CHAPTER-III

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3.1 LIFE BACKGROUND OF MATTHEW ARNOLD:

After the age background of the writers, it is worth pursuing the study of Life, background of the writers. Brief life-sketch of the writers is attempted here; and, comparatively the mental make-up of the writers largely owes its influences to the family background, the surrounding, and various formative influences as such. So the biographical sketch is desideratum to arrive at proper study of the ideologies of the concerned writers. In this connection, Henry Morrison says, "Among the biographers of great persons there is a most persistent and popular belief that the subject's genetic, religious, and social background should be taken into consideration when estimating the competence - if not the validity itself - of the great one's utterances".¹

Before we begin with sketch of Mathew Arnold's life, we must begin, first of all, with the family environment of father and mother. In consideration of the above fact, Mathew was more dominated by his parents. Matthew's, mother side father Penroses were given to versifying. And Matthew's mother side mother's people, Trevenens, were schoolmasters. But schoolmasters appear to be common in both the families. But this family background compared to Dr Arnold's family background was in marked contrast. The Arnold's were of East Anglian stock

from the neighbourhood of Lowestoft, where for generation they had been connected with the sea, owning fish-houses, boats and good Yeoman land. The great-uncle of Dr Arnold spent their lives in Excise Service; so did his father, William Arnold, Collector of customs at Cowes.

Matthew's father side family background reflects secular aspect-with dominance of intellectual element. These two strains on both sides were inherited by Matthew. That is how A L Rowse attributes political hereditary to Arnold as "It is fairly clear where the poetry comes from his mother side, not from Dr Arnold".  

Brief life-sketch of Thomas Arnold would facilitate our understanding of Matthew Arnold's Life. Thomas Arnold was born as seventh child of Collector of Customs, William Arnold. At sixteen Thomas won a scholarship to Corpus Christ College at Oxford, where he made a number of friends. One among them was Keble who later became a Professor of Poetry. Both of them stayed at Fledborough with their friend Trevenen Penrose, and there Arnold married his friend's sister Mary in 1819. After Arnold's departure from Oxford he had joined his brother-in-law, Buckland, in running a preparatory school in the village of Lalehom by the Thomes. Both of them had Georgien houses to live in and Arnold had brought his family members – widowed mother, sister and aunt and later he had added his wife. The place virtually became Arnold's colony and the birth place at Matthew Arnold. Amidst busy life, Arnold lived happily in his family at Lalehom, and marriage had effected a change on his formal manner. Now he was

free to pursue his studies comfortably. Arnold studied Roman history and his frequent visit to continent had broadened his mind. During the time he inherited the family interests in ships and the sea. He had also a passion for Geography and travel. A L Rowse comments on Arnold’s mental make up as, “He was a liberal minded reformer, passionately concerned with the state of country needing reform, he was beginning to write his hot-headed pamphlets - everything about him was vehement and passionate, so unlike his son.”

In 1824, Arnold had met Wordsworth; and influence of Wordsworth was lasting. A L Rowse speaks of close-knit relationship of Arnold family with Wordsworth as, “Later, when Arnold built the family home therein the Lake Districts, Fox How, Wordsworth supervised the building operations for him away at Rugby. The cult of Wordsworth and the devotion to the next generation, with Matthew. When Dr Arnold accepted his call to Rugby, he wanted to try ideas of cherished education to be practical. He was an inspired teacher and a refresher, and wanted to make the past live today. This attitude actually led him in contradiction with Henry Newman. Dr Arnold was against Tractarian movement at Oxford. Dr Arnold’s understanding was broader. He was against narrow, sectarian overlook like that of Oxford Tractarians. He would rather plead religious tolerance and unite different churches, families on a common ground.

Hence, even his cultural ideal rested upon a deep knowledge and sympathy with the European character and institutions. In the words of Fraser Neiman, “These moral and intellectual attitudes were not lost on Matthew Arnold, but he

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3 A.L. Rowse 18.
4 A.L. Rowse 19.
became much more than "his father's forums to quote the phrase of W.H. Auden's clever but deprecatory poem." At forty six, the doctor was at the peak of his reputation, ready to embark upon new career. The sudden death of Dr Arnold was bewailed in the country and abroad. Family responsibility fell on Mrs Arnold, it was she inculcated the devotion to the father which came in the end to influence their eldest son.

Matthew Arnold was born at Lalehom on December 24, 1822. He was the eldest son in a family of five sons and four daughters. The family atmosphere was very conducive to the children. Douglas Bush writes about the family atmosphere of Dr Arnold as, "The Young Arnold's grew up in happy atmosphere of books, piety, games, chords and play-acting, exploratory walks, the editing of a family magazine."

By birth Arnold was active and dynamic, although he wore iron leg braces for his bent leg for nearly two years. But the incumbing irons rather encouraged deep sense of competitiveness in Arnold. He was not permanently crippled, but the spirit of athlete was dormant in him. The restless and athlete mind of Arnold reflects his ambitious nature; that nature, in course of time, would take him to make mark in his life.

It was naturally expected of the literate family to give Arnold his first lessons only at home. And Arnold's early exposure to family title readings and John Keble's devotional poetry enhanced Biblical allusions in the poetry of Arnold. In 1828, Thomas Arnold was appointed headmaster of Rugby School. He had definite plans for reinvigorating the school. Matthew received elementary

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instruction under his uncle at Laleham, where he did not apply seriously. At the age of nine Matthew, exposure to Virgil's fourth Eclogue had impressed him about the beauty of poetry.

Matthew had a year (1836-37) at Winchester, his father's old school, and in 1837 he was shifted to Rugby. Douglas Bush speaks of the school curriculum as "The main material of education was of course Greek and Latin literature, studied in its literary, ethical, philosophical, and historical bearings; these terms describe the impetus given by Dr Arnold, who was a leader in reviving the humanistic tradition in its old breadth and depth."  

Arnold's study days were not of serious type, as he lacked fixity of purpose. This worried Dr Arnold much. Matthew in order to establish his self-identity adopted the elegant attire and air of flippancy, which developed more fully at Oxford. Although Matthew lacked scholastic zeal, but was able to write a quantity of verse and had won a Rugby prize for his longish poem, Alaric at Rome. And before he was shifted to better school at Rugby, Matthew holidayed in France for ten days. The sights of Paris had made great impression on young mind, and had learned to appreciate the enlightened and liberalizing traditions of France. Later in adult days he was to become something a Francophile, mimicking French mannerisms and customs at the same time following a refined sense of aesthetics unfound in England.

Matthew Arnold, in his student days, did not seem brilliant student and scholar, but he had sufficiently developed a strong inner life and he had a passion for reading that lasted with till the end of his days. Back to Rugby as usual he

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7 Bush 3.
continued his literary pursuits. During this time at Rugby, Arnold met his father’s rigorous expectations and won several writing and artery prizes; however, he retained independent streak in personality.

As youth, Arnold countered his father’s sternness with an affected nonchalance and dandified dress and habits. But Arnold became moralist, in his own way by confining the delicacy of intellect and moral fervor.

Arnold’s ambitions to attend Oxford were encouraged by his parents. In this connection Dr Arnold hired a tutor, William Lake, to help his son for preparation. Matthew did not apply seriously, and his family became pessimistic about his success. However, Arnold managed to take his second scholarship after his competition among semi-finalists. This incident also reflects the family concern to Arnold. As Clinton Machann puts it, “Throughout Arnold’s adult life, it seems that strong bonds with his family and a few close friends provide him with emotional security he needed to anchor his intensively subjective life of the mind...”

Next phase at Balliol college years, Matthew had chance of growing in mind maturity with various waves of encounter arriving at the Centre. It is now worth considering various formative influences on Arnold other than family members. Arnold’s contact with Arthur Hugh Clough at Rugby had its formative influence. Matthew was to find in Clough his friend, who mattered most to him intellectually Clough was a man and had keen wide-ranging interests, for even seeking and searching without finding satisfaction or resting place. This attitude

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of Clough has been symbolized in the poem ‘The Scholar Gypsy’ by Arnold. Clough’s friendship was much important to the growing poet.

The next influence on the mind of Arnold was Henry Newman who would become one of the most powerful and persistent influences in Arnold’s life. Dr Arnold represented the social activist, Broad Church Anglicanism whereas Newman stood for High Church party. But later Arnold would yield to his fathers recognizing the English Church as a fundamental national institution. Clinton Machann writes about the efficacy of controversies on the mind of Arnold as “Arnold’s complicated grounding in religious controversy of Oxford would be central to his life’s work as a writer and thinker....”

Although Arnold a mediocre in his student days at Oxford, but was reading and absorbing a great deal of literature by writers who would influence his work for the rest of his life: Carlyle, Emersion, George Sand and Geoth. For instance, Geoth was for Arnold the great figure of moderia times Arnold soured with Geoth’s admiration for the ancient Greeks.

Arnold visited Austria and Switzerland, and reported on the systems of the secondary schools and universalities there. He performed his official duties cheerfully and would be able to devote at night for literary study. This professional experience to Arnold was for rewarding. In the words of R L Rowse, “It is inspectorate covered a great-deal of the Midlands and Wales and he was perpetually travelling about. This give him a country-wide acquaintance with

9 Machann 13.
actual social conditions such as none of his fellow-writers had—neither Carlyle nor Ruskin, Tennyson, Thackery nor even Dickens...” Arnold was responsible for state sponsored education in England and civilizing, humanising force in society. Then he believed to be true aim of all education. Arnold become a classic in his life time. He become a prophet, and shared his honour with Carlyle. In 1857, he was elected Professor of Poetry of Oxford, in which capacity he worked for ten years. With his appointment as Professor of Poetry, Arnold became for the first time a public figure in his own right. His duties as Professor were quite light. He had to deliver only “three lectures each year. He was the first layman to occupy the chair and the first professor to speak in English instead in Latin. However, he resigned from the professorship in 1887. Thus thirty years over the span of his professorship. Even after his retirement, he continued his public lectures. The best of his literary criticism was produced during this period. In criticism Sainte-Baue the French Critic, was his acknowledged master, and many of Arnold’s critical theories may be traced to him.

Douglas Bush observes the phenomenon as, “Circumstances also combined to push him into prose”. His election in May 1957 as Professor of Poetry at Oxford... Arnold best known early prose was the fruit of the Oxford Post.”

A sworn enemy of Philistinism Arnold fought relentlessly against all sorts of cant and hypocrisy. His country recognised his greatness. In 1870, the

10 A.L. Rouse 72.
chancellor of the Oxford University conferred upon him the honorary degree of D.C.L. and addressed him the most sweet and enlightened man. In 1880 Arnold visited the United States on a lecture. His daughter Lucy, who accompanied him became engaged to an American, who she subsequently married. As a grand child was born, Arnold visited America for the second time. Arnold had an agreeable surprise when he was informed that Gladstone had offered him a pension, as a public recognition of his service to the poetry and literature of England.

Arnold returned in 1886. In 1888, Arnold’s daughter Lucy and grand daughter were to come to England. Arnold went to Liverpool to receive them. On 15 April he jumped across a fence to catch a tramp car. He felt an excruciating pain and dropped dead.

3.2 LIFE BACKGROUND OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

After the brief study of life background of Matthew, the study of life background of Swami Vivekananda will be attempted. Swami Vivekananda was born on January 12, 1863 in Calcutta in a family. His father Viswanatha Datta was an Attorney-at-Law of Calcutta High Court, and his mother was Bhuvaneshwari Devi. Narendranath’s father was a liberal-minded man of philanthropic disposition. He was widely read and had been influenced by the humanistic ideas and philosophy of the Bible, Islamic Culture and Persian literature. He was also an avid reader of English literature’. Himself an agnostic and critic of orthodox social conventions, Viswanatha brought up young Naren and his other children in a family environment which had no place for small
minded narrowness. His wife Bhuvaneshwari was a gracious kindhearted pious lady steeping in old traditional Hindu ideas of womanhood and family life. The family environment and his parents were major formative influences on Narendranath.

Narendranath’s biological hereditary gave him a muscular body, brown complexion, compact forehead, strong jaw, and a pair of large dark eyes. He possessed a well-built body constitution. His musical proclivities, his sweet voice, his intense humanism and his propensity to lead a monistic life were inborn and instinctive. And it is unavoidable fact he had heredity influence of his grandfather, Durga Prasad, who took a monistic life.

The boy Narendra was a restless boy. Even the nurses could not control his exuberant energy. But according to psychologists, this restless feature of the boy was a sure sign of future brilliance. Satish K Kapoor observes as, “Little did she realise that her child’s desire to get into everything’ was a sign that he was bright in mind and spirit.’

The question as to how a naughty and restless boy Narendra was transformed into would renowned personality needs to be examined. Five main factors can be attributed to such chiseled personality are: his family tradition, his western education, his spiritual training under Sri Ramakrishna, his trials and tribulation of adolescence, and his wandering in India.

The family influence of father, mother and grandfather had its influence on Narendra. The monistic life of his grandfather, Durga Prasad, and religious leanings of his mother Bhuvaneshwari Devi, had laid the spiritual foundation of the boy. As regards mother’s influence, His Eastern and Western Disciples say, “The influence of his family exerted, mainly through his parents, was far-reaching in its effects. It was his mother who imbued him with the ideals of feeling nobly, thinking highly and acting rightly.”

Humanistic attitudes of his father, Viswanath towards down-trodden despite his epicurean attitude had share of influence on Narendra. Mother Bhuvaneshwari introduced Naren to Hindu scripture by its recital, whereas father introduced him to Gospel of Jesus Christ, and poetry of Hafiz Shirazi.

As regards father’s influence, His eastern and Western Disciples speak: “His father’s influence served to widen the scope of Naren’s learning by directing his attention to the cultures of other lands. This was as it should be, for, as Swami Vivekananda in the making needed to develop a sympathetic understanding broad enough to include all cultures and all religions”.14

Both father and mother had music, and had a charming voice - a trait which they handed over to Naren. The family environment shows that Narendra had received good background to grow in matured state of thinking.

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14 His Eastern and Western Disciples 120.
After a short period of study in local primary school, Narendra had his education under a private tutor. He had a wonderful memory and a probing mind. He also showed early glimpses of leadership qualities - courage and self-confidence. At the age of seven, Narendranath went to a high school. He showed early promise of exceptional intelligence; and his love for sport and extensive reading.

In 1879, Narendra graduated from high school in the first division. He joined Presidency College of Calcutta for higher studies. After a year, he joined the General Assembly's Institution founded by the Scottish General Missionary Board and later on as the Scottish Church College. His intellect, his capacity to comprehend and absorb so many branches of knowledge was truly remarkable. The Principal of the College, W. Hestie, remarked about Narendra as real genius who is bound to mark his mark in life.

Narendranath had already heard from W. Hastie about Ramakrishna. And while lecturing on English poet William Wordsworth, Hastie explained the state of ecstasy as the result of purity and concentration. At the same time he told that he had seen this ecstasy in Ramakrishna of Dakshneswar. Although Narendra possessed rational bent of mind with western education, but his mind was not quelled with deep sense of satisfaction. Nemai Sadhana Bose writes about the inquisitive nature of Naren as, "There was a restlessness in him, a relentless urge to explore new fields of knowledge. He would not believe anything unless he had found out the truth for himself."  

Narendra had approached Devendra Nath Tagore, the venerable leader of the Brahmo movement. To his searching, straightforward question - "Sir have you seen God", a puzzled Devendra Nath could only say, "My boy, you have eyes of a Yogi, you should practice meditation".¹⁶ This did not satisfy Narendranath. His search continued. Narendranath’s relative named Ramachandra Datta, sensing Narendra’s spiritual desire had told him to visit Ramakrishna. In the beginning Narendra was reluctant to meet illiterate priest. However a occasion arose that brought Narendra, Ramakrishna together.

In November 1881, a devotee of Ramakrishna, Surendranath Mitra had invited Narendra to sing devotional songs for some guests. There Ramakrishna was present and he listened to Narendra’s melodious songs. He was moved by Narendra’s purity and emotion with deep affection he asked Naren to visit him at Dakshineshwara. As promised, Narendra met Ramakrishna at Dakshineshwara and bluntly asked his question, "Sir, have you seen God"? The answer came instantly. "Yes, I have seen him." Narendra was deeply impressed by this answer. And his troubled mind was quelled.

Later Narendra became frequent visitor to Dakshineshwara and became Ramakrishna’s disciple in the end. Besides his personal misery he was to encounter misery of his country men. Romain Rolland, describes the state of his country men as, "But this consciousness of his mission only came and took possession of him after years of direct experience, wherein he saw with his own

¹⁶ Bose 8.
eyes and touched with his own hands the miserable and glorious body of humanity
- his mother India in all her tragic nakedness”.

Narendra before he accepted Sannyasa order, he faced the worst situation in
his life. While he graduating, father died suddenly, and entire family
responsibility fell on his shoulders. As father had left the family with heavy
burdened debt as he had to clear beyond his means. To add to his grief, creditors
and relatives had troubled him; and friends turned into foes, well-wishers slammed
their doors in his face. Thus he experienced a pang of poverty. Later in his life he
would weep for the poverty of his
country. Along with personal misery, misery of
his countrymen was to be later realisation as pointed out by Romain Rolland: “But
this consciousness of his mission only came and took possession of him.” Later
providence helped him. His family’s economic condition improved a lot and he
could renounce the wordy life and become a Sannyasi.

Narendra was privileged to sit at the ‘lotus feet of his master for about five
years. He, along with other disciples, nurse the ailing master at a garden house at
Cossipore day and night. Realising the approaching and of his mortal existence,
the master appointed Narendra the leader of his disciples and his spiritual heir. He
transmitted his whole spiritual power to Narendra to enable him to accomplish the
task assigned to him by the Mother. On August 16, 1886, he entered into
Nirvikalp samadhi.

17 Romain Rolland, The Life of Vivekananda and the Universal Gospel (Calcutta: Advaita
After passing away of Ramakrishna the entire responsibility of the brother disciples fell on his shoulder. Narendra could no longer perform his duty as their leader and found it difficult. At the same time his heart longed for wandering life.

As proverb says “A wandering monk and flowing do not become dirty.” A Hindu monk loves to go on pilgrimage from place to place without trace of attachment. Now he felt a longing for pilgrimage. He feared that his attachment to the monastery and his brother disciples was a sort of chain. It was appearing to him an impediment to his quest for the realisation of God. He was anxious to see the country, his motherland, the teeming millions of people, their sufferings, the age-old traditions and culture of India” and he found it difficult. At the same time his heart longed for wondering. Having made some temporary excursions, he set out for intensive tour of India in 1890. He travelled far and wide, lived among kings and pariahs.

His understanding of pilgrimage would be attributed to the following reasons. He sensed that his attachment to the monastery and his brother disciples was a sort of chain. Secondly, it was appearing to him an impediment of his quest for the realisation of God. Third reason was that he was anxious to see the country, his mother, motherland, the teeming millions of people, their sufferings, the age-old traditions and culture of India. Nemai Sadhan Bose observes, “The experience as a Parivrajaka (a wandering monk) was one of the most far-reaching influences on use and mission. His sister Nivedita mentions three major formative influences on Swami Vivekananda, his education in English and Sanskrit.
literature, his Guru Sri Ramakrishna, his motherland India and her people. The third was the result of his experience as a Parivrajaka.”

In this wandering life he had surveyed India’s social condition at low ebb. The scene of utter poverty had greeted him everywhere. Indian princes had not worried about the lot of Indian poor mass. Swami Vivekananda was in perturbed state of mind as to find a solution to existing condition of Indian poverty. And occasion for it also came in his way as Parliament of world religious in America, in 1893 was being organised. He decided to participate in the Parliament in order to give his message to the world. At the same time he was very much pained by the poverty of India and wanted to draw the attention of the West towards this problem. This was one of the important purposes of his visit to USA. Before going to USA he went to Khetri, the King of this State, who was his disciple. It was this princely disciple who suggested the name of Swami Vivekananda which was adopted by Narendranath.

Helped by Khetri Maharaj, Swami Vivekananda sailed for the United States from Bombay on May 31, 1893 to participate in the Parliament of Religion. Parliament of religions was intended to mark the Four Hundredth Anniversary of the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus and subsequent development in the country along with its religious tolerance.

Nemai Sadhan Bose remarks about the historic success in the World’s Parliament of Religions as “Aftermath of Chicago addresses and their impact on

18 Bose 16.
the American mind and later in Europe also constitute a most significant and seminal period of Swamiji’s life.19

Reaching Chicago early on 30 July, 1893, Swami Vivekananda did not have any clear idea about the Parliament of Religions. To make things worse, he came to learn that the Parliament was to meet on 11 September. This meant he had to find board and lodging for nearly six weeks before the Parliament.

The desperate situation in which he found himself, the difficulties he encountered before moving to Boston and finding shelter in the house of a kind hearted wealthy American Lady, is a fascinating poem. But Swamiji’s iron will and faith in divine helped him to get out of the crisis. It was through that kind hearted lady, Swami Vivekananda was introduced to Professor J.H. of Harvard University who assured the Swami that there would be no question regarding his credentials.

Thus, Swamiji was admitted as a delegate along with other representatives. When Samiji’s turn came and rose to speak and began: “Sisters and Brothers of America”. The electrifying effect could be seen in the words of K R Srinivas Iyengar, “The words so human yet so unconventional at once caught the imagination of the thousands assembled in the Hall and Gallery, and there was tumultuous cheering for two minutes”.20 The real key-note of the address however was the basic unity of all religions and the wisdom and commonsense of toleration.

19 Bose 29.
After the Parliament, Swami Vivekananda undertook a series of ‘apostolic campaign’ to spread the message of Sri Ramakrishna. In America and Europe he travelled a lot, visited numerous cities, villages and important places and met and talked to many dignitaries and commoners. The great warrior of India, having taken the world by storm, returned to his motherland on 15th January 1897. Tumultuous welcome was given by his country men for his successful mission in the West. He once again crossed the land from the south to the North and stressed the need of dedicated workers and rich fund to uplift the social condition of the country.

In June 1899, Swami Vivekananda set out upon his second journey to the West, to see himself how the work he had started was developing. His physician also advised Swamiji that a sea voyage would be good for his health. Having made up his mind, he sailed for London, on his way to America in June 1899. After a short break in London, Swamiji sailed for New York, reaching on 28th August 1899.

The physical and mental strain of the excessive work that Swamiji’s had undertaken began to tell on his health. Moreover, he began to feel that he had done his work and the time was approaching for him to leave this world. Outwardly, it seemed, Vivekananda was enjoying his European tour, taking more interest in whatever he was seeing. But inwardly nothing affected, rather he was longing return to India. Swamiji sailed for India from Cairo in November and arrived at Belurmath on December 9, 1900.
Swamiji returned Belurmath in poor health. He spent most of his time in meditation, reading, writing, joining in songs with monks and disciples. In early 1902 Swamiji was requested to Congress of Religions that was to be held in Japan. Although Swamiji willed to accept it, but it did not materialize. Swamiji’s health was visibly getting worse. But he continued to take much interest in the spiritual development and training of young monks and Brahmadharis. He continued to teach and help people until the very end. At last the end came, Swamiji entered Mahasamadhi.

As about final emancipation of Swami Vivekananda, Roman Rolland say as, “It seemed as if he had gone away in voluntary fit of Kundalini Shakti - in the final great ecstasy, which Ramakrishna had promised him only when his task was completed.”

3.3 A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF LIFE BACKGROUND OF MATHEW ARNOLD AND SWAMI VIVEKANANDA:

After the analysis of life background of both the writers we will arrive at comparative analysis of them. In the first place we confront the family environment of Matthew Arnold and Swami Vivekananda as a dominant influence. Matthew’s mother side people were clerical type given to versifying. The practical strain in Matthew Arnold would be attributed to the family ancestry of mother side. Father side of Matthew Arnold were connected with the sea, owning high houses and boats and good yeoman land. This emphasises practical concern of the

1 Rolland 169.
world - symbolizing intellectual element. A L Rose aptly remarks as “It is clear where the poetry came from - from his mother’s side, not from Dr Arnold’s. For poetry springs from the unconscious, the deeper sources of temperament and the emotions: not from the top layer of conscious cerebration, whence comes the intellectualizing, the work of the critic, literary or social.” But the two strains of the family were blended in the personality of Matthew. As we find in later days, the intellectual side of his father won him, over the temperamental, emotional side.

Similarly family environment in the case of Swami Vivekananda” has also done its excellent work in building beautiful personality of Swami Vivekananda. Strongly built body and musical voice of Swami Vivekananda are hereditary. As for the hereditary elements concerned of Matthew Arnold he too had handsome body when he grew young; and had raven black hair from mother side, which would not turn gray even when he was quite elderly. But on both sides Matthew and Swami Vivekananda possessed athlete body. They were sportive in their physical activities.

Psychologically Matthew Arnold and Swami Vivekananda are seen restless in their childhood. This restless on both side is a sure sign of greater achievements in future. In the educational career both of them exhibited their intellectual capacity. In the beginning Arnold being careless, could not express it satisfactorily. But forced by the circumstances he was able to tide over the critical situation with his intellectual effort.
Swami Vivekananda in the words of Eastern and Western Disciples, “His exceptional intelligence was at once recognized by both teachers and classmates. He was the first not only in play but in studies as well.”

In the grown up age Matthew Arnold and Swami Vivekananda move diametrically opposite direction. Arnold gets married to judge Whightman’s daughter, Lucy. He begins his career as Inspector of Schools and remains in the service for thirty-five years. He was not recluse, but became householder with his own family. But the worldly pursuit of school inspectorships automatically leads Arnold to wide ranging experience in life. Swami Vivekananda unlike Arnold accepted monistic life. But he, in his wandering days, also had the similar experience of wide public contact, which enabled him to get the true picture of Indian social life. In the conclusion it can be said that both were exposed similarly to their respective societies and had their social concern as critics of society.

2 Eastern and Western Disciples 27.