets were as conscious of the Time Spirit as Arnold. Lionel Trilling has spotted this: "Perhaps more than any other Englishman of his time, Arnold submitted himself to the stresses of his age, experiencing its pains and contradictions in a personal way". Both his poetry and his criticism interpret the age, also try and stretch beyond the bounds of time. But with all his agony, Arnold can never rid himself of the Victorian veneer of a genteel tradition. Clough was perhaps the first to

1. Anatomy of Criticism; Four Essays, (Princeton University Press; 1957), p. 4
2. Williams, Raymond, Culture and Society (Pelican), p. 130
detect this duality in him. He finds in Arnold "a calmer judgement also, a more poised and steady intellect, the siccum lumen of the soul; a finer and rarer aim perhaps, and certainly a keener sense of difficulty, in life". This sense of unease and difficulty makes Arnold more agonised than academic — a point missed by Eliot. The two voices, one of the artist and the other of the critic, are often heard simultaneously. The frontiers between the realm of art and that of criticism in him merge, sometimes one side winning, sometimes the other.

The movement from art to criticism and from criticism to art is not hard to distinguish. Here Arnold differs from the Romantics and comes close to the Moderns. Both the romantics and the moderns attempt to be critical in general and on their own work in particular. Neither Homer nor Shakespeare needed such self-consciousness. The Augustans explained their techniques and intentions only. But it was probably with the Romantics and their aftermath that this became a necessity, and even theories were provided. Yet inspite of their theories, the romantics often lose track of the critical commitment when they 'create'. Arnold cannot, or can rarely, do so. In this he anticipates the moderns. The fact was obliquely admitted by Eliot when he said: "Arnold is more intimate with us than Browning, more intimate than Tennyson ever is except at moments ....".

5. The Use of Poetry (Faber and Faber; 1959), p. 105
About one who is typically modern Paul Valery has noted shrewdly: "it is the very one who wants to write down his dream who is obliged to be extremely wide awake". But this "waking dream" — a romantic theme after all — does not leave any one "forlorn", not even Arnold. A wanderer between two worlds, he may not find any resting place. Yet he, the alien, himself becomes, in a world of sick hurry and divided aims, paradoxically a refuge and a representative for the restless souls. Retrospectively, perhaps, culture and anti-culture come closer. This unsuspected drama and paradox make his art and criticism so unique. While it helps, it also erodes both his poetry and his criticism. He is neither a pure poet, nor a pure critic. Arnold's artistic vision seems to suffer often from myopia owing to his critical bias, and again his criticism often moves towards art. Taken together, both make an interesting whole and reveal the real drama of Arnold's mind. Arnold criticism is noted more for many positive, popular and pontifical utterances, but in his poetry the note is divided and desperate, even nostalgic. However emphatically expressed, his faith or analysis is somewhat less convincing. For instance, the reference to the tree towards the close of 'Thyrsis' or the repeated italicised refrain, one aim, one business, one desire in 'The Scholar Gipsy' is not only artificial but false. The man who spent a major part of his life in social, educational and literary criticism found in poetry a point, his buried 'quest'—

a quest that the critic would not probably acknowledge. One who condemns Shelley for beating his wings in the void could be a victim of the same charge, if not on the same scale.

As a poet, Arnold may not impress so much as his criticism does. His poetry is, at best, the expression of a finer sensibility alive in more than one way. Many of his poems are based on past associations or memories of love. In a sense, his best poetry is always memorial verse. It evokes in the earlier poems a terrible agony and loneliness as in the 'Switzerland' group of poems and 'Tristram and Iseult', 'The Church of Brou, 'A Memory Picture', etc. But the agony also turns reflective in his poems of the middle period. One may look to the sonnets on Rachel. Arnold broods on her past performances at the French theatre. But the sorrow is chastened in the last poems which acquire an associative significance. 'Kaiser Dead' reveals, as Tinker and Lowry observe, "touches of piercing, sometimes almost intolerable, pathos of Burns". But the pathos is subdued, and the last poems on death and grave make the poet conscious of the "Stern law of every human lot" (l. 29, 'Geist's Grave'). There is no poetry of the highest kind here but it reveals a side of Arnold's personality. "The sense of tears in mortal things" (l. 16) sobers him to make such poetry out of it:

Then some, who through this garden pass,
When we too, like thyself, are clay,
Shall see thy grave upon the grass,
And stop before the stone.....

(11. 73-76)
When all passions are spent, his poetry appears to be grand in its baldness. He could rarely achieve a masterpiece. 'Dover Beach' is, without parallel, the whole of Arnold. It comes, to use his own words, out of an actual tearing of oneself to pieces. One can see here more clearly the romantic-classic syndrome in him. In general, his poetry arises out of a sensitive, sorrowing self at the spectacle of life, specially the spread of industrialism and the receding tide of faith. Is not that, for all the references to Sophocles, the tragedy of the modern?

It is the same self that works in Arnold's criticism but with a difference; and the difference, to simplify, is between suffering and action. In poetry it is suffering which leads necessarily to potential action in criticism. So the tone is assertive; the range, wider. For the "mind of Europe" has been represented more broadly in his criticism than in his poetry ('Dover Beach', to repeat, is an exception). When he speaks in prose of the classical authors, as in the 1853 Preface, he takes, unknowingly, a stand against his poetic self. What he follows as a critic, he cannot match in his poetry. It is precisely this which builds up his conflicting charm as a man of letters. The two worlds — one of poetry and the other of criticism — between which he wanders leave him unsatisfied. What he speaks about Marcus Aurelius may also be said of him: there is something melancholy, ineffectual and circumscribed in his character. In this connexion Dover Wilson observes, "Yet
there is something wistful about him.\textsuperscript{7} This is the very source of Arnold's charm. Yet he is not so or always divided in his aim as his poetry would suggest. His criticism is a varied plea for 'sweetness and light', the perfection of human being. He is concerned with "the humanization of man in society", an aim difficult to disagree with. The well-known utterances about culture conform to his chief concern about humanity. His prose criticism seeks and prescribes an anodyne for the loneliness and melancholy of man which is curiously the staple of his poetry. In Arnold, one suspects, a certain shyness, an inability to face experience. Also the problems of tradition, Christianity and industrial society are never gone into in depth or detail. There are only asides, but not \textit{in medias res}. For instance, forlornness, one of his major themes, never becomes wholly romantic or existentialist.

This search for a corrective in his criticism resembles often the manner of an artist. Arnold knew that in poetry he could not reach a wider public which he needed as a critic. And when he took to prose-criticism, the poet in him trailed along giving it a muted glory. The poet peeps in the spaces of criticism and illumines it from within. This co-existence of poet and critic in his work, in poetry and prose, may not be precise, perfect, or consistent; yet one should never forget that he was genuine, genuine even in his self-division. If Arnold

\textsuperscript{7} 'Introduction', \textit{Culture and Anarchy} (Cambridge University Press; 1966), p. \textit{XXXIX}
failed to come up with a satisfactory resolution, either in his poetry or criticism, that was part of his dilemma. If the parched buds never blossomed, the blame ought not to be laid at the door of this exile from Eden, whose soul was not unlike that of the lady he celebrated in 'Requiescat'.