

Matthew Arnold (1822-1888)

A master of both poetry and prose, Matthew Arnold remains significant today for the same reasons that the Victorian Age as a whole retains significance. The Victorians-Arnold chief among them-struggled with issues that confront us well over a century later: social injustice, unequal educational opportunity, religious doubt, the uncertain role of the arts in the modern world, the restlessness and confusion of modern man. But Arnold's opinions on these issues differed from those of many of his countrymen. Surrounded by champions of British superiority, Arnold nonetheless refused to be satisfied with the accomplishments of nineteenth-century Englishmen. According to biographer Park Honan, when Arnold was only six months old, he seemed to his impatient father "backward and rather bad-tempered" because he would not lie still in his crib. For the rest of his life, Arnold's critics complained about his refusal to lie still-his unwillingness to be content with the signal achievements of the British.

Arnold's comments on society, religion, and aesthetics remain pertinent primarily because of the critical approach he advocated--an open-minded, receptive, intelligent appraisal of the issues--more so than because of specific conclusions he drew or suggestions he proposed. It is this critical method far more than his views on individual controversies that makes Arnold's work enduring. In his essay "Spinoza and the Bible" (collected in *Essays in Criticism*, 1865), Arnold accounts for the genius of men such as Spinoza, Hegel, and Plato and at the same time offers a fitting description of his own genius: "What a remarkable philosopher really does for human thought, is to throw into circulation a certain number of new and striking ideas and expressions, and to stimulate with them the thought and imagination of his century or of after-times." Arnold's own notions of "culture" and "the critical spirit"; of "sweetness and light"; of society divided into "Barbarians, Philistines, and Populace"; of the Christian God as a presence that

can be known only as "The Eternal, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness" profoundly influenced his own times and continue to influence ours.

Matthew Arnold, the eldest son of Thomas and Mary Penrose Arnold, was born Christmas Eve 1822 at Laleham-on-Thames in Middlesex. Less than twenty miles west of London, Laleham was a pleasant pastoral spot. There, where his father kept a small school, Arnold spent the first six years of his life. In 1828 Thomas Arnold was appointed headmaster of Rugby School, and the Arnolds moved to the midlands to establish a new home in Warwickshire. Immediately the new headmaster began instituting revolutionary changes. A strict man, Dr. Arnold demanded adherence to a rigid code of morality, establishing for himself the goal of forming Christian gentlemen. His reforms spread into other areas of Rugby life as well. He broadened the traditional classical curriculum to include a more serious study of mathematics and modern languages. Concerned about the low morale of overburdened, underpaid teachers-a concern his son would later share-Thomas Arnold increased teachers' salaries, making it possible for them to relinquish their curacies and to become more committed to the school and to their pupils. And he set himself as a model for the masters as well as for the boys. He not only earned a reputation as a brilliant teacher of history and religion, but he also involved himself in the lives of his students-swimming with them, playing games with them, welcoming them into his home. Dr. Arnold's stellar pupil, and one of the most frequent visitors to the Arnold home, was Arthur Hugh Clough, who was later to become a poet and Matthew Arnold's closest friend.

Young Arnold himself proved to be a rather poor pupil, however. In 1830 he was sent back to school in Laleham. Eager to be allowed to return home, Arnold applied himself to his studies and showed sufficient improvement to be permitted to come back two years later to instruction under private tutors at his parents' home. In 1836

Matthew and his brother Tom enrolled at Winchester, but Matthew spent only one year there and entered Rugby in 1837. Still a less than devoted scholar, Matthew nevertheless received literary recognition as early as 1840 by winning the Rugby Poetry prize for *Alaric at Rome*. Otherwise, as Park Honan points out, the young Arnold "lived in the grandest juvenile defiance of the fact that he was an Arnold." This defiance manifested itself in his appearance and in his behavior. At age fourteen, he bought and wore a monocle. On one occasion, having been reprimanded by his father for misbehavior in class, he amused his peers by making faces behind Dr. Arnold's back.

The hours Arnold spent in the classroom were offset by many pleasant holidays in the Lake District. In 1831 Dr. Arnold took his family to the north of England and on to Scotland for a vacation. While touring the Lake District, the Arnolds became acquainted with Wordsworth and Southey. They returned to the lakes for Christmas and again the following summer. The Arnolds became so fond of the spot and of the Wordsworths that they built a holiday house at Fox How in Ambleside, only a short walk from the Wordsworths' home at Rydal Mount. They stayed there for the first time in the summer of 1834. Thereafter, Fox How was a favorite family retreat, becoming home to Mrs. Arnold after the death of her husband; and years later, Matthew Arnold brought his own children there. Much of the imagery in his landscape poetry was inspired by the spot.

Arnold's poetic landscapes also are indebted to the region around Oxford where, to everyone's surprise, including his own, Arnold won one of two classical Open Balliol Scholarships in 1840. Even at Oxford his carefree attitude persisted. Fishing occupied many of the hours he was supposed to be devoting to his books. He swam nude by the riverbank, enjoyed drinking, lapsed in his regular attendance at chapel, and adopted the airs of the dandy-donning extravagant waistcoats and assuming an affected manner. He

delighted in lighthearted pranks. On one occasion, reports Trilling, a friend named Hawker with whom he was traveling claimed that Arnold "pleasantly induced a belief into the passengers of the coach that I was a poor mad gentleman, and that he was my keeper."

The years at Oxford were marked by sober events as well. Arnold's father died suddenly of a heart attack on 12 June 1842, at the age of forty-seven. In the years that followed Arnold came to see himself as perpetuating many of his father's views on education, social welfare, and religion. In "Rugby Chapel," written over twenty years after the death of Thomas Arnold, Arnold shows his high regard for his father, remembering him as a son of God, as one of the "helpers and friends of mankind," as a leader worth following:

... at your voice,

Panic, despair, flee away.

Ye move through the ranks, recall

The stragglers, refresh the outworn,

Praise, re-inspire the brave!

Order, courage, return.

Arnold came to see his own mission as one of reinspiring mankind, and he considered it an inherited mission. He wrote to his mother in 1869, "I think of the main part of what I have done, and am doing, as work which he [Thomas Arnold] would have approved and seen to be indispensable.

In the years immediately following his father's death, Arnold grew closer to Arthur Clough who felt the loss of Dr. Arnold almost as intensely as Matthew himself. Clough and Arnold shared much more than their grief, however. Both were promising, but ultimately disappointing, students at Oxford; both felt strongly attached to Oxford, especially to the countryside surrounding the

university; both were restless, unsettled young men. Most significantly, both were poets. They criticized one another's work and discussed their developing theories of art.

Despite the sobering effect of his father's death, Arnold continued to shirk his schoolwork. Unprepared for final examinations, he earned only second-class honors in 1844. Yet in 1845 he won a fellowship at Oriel College, Oxford, and spent the next two years reading widely in classical and German philosophy and literature and traveling in Europe as often as he could. At the age of twenty-four, he gave up his residency at Oxford. He took a temporary post as assistant master at Rugby for one term before accepting a position in London as private secretary to Lord Lansdowne, the lord president of the Privy Council.

While holding this position, Arnold wrote some of his finest poems and published them, signed with the initial *A.*, in two separate volumes: *The Strayed Reveller and Other Poems* (1849) and *Empedocles on Etna and Other Poems* (1852). The poems express in verse many of the ideas and opinions that Arnold expressed in his letters to Clough. These letters, collected in 1932 by H.F. Lowry, offer valuable insight into Arnold's thought as it developed from 1845 to 1861, the year of Clough's death. One of the dominant themes of both the letters and the poems is that of the intellectual and spiritual voice Arnold believed to be characteristic of nineteenth-century life. In September 1849 Arnold wrote, "My dearest Clough these are damned times--everything is against one--the height to which knowledge is come, the spread of luxury, our physical enervation, the absence of great *natures*, the unavoidable contact with millions of small ones, newspapers, cities, light profligate friends, moral desperadoes like Carlyle, our own selves, and the sickening consciousness of our difficulties...." For Arnold, "this strange disease of modern life," as he called it in "The Scholar-Gipsy," led to disorientation, aimlessness, purposelessness. Looking about him, he witnessed the weakening

of traditional areas of authority, namely the dwindling power of the upper classes and the diminishing authority of the Church. Man had no firm base to cling to, nothing to believe in, nothing to be sustained by. Instead, Arnold writes in "Stanzas from the Grand Chartreuse," he finds himself "Wandering between two worlds, one dead,/The other powerless to be born."

Among Arnold's early poems are those love poems about a woman called Marguerite that he grouped under the heading "Switzerland." Although Arnold maintained throughout his life that Marguerite was imaginary, Park Honan has presented convincing, though not universally accepted, evidence that the poems were inspired by a real woman, Mary Claude, who lived near Fox How, and with whom Arnold fell in love in 1848. In the autumn of 1848 and again in 1849, Arnold traveled in the Swiss Alps and used this setting in the Marguerite poems. Mary Claude apparently did not encourage Arnold's affections, and the romance seems to have ended in 1849. Arnold used the Marguerite poems to explore the effects of modern life on love. In "To Marguerite--Continued," he concludes that the individual is essentially isolated: "in the sea of life enisled.... We mortal millions live *alone*. Surely, in the past, there was a sense of community; all men must once have been "Parts of a single continent!" But now each man is an island separated from every other man by "The unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea." Even love lacks the power to unite human beings.

The theme of man's alienation is echoed in later poems as well. In "Rugby Chapel," Arnold asks,

What is the course of the life
Of mortal men on the earth?--
Most men eddy about
Here and there--eat and drink,
Chatter and love and hate,

Gather and squander, are raised
 Aloft, are hurl'd in the dust,
 Striving blindly, achieving
 Nothing; and then they die-
 Perish;-and no one asks
 Who or what they have been.

And in "Dover Beach" the movement of the ocean calls to mind "the turbid ebb and flow/Of human misery" and "bring[s]/The eternal note of sadness in." The speaker longs for a refuge since the world "Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,/Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain." Arnold's expressed longing for a retreat is not limited to "Dover Beach." For example, he envies the immortal Scholar-Gypsy wandering the hillsides around Oxford who "hast not felt the lapse of hours," who is "Free from the sick fatigue, the languid doubt" inherent in the modern condition. Arnold himself felt acutely the oppression of mortality. At age thirty he wrote to Clough, "How life rushes away, and youth. One has dawdled and scrupled and fiddle faddled--and it is all over."

In spite of such somber poetic reflections Arnold's demeanor remained persistently cavalier to the dismay and irritation of his family and friends. When Charlotte Brontë met him in 1850, her first impression was typical. She found him "striking and prepossessing; ... [he] displeases from seeming foppery. I own it caused me at first to regard him with regretful surprise.... I was told however, that 'Mr. Arnold improved upon acquaintance.' So it was: ere long a real modesty appeared under his assumed conceit, and some genuine intellectual aspirations, as well as high educational acquirements, displaced superficial affectations." Even without such testimonies of Arnold's attributes, his poems and letters indicate that he was thinking deeply about the problems of

the age and about the role of literature in helping man to cope with those problems.

Arnold's letters to Clough reveal his theory of poetry, particularly his notion of the purpose of poetry. As E.D.H. Johnson points out in *The Alien Vision of Victorian Poetry* (1952), Arnold tried "to reaffirm the traditional sovereignty of poetry as a civilizing agent." In a letter of 28 October 1852, he contended that "modern poetry can only subsist by its *contents*: by becoming a complete *magister vitae* as the poetry of the ancients did: by including, as theirs did, religion with poetry, instead of existing as poetry only, and leaving religious wants to be supplied by the Christian religion, as a power existing independent of the poetical." Arnold believed that great art, functioning as a civilizing agent to enrich the intellectual and spiritual life of man, had universal application. But his views did not coincide with those of his contemporaries who felt that art should have immediate, practical application to everyday experience.

The critics of Arnold's first two volumes of poems charged that his poetry did not consistently deal with contemporary life. Poems such as *Empedocles on Etna*, *Tristram and Iseult*, and "Mycerinus" (the last in *The Strayed Reveller*) seemed to them irrelevant for modern readers. Charles Kingsley's comments, published in 1849 in *Fraser's* magazine, are representative: "The man who cannot ... sing the present age, and transfigure it into melody, or who cannot, in writing of past ages, draw from them some eternal lesson about this one, has no right to be versifying at all. Let him read, think, and keep to prose, till he has mastered the secret of the nineteenth century." Another complaint voiced by the critics and echoed by Arnold's sister Jane was that his poems expressed dissatisfaction with the age but offered no practical cures for its ills.

Arnold's third volume of verse--the first to bear his full name--appeared in 1853. It included such poems as "Sohrab and Rustum," one of Arnold's personal favorites, and "The Scholar-Gypsy," but it

was the preface to the volume rather than the poems it contained that received the most attention. The "1853 Preface" served as both an introduction to the collection and as an answer to the critics of his earlier volumes.

Insisting "not only that it [poetry] shall interest, but also that it shall inspire and rejoice the reader," Arnold explains in the preface that he has chosen to exclude *Empedocles on Etna* from the 1853 collection because the poem neither inspires nor rejoices. He has rejected it, not because of readers' objections to the classical subject, but rather because the poem deals with a situation that is, ironically, an especially modern one. For the situation of *Empedocles*, he maintains, is one "in which a continuous state of mental distress is prolonged, unrelieved by incident, hope, or resistance; in which there is everything to be endured, nothing to be done;" in other words, in Arnold's view, a decidedly nineteenth-century dilemma. This for Arnold is the poem's flaw. In saying so, Arnold is not condemning tragedy in literature. He acknowledges that tragedy can produce high pleasure, but *Empedocles on Etna* is not tragedy; it is pathos. In this respect, then, Arnold agrees with his critics. A poem should not just expose problems or express discontent. Evaluating his own work he wrote to Clough in December 1852, "As for my poems they have weight, I think, but little or no charm." He contends in another letter that people need literature that will "animate and ennoble them..." He withdrew *Empedocles on Etna* because he believed it failed to do so.

But Arnold vehemently disagrees with critical objections to his use of classical subjects, pointing out that the past supplies subjects that touch "elementary feelings ... which are independent of time." Arnold defends classical subjects because of their universal relevance. In his edition of Arnold's letters to Clough, Lowry says of Arnold that "The deepest passion of his life was for what is permanent in the human mind and the human heart," and he found this in classical literature. To Arnold, a topic's contemporaneity did not ensure

its worth. The important point for the poet to keep in mind was that he should choose a significant subject, whether drawn from the past or the present, for "action" rather than "expression" is the most important part of a poem. In his own *Empedocles on Etna*, there is no action, another sense in which it is "modern." According to Arnold's preface, modern poetry suffers from its emphasis on expression or self-revelation. As Alba Warren explains in *English Poetic Theory* (1950), although he did not make it very plain in the "1853 Preface," "great poetry for Arnold is not lyric, subjective, personal; it is above all objective and impersonal..." In its subordination of expression to action, in its emphasis on the epic and the dramatic, Arnold concludes in his preface, classical Greek poetry is especially praiseworthy. The aspiring nineteenth-century poet, Arnold asserts, can learn much from classical writers.

Although the preface did not quiet his critics who persisted in echoing their former complaints, Arnold reserved more elaborate development of his position for a lecture he delivered in the autumn of 1857. At the age of thirty-four, he was elected to the poetry chair at Oxford University, a five-year appointment which required him to deliver several lectures each year. Traditionally, the lectures had been read in Latin, but Arnold decided to present his in English. He used the occasion of his inaugural lecture on 14 November 1857 to return to his views about the worth of classical literature and to introduce several other themes which reappear in his later work.

In this first lecture, entitled "On the Modern Element in Literature" and eventually published in *Macmillan's* magazine (February 1869), Arnold advocates a liberal education that features wide-ranging knowledge and the use of the comparative method to build knowledge and to shape understanding. For Arnold, poetry is the "highest literature," and he is confident that comparison among literatures will show that classical Greek poetry is the highest poetry. It is superior to other literatures because it is "adequate," by which Arnold means that it

"represents the highly developed human nature" of a great age. Arnold believes that "adequacy" is rare because the great writer must be linked with a great epoch for great literature to be produced. In Arnold's opinion, the literature of Pindar, Aeschylus, Aristophanes, and Sophocles matches the greatness of the era in which they lived. Other great ages, such as the period of the supremacy of Rome, failed to produce great poets who were in sympathy with their age. The Elizabethan age was also inferior to classical Greece because the genius of Shakespeare and Milton was not matched by a great age; instead, they lived in a time characterized by a lack of religious toleration and by a lack of the critical spirit. As Arnold explains, the climate of the nineteenth century is similarly uncondusive to the development of an "adequate" literature. The view he had expressed in an 1849 letter to Clough remains essentially unchanged in 1857: "how deeply *unpoetical* the age and all one's surroundings are. Not unprofound, not ungrand, not unmoving:-but *unpoetical*." Because of "the enduring interest of Greek literature" founded on its "instructive fulness of experience," it has special relevance for modern man. Classical literature, Arnold argues, can provide the "intellectual deliverance" that modern man needs.

Arnold's next major prose work, *On Translating Homer*, was a series of three lectures given at Oxford in November and December 1860 and January 1861. In these essays, published together soon after the third was delivered, he evaluates selected translations of Homer, noting the strengths and weaknesses of each in an attempt to establish the characteristics of a well-written translation. He criticizes translators who have insisted on imposing "modern sentiment" on the material and is equally impatient with those who have become embroiled in background issues such as establishing the true identity of Homer. He insists that many translators have erred because they do not understand that the true purpose of translation is "to reproduce on the intelligent scholar ... the general effect of Homer." To achieve that end the translator must retain not only the content or "matter" of the original but

also must capture its style or "manner." Arnold warns that style is frequently sacrificed, both by those who translate too literally and by those who embellish the original with quaint, pseudoarchaic language in an attempt to make the translation seem authentic. He proposes that the translator of Homer adopt the characteristics of Homer's poetry: simple but noble diction, plain thought, natural rhythm, and rapid movement. These are the traits inherent in "the grand style" of Homer.

In order to clarify his suggestions Arnold criticizes illustrative passages from a number of translations, using, as Robert H. Super points out in his notes to Arnold's *Complete Prose Works* (1960-1977), the touchstone method of judging poetry that he advocated twenty years later in "The Study of Poetry." These illustrations are central to Arnold's argument in the lectures, for he contends that one must develop a taste for or sensitivity to "the grand style." While the grand style is not strictly definable, it is clearly recognizable to the cultivated reader. He trusts that the reader will note the absence of the grand style from the passages he has condemned and will observe its presence in his own brief model translations.

In these three lectures Arnold drew on his own interest in classical literature, but he also capitalized on widespread contemporary interest in Homeric translation. Most of Arnold's negative remarks focus on a new rendering of Homer, the 1856 translation of the *Iliad* by Francis Newman—a translation marked by contorted diction and meter, and consequently lacking in the "grand style." Newman replied to Arnold's evaluation of his work in a lengthy pamphlet entitled *Homeric Translation in Theory and Practice, A Reply to Matthew Arnold*, published in 1861. Others echoed Newman's long-winded complaints about the faulty meter of Arnold's own translations and about the very premises of his essays, in particular his assertion about the purpose of translation. For instance, Fitzjames Stephen, in an unsigned appraisal for the *Saturday Review*, agreed with Newman that it was impossible for a

translation to produce the same effect as the original "simply because it is not the same thing as the original." Arnold was also criticized, even by members of his own family, for his dogmatic tone. Responding to such a charge from his sister Jane, who had accused him of "becoming as dogmatic as Ruskin," Arnold told her, "the difference was that Ruskin was 'dogmatic and wrong.' ..." On another occasion his reaction was more serious. Writing to Jane in 1861, he reminded her that in his position as lecturer he had to speak with authority, but agreed that use of a "dogmatic" tone would be self-defeating. As Kathleen Tillotson has pointed out in the 1956 article "Arnold and Carlyle," Arnold learned to present himself in future essays and speeches as "regrettably expert."

Arnold's tone was demonstrably modified in his very next lecture. Characteristically, Arnold was not satisfied with leaving his critics unanswered. He replied, primarily to Newman, in *On Translating Homer: Last Words*, a fourth Oxford lecture delivered 30 November 1861 and published the following year. Dismayed that he had so seriously offended Newman, he insisted that his respect for Newman as a scholar was genuine but pointed out that scholarship was not the issue. The issue was Newman's failure to produce a simple but noble "poetic" translation of Homer. He reiterated the major argument of his earlier lectures, dwelling on the characteristics of the grand style. Arnold explained that "the grand style arises in poetry, *when a noble nature, poetically gifted, treats with simplicity or with severity a serious subject.*" He then applied this description not only to translations of poetry but also to poetry itself by examining a wide range of English poets from Chaucer to Keats, from Milton to Wordsworth. Just as in the "1853 Preface," Arnold argued in these essays for the importance of the "whole," for the importance of harmony throughout a work.

Finding the time to write and deliver poetry lectures presented a challenge to Arnold since along with the duties demanded by his honorary title at Oxford were more pressing duties to his

family and his job. In 1851 Arnold's appointment as an inspector of schools had provided him sufficient financial security to enable him to marry Frances Lucy Wightman. The marriage was a happy one. Flu, as she was called, frequently accompanied Arnold in his travels and was supportive of his work. According to Arnold, she proved to be "a very good judge of all prose" and criticized his essays and lectures. She provided a liberalizing influence as well, encouraging him to read modern novels and to attend art exhibits and operas. The Arnolds had six children to whom Arnold was a devoted, indulgent father.

During the thirty-five years Arnold spent as a school inspector, he repeatedly complained of his duties: the oppressively long hours, the exhausting travel, and the tiresome bureaucratic system. He spent his days questioning countless schoolchildren and writing endless reports on drainage, ventilation, equipment, teacher performance, and student achievement. Honan reports that in 1855, a "typical" year, Arnold examined 290 schools, 368 pupil-teachers, 97 certified teachers, and 20,000 students. It is little wonder that he claimed to be "worked to death." The depressing conditions he witnessed in the schools affected him deeply. He sympathized not only with ragged, care-worn children but with overworked teachers as well. In 1854 he claimed, "No one feels more than I do how laborious is [the teachers'] work men of weak health and purely studious habits, who betake themselves to this profession, as affording the means to continue their favourite pursuits: not knowing, alas, that for all but men of the most singular and exceptional vigour and energy, there are no pursuits more irreconcilable than those of the student and of the schoolmaster."

Still, despite the negative aspects of his job, as Honan points out, Arnold's work exposed him to aspects of English and European life of which he probably would have otherwise remained ignorant, and thus enhanced his credibility as a social commentator: he earned respect as a social critic because he traveled throughout the country

and to Europe and daily mingled with people of all levels, especially those of the middle class. The advantages of his job were not clear to Arnold, however. Fatigue and discouragement often overshadowed commitment and enthusiasm. He responded with dismay when people tried to relate his work in education to that of his father. In an 1856 letter to his brother William, Arnold confessed that when he was compared to his father he was tempted to reply: "My good friends, this is a matter for which my father certainly had a specialité, but for which I have none whatever.... I on the contrary half cannot half will not throw myself into it, and feel the weight of it doubly in consequence. I am inclined to think it would have been the same with any active line of life on which I had found myself engaged--even with politics--so I am glad my sphere is a humble one and must try more and more to do something worth doing in my own way, since I cannot bring myself to do more than a halting sort of half-work in other people's way." Arnold's dedication to the improvement of education in England was more clearly indicated by his publications than by his perfunctory performance of routine duties.

On several occasions, Arnold escaped the drudgery of his ordinary assignments to travel in Europe where he studied foreign educational systems. The first such study took place in 1859 when Arnold was asked by the Education Commission to visit France, French Switzerland, and Holland to examine the elementary schools in those countries. He spent six months, from March through August of 1859, traveling about Europe, observing schools, and consulting with foreign officials. His report, *The Popular Education of France, with Notices of That of Holland and Switzerland*, published in 1861, records his observations and evaluations and his recommendations to England.

The introduction, entitled "Democracy" and later included in *Mixed Essays* (1879), presents Arnold's view that the national government should assume responsibility for educating its citizens. He anticipates middle-class fears of government

repression of individual freedom but argues that in England the democratic system is strongly rooted, leaving no danger of loss of liberty if the State assumes control of certain public interests. According to Arnold, the State is the best agent for raising the quality of education. He repeats Edmund Burke's definition of the State as "*the nation in its collective and corporate character.*" The State, because of its authority and resources, can distribute "broad collective benefits" to society at large.

Moreover, the very growth of democracy prompts Arnold to advocate a broad-based, state-supported educational program. Middle- and lower-class people were gaining more and more power of self-government; therefore, Arnold reasons, England must "make timely preparation" for the spread of democracy. This can best be accomplished by adequately educating the middle and lower classes. Upper-class schools were already excellent; it was the schools for the middle and lower classes that needed improvement. Arnold argues that our greatest fear should be of "the multitude being in power, with no adequate ideal to elevate or guide" it. He reminds his reader that "It is a very great thing to be able to think as you like; but, after all, an important question remains: *what* you think." Arnold once again praises ancient Athens, for it was in that society, he says, that people of all classes had "culture." It was in that society that the world witnessed "the middle and lower classes in the highest development of their humanity...." By improving the education of the middle and lower classes, Arnold hoped to see a similar spread of culture in nineteenth-century England.

In the chapters following this important introduction, Arnold offers a detailed explanation of the French educational system and brief overviews of education in French Switzerland and Holland. Arnold finds much to be admired in the French system. While the French have not made elementary education compulsory, they have made it available to all. And while Arnold notes weaknesses in the system and concedes that all do

not take advantage of educational opportunities, he finds that "the mental temper" of the French people has shown improvement. He longs for such improvement among the English.

Arnold continues his argument in "A French Eton," which appeared in three installments in *Macmillan's* magazine in September 1863, February 1864, and May 1864. He considered this "one of his most important works to date" and rightly so, for it is in this work that Arnold presents his views on education most concisely and forcefully. He focuses on secondary education, proposing the establishment throughout England of a network of "Royal Schools" (similar to such schools in France) to be distinguished by low fees, regular inspections, and government support. Arnold again voices concern about the existence of a powerful, but inadequately educated, un-"cultured," "self-satisfied" middle class and argues that a school system such as the one he describes would do much to urge "progress toward man's best perfection."

Parliamentary debates over government funding of education motivated Arnold to pick up his pen on other occasions in the early 1860s. Political discussion centered on the Revised Code, proposed by Robert Lowe, the vice-president of the Committee of Council on Education. The Revised Code outlined a plan for appropriating money to schools based on quantifiable "results" achieved by teachers in the classroom. Arnold was appalled by the utilitarian emphasis of the proposal. In "The Twice-Revised Code," an anonymous article that appeared in *Fraser's* magazine (1862), he expresses dismay that emphasis is to be placed on reading, writing, and arithmetic to the exclusion of other subjects. Arnold does not deny that many children, especially poor children, are inadequately trained in these subjects but contends that a reductive approach will not ensure better training. He is convinced children need the civilizing influence of a broader, more liberal curriculum. Arnold

suggests reorganization of and reduction of the number of school inspectors to cut expenses.

Arnold's belief that all children should receive a liberal education surfaces in other ways too. In May 1872, for instance, he edited a version of chapters forty through sixty-six of Isaiah. Entitled *A Bible-Reading for Schools*, it was widely used as a textbook for children. In 1883 he produced *Isaiah of Jerusalem*, an accompanying version of the first thirty-nine chapters. Arnold believed that schoolchildren ought to study the Bible because, he says, it "is for the child in an elementary school almost his only contact with poetry and philosophy...."

Arnold was sent abroad for seven months in 1865 by the Middle Class School Commission to study middle-class secondary education in France, Italy, Germany, and Switzerland. His report was completed late in 1867 and published in March 1868 under the title *Schools and Universities on the Continent*. Arnold had been among those considered for the position of secretary of the commission. All along he had claimed to have no interest in the position and so was not disappointed when the office went to someone else, but he was distressed that most of those named to the committee were opposed to state control of education. In a 1 December 1865 letter to his mother he confided, "I wish it was a better and more open-minded Commission. But this, like all else which happens, more and more turns me away from the thought of any attempt at direct practical and political action, and makes me fix all my care upon a spiritual action, to tell upon people's minds, which after all is the great thing, hard as it is to make oneself fully believe it so." Arnold used publications such as *Schools and Universities on the Continent* to try to affect people's minds by transforming their attitudes.

In his report Arnold argues for universal educational opportunity. His view of the purpose of education is similar to his view of the purpose of art. He is much more concerned with enrichment and culture than with practicality and

relevance. He recognizes that "The aim and office of instruction, say many people, is to make a man a good citizen, or a good Christian, or a gentleman; or it is to fit him to get on in the world, or it is to enable him to do his duty in that state of life to which he is called." But Arnold states emphatically, "It is none of these; ... its prime direct aim is to enable a man *to know himself and the world.*"

Arnold recommends that the English adopt the trend in foreign schools of mandating the same subjects for all children in elementary school, after which each child may choose between humanistic or natural science curricula, depending on his aims and interests. At the elementary level, the child's education should be a comparative one. In order "to know himself and the world," a child should study other cultures, thereby gaining insight into his own. Convinced of the humanizing effects of literary study in particular, Arnold proposes the study of Greek literature and art since the Greeks excelled in these areas and since their works speak to all people in all ages; the study of "the mother tongue and its literature"; and the study of the literature of modern foreign languages.

Arnold points out that while the English rave about the high quality of their schools, the schools in Germany, Holland, and Switzerland are clearly superior. Still arguing for a better education for the middle classes, Arnold points again to the stagnation caused by complacency. He claims that the countries he has visited all "have a civil organisation which has been framed with forethought and design to meet the wants of modern society; while our civil organisation in England still remains what time and chance have made it." Because more and more the middle class is actually running industry, commerce, and government, it is especially important that it be well prepared to do so. In an effort to demonstrate the practical advantages of improved education, Arnold's *Schools and Universities on the Continent* draws attention to the dangers of inadequate education. Many professionals in England-

engineers, chemists, doctors, teachers, and magistrates-lack proper training and certification. In other countries this is not the case. In France, for instance, those who dispense drugs and those who build bridges must be licensed to do so; but licensing is not required in England. Teachers in France are certified for competency in certain areas, but in England teachers receive a general certification for all subjects. All of society, Arnold maintains, would benefit from the more competent professionals educated by an improved school system.

In order to administer a sound middle-class educational program, an education minister and a Council of Education should be appointed. Those who serve should be experts on education, not political favorites. Local boards would handle regional concerns. Arnold boldly claims that all schools should come under public supervision including such hallowed institutions as Rugby, Winchester, and Harrow.

Arnold was asked to make a third journey to the Continent to study elementary education at the end of 1885. He completed his travels in March of 1886 and two months later submitted his comments, published in 1886 as *Education Department: Special Report on Certain Points Connected with Elementary Education in Germany, Switzerland, and France*. In 1888 the report was republished for the public by the Education Reform League, an organization which championed universal education. For this edition, Arnold added a one-page preface in which he summarized his long-standing concerns about popular education, namely that the "existing popular school is far too little formative and humanizing, and that much in it, which its administrators point to as valuable *results*, is in truth mere machinery," and that one of the subjects that ought to be taught in elementary schools is religion because it *is* "a formative influence, an element of culture of the very highest value, and [therefore is] more indispensable in the popular school than in any other."

Throughout the 1860s, Arnold composed less and less poetry. Though he continued to write poems for the remainder of his life, his career as a poet had essentially ended by the close of the decade. His career as a prosodist, however, was just beginning. In his prose works Arnold pursued many of the same ideas he had introduced in his poems, most notably, man's need for spiritual and intellectual fulfillment in a materialistic, provincial society. Already in his Oxford lectures and in his education reports, Arnold had suggested one solution to man's problems--a liberal education. A liberal education would help man develop his critical faculties and would enrich him culturally. As an essayist, Arnold continued to address the subject of intellectual and spiritual growth.

Arnold won fame with his first collection of essays, *Essays in Criticism*, compiled from lectures and reviews written in 1863 and 1864 and published in 1865. The essays cover a wide range of topics as their individual titles indicate: "Maurice de Guérin," "Eugenie de Guérin," "Heinrich Heine," "Marcus Aurelius," "Spinoza and the Bible," "Joubert," "Pagan and Medieval Religious Sentiment," "The Literary Influence of Academies," and "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time." Despite the seeming diversity of the collection, in a 1956 article in *PMLA*, Robert Donovan has demonstrated the unity of *Essays in Criticism*. As Donovan explains, all the essays are about French writers or are inspired by Arnold's exposure to French literature and culture; all have as a common theme British insularity and complacency; all use the comparative method of argumentation; and all attempt to prove the value of studying literature. In short, Donovan notes, Arnold's major goal was "to introduce the British Philistine to a new realm of Continental ideas."

Arnold was moved to write "Maurice de Guérin" when a collection of the French writer's works appeared in print in 1860. Guérin had died in 1839 at the age of twenty-eight, having published nothing. George Sand was responsible for bringing his work before the public, and it was

through her that Arnold first read the little-known Frenchman. In his essay, Arnold not only praises Guérin's writing but also takes the opportunity to express some of his ideas about literature, more specifically, his theory of poetry. He tells us that "the grand power of poetry is its interpretative power; by which I mean, not a power of drawing out in black and white an explanation of the mystery of the universe, but the power of so dealing with things as to awaken in us a wonderfully full, new, and intimate sense of them, and of our relations with them." Guérin succeeded in this in his prose but not in his verse, for Guérin used the alexandrine, which in Arnold's view was not an adequate "vehicle" for the highest poetry. He would have been better served by hexameters or by blank verse. Guérin's prose, however, is exceptional. It is marked by qualities that are usually assigned to poetry: "a truly interpretative faculty; the most profound and delicate sense of the life of Nature, and the most exquisite felicity in finding expressions to render that sense." Arnold elaborates on the interpretative power of literature, saying it is expressed through both the "natural magic" of literature and its "moral profundity". Only a few writers, such as Shakespeare and Aeschylus, have mastered both. Most great authors master one or the other. Guérin, for instance, excelled in conveying "natural magic" and for this reason deserves to be read.

Arnold continues his attempt to cultivate appreciation of continental writers among provincial English readers in the essay "Heinrich Heine." For Arnold, the great German poet Heine truly possessed the critical spirit. Heine cherished the French spirit of enlightenment and waged "a life and death battle with Philistinism," the narrowness he saw typified in the British. Arnold acknowledges that Heine's assessment of the British was the true one and tries to explain how the British developed in this way. In the Elizabethan age, claims Arnold, England was open to new ideas but Puritanism crushed them. The English romantics failed to reinstitute the critical spirit. Coleridge turned to opium;

Wordsworth grew introspective; Keats and Scott failed to "apply modern ideas to life." The German romantic Heine, however, was able to accomplish what the English romantics could not. "The wit and ardent modern spirit of France Heine joined to the culture, the sentiment, the thought of Germany." This achievement, despite his personal faults, made him a man of genius.

In his essays Arnold sees not only individual authors but also institutions as potentially upholding the critical spirit. "The Literary Influence of Academies" is devoted to praise of the French Academy, which was established to improve French language and literature. The English, he declares, would do well to establish an institution that would uphold standards of taste and help to offset the "materialism, commercialism, [and] vulgarization" of nineteenth-century life. The English, whose "chief spiritual characteristics" are "energy and honesty," in Arnold's view, can learn much from the French who are noted for their "openness of mind and flexibility of intelligence." Arnold argues that the "retarding" provincialism of English literature would profit by the influence of a "centre of correct information, correct judgment, [and] correct taste...." Though he recognizes that the English are unlikely ever to form an academy like the one in France, English writers, he concludes, should keep in mind such an institution's noble aims.

All of the *Essays on Criticism* essentially deal with the importance of liberal learning, wide reading, and the development of the critical spirit. But the essay best known for its advocacy of these intellectual habits is "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time," which was originally delivered as a lecture at Oxford in October 1864. Arnold presents in this essay a memorable defense of the critical method. Opening with a reference to Wordsworth's disdain for literary criticism, Arnold agrees that "a false or malicious criticism had better never have been written." Admittedly, "the critical faculty is lower than the inventive," yet criticism does have merit; it too may be

creative. Its most important function, however, is to create a climate suitable for the production of great art. Arnold repeats the claim he made in earlier lectures, most notably in "On the Modern Element in Literature," that great art depends on great ideas. Artistic genius "does not principally show itself in discovering new ideas." Instead, it works with ideas that are already "current." Arnold contends that "for the creation of a masterpiece of literature two powers must concur, the power of the man and the power of the moment, and the man is not enough without the moment...." The critical power can create an atmosphere in which art can flourish. In Arnold's words, it can "make the best ideas prevail," for criticism "obeys an instinct prompting it to try to know the best that is known and thought in the world...." It is "disinterested," allowing "a free play of the mind on all subjects...." Only by such wide exposure, only by objectivity, can it arrive at the best ideas.

Criticism is not immediately concerned with the practical. It is concerned with the life of the spirit and the mind. Arnold believed that his own age lacked great ideas. It was too complacent, too self-congratulatory to seek anything higher. Arnold quotes two of his contemporaries for illustration--Sir Charles Adderley declaring the English are "superior to all the world" and John Arthur Roebuck who is prompted by the Englishman's right "to say what he likes" to exclaim, "I pray that our unrivalled happiness may last." How can it be, wonders Arnold, that this same England--the nation of unrivalled happiness, the nation superior to the rest of the world--is the same nation in which a wretched girl, identified in the newspapers only by her surname, Wragg, strangles her illegitimate child? Criticism can show man the world as it truly exists. The critical spirit can turn man from self-satisfaction to a pursuit of excellence. The aim of criticism, Arnold explains, "is to keep man from a self-satisfaction which is retarding and vulgarising, to lead him towards perfection, by making his mind dwell upon what is excellent in itself, and the absolute beauty and fitness of things."

Arnold develops this view even more fully in his 1869 book *Culture and Anarchy*. As he indicates throughout his works, both poetry and prose, Arnold saw nineteenth-century England as a nation of mechanism and materialism, a nation in which men were content so long as they had the freedom to do as they pleased, in short, a nation marked by intellectual and spiritual anarchy. From Arnold's perspective, the Englishman was more prone to do than to think, and he was losing sight of the fact that action is of little value unless it is preceded by critical thinking. Arnold believed the solution involved the fostering of culture.

Arnold's second term as poetry chair at Oxford University expired in the summer of 1867, and he decided to use culture as the subject of his final address, a lecture he titled "Culture and Its Enemies." Delivered in June, the talk was published the next month as an essay in the *Cornhill Magazine* and aroused wide-spread critical disapproval.

In the essay, later included in *Culture and Anarchy*, Arnold continues to wage war against complacency. England, he insists, must not rest satisfied with her accomplishments but must continue to develop, and the method of culture--by which Arnold meant the method of liberal learning and objective, critical thought--can help her to do so. For culture signifies to Arnold the process 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...."

Arnold attempts to show that culture and religion are similar forces, though culture is more comprehensive, having as its concern the development of all aspects of man's being whereas religion is concerned only with the development of man's spiritual aspect. But the aim of culture, says Arnold, is the same as the aim of religion: "human perfection." And perfection is something one moves *toward*. "Not a having and a resting, but a growing and a becoming, is the

character of perfection as culture conceives it; and here, too, it coincides with religion." Culture is a combination of "sweetness," or beauty, and "light," or intelligence, and it strives "To make reason and the will of God prevail."

Arnold's views met with considerable scorn. His readers claimed that he was an elitist, a snob, and they labeled his scheme inadequately developed and impractical. Henry Sidgwick, reviewing "Culture and Its Enemies" for *Macmillan's* magazine, found the essay "over-ambitious, because it treats of the most profound and difficult problems of individual and social life with an airy dogmatism that ignores their depth and difficulty." And in a delightfully witty piece for the *Fortnightly Review*, which Arnold good-naturedly claimed made him laugh until he cried, Frederic Harrison asked, "And now, then, how do you get it [culture]? It is very good to tell me how beautiful this is; but if a physician tells me only what a beautiful thing health is, how happy and strong it makes those who possess it, and omits to tell me how I can gain health, or says only, Be healthy, desire, seek after health, I call him no physician, but a quack." If ever culture could be obtained, some still perceived it as worthless. Many asked what good it was. Sidgwick voiced the opinion of many when he pointed out that Arnold's criticism of action seemed to stem from the fact that the program he advocated, that of culture, was incapable of any action at all. "Culture," Sidgwick maintained, "is always hinting at a convenient season, that rarely seems to arrive."

Arnold responded to his critics in a series of five essays published in the *Cornhill Magazine* in 1868. The series, entitled, "Anarchy and Authority," was collected along with "Culture and Its Enemies" to form *Culture and Anarchy*. In the essay series Arnold continues his championship of culture by stressing the present need for it. He criticizes England for having "a very strong belief in freedom, and a very weak belief in right reason...." To justify his claim, he points out that while an Englishman cherishes his right to do as he likes, it

never occurs to him that anyone other than an Englishman, and only a middle-or upper-class Englishman at that, ought to be able to do as he likes. Culture demonstrates such inconsistencies and shows that freedom without right reason leads to anarchy. One significant benefit of culture, therefore, would be that people would come "to like what right reason ordains, and to follow her authority...."

To answer questions such as that posed by Frederic Harrison, Arnold suggests that culture is acquired through education, just as he had suggested in his education reports. Culture, he says, is "an endeavour to come at reason and the will of God by means of reading, observing, and thinking...." Literature is one of the principal agents of culture. Arnold firmly believed in the power of literature to enrich and even to transform human life. He wrote in one version of the preface to *Culture and Anarchy*, "one must, I think, be struck more and more, the longer one lives, to find out how much, in our present society, a man's life of each day depends for its solidity and value on whether he reads during that day, and, far more still, on what he reads during it."

In discussing the three principal social classes in "Anarchy and Authority," Arnold finds each one too self-satisfied, too deficient in light, to be the standard bearer of culture. The Philistines, or members of the middle class, are more interested in the "machinery of business, chapels, tea-meetings, and addresses" from fellow Philistines than in the pursuit of sweetness and light. The barbarians, or aristocrats, are also unsuitable for they have always belonged to "an exterior culture" which "consisted principally in outward gifts and graces, in looks, manners, accomplishments, prowess," and are, consequently, lacking in light. The populace, or members of the working class, are as yet "raw and half-developed." Since none of the three social classes is a model of human perfection, the individual is left to pursue "right reason" and, thereby, to cultivate his own "best self."

In an effort to understand why true culture is so alien to modern man, Arnold examines the two major tendencies of human development: Hebraism and Hellenism, or energy and intelligence. "The uppermost idea with Hellenism," explains Arnold, "is to see things as they really are; the uppermost idea with Hebraism is conduct and obedience." Although Hellenism is "full of what we call sweetness and light," both are "*contributions* to human development"; neither is sufficient alone. The two must be balanced within a society and within the individual. But in Victorian England, the balance did not exist. Therefore, "the real *unum necessarium* for us is to come to our best at all points."

Arnold contradicts those who have sneered that culture has no practical purpose. Having stated earlier that the motivating force behind culture is "the noble aspiration to leave the world better and happier than we found it," Arnold generalizes about how this will be accomplished. He applies the method of culture to current controversies about the disestablishment of the Irish Church, the real estate inheritance laws, the concept of free trade, and the legalization of marriage to one's deceased wife's sister to show that the critical approach espoused by culture will enable men to see things as they really are and to make wise decisions. Therefore, he declares, culture is practical because it endorses "a frame of mind out of which the schemes of really fruitful reforms may with time grow." Arnold is not troubled by the slow pursuit of perfection. In fact to him it is natural that the achievement of progress will take time. He quotes Goethe's precept "to act is easy, to think is hard." Arnold is able to look to the future with hope, to a time when "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."

In addition to his espousal of literature and education as agents of culture, Arnold also championed religion as a profound cultural force.

He wrote four great religious books: *St. Paul and Protestantism* (1870), *Literature and Dogma* (1873), *God and the Bible* (1875), and *Last Essays on Church and Religion* (1877). Arnold had two major purposes in these books: first, to save the Church from the dissolution threatened by scientific inquiry, and second, to demonstrate the need for a unified, national Church.

Originally published in the *Cornhill Magazine* as a series of three essays in October and November 1869 and February 1870, *St. Paul and Protestantism* was written, in Arnold's words, "to rescue St. Paul and the Bible from the perversions of them by mistaken men." In the first essay Arnold explains that he is principally concerned with Nonconformist religions such as Calvinist and Methodist that have distorted the teachings of St. Paul by claiming that their doctrines were founded on his writings. Arnold contends that a "critical" reading of St. Paul shows that "What in St. Paul is secondary and subordinate, Puritanism has made primary and essential...." He refers to the Calvinist doctrine of election and to the Methodist doctrine of salvation through faith to demonstrate that the denominations are alike in emphasizing "what God does, with disregard to what man does." Paul, on the other hand, focused on man's righteousness. Furthermore, the Nonconformists drew erroneous conclusions because they ignored the poetic, or metaphorical, quality of biblical language. Often Paul spoke figuratively or rhetorically, yet his words were interpreted literally by those eager to justify "preconceived theories."

In the second essay Arnold develops more fully his argument that St. Paul stressed conduct, not doctrine. The Puritans saw Christ as having sacrificed himself to appease a God angered by man's disobedience, thereby winning man's salvation. But St. Paul saw Christ as a model for others to follow in their daily lives. Arnold insists that Pauline theology was not founded on Puritan beliefs about "*calling, justification, sanctification*" but instead on "*dying with Christ, resurrection from the dead, [and] growing into Christ.*" Paul believed

in both physical and spiritual resurrection, but his emphasis was on the spiritual. According to Arnold, by death, Paul meant spiritual death, or "living in sin." The individual must imitate Christ and say "no" to sin, thereby effecting his own "resurrection to *righteousness*" in this life rather than assuming salvation will be his in a life to come.

Arnold presents his concern for religious unity in the third essay. The fragmentation of the Christian Church distressed Arnold as it had his father. Arnold hoped that if he adequately demonstrated the weak foundation of Puritan denominations he could help to effect a return of the Nonconformists to the Church of England. The essay states Arnold's belief that the Church has to meet the changing needs of the people it serves. The nineteenth-century Church itself, he argues, has to change. Because the doctrine of the Church of England has remained open, whereas that of the dissenting churches has been narrow and restrictive, he concludes that the Anglican Church "is more serviceable than Puritanism to religious progress...." Arnold reminds his readers that "the Church exists, not for the sake of opinions, but for the sake of moral practice, and a united endeavour after this is stronger than a broken one." In other words, a unified Church is more conducive to "collective growth."

A fourth essay entitled "Modern Dissent" was written to serve as the preface for the publication of *St. Paul and Protestantism* in book form in April 1870. In it Arnold answers the criticisms already voiced by the readers of the serial version of the work. Attacked for his presumption in presenting his views as the "right" ones, Arnold says that his ideas are neither new nor his alone. Asserting that his interpretation of St. Paul is a reflection of the "Zeit-Geist," he insists that: "it is in the air, and many have long been anticipating it...." In addition he points out that, unlike the Puritans who claim to possess truth, *the Gospel*, he admits that his "conception" of St. Paul's writings is an evolving one that tends toward truth, but does not pretend to be conclusive. Arnold maintains

that he is disinterested; his "greatest care is neither for the Church nor for Puritanism, but for human perfection."

Still, as Ruth apRoberts shows in *Arnold and God*, Arnold is guilty of "overingenuity." His argument is not so disinterested as he claims. He often glosses over biblical passages inconsistent with his position. For Arnold, the Bible was literature and must be read as such. What he offers in *St. Paul and Protestantism* is, according to apRoberts, "a literary analysis of Scripture." Predictably, this approach elicited objections from many readers. As R.H. Super points out, *St. Paul and Protestantism* is a direct development of the arguments presented in *Culture and Anarchy*. Arnold's contemporaries certainly recognized it as such and adopted the phrases made famous by that earlier work in their responses to this most recent one. An anonymous reviewer for the July 1870 issue of the *British Quarterly Review* wrote that "in Mr. Arnold's culture, perhaps in his nature, the Hellenic element is too exclusive; the Hebraic has scarcely any place. In all that he writes, the purely intellectual predominates over the emotional and spiritual.... Thus theology is to him merely a system of ethical ideas, and the Church merely a machinery for their culture--a national organization for the comprehension and good order of citizens of all varieties of theological belief." In his book *Culture and Religion* (1870), J.C. Shairp, a contemporary of Arnold's argued that "They who seek religion for culture-sake are aesthetic, not religious...." The same charge was later echoed by T.S. Eliot in *The Use of Poetry and The Use of Criticism* (1933), who found that Arnold had confused "poetry and morals in the attempt to find a substitute for religious faith."

Convinced of the merits of his argument, however, Arnold persisted in defending his case. Of *Literature and Dogma*, his second major work on religion, and by far the best known, Arnold said, "I think it, of all my books in prose, the one most important (if I may say so) and most capable of being useful." Following his earlier practice, *Literature and Dogma* appeared first in the *Cornhill*

Magazine in serial installments and was later published as a book. The public must have agreed with Arnold's assessment of the importance of his work. Attesting to its popularity, Mudie's library bought copies for circulation; a less expensive, abridged "popular" edition was printed in 1883; and by 1924 sales of all editions had reached 21,000 copies.

In Arnold's words, "The object of *Literature and Dogma* is to re-assure those who feel attachment to Christianity, to the Bible, but who recognise the growing discredit befalling miracles and the supernatural" due to the influence of science. Arnold sets out to discover, using the method of culture, the "real experimental basis" of the Bible rather than operating from a "basis of unverifiable assumptions." Only culture can supply a valid interpretation of the Bible. In order to be a wise interpreter of the Bible, one must be widely read. According to Arnold, if one knows only the Bible, he does not really know even that. He concedes that applying a critical approach to biblical interpretation is very difficult because we have come to view the Bible "as a sort of talisman given down to us out of Heaven." This inherited assumption makes it even more essential to apply the disinterested critical approach of culture. For, says Arnold, "To understand that the language of the Bible is fluid, passing, and literary, not rigid, fixed, and scientific, is the first step towards a right understanding of the Bible." In Arnold's opinion, as summarized by Basil Willey in *Nineteenth-Century Studies* (1949), it is a "false approach to the Bible which seeks to extract dogma from poetry."

Arnold reminds the readers of *Literature and Dogma* that the Bible is literature, and that biblical terms are literary terms. Even a term such as *God* cannot justifiably be used as if it were a scientific designation with a precise definition. Theologians have aimed at precision by defining God as "the great first cause, the moral and intelligent governor of the universe," when, in fact, such a definition cannot be verified. Instead, Arnold proposes to describe God "scientifically" as "the

not ourselves which makes for righteousness," as "the stream of tendency by which all things seek to fulfil the law of their being...." He admits that these definitions are inadequate, but, in his view, they express all that can be known for certain. While he doubted man's ability to describe satisfactorily the true nature of God, Arnold did not doubt God's existence. He maintains that God's existence is proven--not by the existence of the physical world or by other such tangible evidence--but by man's conscience, which is the guide to God's law. "The idea of *God*, as it is given us in the Bible, rests, we say, not on a metaphysical conception of the necessity of certain deductions from our ideas of cause, existence, identity, and the like; but on a moral perception of a rule of conduct not of our own making, into which we are born, and which exists whether we will or no; of awe at its grandeur and necessity, and of gratitude at its beneficence." All experience proves that God exists. There is something in man that urges him to fulfill the law of his being and that makes him happy when he does so. God is made manifest when man resists the temptation to give in to "the blind momentary impulses" of his weak nature and is subsequently "thrilled with gratitude, devotion, and awe, at the sense of joy and peace, not of his own making, which followed the exercise of this self-control...."

The object of religion is conduct, and conduct, Arnold argues in *Literature and Dogma*, is three-fourths of life. Religion should become "personal," should make us care deeply about conduct. For Arnold, "the true meaning of religion is thus, not simply *morality*, but *morality touched by emotion*." This was the message of Jesus Christ. Arnold believed that religion had been weakened by the addition of *aberglaube*, or "extra-belief," to what is provable. These extra beliefs in events such as the resurrection of Christ or the virgin birth undermine religious truth and, for some, become more important than morality, which is the essence of religion.

Arnold asserts that extra belief in and of itself is not harmful and can even be beneficial if it helps

one improve his conduct, but eventually the realization will come that there is no proof to support extra belief, and Arnold fears "then the whole certainty of religion seems discredited, and the basis of conduct gone." This is the danger inherent in overemphasizing what cannot be substantiated. Ultimately, religious doubt and uncertainty cannot be avoided. For Arnold, it is "the Time-Spirit which is sapping the proof from miracles,--it is the 'Zeit-Geist' itself." Explaining that the nineteenth century is a questioning age, a scientific age, Arnold concludes that there is no proof of the supernatural events the Bible records. Jesus' miracles were recorded by others; those who reported his actions were merely men, and therefore, fallible. Since most church dogma is founded on an acceptance of the miraculous, many traditional tenets of Christianity have been weakened. But Arnold tells his readers that this is only because the Church has drifted so far from the original aims of Christ. "Jesus never troubled himself with what are called Church matters at all...." He dealt with experience, not with theory. Moreover, according to Arnold, there is practically no dogma in the Bible itself. The religious doctrine that it does contain can be summarized by two pronouncements: in the Old Testament, "Obey God!" and in the New Testament, "Follow Jesus!" Arnold asks, "Walking on the water, multiplying loaves, raising corpses, a heavenly judge appearing with trumpets in the clouds while we are yet alive,--what is this compared to the real experience offered as witness to us by Christianity? It is like the difference between the grandeur of an extravaganza and the grandeur of the sea or the sky." Arnold closes, "The more we trace the real law of Christianity's action the grander it will seem."

It was to be expected that *Literature and Dogma* would stir even more controversy than had *St. Paul and Protestantism*. Understandably, many of Arnold's critics were clergymen. John Tulloch, a clergyman reviewing the 1873 volume for *Blackwood's* magazine, was not alone in accusing Arnold of dabbling in "amateur theology." It is

true that Arnold was not a theologian, but he did know the Bible. As apRoberts points out in *Arnold and God*, the notebooks Arnold kept from 1852 to 1888 record his reading lists and are filled with quotations from the Bible, in fact with more quotations from the Bible than from any other source. And Arnold had thought long and deeply about his views. Nevertheless, he was stirred to even wider reading and more extensive research in preparation for writing *God and the Bible* since he conceived it as "a review of objections" to *Literature and Dogma*.

In *God and the Bible* Arnold renews his commitment to making the Bible accessible. "All disquisitions about the Bible seem to us to be faulty and even ridiculous which have for their result that the Bible is less felt, followed, and enjoyed after them than it was before them." Arnold's sole aim is to help the reader "to enjoy the Bible and to turn it to his benefit."

In the first three chapters--"The God of Miracles," "The God of Metaphysics," and "The God of Experience"--Arnold justifies the definition of God which he offered in *Literature and Dogma*. He repeats his claims that his definition of God as "*The Eternal, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness*" is verifiable and that a verifiable definition of God is essential for reading the Bible, a book in which "God is everything." In response to criticism of his refusal to profess belief in a personal God, in other words, a God "who thinks and loves," Arnold says he is unable to affirm or deny this notion of God and, thus, is more comfortable with a verifiable definition.

In three subsequent chapters, "The Bible Canon," "The Fourth Gospel from Without," and "The Fourth Gospel from Within," Arnold discusses current controversy about the biblical canon and the Gospel of John. The resolution of these controversies is "unessential" for enjoyment and appreciation of the Bible, but because some Bible readers ascribe undue importance to such questions, Arnold feels a disinterested appraisal is in order. His critical examination reveals that the

positions taken by both popular religion and higher German criticism on these controversies are devoid of light. Both are extremist. Puritans ask no questions and without hesitation accept the Bible as truth while the higher German critics ask too many questions and mislead their followers by presuming that all questions can be answered. In Arnold's view, although there is not enough evidence to ascertain whether the Bible is literally true or false, the absence of certainty should not force one into either blind acceptance or debilitating doubt. "We should do Christians generally a great injustice," Arnold writes, "if we thought that the entire force of their Christianity lay in the fascination and subjugation of their spirits by the miracles which they suppose Jesus to have worked, or by the materialistic promises of heaven which they suppose him to have offered. Far more does the vital force of their Christianity lie in the boundless confidence, consolation, and attachment, which the whole being and discourse of Jesus inspire." Arnold describes his effort in his religious works as "an attempt conservative, and an attempt religious." He assures the reader that he has written "to convince the lover of religion that by following habits of intellectual seriousness he need not, so far as religion is concerned, lose anything."

The year 1877 saw publication of Arnold's *Last Essays on Church and Religion*, a collection of four essays, two of which had originally appeared in the *Contemporary* and two of which had first been published in *Macmillan's* magazine. Arnold was sincere in labeling these papers his "last" words on the subject. At the end of one of the essays, "The Church of England," he explains that he had originally pursued the topic of religion because he had witnessed the damaging effects of dogma and dissent on national religion. "However," he continues, "as one grows old, one feels that it is not one's business to go on for ever expostulating with other people upon their waste of life, but to make progress in grace and peace oneself." Of the four essays in the volume "The Church of England" and "A Psychological Parallel" are the most important.

In "The Church of England," presented as a lecture before an audience of clergymen at Sion College in 1876, Arnold seeks to explain how it is possible for him to condemn Christian doctrine and yet be an Anglican. His support for the Church derives from his view of it as "a great national society for the promotion of what is commonly called *goodness* ... through the means of the Christian religion and of the Bible." Promoting goodness is the true "object of the Church" and the true "business of the clergy." The basis of religion and the mission of the Church are the improvement of conduct, not the promulgation of doctrine. Just as in *God and the Bible*, Arnold insists that men cannot do without Christianity, but "they cannot do with it as it is."

Arnold points out that many working-class people are turning from the Anglican Church because it has failed to support social reform. Clergymen have supplied physical aid to the oppressed but have not shown "a positive sympathy with popular ideals." Instead, the Church is perceived as "an appendage to the Barbarians ... favouring immobility, preaching submission, and reserving transformation in general for the other side of the grave." Such a position not only alienates the masses from the Church, but also alienates the Church itself from the true ideals of the active Christian faith as presented in the Bible. "The Church of England" ends with the reassurance that the Anglican Church "by opening itself to the glow of the old and true ideal of the Christian Gospel, by fidelity to reason, by placing the stress of its religion on goodness, by cultivating grace and peace ... will inspire attachment ..." and will endure.

"A Psychological Parallel," is, according to apRoberts, "a comprehensive reprise" of Arnold's religious works, for in this essay Arnold contends that whether one accepts or denies the supernatural in religion, he can still be a Christian and a supporter of the Church. Arnold first explores the possibility that a man like St. Paul may believe in the miraculous and still not be "an imbecile or credulous enthusiast." Arnold

compares the belief of St. Paul in "the bodily resurrection of Jesus," to the belief of Sir Matthew Hale, the eminent seventeenth-century judge, in the existence of witches. These "parallel" cases demonstrate that a man may be psychologically influenced by the intellectual atmosphere of the times in which he lives, in other words, by the *Zeit-Geist*. Consequently, he "may have his mind thoroughly governed, on certain subjects, by a foregone conclusion as to what is likely and credible." Just as it was commonplace in the seventeenth century to believe in witchcraft, it was commonplace in St. Paul's day to believe in such events as the physical resurrection of the body after death. Arnold explains, "That a man shares an error of the minds around him and of the times in which he lives, proves nothing against his being a man of veracity, judgment, and mental power."

Arnold considers next the possibility that a man may not believe the miraculous and still support the Church. He points out that though the *Zeit-Geist* of the nineteenth century has caused many Victorians to doubt the literal truth of Church teachings, this uncertainty should not prevent their belonging to the Church. They must remember that the Church is first and foremost "a national Christian society for the promotion of goodness," and they should support it as such. Arnold asserts that the Church's emphasis on dogma should be relaxed. He goes so far as to argue that clergymen should not be required to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles, for he suspects there are many who cannot profess acceptance of all thirty-nine statements who would nevertheless be committed ministers to the true message of Christianity. Yet Arnold contends that the Book of Common Prayer should be retained because for the masses of Englishmen, "It has created sentiments deeper than we can see or measure. Our feeling does not connect itself with *any* language about righteousness and religion, but with *that* language." In that sense, the prayer book is like the Bible. And Arnold advocates using it as one would use the Bible--accepting the literal truth of part and reading the rest as the

poetic "approximations to a profound truth." Arnold concludes, "It is a great error to think that whatever is thus perceived to be poetry ceases to be available in religion. The noblest races are those which know how to make the most serious use of poetry."

Having abandoned the subject of religion after completing his *Last Essays*, Arnold focused his writing during the last ten to twelve years of his life on social and literary topics, offering more elaborate or definitive statements of his views on matters that had long held great interest for him. For instance, R.H. Super has said of "A French Critic on Milton" from *Mixed Essays* (1879), "As an essay on critical method, it stands in much the same relation to Arnold's later critical essays as 'The Function of Criticism' [does] to the earlier." Just as "The Function of Criticism" instructs man in the application of the critical approach to all aspects of life, "A French Critic on Milton" instructs the reader in the application of the critical approach to the evaluation of literature. Arnold sets about explaining the critical method by comparing several critics of Milton. He dismisses Macaulay's "Essay on Milton" as popular "rhetoric," as nothing more than a "panegyric" on Milton and the Puritans. He discards Addison's criticism of Milton as a compilation of conventional platitudes. He also finds Samuel Johnson unsatisfactory as a critic of Milton. Though he avoids the rhetoric and conventionality of Macaulay and Addison, Johnson is not "sufficiently disinterested" or "sufficiently receptive" to judge fairly. However, in Arnold's view there has been an admirable judge of Milton--the French critic Edmond Scherer, who is "Well-informed, intelligent, disinterested, open-minded, [and] sympathetic." Scherer noted the weaknesses of Milton as a man and as an artist. His views were not influenced by Milton's avowed religious convictions or by the religious subjects of his poems. Especially satisfying to Arnold is Scherer's recognition of Milton's "true distinction as a poet"--the greatness of his style. Arnold is convinced that this is the

conclusion to which a sensitive yet impartial criticism necessarily leads.

Many of Arnold's other late essays also deal with literature, and more specifically, with sound criticism of literature. The best known of his later collections is *Essays in Criticism, Second Series*, which Arnold began discussing with his publisher in January 1888, but which was not actually printed until November 1888, seven months after Arnold's death. The volume includes nine essays: "The Study of Poetry," "Wordsworth," "Thomas Gray," "John Keats," "Byron," "Amiel," "Count Leo Tolstoi," "Shelley," and "Milton." One of the most important, "The Study of Poetry," first appeared in 1880 as the introduction to *The English Poets*, an anthology edited by T. Humphry Ward. R.H. Super reminds that the essay was intended "to give some guidance to a middle-class public not sophisticated in the reading of poetry...." In an opening explanation of the value of literature, Arnold makes grand claims for poetry, saying "we have to turn to poetry to interpret life for us, to console us, to sustain us." In other words, poetry meets the same human needs as religion. Of course, only the best poetry accomplishes so much: "poetry, to be capable of fulfilling such high destinies, must be poetry of a high order of excellence." But "the best poetry will be found to have a power of forming, sustaining, and delighting us, as nothing else can."

Because poetry has so much to offer, Arnold continues, the reader must have some way to recognize the finest poetry. Neither a purely historical nor a purely personal critical method will serve since each is too biased. Arnold proposes instead a comparative method by which the reader will always have in mind "lines and expressions of the great masters" that he may apply "as a touchstone to other poetry" to help him detect "the presence or absence of high poetic quality, and also the degree of this quality." Arnold maintains that the greatness of poetry is revealed in both substance and style. The substance of great poetry may be recognized by its "truth and seriousness" and the style of great

poetry by its "superiority of diction and movement." Beyond these general assertions, Arnold refuses to define, arguing that concrete examples of exceptional poetry will be more helpful than abstract theory or lists of characteristics. He offers a critical overview of the history of English poetry sprinkled with illustrative lines and passages to demonstrate the touchstone method. Arnold begins with Chaucer, whose poetry he deems superior in substance and style, or, to be more exact, in the rich view of human life it presents and in the "divine liquidness of diction" and "divine fluidity of movement" of its manner. These traits make Chaucer "the father of our splendid English poetry"; nevertheless, he does not attain the level of "one of the great classics." Though his poetry has truth, it lacks "high seriousness."

Acknowledging that both Shakespeare and Milton unquestionably belong "to the class of the very best," Arnold moves on to consider the merits of more controversial poets--those of the eighteenth century. In Arnold's estimation, Dryden and Pope are masters of prose rather than verse, for the characteristics of their style, "regularity, uniformity, precision, [and] balance," produce classic prose, not classic poetry. In a separate essay, "Thomas Gray," Arnold maintains that "The difference between genuine poetry and the poetry of Dryden, Pope, and all their school, is briefly this: their poetry is conceived and composed in their wits, genuine poetry is conceived and composed in the soul." "The Study of Poetry" concludes with a discussion of the works of Robert Burns and Thomas Gray. In Arnold's opinion, Burns fails to achieve greatness for much the same reasons Chaucer fails. Like Chaucer, Burns depicts the largeness of life, but he too lacks high seriousness. Gray, on the other hand, is a classic--the only eighteenth-century English classic, Arnold thinks. Arnold credits him with achieving such eminence because he gave himself up to a study of the Greeks, absorbing the qualities of exceptional poetry from them.

"The Study of Poetry" no more remained unchallenged than had any of Arnold's other works. Many, including contemporary critics, have disagreed with Arnold's choice of touchstone passages, and many have taken offense at Arnold's pronouncements about the merits of individual authors. Despite such objections, the essay remains an important piece of criticism historically and an important guide to Arnold's own tastes.

The other essays from the second series of *Essays in Criticism* that are especially noteworthy are those about the romantic poets. While Arnold was fully aware of the limitations of purely personal criticism, his assessments of writers did involve some personal commentary. Such subjective evaluations surface in his essays on the romantics. Coleridge is referred to as a genius "wrecked in a mist of opium," and Shelley is described as a "beautiful and ineffectual angel, beating in the void his luminous wings in vain." In fact, Shelley more than the others troubled Arnold. When Edward Dowden's two-volume biography of the poet was published in 1886, Arnold found the poet's life so scandalous that he claimed the biography should never have been written. Arnold's objections were not restricted to questions of perceived immorality though; he also faulted authors for what he thought to be unattractive character traits. Keats, for example, Arnold considered effusive. He seemed a "sensuous man of a badly bred and badly trained sort" who virtually allowed himself to die young, "having produced too little and being as yet too immature" to achieve greatness. Despite his aversion to some of their personal qualities, Arnold tried to examine writers' works objectively. Thus, although he considers Keats an immature poet, Arnold commends Keats's celebration of beauty and judges him Shakespeare's equal in the creation of "natural magic" in his poems.

The two romantics Arnold holds in highest esteem are Byron and Wordsworth, both of whom had failed to receive the serious appreciation

Arnold thought they deserved. For some reason, Arnold was able to gloss over Byron's sins though he could not overlook Shelley's. He praises Byron at length for his stand on social injustice. In regard to Byron's poems, he shows special fondness for the shorter pieces and for select sections from the longer works, claiming he "has a wonderful power of vividly conceiving a single incident, a single situation...." Arnold likewise asserts that Wordsworth's best poems are his shorter ones. He considers "Michael" and "The Highland Reaper" poems which afford "a criticism of life," far superior to "philosophical" poems such as *The Excursion* and *The Prelude*. Arnold declares, "Wordsworth's poetry is great because of the extraordinary power with which Wordsworth feels the joy offered to us in nature, the joy offered to us in the simple primary affections and duties; and because of the extraordinary power with which, in case after case, he shows us this joy, and renders it so as to make us share it." For these reasons, Arnold ranks Wordsworth only after Shakespeare, Molière, Milton, and Goethe in his list of the premier poets of "the last two or three centuries."

Of the other pieces Arnold wrote on literature in the last decade of his life, the major one was an essay entitled "Literature and Science." In the autumn of 1880 Thomas Henry Huxley, noted proponent of science and a friend of Arnold's, had presented a lecture in Birmingham on the necessity for scientific knowledge. That address was subsequently published in Huxley's *Science and Culture, and Other Essays* (1881). In it he argues against Arnold's notion that the agent of true culture is humanistic education. Huxley claims, "for the purpose of attaining real culture, an exclusively scientific education is at least as effectual as an exclusively literary education."

"Literature and Science" was Arnold's reply, given as a lecture at Cambridge in June 1882 and published two months later in the *Nineteenth-Century*. In 1883 Arnold delivered the lecture twenty-nine times to eager audiences in the United States. Arnold is quick to clarify at the

beginning of his remarks that in his lifelong insistence on a broad, liberal, classical education and in his advocacy of knowing the best that has been thought and said, he has not meant to suggest that science should be ignored. As Fred A. Dudley points out in a 1942 *PMLA* article, Arnold thought training in science would teach people perception and open-mindedness, qualities he valued highly. Therefore, education should include the study of both science and belles lettres in Arnold's opinion. Still, in the lecture, he disagrees with Huxley that science was just as valuable in transmitting culture as literature. The study of science, argues Arnold, satisfies only one of the demands of human nature--the need for knowledge. And knowledge in isolation does not fill the needs of the human spirit. According to Arnold, unless knowledge is "put for us into relation with our sense for conduct, our sense for beauty, and touched with emotion by being so put," it will become "to the majority of mankind, after a certain while, unsatisfying, wearying." Literature, both classical and modern, provides the requisite synthesis of knowledge to conduct and beauty. It has "a fortifying, and elevating, and quickening, and suggestive power, capable of wonderfully helping us to relate the results of modern science to our need for conduct, our need for beauty." In that respect, the humanities are not "mainly decorative." Therefore, while men should know both science and literature, Arnold concludes that if one has to choose between the two, he had best choose literature. He acknowledges that the value of studying the classics and belles lettres in general is presently being questioned, yet he predicts, "they will not lose their place. What will happen will rather be that there will be crowded into education other matters besides, far too many; there will be, perhaps, a period of unsettlement and confusion and false tendency; but letters will not in the end lose their leading place. If they lose it for a time, they will get it back again. We will be brought back to them by our wants and aspirations."

In addition to literature, Arnold's later works often treat social topics. In his preface to *Mixed*

Essays (1879), Arnold explains that while the essays treat a wide range of subjects they are unified by their concern with the broader subject of civilization. Literature is one aspect of civilization, but only one. Arnold maintains that although literature is "a powerful agency for benefiting the world and for civilising it, ... literature is a part of civilisation; it is not the whole." Repeating ideas first presented in his lecture "Equality" (February 1878), he defines civilization as "the humanisation of man in society," accomplished primarily by the human need for expansion which manifests itself in the love of liberty and the love of equality. Beyond this, civilization must satisfy man's need for conduct, for intellect and knowledge, for beauty, and for manners. Arnold's social essays examine the success of both England and the United States in fulfilling these needs.

"The Future of Liberalism" (collected in *Irish Essays, and Others*, 1882) provides an elaboration of Arnold's assessment of civilization in Victorian England. Ever critical of the middle class, Arnold asserts that the greatest threat to the future of the Liberal party is its base in Philistinism, for, says Arnold, the Liberals "lean especially upon the opinion of one great class,—the middle class,—with virtues of its own, indeed, but at the same time full of narrowness, full of prejudices; with a defective type of religion, a narrow range of intellect and knowledge, a stunted sense of beauty, a low standard of manners; and averse, moreover, to whatever may disturb it in its vulgarity." In other words, the middle class is virtually uncivilized and will remain so until forced to confront its imperfections. Even with its Philistine foundation, the Liberal party in fostering love of liberty has a more promising future than the Conservatives, who are primarily concerned with keeping order. In order to retain power and influence, the Liberals must not rest satisfied; they must recognize man's continual need for expansion and must work diligently to alleviate the social and political inequality which has resulted in "an upper class materialised, a middle class vulgarised, a lower class brutalised."

Because Arnold perceives Americans to be merely "English people on the other side of the Atlantic," he attributes to American society many of the same weaknesses he notes in British society. American civilization is the topic of "A Word About America," published in the *Nineteenth-Century* (1882). In this essay Arnold observes that a significant difference between England and the United States is that democracy is more advanced in the United States, leaving fewer citizens members of the barbarian and populace classes. Assuming then that the Philistines comprise "the great bulk of the nation," Arnold suggests for America the same civilizing agents he has repeatedly recommended for the British--improved schools and improved arts.

At the time Arnold wrote "A Word About America," he had never visited the United States, but a year later, in 1883, having received an invitation from the Pittsburgh iron magnate Andrew Carnegie, Arnold, accompanied by his wife and daughter Lucy, sailed to America. The six months spent there were hectic ones, for Arnold was engaged in an extensive and demanding lecture tour in the course of which he met William Dean Howells, Oliver Wendell Holmes, John Greenleaf Whittier, and Mark Twain. Arnold's daughter Lucy also made new acquaintances, including that of Frederick Whitridge whom she married a year later. His daughter's move to New York motivated Arnold to make another trip to the United States just after he retired from school inspecting in May 1886.

Thus Arnold had paid two extended visits to America when he lectured on "Life in America" in January 1888. His remarks, published in April in the *Nineteenth-Century* under the title "Civilisation in the United States," reflect little change in the position he had outlined six years earlier. Arnold argues that while Americans have established a laudable democratic social system and have proven successful in commerce and industry, they have not cultivated beauty. Arnold cites the inferiority of American architecture, painting, and literature as evidence. Even American place

names such as Briggsville, Higginsville, and Jacksonville indicate to him an inadequate national regard for the beautiful. He contends, "The Americans have produced plenty of men strong, shrewd, upright, able, effective; [but] very few who are highly distinguished." This situation is hardly surprising since the democratic system with its "glorification of 'the average man'" makes distinction rare. Arnold is convinced of the value of heritage and established culture and says that Americans apparently desire it since "all Americans of cultivation and wealth visit Europe more and more constantly." Arnold summarizes: "The human problem, then, is as yet solved in the United States most imperfectly; a great void exists in the civilisation over there: a want of what is elevated and beautiful, of what is interesting."

"Civilisation in the United States" was the last essay by Matthew Arnold to be published in his lifetime. He died suddenly of a heart attack on 15 April 1888. John Holloway's remarks on Arnold's style and rhetorical technique in his 1953 book *The Victorian Sage* provide a fitting summary of Arnold's prose. Holloway points out that Arnold "had no rigid doctrines to argue for, only attitudes." He argued for the cultivation of "certain habits and a certain temper of mind." Arnold, quite naturally, set himself as a model. It was essential that he present himself as the kind of person he most admired--"intelligent, modest, and urbane." As Holloway observes, in Arnold's prose, it is "his handling of problems" that is more important than his solutions to them. One of Arnold's contemporaries, John Burroughs, writing two months after Arnold's death, claimed that Matthew Arnold deserved to be read extensively, for only then could he be fully appreciated. In the prose "His effect is cumulative; he hits a good many times in the same place, and his work as a whole makes a deeper impression than any single essay of his would seem to warrant." The modern reader will still find much to savor in the prose of Matthew Arnold.

Papers: Major collections of Arnold's papers are at the Beinecke Library, Yale University, and at

the University of Virginia. Yale has notebooks, diaries, commonplace books, literary manuscripts, and over 200 letters. The Arthur Kyle Davis Papers at Virginia include mainly letters.

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