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The position of Matthew Arnold in the religious dilemma of his time

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY
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Dissertation

THE POSITION OF MATTHEW ARNOLD IN THE RELIGIOUS DILEMMA OF HIS TIME

by

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PhD

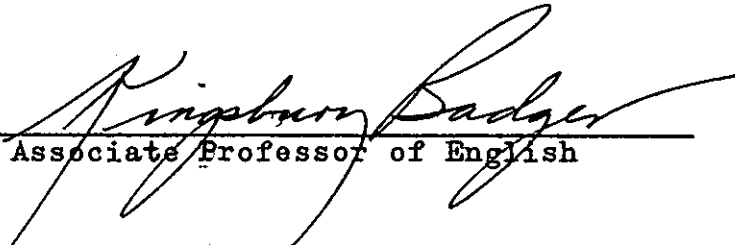
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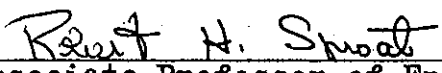
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Introduction

Critics have tended to overlook the relevance of Arnold's religious writings to his criticism. This oversight represents a failure to acknowledge the importance of Arnold's distinctive (though not unique) contributions to nineteenth-century religious criticism: his viewing religion---and religious criticism---from the standpoint of a man of letters, while pointing out to his contemporaries the differences between a literary and a literal approach to the Bible; his assuming the role of mediator between extremes of Scriptural interpretation; and his application of the principles of Culture to public morality.

Arnold's involvement in the religious question of his day has been treated by Lionel Trilling in his definitive and now standard work, *Matthew Arnold* (New York, 1939), by the late E. K. Brown in his *Matthew Arnold, A Study in Conflict* (Chicago, 1948),* and by others who have briefly and generally commented on the religious dilemma presented in Arnold's poetry. Except for William Blackburn's excellent and suggestive Introduction to his edition of *Literature and Dogma* (Yale dissertation, 1943), parts of which have appeared in *Modern Philology* and *Modern Language Quarterly*, there has been no specific treatment of the backgrounds of Arnold's religious writings.

The present essay on the position of Matthew Arnold in the religious dilemma of his time elucidates Arnold's literary and social criticism through an examination of certain antecedent and contemporary theological influences and an evalua-

*T. S. Eliot's writings on Arnold's religious thought have been excluded as being outside the scope of the present study.

tion of Arnold's mediating role in terms of the relations of conduct to the larger concept of Culture (for Culture alone had ameliorating properties). Culture, which Arnold described so often, had particular properties in given contexts. But in his religious criticism it made explicit the application of literary principles to the interpretation of Scripture and the recognition of the social and moral integrity of man based on the Bible as a book of conduct and a history of the idea of righteousness. Culture derived in part from the religious controversies of the times in which he grew, in part from the theological traditions into which he was born. Culture, in this sense, met the demands of the Time-Spirit by discovering in religion its essential poetry (for to many Christians the fact had failed religion). The present essay carries the narrative of Arnold's religious coming of age from the reading of Spinoza and Bishop Butler back to the controversies of the thirties, in which his father figured so prominently, and forward to the article on Bishop Colenso and Spinoza and the final revaluation of Bishop Butler in Last Essays on Church and Religion. Throughout, Arnold's work is seen as blunting the tendencies of both the Oxford Movement (and what it stood for) and German biblical criticism.

I: The Religious Inheritance

In a letter to his mother from the Council Office of the Education Department, dated from Downing Street, London, December 17, 1862, Arnold wrote of his article on the Bishop (Colenso) and the Philosopher (Spinoza): "I was pleased with this performance on Colenso and Spinoza."¹ Less than a month later² he wrote to his mother another letter in which he indicated that the Spinoza and Colenso article had aroused considerable attention, for F. D. Maurice, among others, had taken up the controversy in periodical articles.³ It is apparent from still another letter to his mother, dated from the Athenaeum, November 19, 1863, that Spinoza occupied Arnold's attention for at least a year: "I am not quite pleased with my Times Spinoza as an article for Macmillan ["A Word More about Spinoza," Macmillan's Magazine, December 1863]; it has too much of the brassiness and smartness of a Times article in it."⁴ This interest in Spinoza was nothing new, however; for when Arnold "came to Balliol," he came with a bold step. "The poets of his choice, led by Béranger, were unorthodox and epicurean. He read Spinoza, the atheistic philosopher, and Emerson, who taught him the dangers

¹Letters, ed., G.W.E. Russell (New York, 1900), Vol. I, p. 205.

²January 7, 1863. See Letters, I, 208.

³The article by Maurice, "Spinoza and Professor Arnold," appeared in the Spectator, January 3, 1863.

⁴Letters, I, 242. Cf. Letters, I, pp. 209-211: a reference to the Spinoza-Colenso article in a letter to his mother, January 27, 1863.

of conformity and the need for preserving in oneself the glow of life."⁵ Thus the reading of the Philosopher may be said to begin in Arnold's early Balliol days.

But at Oxford Arnold only read Spinoza, reserving for much later the careful study which was to emerge when he came to compare him with Bishop Colenso.⁶ He was reading in Spinoza in the year 1848, the year of revolutions in Europe.⁷ And he was reading in Spinoza in 1850; from Rugby (October 23) he wrote to his friend Clough: "Locke is a man who has cleared his mind of vain repetitions, though without the positive and vivifying atmosphere of Spinoza about him. This last I have been studying lately with profit."⁸ Two items of some importance should, however, be remembered: Arnold's first published work on Spinoza appeared in December 1863, and in connection with the controversy then raging over Bishop Colenso. It may be a fact that, as Mr Lowry indicates, Arnold in the period of the correspondence with Clough (1848-1853) arrived at a point in religious certainty to this extent:

⁵Lionel Trilling, Matthew Arnold (New York, 1939), p. 19.

⁶While Arnold was at Oxford the formal study of the philosophy of Spinoza was perhaps not so strict. H. V. Routh---in Towards the Twentieth Century (Cambridge, Eng., 1937), p. 226---makes the point that the importance of Spinoza increased only gradually: "As the philosophy of the romantic movement was proving inadequate, thoughtful observers, dissatisfied with deism and theism, were beginning to revive the teaching of Spinoza.... On the other hand...his pantheism [was not] congenial to the religious revival of the early Victorian era."

⁷Letters to Clough, ed. H. F. C. Lowry (New York, 1932), p. 75.

⁸Letters to Clough [Letter 35], p. 117.

he believed the professional theologian obscured, with all his talk of first causes, miracles, and theories of atonement, the real faith he sought to reveal; that the literary man, on the contrary, with his ready tact for essentials, with his trained power of knowing where to rest in a book and where to go lightly, had a definite contribution to make towards a study of the Bible.

The letters to Clough do reveal a certain amount of "religious certainty" in this period insofar as Arnold "had already set his course and caught the significance of what he later was to teach others"; and it is the view of Mr Lowry that "the person familiar with Arnold's religious work will recognize that he was already embarked."¹⁰ Arnold in his later twenties might have set his course and might even have been embarked. There can be no argument with this view of Arnold's religious thinking in the late forties; there is too much evidence in Arnold's letters to Clough to support the view. But to say that the young Arnold caught the significance so early of what he was to teach, though it may be true in a limited sense, anticipates too much. It will be seen that the real significance of the major portion of the religious writings of Matthew Arnold derives from its relation to the religious controversies of the sixties and the seventies.

Preliminary to a discussion of these controversies, some

⁹Letters to Clough, p. 49.

¹⁰Page 50.

notice should be given to academic and personal influences which shaped Arnold's thought. To this end the present history treats of certain aspects of the religious inheritance of Matthew Arnold, or what can be termed the sources of his religious thinking: Spinoza, who stood as a beacon always guiding Arnold toward fundamental religious practice and demonstrating the validity of a literary interpretation of Scripture; Bishop Butler, who, like Arnold, attempted to mediate between religious extremes and observed the close association between happiness and virtue; Thomas Arnold, who at home and at school defined for his son the basic assumptions of the liberal church primarily as an institution of the state; the personalities of the Oxford Movement (in its earlier years), who raised issues inimical to the principles of the liberal church as those principles were being spelled out by the bishops Whately and Hampden.

A. Spinoza and the Bible.

To understand...is the absolute virtue of the mind. But the highest thing which the mind can understand is God..., and therefore the highest virtue of the mind is to understand God.

Spinoza, Ethic, Fourth Part, Prop. XXVIII.

To know and love God is the highest blessedness of men, and of all men alike; to this all mankind are called, and not any nation in particular. The divine law, properly so named, is the method of life for attaining this height of human blessedness; this law is universal, written in the heart, and for all mankind.

M. Arnold, "Spinoza and the Bible."

For the purposes of this discussion, and for Arnold as well, Spinoza is the link between the past and the contemporary

scene. He had been translated many times by the end of the seventeenth century; he had been disparaged by Voltaire and studied by Coleridge and Goethe; but the mid nineteenth-century Zeitgeist, to use Arnold's term, was right for a closer look at his writings in relation to the new age. Coleridge, a pioneer in nineteenth-century religious thought, reflected, in his Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit, Spinoza's literary reading of Scripture and, like his contemporary, Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), recast religious thought to make it free of orthodoxy and Enlightenment narrowness. In Arnold's day the Philosopher enjoyed a revival.¹¹ "By the law of reaction, an inquisitive and disquisitive age was ripe for his influence;"¹² and Arnold was one of the first to sense that influence. Like Bishop Colenso, but from a different standpoint ---the contrast is of Arnold's own making---Spinoza reconciled new science to old-fashioned orthodoxy, discarding on literary as well as religious principles the obvious theological superstructure of the Scriptures, insisting "that without understanding our place in the scheme of the universe, without exercising to the full our capacity for analysis and inquiry, we could not live rightly, could not be ethical...."¹³ Spinoza's contribution

¹¹See Ernest Renan, "Spinoza: 1677-1887," The Contemporary Review, XXIX(1877), 763-777; John Caird, Spinoza (Edinburgh, 1888); James Martineau, A Study of Spinoza, 2nd ed. rev. (London, 1883).

¹²Routh, p. 226.

¹³Routh, p. 226.

was this: he perceived that ultimately faith would rest, as it should, not on the literalism of the Scriptures, which is the playground of the theologians, but on the everlasting moral truths of the Scriptures, which it is the function of literature to expose.¹⁴ Thus from the first the conflict between religion and science, or better, what Arnold came to call literature and dogma, was clear. To Clough Arnold pointed out this unhappy state of religion when he said, "The world in general has always stood toward religions and their doctors in the attitude of a half-astonished clown, acquiescingly ducking at their grand words and thinking it must be very fine, but for its soul not being able to make out what it is all about."¹⁵ It was under the influence of Spinoza, in his "positive and vivifying atmosphere," that Arnold began to see his Bible.¹⁶

Arnold's essay on "Spinoza and the Bible", as it appeared in its final form,¹⁷ does not much betray the controversy¹⁸

¹⁴Letters to Clough, p. 50.

¹⁵Letters to Clough, p. 50.

¹⁶Cf. Letters to Clough, p. 51. Mr Lowry, the editor of the Letters, adds: "He who has mastered this thought of Spinoza [*i.e.*, that knowledge of God depends not on the transitoriness and imperfection of theological glosses] and followed its ramifications has mastered half the religious teaching of Matthew Arnold."

¹⁷E. K. Brown, in Studies in the Text of Matthew Arnold's Prose Works (Paris, 1935, pp. 2; 132), notes that "Spinoza and the Bible" appeared in book form in the first edition of Essays in Criticism, First Series (Macmillan, 1865) and that the second edition of Essays, I contained an enlarged version of the Spinoza essay, first published in Macmillan's (December 1863).

¹⁸Over Bishop Colenso's Pentateuch...Critically Examined (1862).

which was its original inspiration. Modifications in the texts of the papers which composed the final essay were such that the topical allusions which once had excited attention were either subordinated or lost. The longest interpolation in the final form of the essay was a rather lengthy but general exposition of Spinoza's Tractatus Theologico-Politicus. It was to this work of Spinoza's that Arnold returned. He returned to it because he felt certain that there is a difference between religion and philosophy and that there is a choice to be made between them. "The theme [of Arnold's essay] is the authenticity and piety of Spinoza's religious feeling; in their former context, a contrast to the religious feeling of the Bishop of Natal, they are here a rejoinder to the aspersions of a Dutch secularist."¹⁹ As Arnold saw the dilemma he recognized in Spinoza one whose theory of criticism sought the establishment of

religion of a kind acceptable to men of good will who stood on a middle ground between the vulgar, superstitious masses and those very few who were capable of understanding and supporting the strenuous conclusions of the author's naturalistic philosophy as set forth in the Ethics. It had, too, a political purpose, for it sought to prove what its title declared, 'that freedom of thought and speech not only may, without prejudice to piety and the public peace, be granted; but also may not, without danger to piety and the public peace, be withheld.'²⁰

In the time of uncertainty---the important thing to remember is that the contemporary scene motivated his writing---Arnold

¹⁹E. K. Brown, Studies, p. 11.

²⁰Trilling, p. 214. See Chapter XX of the Tractatus.

rediscovered the Tractatus. And there he found a basic conception of religion set forth unequivocally for his edification and set apart from both philosophy and science, products of the imagination and intellect having little to do with one another. "Religion deals with morality, which can never be proved true but only good; philosophy deals with what can be demonstrated by mathematics."²¹ Arnold's position was that of a man of letters, like Spinoza, on a middle ground. But in his own essay Arnold said it:

Strauss [and the same criticism applied to Colenso] has treated the question of Scripture miracles with an acuteness and fulness which even to the most informed minds is instructive; but because he treats it almost wholly without the power of edification, his fame as a serious thinker is equivocal. But in Spinoza there is not a trace either of Voltaire's passion for mockery or of Strauss's passion for demolition. His whole soul was filled with desire of the love and knowledge of God, and of that only.²²

The power of edification, the love and knowledge of God. These were the literary and religious attributes of the Philosopher which attracted Arnold.

The universal aspiration to know and love God had, according to Arnold, been lost sight of.²³ How and why this aspiration for knowledge and love of God, "the highest blessedness of

²¹Trilling, p. 214.

²²M. Arnold, Works, III, 370-371. Unless otherwise noted, all references are to The Works of Matthew Arnold in Fifteen Volumes, ed., G. W. E. Russell (London, 1903-1904). David Friedrich Strauss (1808-1874), German theologian, author of Das Leben Jesu (1835).

²³Page 345. Cf. Spinoza, I, 61f. All references to the Tractatus are in the translation by R. H. M. Elves in The Chief Works of Benedict de Spinoza, 2 vols. (London, 1883).

man, and of all men alike,"²⁴ was lost, Spinoza answered in the twenty chapters of the Tractatus. In reviewing the content of this treatise on the interpretation of Scripture, Arnold condensed its doctrine without the "metaphysical language in which much of it is clothed,"²⁵ extracting from it its salient ideas. First, the commentaries of the ages, which have been "foisted into the Christian religion," have caused many to lose sight of the essential teachings of God as they appear in the Bible: theology has replaced morality and ethics, while the worth of the Bible as poetry has gone unrecognized.²⁶ Second, the prophets have been misinterpreted, their "revelation" in terms of poetic truth blunted, as Arnold called it, by the incursions and impositions of "Rabbinical traditions and Greek philosophy."²⁷ The power of poetry in religion, a recurring idea of Arnold's, or "the power of imagining, the power of feeling what goodness is, and the habit of practising goodness,"²⁸ were the only attributes of the prophet. This power, this practice is part of the accoutrement of the true poet, and without recognizing this power the literary, and by implication the religious, value of the Bible is lost.²⁹ Third, the significance of Christ lies in

²⁴Page 345.

²⁵Page 355.

²⁶Page 341.

²⁷Pages 342-346. Cf. Spinoza, I, 18f.

²⁸Page 343.

²⁹Pages 342-343. Cf. Spinoza, I, 102.

his extending the law and the prophets and redefining and proclaiming the "universal divine law" of blessedness at a time when the "fabric of the Jewish State, for the sake of which the Jewish law existed, was about to fail."³⁰ The prophets had only imperfectly conceived the law as "mere rules and commands, and for them moral action had no liberty and no self-knowledge."³¹ It remained for Christ to proclaim the "love of God and the love of our neighbour" as eternal truths.³² Fourth, the essentials of religion are to love God and our neighbor, follow the precepts of the first chapter of Isaiah, live the Sermon on the Mount.³³ The articles of religion are no more than these. Finally, philosophy and theology are independent, the former demanding obedience, the latter, knowledge. What is important is the "belief that God is," that he rewards them that seek him and that "the proof of seeking him is a good life."³⁴ Perhaps Arnold oversimplified a more complex matter when he wrote: "These are the fundamentals of faith, and they are so clear and simple that none of the inaccuracies provable in the Bible narrative in the least affect them, and they have indubitably come to us uncorrupted."³⁵

³⁰Page 346. Cf. Spinoza, I, 169. Spinoza defined the "divine law": "The Word of the Lord when it has reference to anyone but God Himself, signifies [the] Divine law..., in other words, religion...not in ceremonies, but in charity, and a true heart...."

³¹Page 347.

³²Page 347. Cf. Spinoza, I, 64f.

³³Pages 348-349.

³⁴Page 351.

³⁵Page 351.

But what further? If all this is true, if the Scriptures need re-interpretation, what position can the Bible then hold? "What is the new Christianity to be like? How are governments to deal with national Churches founded to maintain a very different conception of Christianity?"³⁶ Passing quickly over all minor inconsistencies and inaccuracies, Spinoza answered these questions, without much regard for whether, as Arnold put it, "the fanatical devotee of the letter is to continue...to believe that Moses sate in the land of Moab writing the description of his own death, but [rather] what he is to believe when he does not believe this."³⁷ With Strauss and Colenso in mind, Arnold apparently felt that the fanatical devotee of the letter would then, having been deprived of the letter, believe nothing; for it was his conviction that the rationalistic approach to Scripture of the sort in which Strauss and Colenso engaged offered nothing constructive in place of that which it took away. Arnold added pointedly: "Is he [the devotee of the letter] to take for the guidance of his life a great gloss put upon the Bible by theologians?"³⁸ or will the Church then ask him to believe in formularies and creeds or in what Spinoza had outlined as the basic tenets of Christianity? Spinoza had pleaded that the nations "make the national church what it should be...to

³⁶Page 355.

³⁷Pages 356-357.

³⁸Page 357.

save us from the untoward generation of metaphysical Article-makers."³⁹ But for this last reform Spinoza offered no specific program in keeping with traditional Christianity.

Given Spinoza's interpretation of Scripture, any form of traditional Christianity is impossible, especially since Spinoza insisted upon the strict historical method. "If we read a book [he wrote] which contains incredible or impossible narratives, or is written in a very obscure style, and if we know nothing of its author, nor of the time or occasion of its being written, we shall vainly endeavor to gain any certain knowledge of its true meaning."⁴⁰ It is surprising that in his enumerations of the weaknesses of the Tractatus,⁴¹ Arnold did not seize upon this statement of method, for it appears in contradiction to the spirit and tendency of Arnold's own poetic principles.⁴²

Arnold agreed in certain essentials in spite of the fact that he believed that "as a speculative work" the Tractatus was "in want of a base and in want of supports."⁴³ He agreed generally with Spinoza on matters concerning popular superstition and its effects upon religion, the function of prophets and prophecy and their place in the literature of the Bible, the origin and effect

³⁹Page 357.

⁴⁰Spinoza, I, 111.

⁴¹See M. Arnold, Works, III, 362. Arnold cited Spinoza's subordinating the importance of the prophets: "Mr Mill and Dr Stanley have been telling us how great an element of strength to the Hebrew nation was the institution of prophets." To Spinoza, "the ablest of Hebrews," they seemed an element of weakness. Arnold also criticised Spinoza's denial of final causes, adding, however, that the Correspondence throws more light on the Ethics, which were, at Arnold's writing, not yet published in translation.

⁴²See "The Study of Poetry," in Works, IV, 1-41.

⁴³M. Arnold, Works, III, 362.

of miracles, and the definition of the Divine law as a vital part of religion governed by reason. These aspects of the work contributed to the beginnings of Arnold's approach to his Bible, and, although he took much from Spinoza outside the Tractatus,⁴⁴ it was this work in particular which was to show through the chapters of Literature and Dogma and God and the Bible. A work of the intellect rather than the emotions, written against the background of his excommunication⁴⁵ though with great objectivity---even coldness, Spinoza's treatise, in spite of its shortcomings, offered Arnold much.

As a first step toward a revaluation of the Bible, Spinoza sought to expose and destroy popular superstition, which, he said, "is engendered, preserved, and fostered by fear,"⁴⁶ its special victims being the ignorant, the unlucky, and the miserable who in danger and misfortune forsake reason to pray help from God. Any inexplicable phenomena of the natural world become for the superstitious signs of divine displeasure soothed only by repentance, prayer, or sacrifice; and historically the rituals of superstitious people came to be mistaken for religious practice, differing accordingly in various localities and nationality groups so that eventually the ritual became identified with certain groups to the exclusion of all others. If,

⁴⁴Throughout his essays on religion Arnold shows more than passing acquaintance with the Ethics.

⁴⁵Arnold's essay "Spinoza and the Bible" begins with a quotation of the curse of excommunication pronounced upon Spinoza by the Portuguese synagogue of Amsterdam in 1656.

⁴⁶Spinoza, I, 4. The origin and growth of popular superstition is the subject of the Preface.

as Spinoza pointed out, man were governed by Reason and were not the pawn of fortune, he would never be superstitious. Spinoza discovered as he proceeded that there was "nothing taught expressly by Scripture, which does not agree with our understanding, or which is repugnant thereto."⁴⁷ In practice, however,

Matters have long since come to such a pass that one can only pronounce a man Christian, Turk, Jew, or Heathen, by his general appearance and attire, by his frequenting this or that place of worship, or employing the phraseology of a particular sect---as for the manner of life, it is in all cases the same. Inquiry into the cause of this anomaly leads me unhesitatingly to ascribe it to the fact, that the ministries of the church are regarded by the masses merely as dignitaries, her offices as posts of emolument---in short, popular religion may be summed up as a respect for ecclesiastics.⁴⁸

While faith he saw as "a mere compound of credulity and prejudices,"⁴⁹ degrading rational man to a beast and stifling "the power of judgment between true and false....Piety, great God! and religion are become a tissue of ridiculous mysteries."⁵⁰ Devoid of reason, narrow within the limits of its dogma---such is popular religion. Man is generally not governed by Reason. Thus, man "ever prone to superstition, and caring more for the shreds of antiquity than for eternal truths," mistakenly "pays homage to the Books of the Bible, rather than to the Word of God" which

⁴⁷Page 9.

⁴⁸Spinoza, I, 6.

⁴⁹Page 7.

⁵⁰Page 7. In the Ethics Spinoza made the following distinction: "Everything which we desire and do, of which we are the cause in so far as we possess an idea of God, or in so far as we know God, I refer to Religion. The desire of doing well which is born in us, because we live according to the guidance of reason, I call Piety" (Ethic, pp. 208-209).

"has not been revealed as a certain number of books, but was displayed to the prophets as a simple idea of the Divine mind, namely, obedience to God in singleness of heart, and in the practice of justice and charity."⁵¹

The rule of reason informed also Spinoza's treatment of prophecy and the prophets. Accordingly, he reduced the question of the certitude of prophecy to three basic considerations:

- (1) That the things revealed were imagined very vividly, affecting the prophets the same way as things seen when awake;
- (2) The presence of a sign;
- (3) Lastly and chiefly, that the mind of the prophet was given wholly to what was right and good.⁵²

So all of God's revelations to the prophets were through words or so-called appearances, or both; and these are of two kinds: "real when external to the mind of the prophet who heard or saw them, imaginary when the imagination of the prophet was in a state which led him distinctly to suppose that he had heard or saw them."⁵³ Revelations the prophets received in parables and allegories, for this was the manner of speaking and thinking, and spiritual truths were "clothed...in bodily forms."⁵⁴ The only evidence of the use of real voices is the conversation on Mount Sinai between God and Moses; all other signs of divine revelation are presumed to have been imaginary. If this much is granted, it is a mistake, then, to think that "knowledge of

⁵¹Page 9.

⁵²Page 29. Cf. M. Arnold, Works, III, 343f.

⁵³Page 15. Matthew Arnold wrote of the special qualifications of the prophet simply: "The sum and substance of this revelation was...Believe in God, and lead a good life" (Works, III, 344).

⁵⁴Page 25.

natural and spiritual phenomena can be gained from the prophetic books."⁵⁵ These were the speculations of the rationalist describing the essentials of prophecy and the prophets, essentials over which the superstructure of theology with its attendant dogma was finally built. The words of Arnold, echoing the spirit of the Tractatus, though describing the situation of religion contrary to Spinoza's essentials, have some relevance to the case in point. Arnold wrote that the multitude,

which respects only what astonishes, terrifies, and overwhelms it, by no means takes this simple view of its own religion. To the multitude, religion seems imposing only when it is subversive of reason, confirmed of miracles, conveyed in documents materially sacred and infallible, and dooming to damnation all without its pale. But this religion of the multitude is not the religion which a true interpretation of Scripture finds in Scripture.⁵⁶

Reason denies, for example, the possibility of a miracle.⁵⁷ And yet the multitude persist, said Spinoza and Arnold, in allowing themselves to be baffled by a hint of a contradiction of the laws of nature, persist in calling religion that worship of mystery and superstition which makes God impotent by admitting that he allows through a miracle the violation of his own laws, the laws of nature.⁵⁸ The masses suppose...that God is inactive so long as Nature works in her

⁵⁵Page 27.

⁵⁶M. Arnold, Works, III, 352.

⁵⁷Page 352. "Reason tells us that a miracle,---understanding by a miracle a breach of the laws of nature,---is impossible, and that to think it possible is to dishonour God...." For the full discussion by Spinoza, see Tractatus, Ch. VI, "Of Miracles."

⁵⁸Spinoza, I, 81.

accustomed order, and vice versa, that the power of nature and natural causes are idle so long as God is acting: thus they imagine two powers distinct one from the other, the power of God and the power of Nature, though the latter is in a sense determined by God, or created by Him.⁵⁹

"Miracles," then, are unusual natural phenomena which had their origin in the primitive Gentile tribes who worshipped visible gods in the elements. Early Jewish religious leaders, anxious to demonstrate the inefficacy of worshipping visible deities, countered with the notion of an invisible deity who arranged nature, through phenomena, to suit the Chosen People. It was around this deity that they built a miracle myth which succeeding generations were reluctant to forget.⁶⁰

Because Nature maintains an unchanged, immutable order, Reason, so applied, wrecks religious proof from miracles. According to Spinoza, the existence and character of God⁶¹ may be ascertained not through miracles but through the changeless order of Nature. Scriptural miracles, like all else in the Bible, Spinoza subjected to the rational method of interpretation, because he felt that they required rational interpretation, required it because Scriptural examples showed that God's decrees

⁵⁹Spinoza, I, 81.

⁶⁰Spinoza, I, 81-82.

⁶¹Spinoza's definition of God is in the Ethics: "By God, I understand Being absolutely infinite, that is to say, substance consisting of infinite attributes, each one of which expresses eternal and infinite essence" (Ethic, 1). Cf. Arnold's "not ourselves which makes for righteousness."

meant nothing more than that Nature's pattern was determined only as a result of her own eternal laws.⁶² The workings of Nature, it was seen, conformed to a Divine law which seeks as its aim the true knowledge of God through a true knowledge of Nature. This law Spinoza called the Divine law "because of the nature of the highest good," and he asserted that

in intellectual perfection the highest good should consist. Now, since all our knowledge, and the certainty which removes every doubt, depend solely on the knowledge of God;---firstly, because without God nothing can exist or be conceived; secondly, because so long as we have no clear and distinct idea of God we remain in universal doubt---it follows that our highest good and perfection also depend solely on the knowledge of God.⁶³

Natural reason and the natural Divine law of Spinoza contain nothing inimical to the moral teachings of Scripture; and what he called the natural Divine law reveals that it is universal, that it is independent of "the [literal] truth of a historical narrative," for "the truth of histories cannot give us the knowledge and love of God," that it works independently of "the performance of ceremonies," that the "highest reward of the Divine law is the law itself, namely, to know God and to love Him of our free choice."⁶⁴ This Divine law, exercised by free choice and not from "fear of any pain and penalties,"⁶⁵ or through ceremonies, is independent of and above Biblical narrative.

⁶²Spinoza, I, 82.

⁶³Page 59.

⁶⁴Page 61. See also pp. 69-70. Cf. M. Arnold, Works, III, 345.

⁶⁵Page 61.

Thus Spinoza contended that there were no mysteries hidden in the Bible. The error of the theologians was that they wearied themselves "in the investigation of absurdities, to the neglect of what is useful."⁶⁶ For this the only remedy, as he saw it, was the more accurate method of interpreting Scripture, almost the same as the method of interpreting Nature. "For as the interpretation of nature consists in the examination of the history of nature, and therefrom deducing definitions of natural phenomena on certain fixed axioms, so Scriptural interpretation proceeds by the examination of Scripture, and inferring the intention of its authors,"⁶⁷ by an analysis of the history of Scriptural statement. This analysis of Scriptural statement consists of an examination of the language in which the books of the Bible were written, with particular attention to the idiom in which Biblical writers spoke; an analysis of the contents of each book to determine ambiguous or obscure passages and so to discover not the "truth" but the meaning of the passages; and a study of the "environment" of the prophetic books especially in order to learn the life, conduct and work of each author.⁶⁸ Spinoza's strict adherence to the historical method has already received some comment; its dangers Arnold recognized and criti-

⁶⁶Page 99.

⁶⁷Page 99.

⁶⁸Pages 101-104.

cized when he saw the method carried to logical extremes in the work of the German critics. Certainly the method knocked the support out from under conventional or orthodox religious belief. Both Spinoza and Arnold had posed rhetorical questions: assuming the validity or, indeed, the necessity of an approach to the Bible such as the one adopted by Spinoza, could orthodox Christianity and the existing Church survive such a philosophy of religion? Both answered that Christianity and the Church could not and remain the same. Arnold pointed to the Tractatus Theologico-Politicus, the principal work of the Philosopher's published in his lifetime, as an inquiry into "the life and practice of Christian nations professing the religion of the Bible."⁶⁹ Spinoza discovered that because people did not understand their Bible, their life and practice as Christian nations were not "the due fruits of the religion of the Bible."⁷⁰

With closer attention to the religious dilemma of his age, Arnold would use the principles of Spinoza to reconcile the due fruits of the religion of the Bible to the life and practice of England as a nation professing the religion of the Bible. This was the scope of Spinoza's work, the scope also of Arnold's.

⁶⁹M. Arnold, Works, III, 340.

⁷⁰M. Arnold, Works, III, 340.

How much Arnold took from the Philosopher! The uses of reason and the power of edification, the method of Scriptural interpretation, the function of religion in the state. And underlying these aspects of Arnold's indebtedness was the concern over the future of religion for the masses, the multitude which both rather feared but which both sought to re-educate in their reading of the Bible; though in this last Spinoza's aim was to make virtue an end in itself, while Arnold demonstrated that virtue was a means to an end, the end being happiness. The Tractatus was, after all, an academic performance. What Arnold took from Spinoza he modified to suit his own purpose; he made what he borrowed practical, useful, pragmatic; for he conceived the ultimate good in happiness, and happiness derived from what he called conduct and righteousness. But this anticipates Literature and Dogma, and it is important first to consider briefly the influence of another segment of his reading at Oxford, namely Bishop Butler, whose eudaemonism, through the Analogy and the Sermons, gave point to Arnold's writings on religion.

B. Bishop Butler and Matthew Arnold.

Affections, Instincts, Principles, and Powers,
 Impulse and Reason, Freedom and Control---
 So men, unravelling God's harmonious whole,
 Rend in a thousand shreds this life of ours.
 Vain labour! Deep and broad, where none may see,
 Spring the foundations of the shadowy throne
 Where man's one Nature, queen-like, sits alone,
 Centred in a majestic unity...

[Sonnet] "Written in Butler's Sermons"

Man must begin, know this, where Nature ends;
 Nature and man can never be fast friends.

[Sonnet] "To an Independent Preacher"

The lack of any definitive study of the influence of Joseph Butler (1692-1752) upon the religious thought of Matthew Arnold is a gap in Arnold criticism. Furthermore, of the essays in criticism of the work of Matthew Arnold, only the Introduction to Mr William M. Blackburn's edition of Literature and Dogma⁷¹ even suggests the importance of this influence. It is a disappointment that in his revaluation of Arnold, Mr Basil Willey⁷² contributes nothing new to our understanding of Arnold, though he does appropriately recognize and aptly express a truth which students of Arnold have always felt, namely, that "to Arnold religion was the thing that mattered most: all his efforts

⁷¹An unpublished Yale dissertation (1943), parts of which have appeared in Modern Philology, Modern Language Quarterly.... See Blackburn, "Bishop Butler and the Design of Arnold's Literature and Dogma," Modern Language Quarterly, IX(1948), 199.

⁷²Nineteenth Century Studies (New York, 1949). Pp. 263-283 contain an examination and critical estimate of Arnold's religious writings.

---in criticism, in politics, in education---really led up to it. It was therefore of vital importance to preserve it, to find a basis for it which should make it invulnerable to 'scientific' criticism and yet leave it ethically as powerful as before."⁷³ It is interesting to see that this same problem, which involves fundamentally a conflict between what is commonly termed science (in its broadest meaning) and what is commonly termed religion, informed Bishop Butler's apology for religion and that the existence of the problem for Arnold in the nineteenth century and his acknowledgment of his debt to Butler⁷⁴ (especially in his acceptance of the eudaemonistic ethic) suggests that there might be certain points of basic similarity between Butler and Arnold, some areas of disagreement, and grounds for comparison between the two. The following is a summary of the backgrounds to the writings of Butler and Arnold, together with a short exposition of the Analogy of Religion, which is basic to an understanding of Butler. A discussion of the more intimate connections between the writings of Butler and Arnold, particularly insofar as the Sermons throw light on

⁷³Page 264.

⁷⁴See M. Arnold, Works, VIII, 154. In Chapter III of God and the Bible Arnold wrote: "Nevertheless, the greatness of Butler...is in his clear perception and powerful use of a 'course of life marked out for man by nature, whatever that nature be.'" He acknowledged also "obligations of all kinds to this deep and strenuous spirit...."

Literature and Dogma, is reserved for another place, as is a review of the critical reception of Butler by Arnold and others.

The striking similarities between Butler and Arnold centre in the controversies which inspired their significant religious works and in the general treatment of the matter of ethics.

(1) Butler and Arnold, both in search of a reconciliation of religious extremes, took the middle ground. (2) Both attempted to arrive at a new synthesis for religion for their own age and attacked at once traditional orthodoxy and radicalism. For Butler the attack was on the religion of revelation and the philosophy of self-interest as it found its epitome in the work of Hobbes, Mandeville, and later, Bentham. For Arnold the attack was on the religion of revelation as it was on the one hand formulated and then dried out by the metaphysics of High Church bishops and as it was on the other hand debased by the rationalizations of the German school of criticism, for both the bishops and the German rationalists robbed religion of the vitality, emotion, and imagination so necessary to Arnold.

(3) Both Butler and Arnold were unable or unwilling to define exactly, even for themselves, the uses which they might make of Reason in their criticism. Though both appealed to the judgment of their audiences, Butler distrusted the uses of Reason, fearing he would be identified with the Deism of the School of Toland, while Arnold, stating his dislike for the German school, declined to use this kind of Reason and in its place asserted the need for religion touched by emotion. (4) Butler and Arnold saw the

need for an established church as a national institution for the promotion of morality and good conduct. (5) Both believed that there existed a definable relationship between right living and happiness; and though they arrived at the concept of happiness by different ways, the eudaemonistic ethic formed an integral part of the religious thought of Butler and Arnold as well. (6) Inasmuch as both wrote in periods of religious controversy, the criticisms of both were topical, persuasive, though the influence of Butler, academically at least, was felt more in the nineteenth century than in the eighteenth. (7) Butler and Arnold did their most significant work at a time when the zeit-geist demanded and was responsible for such criticism as they offered. It was the Deistic controversy and Toland's Christianity not Mysterious that contributed to the determination of the character of Butler's Analogy. (8) As writers in periods of controversy, both attempted to answer the larger philosophical questions concerning the nature of God, the relationship of man to God, the government of the universe, and the position, in their respective areas of criticism, of systematic ethics, or, for Arnold, conduct and morality. It is important to realize, however, that neither Butler nor Arnold offered anything new to the history of religious thought, that both were eclectic and synthetical,⁷⁵ groping for a compromise between "science" as each knew it and "religion" as each knew it.

⁷⁵Not in the Spencerian sense.

The ethical environment of Butler was located in the so-called "intuition school" of the eighteenth century which included Cudworth, Clarke, Shaftesbury, and Butler's contemporary, Hutcheson. It was a school of thought which based its ethics upon the optimistic view of Nature and of man.⁷⁶ Butler might at first glance be regarded as originally a follower of Shaftesbury and opposed to the utilitarian, enlightened self-interest of Hobbes and Mandeville. He was, however, unlike Shaftesbury in that he did not make the distinction between morality and religion. For Butler, as for Arnold, "morality reaches its zenith in religion."⁷⁷ This is as complete an ethic as Butler ever evolved: he never completely catalogued his system of ethics.⁷⁸

Considered as the result of a religious controversy, Butler's Analogy of Religion constitutes an interesting study of the effect of the zeit-geist. The interest lies in the fact that its author was carried along with the tide of secularism and yet became disturbed when scientific inquiry and the use of Reason, as agents of secularism, seemed to make incursions into the sacred areas of religion. To the eighteenth century, "to a period of great worldliness in philosophy and religion the ques-

⁷⁶W. E. Taylor, The Ethical and Religious Theories of Bishop Butler (Toronto, 1903), pp. 16,17.

⁷⁷Ernest Campbell Mossner, Bishop Butler and the Age of Reason (New York, 1936), pp. 107-108.

⁷⁸The addendum to the Analogy, "Of the Nature of Virtue," appears to be the only article devoted exclusively to a discussion of ethics.

tion of supreme import was this life, how to live it most fully and most happily."⁷⁹ However, Butler's worldliness stopped where science usually begins, when the question of ethics, What is the end of man? admits of no answer. The lack of any answer to the question did not, however, prevent men from attempting a solution to the problem, and the eighteenth century, as a time of great worldliness in philosophy and religion, gave rise to an attitude toward the universe which employed all the accessories of Reason. Deism⁸⁰ and the Deistic controversy, reaching its height following the Revolution of 1688/89, had its antecedents in Locke's Reasonableness of Christianity (1695) and Toland's Christianity not Mysterious (1696), which represent respectively the constructive and destructive aspects of Deistic criticism.⁸¹ The enthusiasm for the Deistic view of the universe was not short-lived: Tindal's Revelation a Republication of the Religion of Nature appeared in 1730. These works, and especially Toland's, among others, "prompted Butler to the writing of his Analogy."⁸² For, as Mr Taylor points out, "When Toland...wrote his Christianity not Mysterious, deducing on his arbitrary definition of

⁷⁹Mossner, p. 105f.

⁸⁰"Deism, in contrast with Theism, would confine God's activity to the primal act of creation, and exclude the supernatural as contrary to reason" (Henry Bettenson, ed., Documents of the Christian Church [New York, 1947], p. 427).

⁸¹Cf. Taylor, pp. 40-41.

⁸²Bettenson, p. 433.

Reason that Christianity was, therefore, unreasonable, then Butler saw more clearly than ever in the Rationalistic school an exceedingly dangerous enemy to religion and morality."⁸³ When Butler, and later Arnold, attacked the enemies of religion and morality they declined the use of Reason in any of its philosophical definitions; and Butler for himself could not "define...the uses of Reason and therefore rejected it altogether."⁸⁴ The starting point for Butler---Arnold as well ---was not, then, Reason but rather fundamentally the ethical consideration of the end of man. The method of Butler was analogical, based on the supposition that "every work both of nature and art is a system."⁸⁵ The purpose or function of the Analogy was to attack science as it was expressed in the philosophy of mechanical self-interest and egoism. From the point of view of a criticism of religion or a philosophy of religion, there was in the Analogy nothing new either in content or in method; if the Analogy accomplished anything it summarized in a convenient manner "what oft was thought, but ne'er so well express'd."⁸⁶ This is not to minimize the importance of the Analogy in its (1) apparent two-fold object of defining the

⁸³Taylor, p. 18.

⁸⁴Taylor, p. 18.

⁸⁵Taylor, p. 21. See Butler's Sermon II.

⁸⁶Cf. Mossner, p. 79. Mossner (p. xi) notes that as an article for speculation the Analogy contains material "particularly useful in enabling [the historian of thought] to evaluate the new role of science, now just become important."

aspects, functions, and limitations of natural and revealed religion and attempting to reconcile the deistic tendencies of the eighteenth century with orthodox Christianity, (2) concern with human conduct, and (3) emphasis upon the moral government of God and a system of eudaemonistic ethics.⁸⁷

For his purposes Butler's use of the empirical method seemed appropriate since, as Mossner suggests, "morality is the science of human actions, their causes and results, matters of fact that can be ascertained by experience."⁸⁸ In an account of Butler's moral and religious systems, prefixed to the Analogy,⁸⁹ Bishop Halifax noted that Butler recognized the advantages inherent in his empirical or analogical method when he wrote:

This way of arguing [from analogy] from what is acknowledged to what is disputed, from things known to other things that resemble them, from that part of the divine establishment which is exposed to our view to that more important one which lies beyond it, is on all hands confessed to be just. By this method Sir Isaac Newton has unfolded the system of nature; by the same method Bishop Butler has explained the system of grace....⁹⁰

This method, unlike Spinoza's, for example, in no wise had the effect of lessening the importance of orthodox Christianity, and Bishop Halifax, in his introduction to the Analogy, took

⁸⁷In his discussion of both natural and revealed religion, Butler uses the traditional proofs from miracle. The system of ethics is Butler's important contribution to Arnold.

⁸⁸Mossner, p. 105f.

⁸⁹Joseph Butler, Works, ed. W. E. Gladstone (London, 1896), Vol. I, pp. xix-xxxvii.

⁹⁰Page xxv.

great pains to make clear the point that Butler sought only to reinforce by this method the existing structure of Christianity.

The importance of Christianity appears in two respects. First, in its being a republication of natural religion, in its native simplicity, with authority, and with circumstances of advantage; ascertaining, in many instances of moment, what before was only probable, and particularly confirming the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments. Secondly, as revealing a new dispensation of Providence, originating from the pure love and mercy of God, and conducted by the mediation of his Son, and the guidance of his spirit, for the recovery and salvation of mankind, represented in a state of apostasy and ruin....⁹¹

Chapter 4 of the second part of the Analogy contains a statement of the eudaemonistic ethic, which Bishop Halifax summarized thus:

Another circumstance objected to in the Christian scheme is the appointment of a Mediator, and the saving of the world through him....We have seen already, that with regard to ourselves this visible government of God, in the physical world is carried on by rewards and punishments; for happiness and misery are the consequences of our own actions, considered as virtuous and vicious; and these consequences we are able to foresee.⁹²

The above quotations appear to have contained for Bishop Halifax at least the salient critical points of Butler's work. And in concluding his commentary upon the moral and religious systems of Butler, Bishop Halifax wrote, "The view here given of the moral and religious systems of Bishop Butler, it will immediately be perceived, is chiefly intended for the younger students,

⁹¹Pages xxix-xxx. This statement is expanded by Butler in Part II, Chapter I.

⁹²Page xxxiii.

especially for students in Divinity;"⁹³ to which Mr W. E. Gladstone, the nineteenth century editor of Butler, added in a footnote that the Analogy is intended for "the more serious and candid thinkers among men of the world" and that he found no record of the Analogy's having been published in any university before 1807, seventy-one years after the appearance of the first edition.⁹⁴ Butler's own Advertisement was addressed to "reasonable" men, who would find, he hoped, the truth of the argument based on principles of reasonableness, so annoyed was he at the light attitude of clergy and laity alike toward religion. He intended that the Analogy should correct this attitude.

The following notes, with quotations, paraphrase Butler's summary of his treatise. In the Introduction he determined his method, that is, the "inductive" method of proceeding from known facts to unknown facts concerning the constitution of the universe, proposed a system of ethics based on the assumption that virtue leads to happiness and vice to misery,⁹⁵ and summarized the content of the Analogy: (a) "mankind is appointed to live in a future state"⁹⁶ which Butler did not define in the Introduction or the text in terms of heaven or hell; (b) in the "future state" mankind will be rewarded or punished according to his

⁹³Page xxx.

⁹⁴Actually, the Analogy went through several printings during the eighteenth century, enjoying a kind of popularity, though no critical reception until the nineteenth century.

⁹⁵Butler, I, 11-12ff.; 14f.; 16-18.

⁹⁶Page 17.

conduct on earth;⁹⁷ (c) rewards and punishments which are meted out in the future state are in terms of "all that behaviour here, which we comprehend under the words, virtuous or vicious, morally good or evil;"⁹⁸ (d) the existence which we now enjoy should be considered as a period of "probation, a state of trial;"⁹⁹ (e) the state in which we now live may be defined as a "discipline" or a process or preparation for the future life;¹⁰⁰ (f) in spite of objections to the contrary, there is a moral plan to or in the universe;¹⁰¹ (g) and in spite of possible objections to the correctness or rightness of this plan of the universe, the plan does function even though it is but imperfectly comprehended;¹⁰² (h) the world "being in a state of apostasy and wickedness, and consequently in ruin," there is, nevertheless, in operation a "dispensation of Providence" which might be equated with the (mediaeval) idea of grace;¹⁰³ (i) there is a proof of the above by miracles;¹⁰⁴ (j) the idea of the Redemption and the Atonement

⁹⁷Page 17. Note Arnold's use of conduct.

⁹⁸Page 17.

⁹⁹Page 17. A central idea in Butler.

¹⁰⁰Page 17.

¹⁰¹Page 17.

¹⁰²Page 17.

¹⁰³Page 17.

¹⁰⁴Page 17.

is central in the dispensation of Providence, "which is a scheme or system of things" and is administered by the intercession or mediation of "a divine person, the Messiah, in order to the recovery of the world;"¹⁰⁵ (k) this grace, however, is not revealed to all mankind alike, "nor proved with the strongest possible evidence to all those to whom it is revealed; but only to such a part of mankind, and with such particular evidence as the wisdom of God thought fit."¹⁰⁶

"It [was] not [Butler's] intention to prove God's perfect moral government over the world, or the truth of religion. His purpose [in writing was] entirely defensive; he wishe[d] to answer objections that [had] been brought against religion, and to examine certain difficulties that [had] been alleged as insuperable."¹⁰⁷ To a degree Butler accomplished this purpose. A brief review here of the chief ideas of the Analogy might serve to show, by way of explaining some aspects of the outline presented above, how Butler, through the design of the analogy, expected to accomplish his purpose. His outstanding concepts are (1) his

¹⁰⁵Page 17.

¹⁰⁶Page 17. The letter headings to the outline above refer to the following chapters in the Analogy (Chapter 3 of Part II omitted).

(a)	summarizes content of	Part I, ch. 1
(b)	" "	" ch. 2
(c)	" "	" ch. 3
(d)	" "	" ch. 4
(e)	" "	" ch. 5
(f)	" "	" ch. 6
(g)	" "	" ch. 7
(h)	" "	Part II, ch. 1
(i)	" "	" ch. 2
(j)	" "	" chs. 4, 5
(k)	" "	" chs. 6, 7.

¹⁰⁷Taylor, p. 51.

"moral psychology", (2) his belief in a future life, (3) his system of rewards and punishments as part of the ethic, (4) his belief in the moral government of God, (5) his interpretation of this life as a state of probation, and (6) his sense of the greatness of Christianity.

(1) One of the pervading aspects of Butler's thought is his moral "psychology," which derived from the philosophies of the seventeenth century and which is best defined by Mossner:

In Butler's particular scheme, these [*i.e.*, the basic human motivations] are the appetites, the passions, the principle of benevolence, the principle of self-love, and conscience. These five faculties are functionally distinct. An appetite is the desire to satisfy a physical urge, for example, hunger or fatigue. A passion is the desire to satisfy a mental or emotional urge, as revenge or compassion. Benevolence is the rational principle motivating the care for the welfare of others. Self-love is the similar rational principle actuating regard for the welfare of the individual. Self-love and benevolence considered together are general principles supplying the means of gratifying appetites and passions when they tend toward private or public welfare respectively. Conscience or reflection is the reigning principle devoted to the approbation or disapprobation of one's own heart, temper, or actions, accordingly as they lead to good, private and public, or evil. It formulates the concepts of right and wrong. Once established, these five objective faculties are appealed to in accordance with the general argument from design that lies back of so much of Butler's thought.¹⁰⁸

This scheme or design of the psychology is the common denominator for both the ethic, and, by implication, Butler's view of the universe.

(2) Why should not death, as ordinarily apprehended, be considered a part of life, or better, a part of God's scheme of the universe? Butler addresses himself to this question

¹⁰⁸ Mossner, pp. 108-109ff.

and introduces the analogy: persons are born into this world, helpless and imperfect, gradually mature in the world (which is a state of probation), to become increasingly independent and perfect. Death, according to this analogy, unless it has the power to destroy completely, should be considered a part of the life scheme, part of God's government of the world, for in the future life "maturity" will be even more complete. Butler says:

From our being born into the present world in the helpless imperfect state of infancy, and having arrived from thence to mature age, we find it to be a general law of nature in our own species, that the same creatures, the same individuals, should exist in degrees of life and perception, with capacities of action, of enjoyment and suffering, in one period of their being, greatly different from those appointed them in another period of it.¹⁰⁹

(3) The importance of a belief in a future life is connected with this idea. Butler asserts, "That which makes the question concerning a future life to be of so great importance to us, is our capacity of happiness and misery." The reference to the ethic is plain. Butler continues, "And that which makes the consideration of it to be of so great importance to us, is the supposition of our happiness and misery Hereafter, depending upon our actions Here."¹¹⁰ It is pertinent to see also

¹⁰⁹Butler, I, 21. Part I, ch. 1.

¹¹⁰Page 48. Part I, ch. 2. Italics mine; the word action underscores the empirical aspect of the ethic.

the connection with Arnold. Arnold's conduct (three-fourths of life) is substituted for (ethical) actions. Pleasure and pain, Butler here demonstrates, are directly the consequences of our own actions in the present life; enjoyment and suffering, happiness and misery are, therefore, within our power to lose or to achieve.

(4) The government of God, like the Creation of God, has a design.

As the manifold appearances of design [Butler writes] and of final causes, in the constitution of the world, prove it to be the work of an intelligent Mind; so the particular final causes of pleasure and pain distributed amongst its creatures, prove that they are under his government; what may be called his natural government of creatures endued with sense and reason.¹¹¹

So Butler writes, taking care to point up the fact that the government of the world by an intelligent Mind should not be taken to imply that that intelligent Mind is itself moral, nor, indeed, that his government is moral; for the moral government of the world does not---or should not---consist merely in rewarding and punishing mankind for their actions "but in rewarding the righteous and punishing the wicked."¹¹² It is at this juncture that Butler's idea of the moral government of God needs some qualification. The government of God is at best imperfectly comprehended. Evil, for example, though it obviously should not be encouraged, might, in some instances, work for good. By

¹¹¹Page 63.

¹¹²Page 64. Part I, ch. 3.

this Butler means that man, having the knowledge of both good and evil and the freedom to make the choice between the two, might be edified or elevated through an encounter with evil; and thus if the choice is the good, making evil work toward the achievement of the good.¹¹³

(5) In connection with Butler's interpretation of this life as a state of probation or preparation for the life hereafter little comment is necessary. It might be sufficient to observe that the following sentence from the chapter on this life as moral discipline has added meaning when applied to the "stoicism" of Arnold. Butler sees "the active principle of virtue and obedience to God's commands [as] applicable to passive submission or resignation to his will."¹¹⁴

(6) For Butler the importance of Christianity lies in its special interpretation of revelation. Christianity may be considered primarily as an "external institution, or natural or essential religion, adapted to the present circumstances of mankind, and intended to promote natural piety and virtue."¹¹⁵

Arnold, it will be remembered, thought of the Church of England as a society for the promotion of goodness. Butler believes, however, that Christianity may also be considered as "a re-
publication

¹¹³Page 169. Part I, ch. 7.

¹¹⁴Page 133. Part I, ch. 5.

¹¹⁵Page 188. Part II, ch. 1.

publication of natural religion. It instructs mankind in the moral system of the world...."¹¹⁶ Revelation is used by Butler as it was used by many commentators before him: "Indeed," he writes, "the miracles and prophecies recorded in Scripture, were intended to prove a particular dispensation of Providence, the redemption of the world by the Messiah."¹¹⁷ In this attitude toward Old Testament prophecy Arnold and Butler are in agreement. And in this respect too they are in essential agreement: for though their methods differ, Arnold and Butler find that the importance of Christianity resides in the mediation of Christ. Notwithstanding the "great traditional objection" to the idea of the mediation of Christ, Butler insists that "there seems nothing less justly liable to it," and notes that "we find all living creatures are brought into the world, and their life in infancy is preserved, by the instrumentality of others."¹¹⁸ The notion of the visible and invisible government of God in this connection seems to indicate in the analogy a bifurcation of Christianity into what Arnold later termed the "inward" as opposed to its "outward" aspects; but the connection between Butler and Arnold becomes somewhat neat when one considers the rather nice summary statement of Butler, "the essence of natural religion may be said to consist in religious regards

¹¹⁶Pages 188-189.

¹¹⁷Page 189.

¹¹⁸Page 252. Part II, ch. 5. Butler adds that "the visible government, which God exercises over the world, is by the instrumentality and mediation of others. And how far his invisible government be or be not so, it is impossible to determine at all by reason."

to God the Father Almighty; and the essence of revealed religion...to consist in religious regards to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost."¹¹⁹ Whatever Arnold may have thought of this stating of the issue so simply and so cleverly, he surely must have assented to Butler's commonplace final observation in the Conclusion to the first part of the Analogy, though perhaps he objected to the phrasing of the notion that, "We are placed, as one may speak, in the middle of a scheme, not a fixed but a progressive one, every way incomprehensible: incomprehensible, in a manner equally, with respect to what has been, what now is, and what will be hereafter."¹²⁰

Apart from his varied indebtedness to Butler, Arnold, nevertheless, when he spoke as critic, said that the Analogy, for his own time, was a failure. He objected to its too pat scheme or system or method. He objected to Butler's essential "lack of spirituality," to Butler's "psychology," to Butler's driving man to God. One commentator, Mr Taylor, in his notice of the "distinctive ethical views" and the "apologetic value" of Butler, has defended the "psychology" or the "principles of action"¹²¹ and the cast of the Analogy.¹²² In the matter of

¹¹⁹Page 198.

¹²⁰Page 176. Butler's preoccupation with scheme makes the idea of a future life in the analogy particularly intriguing to him. He repeats that death is part of the life scheme, for "there is nothing strange, in our being to exist in another state of life. And that we are now living beings, affords a strong probability that we shall continue so" (Analogy, p. 178).

¹²¹See p. 34 for Mossner's summary.

¹²²Taylor, pp. 24, 25.

Butler's account of the basic human motivations, as well as in the form of the argument, Arnold's harshness toward Butler, it will be seen, stems from the problem of definition. This appears to be the case; and it is unfortunate, for if any writer can be criticized for arbitrary definition that writer is Arnold. If Arnold felt that Butler's system or view of the universe was utilitarian and therefore objectionable, was not Arnold's own concept of conduct and happiness more utilitarian? For Arnold the end and aim of man, virtue, indeed, was happiness, human perfection; and it was a practical thing; it was, as he wrote in Literature and Dogma, "the sense of succeeding, going right, hitting the mark."¹²³ In his account of behaviour, Arnold too was utilitarian. As Mr Taylor has said it, according to Arnold, there is a contradiction first in Butler's definition of Self-love as "a cool, deliberate pursuit of private interest" and then the application of the principle of Self-love, thus defined, to love (or hatred) of our neighbor. In Arnold's mind, in other words, to define Self-love, as one example, in terms of private interest "and then to say that from Self-love..., love of our neighbour is no more distant than hatred of our neighbour ...is to sophisticate things."¹²⁴ Arnold's difficulty with Butler at his juncture seems to come from his unwillingness to accept Butler's identification of the locus of the selfish and/

¹²³M. Arnold, Works, VII, 28.

¹²⁴Taylor, p. 31. "Even at past fifty years of age I approach the subject, so terrible to undergraduates, of Butler's account of self-love, with a shiver of uneasiness" (M. Arnold, "Bishop Butler and the Zeit-Geist," Works, IX, 305).

or the unselfish in mankind and his inability to reconcile what he called the Best Self in his concept of conduct with what Butler conceives as "the higher self" in his system of psychology. Arnold's stricture against Butler's method has also been answered: Arnold made the "unwarranted" assempⁿtion "that the argumentative form of treatise is not in keeping with the spirit of Christianity."¹²⁵ But as an article in argumentation, the Analogy does have, discounting the treatment of the subject matter and its substance, an apologetic value; and the charge of Arnold on Butler's lack of spirituality and his objection against the method of analogy have no intrinsic critical value, especially as the form and the approach to the matter was for Butler and his readers part of the appeal and in keeping with the spirit of the times in which he wrote.

The dust of antiquity had not yet settled over the writings of Bishop Butler when Arnold was reading him at Oxford, reading Butler, along with Aristotle, whose spirit informed all the colleges, and with Aristotle and Butler reading two or three other standard---and revered---texts. Thomas Arnold had sent his son to Oxford to learn Aristotle: his work was the criterion against which the work of all others was measured. "Whatever was hard, whatever was obscure, the text-book was all right, and our understandings were to conform themselves to it."¹²⁶ Arnold read faithfully. He would return to Butler and address himself to a detailed criticism in "Bishop Butler and the Zeit-Geist."

¹²⁵Taylor, p. 69.

¹²⁶M. Arnold, Works, IX, 260.

C. Whately, Hampden, Thomas Arnold
and Controversies of the Thirties.

These principles I believe to be irrefragable, that a Church Establishment is essential to the well-being of the nation; that the existence of Dissent impairs the usefulness of an Establishment always, and now, from peculiar circumstances, threatens its destruction; that to extinguish Dissent by persecution being both wicked and impossible, there remains the true, but hitherto untried way, to extinguish it by comprehension.

T. Arnold, "Principles of Church Reform," iii-iv.

"Arnold's interest in religion had never flagged from the youthful days when he had listened to Newman at St Mary's and had turned the pages of the Gita;"¹²⁷ and excepting some poetry, it was not until the essay on the Bishop and the Philosopher (1863) that he published anything specifically on religion. His prose criticism on religious matters was not without long preparation, for it had its antecedents in Oxford, the movements of thought there during the thirties and the attendant personalities and religious controversy. Even Arnold's friends at Oxford, the members of the club called the Decade---Temple, later the Archbishop of Canterbury, Church, Lake and Stanley, later deans of the Church of England, John Duke Coleridge, later Lord Chief Justice, and Jowett and Shairp---were in one way or another party to the religious controversies of the years after Oxford.¹²⁸

¹²⁷W. F. Connell, The Educational Thought and Influence of Matthew Arnold (London, 1950), p. 143. Arnold's interest in the Bhagavadgita was thought by his sister Jane ("K") to be a detriment, but from it, according to Mr Connell, Arnold derived his ideas on individual integrity and perfection (p. 26f.); furthermore, according to Mr Connell, the concept of culture derives from the Gita and the Stoics (especially Epictetus) as well as Obermann (page 29).

¹²⁸Connell, pp. 20-21.

Matthew Arnold and his friends were reared in a religious atmosphere. And that atmosphere was charged with the promise of strife because the critical spirit was, to use Arnold's expression, in the air. Even while awaiting admission to the university, Arnold confided to his friends his aversion to statements in the Thirty-Nine Articles, and especially to that Article which approves of the Athanasian Creed. Moreover, he found it increasingly difficult to continue in a university which demanded his subscription to the Thirty-Nine Articles, and though he was not opposed specifically to this or that Article or its implications, he did, nevertheless, object to the "cramping and crippling" effect that subscription would entail. He did finally sign the Articles.¹²⁹

At Oxford, Matthew Arnold was a credit to his father. But according to Mrs Ward's history of those early years, gathered from the "most intimate diary" of Thomas Arnold, from the pages of Dean Stanley's Life of Thomas Arnold, and from her personal recollections, the impression which her grandfather made upon his sons "appeared, at any rate, to be less strong and lasting than in the case of others."¹³⁰ She meant, of course---as she said, "in the matter of opinion." "The development of the elder two sons [Matthew and Tom] at the University was probably very different from what it would

¹²⁹Letters to Clough, pp. 23-24.

¹³⁰Mrs Humphrey Ward, A Writer's Recollections (London, 1918), Vol. I, pp. 13-14.

have been had their father lived."¹³¹ The inference here is that "the young Balliol poet," just having discovered Sand and Emerson and Carlyle, found orthodox Christianity "no longer ...the sure refuge that it had always been to the strong teacher [Dr Arnold] who trained them as boys."¹³² However, the fact that the son did not take refuge in Christianity in the same way in which the father had does not necessarily signify that the impression made by the father was less deep than it might have been. To this extent at least the training of the sons had been adequate: while at Oxford, neither showed any tendency toward "Newmanism."¹³³ Matthew particularly would remember the performance of his father in the article on "The Oxford Malignants," one of the outstanding attacks on "Newmanism." The son's fidelity to the principles of his father would preclude his coming under the influence of Newman's opinions---this in spite of his own confession that Newman was one of his "teachers" at the university. On the face of it the only attraction which Newman had for Matthew Arnold was, as Mrs Ward has observed, "for that strange New-
manic power of words. But he was never touched in the smallest

¹³¹Mrs Ward, I, 15.

¹³²Mrs Ward, I, 16.

¹³³Mrs Ward, I, 15. After Tom's graduation from the university, after he settled in New Zealand, he "surrendered to Newman's influence" (Mrs Ward, I, 26). See Thomas Arnold, Passages in a Wandering Life (London, 1900).

degree by Newman's opinions. He and Arthur Clough...lived indeed in quite another world of thought."¹³⁴ Yet he was a credit to his father, even though he lived in another world of thought, the world unorthodox and epicurean, apart perhaps from the world in which, had the impression of the father been more deep, he might have lived. Mrs Ward's recollection that Thomas Arnold's influence in his own family was apparently less strong than outside tends to mislead. Mr Trilling's statement that the younger Arnold went up to the university with a bold step also seems to indicate that, ideologically at least, there was a severing of family ties. Both these views, though essentially correct, do not, however, account for the impact made upon the younger Arnold of the movements of thought at Oxford of which not only Newman but also (and more importantly) Thomas Arnold was a part.

The present narrative carries the matter of Matthew Arnold's religious inheritance forward to the early years of the Oxford Movement and the writings of Whately, Hampden, and Dr Arnold. Whately and Hampden are briefly considered as influences on Matthew Arnold which were, according to Mr Blackburn, "hitherto unnoticed."¹³⁵ The significance of these antecedents is cast within the framework of the early Oxford

¹³⁴Page 15. Matthew only occasionally went to hear Newman. Tom "had rooms in University College..., nearly opposite St Mary's...but only once crossed the street to hear him, and then was repelled by the mannerism of the preacher."

¹³⁵Indebtedness here specifically, as in other places, is to William M. Blackburn's Introduction to his edition of Literature and Dogma (Yale dissertation, 1943).

Movement: the writings and events of the early thirties have further significance in that they anticipate, in their controversial aspects, the religious revival of the sixties.

Before 1833, there was within the Church of England a movement of thought which bore all the characteristics of the Oxford Movement.¹³⁶ This early tendency was not concerted until elements within the Church felt they had to defend themselves against political incursions following the Reform Bill of 1832, since all through the agitation preceding the Reform of 1832 the Church of England slumbered. Serious minds despaired at the lack not only of religious but also of political interest. Dr Whately and Dr Arnold had already formed their opinions about the true constitution and function of the national Church. The importance of Dr Arnold consisted, according to Matthew Arnold in a letter to his mother,¹³⁷ "in his bringing such a torrent of freshness into English religion by placing history and politics in connection with it." But the Oxford Movement, facing in a different direction, was also a cry against indifference, on the face of it against the suppression by the Government of ten Irish bishoprics. There was need for reform. The times had changed; the Church remained traditional, hardly adapted to the bold economic, political, and religious enterprise of the century in which it found itself

¹³⁶ See C. P. S. Clarke, The Oxford Movement and After (London, 1932), pp. 9-11; 13; 16.

¹³⁷ Letters, I, 362. Cf. Letters to Clough, p. 4.

on the eve of the Oxford Movement.¹³⁸

Notwithstanding the impetus given it by so-called political considerations, the Oxford Movement was from the beginning primarily Scholastic (in its theology) and ecclesiastical. After 1845, however, when Newman's power at Oxford was destroyed, there was a social and political reaction, for while the Movement steadily lost what ground it had gained in the preceding years, there was becoming increasingly apparent a counter-movement, also a reaction, under the aegis of the High Church, with Dr Pusey and Bishop Wilberforce as academic and ecclesiastical heads. The attempt to check Newman's drift toward Rome had failed, and his Tract Ninety, which argued that there was no real distinction between Anglican and Roman doctrine, caused a storm of criticism to break upon the leaders at Oxford; and from 1845, the Movement, in the form in which it survived, was beset with problems which it found difficult to solve.

Newman always believed that Keble's Assize Sermon on "National Apostasy," preached at Oxford on July 14, 1833, launched the Movement.¹³⁹ The sermon was a reminder to the body politic of the Anglican Church of the threat from the Government, which said Keble, was already preparing to challenge once and for all the privileges and immunities of the clergy and

¹³⁸ See R. W. Church, The Oxford Movement (London, 1891), p. 3. Dean Church wrote: "The typical clergyman in the English pictures of the manner of the day, in the Vicar of Wakefield, in Miss Austen's novels...is represented...as a kindly and respectable person, but certainly not alive to his calling."

¹³⁹ See Church, pp. 19; 21-27; also Clarke, pp. 42-43.

even the constitution and doctrines of the Church.. He reminded the Church that its relations with the Government had already been strained by the action of the Government in suppressing the Irish bishoprics. The sermon was a call to the Church to counteract this infringement of its historic rights. The Church of England, said Keble, had from its institution believed that as a Christian nation England was also a part of Christ's catholic Church and that as such was bound to the laws of that Church in "all her legislation and policy."¹⁴⁰ This tradition the Government was attacking, said Keble, in "direct disavowal of the sovereignty of God."¹⁴¹

But sermons alone were not enough to rouse popular interest in reform. The public remained uninterested in the Church in spite of the threats of the Government, the suppression of Church offices, and the increased pamphleteering against the Movement. It was decided that one of the chief tasks of the Oxford men was to be the propagation of their doctrine in the

¹⁴⁰ Church, p. 82.

¹⁴¹ The first step forward in the Movement was taken at a gathering of friends at the parsonage of Hugh James Rose at Hadleigh, Suffolk, sometime between the twenty-fifth and twenty-ninth of the same month in which Keble preached the Assize Sermon at Oxford. The meeting was brought about through the efforts of Rose, the originator of the organ of Church opinion, the British Magazine. All the members of the meeting, though of sharply different temperament, agreed on the major issues which confronted the Church, and were further agreed on the main course of action which they would follow. Rose and Palmer and A. Perceval, together with the three Oxford men, Keble, Froude and Newman, by meeting and correspondence, formed the group whose opinions resulted in the publication of the Tracts for the Times (Church, pp. 84-85).

form of tracts, the actual composition of which was left to the less experienced but bolder Oriel scholars, each writing as an individual and at the same time maintaining the aim of the Movement to reform the Church from within and to recast it in its traditional historical and theological setting.¹⁴² The resulting Tracts for the Times, the accumulated contributions of the leaders, were the startling answer to academic as well as public apathy. The tracts served as a means to an end---for Newman, at least. The end was the destruction of church liberalism, which, at Oxford, at any rate, from the earlier years of Dr Whately to the years of the influence of Dr Hampden and Dr Arnold, was a force. The end was not accomplished. In a sense, Tractarianism caused a serious setback to the Movement as originally proposed, for the controversial Tract Ninety, in its assertion that there was essentially no difference between Anglican and Roman doctrine, contributed to the growth of the High Church party, which itself became a threat to church liberalism in the sixties.

Such is the background against which the work of Dr Thomas Arnold must be set. Through the chain of influence the work not only of Dr Arnold but also of Dr Whately and Dr Hampden within the context of the Oxford Movement in its beginnings contributed to the formation of Matthew Arnold's religious beliefs. The writings of Whately and Hampden ante-date Keble's

¹⁴²Church, p. 96.

Assize Sermon, commonly taken as one of the first events of the Oxford Movement; but they have no value merely because they constitute preachments of the liberal church. They are important because Whately's essays provided a basis for Matthew Arnold's biblical studies and Hampden's lectures, through all the controversy they provoked, encouraged individual thinking at a time when Oxford was repressing individual thinking. By the time Matthew Arnold arrived at the university, the events of the thirties had become part of his religious inheritance, and he remembered that his father and his father's colleagues had helped to shape it.

But in the background of Thomas Arnold's personal associations with the religious controversies of the thirties there was an important kinship with and indebtedness to German critics. Friedrich Schleiermacher, influenced in his theology, as was Coleridge, by the Romantic movement, had independently come to conclusions similar to Coleridge's: both had expressed ideas on the literary value of Scripture that had been advanced by Spinoza in the Tractatus and both, in their emphasis on the imagination, reacted to the exclusively intellectual approach of the German Rationalists. Matthew Arnold acknowledged the importance of Coleridge's literary approach to Scriptural interpretation in his paraphrase of Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit in "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time." Thomas Arnold's indebtedness to German critics was more intimate, for as early as 1824 Thomas Arnold was learning German, in

order to read works of German scholarship, especially Barthold Niebuhr's Römische Geschichte. Thomas Arnold's Traveling Journals report a visit to Niebuhr at Bonn in 1830; and the Preface to his History of Rome (1840) acknowledges directly indebtedness to Niebuhr's Roman History. Thus, Thomas Arnold's exposure to German criticism "conditioned" his religious thought,¹⁴³ and "the more deeply he researched, the more confident he felt that some serious reform of the Church Establishment was sadly overdue;"¹⁴⁴ for the Broad Church movement, in which Thomas Arnold was involved, had its analogue in a similar and earlier movement in Germany whose leadership he greatly admired.

Among English theologians, the most lasting influence on Thomas Arnold was Richard Whately (1787-1863), his Oxford tutor and adviser, a man better known for his Logic than for his theological writings. Not a particularly learned man, Whately nevertheless "carried his sound common sense into theological questions also, and found that not a few orthodox dogmas have no foundation in the Scriptures."¹⁴⁵ He expressed his practi-

¹⁴³Merton A. Christensen, "Thomas Arnold's Debt to German Theologians," Modern Philology, LV(1957), 14. See also Kingsbury Badger, "Arthur Hugh Clough as Dipsychus," Modern Language Quarterly, XII(1951), 39-56.

¹⁴⁴Norman Wymer, Dr Arnold of Rugby (London, 1953), p. 77.

¹⁴⁵Otto Pflleiderer, The Development of Theology in Germany since Kant (London, 1890), pp. 368, 369.

cality in his ecclesiastical duties: education for the lower classes, assistance to both Protestants and Catholics in Ireland, reflecting practical and rational theology, "which was not either in philosophy or in history and criticism profound."¹⁴⁶ Such was the man Whately, chief of the group of Oriel men called the Noetics ("hard reasoners"), which included Keble, Hampden, then Thomas Arnold, Pusey and Newman. Even after the group at Oxford disbanded from the meetings in the commons rooms "an intimate correspondence... continued to unite the friends [Whately, Arnold, and Hampden]. It was Whately's ear into which Hampden poured his troubles when they arose in 1836....It was Arnold who came to his assistance at the same crisis in his...article in the Edinburgh Review...."¹⁴⁷ Thomas Arnold acknowledged, as Tulloch has indicated, his indebtedness to Whately in the Preface to the first volume of his Sermons, admitting general borrowings and also "apprehension that some of his sentences were so like passages in the Essays [of Whately] that he might be accused of plagiarism."¹⁴⁸ This alone is sufficient evidence of the pervasive influence of Whately, a softer light in the theological world, but still, in the thirties as previously at

¹⁴⁶Pfleiderer, p. 370.

¹⁴⁷John Tulloch, Movements of Religious Thought in Britain during the Nineteenth Century (New York, 1885), p. 44.

¹⁴⁸Page 53.

Oxford, "something of a power."¹⁴⁹

Tulloch observed that to Whately---as indeed to Thomas Arnold---the majority of the people seemed in this period especially "to live in an atmosphere of theological delusion, mistaking their own conceits for essential religious principles" and moreover, basing their whole Christianity upon the New Testament alone, "making the New Testament writers responsible for notions that...had no existence there, and were indeed contrary to its spirit and teaching rightly interpreted."¹⁵⁰ Hence Whately's important collection of Essays on Some of the Difficulties in the Writings of the Apostle Paul, which appeared in 1828¹⁵¹ and which had as their aim the proof of the contention that commonly held evangelical ideas, in fact, much orthodox doctrine, on, for example, the priesthood, the belief of verbal inspiration, and election, were either not Pauline or not in harmony with the teachings of Paul rightly interpreted.¹⁵² The principles which inform the Essays on...St Paul, as enumerated by Otto Pfleiderer¹⁵³ and developed by Dr Whately, demonstrate first, in the matter of literary interpretation, a kinship with the method of Spinoza and second, a position, with respect to theology, somewhere between "Newmanism" and German

¹⁴⁹Tulloch, p. 41. Whately's connection with the Arnold family continued after the death of Dr Arnold. See Trilling, p. 44.

¹⁵⁰Page 49.

¹⁵¹On the Use and Abuse of Party Feeling comprise the Bampton Lectures (1822). A first series of essays, On Some of the Peculiarities of the Christian Religion was published at Oxford, 1825. The Essays on...St Paul (1828) are marked Second Series.

¹⁵²Tulloch, p. 49. Cf. Pfleiderer, p. 369.

¹⁵³Pfleiderer, p. 369.

rationalism. (1) The doctrine of election is not in harmony with the teaching of St Paul---for by election it is taken that St Paul meant not the predestination of the individual but rather the "appointment of the whole Church to salvation in Christ, which is elected from the rest of the Heathen, as previously the people of Israel had been elected from the other nations."¹⁵⁴ (2) The final destiny of the individual is based, according to St Paul, "on whether [he] personally make[s] use of the advantages offered to [him], by participation in the revelation of the Church."¹⁵⁵ (3) Justification by faith means, according to the ethically ordered life, the forgiveness of sin only through the qualifications of certain moral conditions. (4) The death of Christ, as a sacrifice, though it must be received on Scriptural authority, cannot be shown to be necessary. (5) The deity of Christ, however, should be accepted, but only in the "sense of Christ being the perfect moral example."¹⁵⁶ (6) And his coming should be interpreted as for "the foundation of the kingdom of God as a moral commonwealth."¹⁵⁷ (7) There is no proof in Scripture of the doctrine of apostolic episcopal succession, and the

¹⁵⁴Page 369.

¹⁵⁵Page 369.

¹⁵⁶Page 369.

¹⁵⁷Page 369.

doctrine "is wrecked on the historical improbability of a chain of tradition being kept unbroken through eighteen centuries; the true succession is holding fast to apostolic principles, that is, the moral character of Christianity."¹⁵⁸ This interpretation of the apostolic succession "is violated in the Tractarian doctrine of the sacraments."¹⁵⁹ (8) "Rigorous" observance of the Sabbath is not in harmony with the express teachings of the New Testament. And (9) the Bible is not a law book but a "system of practical truths, motives, and principles in a popular form."¹⁶⁰ In the opinion of Dr Pfleiderer, these are the leading ideas of Whately not only in the Essays on...St Paul but through all his writings on religion to The Kingdom of Christ (1841). In no sense may these notions be thought extreme: Whately fancied himself a true liberal, like the Arnolds on that sometimes untenable middle ground so sacred to liberalism. "The excesses of Anglo-Catholic theology and of German Rationalism were alike obnoxious to him. He closed equally with Newman and Strauss, and beat them with the pitiless and persistent force of his argument and ridicule."¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁸Page 369.

¹⁵⁹Page 369.

¹⁶⁰Page 369.

¹⁶¹Tulloch, p. 52. See Whately, Cautions for the Times. Thomas Arnold was not as well acquainted with the German school as was Whately (Tulloch, p. 61). Cf. Christensen, "Thomas Arnold's Debt to German Theologians," Modern Philology, LV(1957), 14-20. See also L. E. Elliott-Binns, The Development of English Theology in the Later Nineteenth Century (London, 1952), pp. 17-18.

At the centre of Dr Whately's scheme for the interpretation of the writings of St Paul on literary principles appears the three-fold question, the one upon which, by his own testimony, the discussion turns.

I cannot but think that an attentive examination of the Old Testament will go far towards furnishing a key to the true meaning of Paul's and the other Apostolic epistles [wrote Whately, with a view toward connecting in some sort of tradition the Old and New Testaments]; and will furnish an answer not only satisfactory, but capable of being made clear to the unlearned, of the three great questions on which the whole discussion turns; viz. 1st Whether the divine Election is arbitrary, or has respect to men's foreseen conduct; 2dly, Who are to be regarded as the Elect; and 3dly, In what does that Election consist?¹⁶²

These questions Dr Whately answered in Essay III, "On Election." Were the Israelites chosen arbitrarily or not? Moses said yes ---arbitrarily, though not for their intrinsic goodness, for they were "a stiffnecked people;" and Whately had to agree that "the divine election then under the old dispensation was... entirely arbitrary."¹⁶³ To the question Who were the objects of election? Whately answered, the whole nation, without exception. As to the nature of that election, Whately appeared to have an answer less ambiguous. "Were [the Israelites under the old dispensation] elected absolutely and infallibly to enter the promised land...to live in security, wealth, and enjoyment? Manifestly not."¹⁶⁴ The only thing to which they were elected was "the privilege of having these blessings placed with-
in their reach, on the condition of their obeying the law which

¹⁶²Richard Whately, Essays on some of the Difficulties in the Writings of the Apostle Paul (London, 1845), pp. 119-120.

¹⁶³Pages 121-122. Essay III. Essays II, III, IV, V, and VI deal specifically with St Paul.

¹⁶⁴Page 122.

God had given them."¹⁶⁵ Now, with relation to Pauline thought, Whately's suggestion of the connection between the Old and New Testaments cries to make sense; a change has apparently taken place, for whereas the election of the Jews implied only "privilege and advantage," the Church of St Paul, under the Gospel or Christian dispensation, succeeded its predecessor in "the divine power" and offered what Whately called "corresponding benefits and privileges," not confined to one place or nation.¹⁶⁶ In the reading of Pauline theology the error has (following the argument of the Essays) been this: the doctrine of Election has been taken infallibly to imply salvation, and in a manner most arbitrary: "whence it follows...that salvation is arbitrary."¹⁶⁷ This is the wondrous subtlety at the centre of Dr Whately's scheme in the Essays on...St Paul. The propositions would hit both conservatives and puritans: the possibilities in this book for Matthew Arnold could be exciting. Painstakingly, like St Paul,¹⁶⁸ Dr Whately applied the Law to the Gospels, interpreting the New Testament in the light of the Old.

The critical point here taken does not necessarily minimize the value of Dr Whately's literary interpretation of Scripture. The method of attempting to correlate or harmonize the ideas or doctrines of the Old and New Testaments had for Whately theological

¹⁶⁵Page 123.

¹⁶⁶Page 125.

¹⁶⁷Page 139.

¹⁶⁸Pages 114-115.

as well as literary merit, the whole of the Scriptures, generally speaking, being different aspects of a religious tradition. Furthermore, the precedent was there: St Paul, as Whately recognized, was himself familiar with the Old Testament from childhood.¹⁶⁹ Outside of his choice of approach to the matter, Whately succeeded in his original proposition, namely, to suggest, as he put it, "some principles which should be kept in mind by one who would rightly understand this portion of Scripture."¹⁷⁰ This he accomplished with full knowledge of the character of St Paul, "the circumstances in which he was placed, his modes of thought," and his "correspondents."¹⁷¹ He solved the problem of Election by interpreting it loosely as the calling of the "chosen" people of God "out of the world, to be Saints, and inheritors of Eternal life, by God's favour (or grace) through Christ."¹⁷²

There is in the writings of St Paul hardly a letter in which he does not state his belief in the eternal life, a belief which is bound up in his doctrine of "final Perseverance" and "Assurance." These ideas of St Paul, while they may be considered "dangerous," appear to guarantee ultimate success to "those who are once truly elected of God, [but] the fears

¹⁶⁹Page 108.

¹⁷⁰Page 105.

¹⁷¹Pages 105-106.

¹⁷²Page 116.

of [them] (and others of Paul's 'doctrines') have [Whately wrote] been grounded on a misunderstanding of these writings."¹⁷³ The notions which have hitherto been regarded as "pernicious in the extreme" are that "Absolute predestination to eternal life evidently implies the physical impossibility of ultimate failure,---in short, the infallible perseverance of the Elect," and as a result of this implication, "if anyone have arrived at the Knowledge that he is one of the Elect, he cannot but have the most complete Assurance of his own safety."¹⁷⁴ But the dangers in the opposite direction are also great. For example, there appear to be certain portions of the Mosaic law, alluded to by St Paul, which seem to be invalidated by the "establishment of the Gospel."¹⁷⁵ Some commentators have inferred, relative to St Paul's statements on the idea of justification by faith alone, "that the Christian is under no obligation to the practice of virtue,---nor incurs, if he be one of the Elect, any spiritual danger from the commission of sin."¹⁷⁶ Clearly the inference here is this: that from the scheme of the Gospels, implying the abrogation of the older and more traditional Mosaic law, it was evident to Whately that "the virtuous or vicious conduct of a Christian [has] nothing to do with his final salvation."¹⁷⁷ Dr Whately's return in this

¹⁷³Pages 160-161. Essay IV, "On Perseverance and Assurance."

¹⁷⁴Page 162.

¹⁷⁵Page 184. Essay V, "On the Abolition of the Law."

¹⁷⁶Page 185.

¹⁷⁷Page 185.

instance to the tradition of the Old Testament and his consequent imposition of the Old Testament ethic upon Pauline (Christian) theology is interesting and significant in that he felt, as his Essays show, the results of the deterioration of Christian conduct stemming from the incorrect reading of St Paul out of the context of the whole Scripture. Christian theology based on St Paul seemed to ignore this ethic.

One other doctrine "credited" to St Paul was that of "imputed sin" and "imputed righteousness" which seemed to have its origin in the fall from the state of innocence when "our First Parents" passed on to all mankind "the guilt also of the actual transgression committed by Adam: this being imputed to everyone of his posterity."¹⁷⁸ Then the sacrifice of Christ was taken as an act relieving posterity from the sentence to eternal punishment. But as Whately pointed out, the importance of Christ lay not only in the effect of the sacrifice but also in the performance of good works on earth, good works which are "imputed to true believers in Him, and considered as theirs."¹⁷⁹ In many circumstances we find St Paul addressing his hearers on this "imputed sin and imputed obedience," though he is not, as Whately said, responsible for the doctrine. "The whole system

¹⁷⁸Pages 224-225. Essay VI, "On Imputed Righteousness."

¹⁷⁹Page 226.

is made to rest on a particular interpretation of one single text (Rom. v. 19), 'As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.'¹⁸⁰ This is one example, according to the interpretation of Whately, of reading St Paul without understanding what he called the "fervour" of St Paul's teaching. Accepting at face value and literally such words of the apostle is not to read him "aright;" and reading him aright is to read him primarily as literature. Dr Whately saw the importance of studying St Paul not in doctrine alone; he saw that in spite of the vast overlaying of Pauline theology on basic Christian teachings, no part of the New Testament had been so unjustly neglected by Christians as St Paul. As he said it, the Pauline letters offer a main source of instruction to "a regular systematic introduction to Christianity."¹⁸¹ But the truth and the fact of the matter remained that the teachings of Jesus and those of St Paul, though each was of the Gospel, were not and could not be the same.¹⁸² What Matthew Arnold later came to call "extra-belief" had clouded the real and fundamental attributes of the Christian religion. What Dr Whately early sought to do was to recast the writings of St Paul in a continuing Old Testament religious-literary tradition, with special attention to defining the nature and

¹⁸⁰Page 230.

¹⁸¹Page 84. Essay II, "On the Difficulties...of the Writings of Paul Generally."

¹⁸²Page 75.

constitution of divine Election to show that, contrary to the claim of Puritan orthodoxy, salvation in Christ was possible for all mankind. He admitted St Paul to be the key to the regular and systematic study of Christianity, but he recognized, too, that churches and churchmen had read him in such a manner as to neglect his actual teachings for the sake of his supposed doctrines.

"Extra-belief" or the overlaying of doctrine upon the foundations of Christianity was the particular delight of High Church theologians, and not the least of their delights was the Scholastic theology with which they tried to reconcile Christianity. One of the governing principles of the High Church in particular and of orthodoxy in general was the unification of Scholastic theology and Christianity. It is not difficult to see, therefore, why, at a time when at Oxford individual thinking on religion and philosophy was not encouraged, the accounting (by Whately, among other liberals) for the origins of orthodox dogma and doctrine was offensive. There were fears that such accountings were the beginning of widespread skepticism.¹⁸³

Among the friends of Thomas Arnold during the years of the early Oxford Movement was Renn Dickson Hampden, who demonstrated in his Bampton Lectures of 1832 on The Scholastic

¹⁸³Pfleiderer, p. 370.

Philosophy in its Relation to Christian Theology how orthodox theology, "risen in its Patristic and Scholastic form under the influence of the philosophy in vogue at the time, is not identical with the doctrine of the Scriptures."¹⁸⁴ The historian Tulloch took note of the fact that Hampden in these lectures had

assailed what has long been and continues to be the very apple of the traditional theologian's eye---the vast fabric of 'logical theology.' The whole aim of his Bampton Lectures was to explain how such a theology had grown up under the influence of the scholastic philosophy. It was, in his view, no Divine product nor even any directly derivative product of Divine revelation. It was largely a purely human compound, based on the logical terminology of the Patristic and Mediaeval schools.¹⁸⁵

These sentiments caused a commotion in theological circles.

The natural inference was that in a single gesture Hampden thus brushed aside all doctrine, and in doing so the very groundwork of the church. This Hampden did not admit, though certainly he admitted to the undermining of "the whole body of dogmatic theology held by orthodox Christians."¹⁸⁶ The claim of Hampden's immediate opponents was that the lectures reduced "the dogma of the Trinity, in its Athanasian form, ...into a mere series of scholastic propositions."¹⁸⁷ And this was the later contention of his opponents as they expressed their reactions

¹⁸⁴Pfleiderer, p. 370. With Whately, Hampden, and Arnold at this time was H. H. Milman, whose History of the Jews (1829, 1863) is supposed to mark the beginning of the modern treatment of the Old Testament narrative (Pfleiderer, p. 372).

¹⁸⁵Tulloch, pp. 67-68.

¹⁸⁶John Hunt, Religious Thought in England in the Nineteenth Century (London, 1896), p. 99.

¹⁸⁷Tulloch, p. 69.

in the famous pamphlet, Elucidation of Dr Hampden's Theological Statements, generally attributed to Newman and attacked by Thomas Arnold.¹⁸⁸ Another claim of orthodox Christianity in its scholastic phrasing was attacked in the lectures: "The substance of Revelation is not the words or propositions of inspired writers, but God's dealings in the world. In illustrating this distinction, [Hampden said] that the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds involved scholastic speculations,¹⁸⁹ while the Apostles' Creed contains nothing but facts."¹⁹⁰ Though these sentiments caused a commotion, according to the historians of the period, the opinions of Hampden's opponents were not organized immediately after the delivery of the lectures. For the lectures went unnoticed generally until 1836, when Dr Hampden was nominated to fill the chair left vacant by the death in 1835 of Dr Burton, Oxford's Regius Professor of Divinity. Then the blow fell. Tractarians and liberals battled for the first time, three years after the publication of Newman's first Tract, the Tractarians contending that "if Dr Hampden," who in his Bampton Lectures seemed to deny the authority of the Creeds of the

¹⁸⁸Tulloch, p. 69.

¹⁸⁹This seems to prepare for the dissatisfaction of liberal churchmen over the wording and implications of the Athanasian Creed.

¹⁹⁰Hunt, p. 100.

Church, "was right, there was neither Church nor doctrine worth contending for."¹⁹¹ All orthodox churchmen---Tractarians, Evangelicals, and High and Dry---demanded the removal of Hampden. Then, Convocation, by a majority of four hundred and seventy-four to ninety-four, voted that Hampden should not be allowed voice in the elections of University preachers.¹⁹² "The size of the majority shows plainly that the victory was due to a combination of parties and certainly not to the sole efforts of the Tractarians."¹⁹³ The liberals blamed the Tractarians for the suppression of Dr Hampden, blamed especially Newman and Pusey, the heads of the party which sought to block the appointment on the grounds of Hampden's "heresy" in the Bampton Lectures of 1832.

The lectures were anything but "heretical." Rather, it would appear that in letter and spirit, they followed the stipulations of the will of the Reverend John Bampton, Canon of Salisbury, to preach on

either of the following Subjects---to confirm and establish the Christian Faith, and to confute all heretics and schismatics---upon the divine authority of the holy Scriptures---upon the authority of the writings of the primitive Fathers, as to the faith and practice of the primitive Church---upon the Divinity of our Lord...---upon the Divinity of the Holy Ghost---upon the Articles of the Christian Faith, as comprehended in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds.¹⁹⁴

There was little question as to Dr Hampden's fitness to preach in 1832. In London, in 1827, he had written his "Essay on the

¹⁹¹ Church, p. 134.

¹⁹² Clarke, pp. 73-74. See H. P. Liddon, Life of Edward Bouverie Pusey (London, 1893), Vol. I, pp. 298-390.

¹⁹³ Clarke, pp. 73-74.

¹⁹⁴ R. D. Hampden, "Bampton Lectures" (London, 1837), p. vi.

Philosophical Evidence of Christianity; or, the Credibility obtained to a Scriptural Revelation, from its Coincidence with the facts of Nature," on the title page of which he had affixed the words of Milton from Paradise Lost, v, 574 ("What if earth/Be but the shadow of heaven, and things therein/Each to other like, more than on earth is thought") and in the Preface of which he had acknowledged his "admiration of the celebrated treatise of Bishop Butler,---'The Analogy of Religion,'"¹⁹⁵ to which "we owe the establishment of the truth of our religion."¹⁹⁶ Clearly, according to the work which he had accomplished at the university, he was appointed through the offices of the Vice-Chancellor and the Heads of the Houses, in whose hands the matter rested, as a man well qualified to fill the vacancy. Lord Melbourne offered him the chair for his general knowledge, "profound theological knowledge, and...a liberal spirit of inquiry tempered by due caution...."¹⁹⁷ But though the officers of the university accepted the qualification for appointment, something had happened between 1832 and 1836 to cause the Tractarian party, the High Church Tories, to oppose Hampden "as the nominee of a Liberal Government."¹⁹⁸

What happened was that Dr Hampden from the beginning

¹⁹⁵Henrietta Hampden, Some Memorials of Renn Dickson Hampden, Bishop of Hereford (London, 1871), p. 16. Dr Hampden was instrumental in introducing the Analogy into the B. A. examinations at Oxford.

¹⁹⁶H. Hampden, Memorials, p. 211.

¹⁹⁷H. Hampden, Memorials, pp. 22, 49.

¹⁹⁸H. Hampden, Memorials, p. 50.

advocated the "supremacy" of the Scriptures, declaring that he was always "averse to polemical disputation" of the kind in which the Tractarians engaged. That is why, he said, he did not answer his attackers.¹⁹⁹ He could not engage in controversy over "dogma" or "doctrine" because he believed there was no doctrine in the Scriptures themselves.²⁰⁰ He said that his lectures were not, as had been charged, attempts "to explain away Christian Truths---to leave nothing of Christian doctrine ---to reduce the Creed of the Christian to a few historical events...and generally to unsettle the minds of believers as to what is Christian Truth, and what is not."²⁰¹ This he felt was an overstatement of the case. His "appeal," similar to that of Dr Whately, was historical, or to what he termed Tradition; and this Tradition, as he defined it, he attempted to reconcile with the Scriptures. "And as the Philosophy of the Schools of the Middle Ages...presented copious and fresh materials for tracing the history of the Sacraments of Doctrine, [he] selected that...as the field of [his] observation,"²⁰² convinced that, as he said, these writings of the Middle Ages contributed to the formation and development of the super-structure of "extra-belief" or Theological language, exerting

¹⁹⁹R. D. Hampden, "Bampton Lectures," p. xviii.

²⁰⁰Pages lx-lxi. Dogma is the equivalent of doctrine in the popular sense.

²⁰¹Page xx.

²⁰²Page xxxviii.

"a very considerable influence."²⁰³ With this as his thesis he proceeded to show (1) that the language of theology, as distinct from any other sort of language, had hitherto been neglected;²⁰⁴ (2) that the modern church had inherited the principles of Scholastic Philosophy and its errors in its neglect of the Historical Nature of the Christian Scriptures, resulting in the "loss of the real instruction contained in them,"²⁰⁵ in its neglect of the Rhetorical (poetical) nature of the Scriptures, resulting in "an exclusive attention to the mere words of revelation,"²⁰⁶ and in its losing sight of the Ethical lessons of the Scriptures while in "pursuit of theoretical Truth;"²⁰⁷ (3) that the church had given too much attention to the constitution of the Trinity,²⁰⁸ when such a purely theological problem might have been subordinated to the more pressing demands of practical ethics; (4) that the church in involving itself in controversies over predestination and grace and justification²⁰⁹ had contributed little towards its own support; and (5) that the Scholastic System embraced no moral philosophy and that the confusion of moral and religious truth was injurious to both.²¹⁰ The whole

²⁰³Page xxxviii.

²⁰⁴Page 3. Lecture I, "On the Origins of Scholastic Philosophy."

²⁰⁵Page 51. Lecture II, "On the Formation of Scholastic Theology."

²⁰⁶Page 51.

²⁰⁷Page 51.

²⁰⁸Page 97. Lecture III, "Trinitarian Controversies."

²⁰⁹Lectures IV and V.

²¹⁰Lecture VI.

inquiry (of which the above is but a summary) made Hampden, in his own words, "the object of no common or measured attacks;"²¹¹ but according to the recollection of his daughter, "he felt the inquiry to be one of deep interest, especially at a time when the general spirit of inquiry and the more enlarged means of education at once call[ed] forth and strengthen[ed] the power of pursuing it."²¹²

The inquiry which Miss Hampden mentioned as being of such deep interest and which her father pursued offers itself as a rather curious footnote to the Bampton Lectures. The Life of Thomas Aquinas: a dissertation of the Scholastic Philosophy of the Middle Ages, contributed as an article to the Metropolitana²¹³ but published separately in an edition of 1848, continued the researches of the Bampton Lectures, excited much attention, and opened again an aspect of theology much ignored.²¹⁴ As an encyclopaedic account of the social importance of the church in the Middle Ages, of the scholastic religious life, the philosophy of Aquinas and his school and the importance to it of Aristotle's Ethics, and the growth of scholasticism in the West, the article

²¹¹R. D. Hampden, "Bampton Lectures," p. xvii.

²¹²H. Hampden, Memorials, p. 24.

²¹³The article formed a portion of the third edition of The Encyclopaedia Metropolitana, first published in 1833; as published in book form it apparently underwent no major alterations. The Metropolitana, 25 vols. (London, 1845), edd. Edward Smedley, Hugh James Rose and Henry John Rose.

²¹⁴H. Hampden, Memorials, p. 22.

suggested little new information. But as an article in which its author criticized Scholasticism as an inversion of the Natural Progress of Knowledge and described it as an interest in Philosophy for its own sake,²¹⁵ it served as a further explanation of the position taken in the Bampton Lectures. Once again, in his summary of the effects of translations and Commentaries, he stressed the importance of language:

The need of Commentaries to explain the text of an author, when he is read as the writer of another Age and another Country, gave occasion for further limiting the views of students. For soon the original text of the author would scarcely be read.... And thus in process of time an artificial, microscopic Literature would grow up....²¹⁶

This process of amassing glosses and commentaries, resulting from the necessity of "opposing Philosophy with Philosophy," was the reason for the Christian Schools reversing "the natural order of the education of the human mind, making all at once to an end, legitimately attainable only by the fruit of matured habits of thought, and the discipline of all the faculties of the mind."²¹⁷ The consequences of this Philosophy were a system "insincere" and "unreal" and "a collection of principles, the data not of investigation and experience, but of a prescriptive authority...."²¹⁸ When philosophy alone failed of

²¹⁵R. D. Hampden, The Life of Thomas Aquinas, p. 70f.

²¹⁶R. D. Hampden, The Life of Thomas Aquinas, p. 68.

²¹⁷Pages 72-73.

²¹⁸Page 73.

its purpose, then the so-called "profane Sciences were brought into the service of Christian Theology;" and if there were still some confusion, that confusion, according to Hampden, was drawn from Platonism, which somehow "furnished the mysterious links between the worlds of Reason and of Revelation."²¹⁹

The Life of Thomas Aquinas, treated as an appendix to the Bampton Lectures, is seen, then, as continuing the view and applying the principles of the earlier work of Hampden as it was begun in the Essay on the Philosophical Evidence of Christianity under the inspiration of Bishop Butler's Analogy, and as it was from the beginning an expression of the speculations of the Oriel group.²²⁰

Dr Whately believed that the persecution of Dr Hampden (1795-1868) after the nomination to the chair of Divinity at Oxford marked the first real outbreak of Tractism;²²¹ he said that "there had been persecutions as unjust and as cruel, but for impudence he never knew the like."²²² In this Hampden's

²¹⁹Page 121.

²²⁰At the time of the "Bampton Lectures" Dr Hampden accepted a tutorship in Oriel. "Dr Whately was then principal of St Alban's Hall, so that there was still a remnant of the Oriel 'set' in Oxford" (H. Hampden, Memorials, p. 23). The influence of Bishop Butler during this period has added importance in the light of the contention by some that Mr Blanco White authored at least part of the "Bampton Lectures." The contention, made in a letter to The Times, was denied by both Henrietta Hampden and Dr Whately. Archdeacon Hare, in a letter to the dean of Chichester, also denied White's authorship in asserting Hampden's relationship to Butler (Memorials, pp. 27-28). For a discussion of the influence of Blanco White on Hampden and Whately, see H. P. Liddon, Life of Pusey, I, 298-390.

²²¹H. Hampden, Memorials, p. 51.

²²²Hunt, p. 103.

daughter and a historian of the period viewed the controversy over the appointment with a single eye. The protest against Hampden was by 1836, four years after the seemingly innocent lectures, organized to the extent that denunciations were printed in the journals and periodicals, and committees were formed. One such committee, assembling in the rooms of Corpus Christi between February 24 and March 10, composed eight large placards denouncing Hampden.²²³ The High Church party lifted out of context passages from the lectures designed to disgrace their author; the pamphlet Elucidation of Dr Hampden's...State-ments was circulated. Samuel Wilberforce,²²⁴ first with the protestors, later declared Newman's extracts "most false." Gladstone also was among the protestors, though thirty years later he apologized to Hampden.²²⁵ The potential magnitude of the controversy was indicated by the theological and political stature of some of the personalities who took issue with the proposal to make Hampden Regius Professor of Divinity.

²²³H. Hampden, Memorials, pp. 50-51.

²²⁴Samuel Wilberforce (1805-1873) was an Oriel man, dean of Westminster, then bishop of Oxford. Robt I. Wilberforce was fellow of Oriel, later (1856) a Roman Catholic. William Wilberforce, an Evangelical, was of St John's, Cambridge. See Hunt, p. 395f.

²²⁵Hunt, p. 103. Hampden was later made bishop, in spite of his "heresies," was in time "reckoned" a High Churchman, and was one of the accusers of Bishop Colenso. His election to the see of Hereford did not go uncontested, for as late as 1847 many bishops of the realm were expressing their fears over the orthodoxy of Dr Hampden.

Confused, Hampden wrote to his friend Dr Whately, from St Mary's Hall, February 17, 1836, apprising him of the protest and asking why passages of his Bampton Lectures should be taken to prove his "heterodoxy" when the same lectures were applauded in 1832; and again, on March 2, he wrote to Whately informing him that the storm of protest continued.²²⁶ Though, by the witness of his daughter, he was very poor in defending the death of Christ and the Resurrection and miracles in general in the Bampton Lectures,²²⁷ the Lectures, which surely should have betrayed his weakness, were, nevertheless, preached "to a very large congregation. That they were listened to with universal interest [though not necessarily with universal approval] is fully proved by the many letters received by [my father] in which they are mentioned."²²⁸ The many letters were quite certainly from admirers, persons perhaps like the Bishop of Kildare, who remembered that the lectures were clear and impartial, and "giving no [personal] formal opinions."²²⁹ One of the most notable admirers of Dr Hampden was, of course, his Oriel "friend," Dr Thomas Arnold. And Henrietta Hampden, in her Memorials to her father, vindicated the Bampton Lectures by quoting extensively from Dr Arnold's letters to show that the

²²⁶H. Hampden, Memorials, pp. 53-54, 58.

²²⁷Pages 214-216.

²²⁸Page 27.

²²⁹Pages 26-27. Letter from Kildare to Archbishop Whately, March 12, 1836.

treatment of Hampden, especially in lifting passages out of context, was unfair.²³⁰ Thomas Arnold best expressed his attitude toward the Hampden controversy in a letter to the Reverend J. Hearn:²³¹

But Hampden is doing what real Christian reformers have ever done; what Protestants did with Catholicism, and the Apostles with Judaism. He upholds the Articles as true in substance, he maintains their usefulness, and the truth and importance of their doctrines; but he sees that the time is come when their phraseology requires to be protested against---as having, in fact, obstructed and embarrassed the reception of the very truths which they intend to inculcate. He is engaged in the same battle against technical theological language, to which you and I have, I believe, an equal dislike.

Thomas Arnold thus became the spokesman for Hampden. But the most imposing monument of his defense was contained in A. and C. Black's Edinburgh Review for April 1836, in the unsigned article "The Oxford Malignants and Dr Hampden." This article won for Dr Arnold many enemies: "the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Howley, objected to his preaching the Consecration Sermon... when... Stanley was consecrated."²³² But more than anything else it supported Hampden's position in its narrative of the latter's good works at the university²³³ and in its proving the worthlessness of the charges against his friend and in its

²³⁰See A. P. Stanley's Life of Thomas Arnold (New York, 1846), pp. 261, 273 (Letter 126, to W. W. Hull, Esq.), p. 272 (Letter 125, to an Old Pupil), both letters dated March 1836. See also H. Hampden, Memorials, p. 80.

²³¹Stanley, Life of Thomas Arnold, p. 273 (Letter 128).

²³²Hunt, p. 363. Stanley became Thomas Arnold's successor as a leader in the liberal church.

²³³T. Arnold, "The Oxford Malignants," pp. 225-228ff.

view of Hampden's ultimate victory in the face of his accusers.²³⁴ Since the subject of the Bampton Lectures was the tracing of the influence of scholastic philosophy upon Christianity, Hampden's "business therefore was," as Dr Arnold was careful to point out, "less to enforce the original truths of the gospel, than to condemn the corruptions of them."²³⁵

[Hampden's] statements were of necessity negative rather than positive; confuting error rather than inculcating truth. To quote, therefore, exclusively from such a work, even had the quotations been fairly made, was to give an utterly inadequate and unjust view of Dr Hampden's character as an instructor in positive Christianity.²³⁶

Thus it was Thomas Arnold, who, though not himself primarily a theologian but "the pioneer of free theology in England,"²³⁷ showed by his involvement with the Hampden controversy his willingness to lead his contemporaries into religion without dogma. For it was ever his demand that the Bible as the sole agent of Christianity was meant to be understood, as Hampden showed, without the pre-suppositions of dogma or orthodoxy, and further, that without this "extra-belief" it and Christianity would offer a more productive morality.

²³⁴Pages 231-232.

²³⁵Page 231.

²³⁶Page 231. The editors of the Edinburgh Review sent Hampden a reprint of the article. In an unpublished letter to Hampden, Dr Arnold had written: "I think I differ from your views as to the distinct character of religion and morality, while [with] what you say of the evils of a technical and theoretical theology, I agree most fully....The Scripture is to be used for lessons more than for truths..."(H. Hampden, Memorials, p. 63).

²³⁷Pfleiderer, p. 367.

In spite of the controversies which seemed to disunite its leadership, one of the aims of the Oxford Movement was slowly becoming a reality: the appeal for a return to the doctrines of the Roman Church was being answered by the High Church party. But still other aims went unaccomplished, for there was yet the threat of State intervention into the government of the affairs of the Church, and there was yet a real danger in the mismanagement of Church offices. On the other hand, the Church of England seemed more disunited than ever. The Evangelicals, lacking the "intellectual grasp" necessary for the maintenance of their position in the Church, were spending their energies in clamoring for social reform and were no longer an effective force. The "Orthodox" of High Church party, strong Erastians, believed "above all else in a providentially ordered establishment," while the Liberals, professing "considerable indifference to creeds, dogmas, and liturgies of all sorts,"²³⁸ advocated church reform even to the admission of Non-conformists. The chief advocate of the

²³⁸M. W. Patterson, A History of the Church of England (London, 1909), pp. 401, 402.

Liberal party was Thomas Arnold (1795-1842),²³⁹ who enumerated his proposals in the pamphlet Principles of Church Reform, published in 1833,²⁴⁰ remarkable for its concept of the National Church.

At least as early as 1828, Thomas Arnold was occupied with the problem of Church Reform, for in a letter to the Reverend F. C. Blackstone he wrote:

²³⁹The development of Thomas Arnold's religious thought is matched only by that of his great opposite, Newman, and is best understood by an acquaintance with his practical ethics, the change which came over him when he graduated from Oxford and entered the responsibilities of marriage, the loss of his elder brother, and the experience of his teaching (Stanley, Life, p. 41). At Corpus Christi, his closest friends were Keble and J. T. Coleridge, from whom he acquired "an enthusiasm for the poetry and Tory politics of the Lake group, and from both friends, but especially from Keble, who was already confirmed in his apostolical and mystical conception of the Church, he derived the strong pietism of his early days (Trilling, p. 40). However, he transferred from Corpus (the stronghold of dogma) to Oriel, where he joined the Moetics, who "were certainly not religious radicals; it did not, for example, occur to them to raise the fundamental doubts of religion that were agitating the clergy of the Continent", though they certainly denied the "mystical authority of dogma" (Trilling, pp. 40-41). At Laleham, between the years 1817 and 1830, he became increasingly attracted towards the Interpretation of Scripture and Church Reform (see Stanley, Life, pp. 50, 72, 73, 163, 177, 203); from Laleham were sent the letters which expressed his conviction of the importance of a national Christianity. See also Wymer, pp. 52, 77.

²⁴⁰Principles included in an edition of Miscellaneous Works (New York, 1845).

My views of things certainly become daily more reforming; and what I above all other things wish to see is, a close union between Christian reformers and those who are often, as it think, falsely charged with being enemies of Christianity....[And he expressed cogently the position of the High Church party when he said they believe that] the establishment in Church and State is all in all, and that the Gospel principles must be accommodated to our existing institutions, instead of offering a pattern by which those institutions should be purified; and the Evangelicals by their ignorance and narrow-mindedness, and their seeming wish to keep the world and the Church ever distinct, instead of labouring to destroy the one by increasing the influence of the other, and making the kingdoms of the world indeed the kingdoms of Christ.²⁴¹

Thus the Principles were not set down without some preparation, and when they were published they excited a storm of protest from all political and religious quarters. Dissenters objected to having their sectarianism described as narrow-mindedness. Orthodox clergymen objected to the latitudinarian approach. Political conservatives objected to the sweeping provisions. Even the Liberals disliked the reform scheme for its emphasizing the importance of religious institution. Though Thomas Arnold's tracts on Roman Catholicism and on the Interpretation of Scripture made him enemies, the Principles precipitated a protest "beginning in theological and political opposition, but gradually including within its sweep every topic, personal or professional, which could expose him to obloquy."²⁴² Nevertheless, he insisted on the validity of

²⁴¹ Stanley, Life of Thomas Arnold, p. 72 (Letter 26).

²⁴² Stanley, Life of Thomas Arnold, pp. 204-205.

his proposals, since he felt certain that if the Church ever experienced a too radical reform at the hands of the Tractarians on the one hand and of the rationalists on the other hand, it would most surely be destroyed. He wished to preserve the institution of the Church at all costs, for, with all its defects, it seemed to him the "greatest instrument of social and moral good existing in the country."²⁴³ The defense of a National Establishment was all: the purpose, therefore, of the Principles was to restate the dangers to which the Establishment was already exposed and to show that by expanding the Church to comprehend Dissent its efficiency would thereby be increased. To Arnold the comprehension of Dissent into the Church was important, and this could be brought about only by a broadening of doctrine, constitution, and ritual. Into the proposals went not only theories and hopes but also the spirit of the author, reflecting the ethical character of his religion as seen in his insistence upon the daily practice of religion, moral living, and the toleration of differences in what he considered unessential in religion. Thomas Arnold saw, as would his son, the need of the day-by-day ethical emphasis

²⁴³ Stanley, Life of Thomas Arnold, p. 203. Among the defects in the Church, Arnold listed specifically its fanaticism, dress, ritual, ceremony, technical phraseology, "the form of Episcopal government without its substance" (Stanley, Life, p. 260).

because he also saw around him a Church which was, as Dean Stanley recorded his words, "an affair of clergy, not of people,---of preaching and ceremonies, not of living,---of Sundays and synagogues, instead of one of all days and places, houses, streets, towns, and country."²⁴⁴

The major argument against a National Establishment being traditional Protestant sectarianism---a serious obstacle to unity---Arnold first optimistically sought to unite the denominations which were "so contrary to the spirit of Christianity"²⁴⁵ by constituting the church to "allow great varieties of opinion, and of ceremonies, and forms of worship, according to the various knowledge and habits, and tempers of its members, while it truly held one common faith,"²⁴⁶ trusted one Saviour, worshipped one God. There were certain elements of Christian belief common to all sects; and these, he asserted, could be the basis of an Establishment: belief in one God, belief in the teachings of Jesus Christ, belief in the Old and New Testaments as containing the "revelation of God's will to man" and forming the "standard of faith and the rule of practice," and belief in the "same notions of right and wrong" to the extent that the common duty

²⁴⁴Life of Thomas Arnold, pp. 203; 265.

²⁴⁵T. Arnold, Principles, p. 28.

²⁴⁶Pages 28-29.

of all is first to love God and second to love our neighbor.²⁴⁷ This of course gives the problem of comprehending Protestant sectarianism a simplicity which it does not have. But Arnold contended, further, that the only real difficulty would be the admission into the church of the Quakers, the Roman Catholics, and the Unitarians, while Presbyterians, Methodists, Independents, Baptists, and Moravians could "hardly be said to differ on any important point, except as connected with church government, either from one another or from the Establishment."²⁴⁸ The former group he felt it would not be practicable to admit into "any national Christian church,...the epithet 'Christian' rendering...impossible [their] admission;"²⁴⁹ though they might be admitted if creeds strictly adhered to were loosened.²⁵⁰ Arnold perceived, in other words, that there was not enough of what he termed "latitude" in the Church and that, looking for unity, men tended to confuse the evil of difference of opinion with the difference of practice, overrating the latter. The Church in this regard was failing in both its exclusiveness and in its subordination of the importance of practice, forgetting that opinion alone, a theo-

²⁴⁷Pages 29-30.

²⁴⁸Page 31.

²⁴⁹Page 31.

²⁵⁰Pages 31-39. If the Athanasian Creed and "the technical language of Trinitarianism" were deleted, "many good Unitarians would have a stumbling block removed out of their path" (Stanley, Life, p. 214). This was in answer to an objection to Arnold's making it essential that all should view Christ as the object of worship.

logical thing primarily and the very reason for denominationalism, hindered rather than helped the course of the Christian life. But whatever the difficulties with respect to the beliefs peculiar to the various denominations and with respect to Arnold's too apt scheme for their comprehension, there remained one fact which he thought might stir some serious interest in reform. The state of affairs in the Church of England was acceptable to no one.²⁵¹

With reference to the current condition of the Church, Thomas Arnold proceeded to outline several items of grievance. The clergy, he said, might be better educated, less corrupt. The laity ought to have a greater share in the "ordinary government" of the Church; and both could cooperate for a better social organization of the Church. "This want of...social organization...has been one main cause of the multiplication of Dissenters. Men's social wants have not been satisfied;--- and a Christian Church which fails in this particular, neglects one of the most important ends of Christianity."²⁵² Services were too cut and dry; even the singing of hymns was "in some dioceses brought down to...uniformity, and nothing...sung but the old and new versions of the Psalms of David. Thus the people are, as members of the Church, wholly passive."²⁵³ But to

²⁵¹Pages 39-41.

²⁵²Page 46.

²⁵³Pages 42-48.

Arnold these grievances were as nothing in comparison with the abuses which he was sure impeded episcopal polity; and to correct such abuses he advocated the division of dioceses with the appointment of bishops to the administration of each; and excepting benefices already in existence, ministers of the national church would be appointed also.²⁵⁴ Church government would be then truly episcopal without being "prelatical." A reduction in the size of dioceses would make episcopal administration easier and inspection more frequent. The election of an advisory council of both lay and clerical members would allow the various parishes a more congregational and democratic form of government. The institution of diocesan general assemblies would bring episcopal administrators together for a discussion of problems common to the several dioceses. The admission into the Establishment of preachers too poor to support the expense of a university education would add to the Church many good ministers who otherwise labor in the denominational churches. A greater lay participation in the appointment of parish ministers would give laymen an added interest and responsibility in the affairs of the Church. Finally, lay and clerical participation in the actual superintendence of the parishes would allow some degree of a check on the activities of the clergy.²⁵⁵ In these reform measures and in a revision

²⁵⁴Pages 48-52.

²⁵⁵Page 55.

of the Articles of Faith of the Church of England, the larger segments of English Dissent could, Arnold convinced himself, be comprehended into the National Church, and the procedure for gaining this end was, as Whately had put it, to build the Church around the flock rather than to force the flock into a Church it did not wish to enter. If the Church saw the problem as Arnold saw it, the Church itself would couple its "professional learning" to "plain sensible piety" and itself would effect the reforms necessary to its being an institution for the promotion of goodness.

But many Churchmen failed to see the problem as Arnold saw it. The reform proposals created a sensation. His specific provisions, on the multiplication of bishoprics, the use of churches on weekdays, greater variety in the forms of worship, stirred a controversy and a storm which raged about him for four years. "But, independently of the actual matter of the pamphlet, its publication was the signal for the general explosion of the large amount of apprehension and suspicion, which had been in so many minds contracted against [Arnold] since he became known to the public."²⁵⁶ In the sense that it excited much religious controversy, the pamphlet by the author of an "Essay on the Interpretation of Scripture" achieved both notoriety and popularity. On the word of Dean Stanley, the Principles, within six months of their publication, went

²⁵⁶ Stanley, Life of Thomas Arnold, pp. 204-205.

through four editions,²⁵⁷ and with each successive edition the louder grew the protest, and so loud was the protest that even by the year 1840 its repercussions were still audible in a charge of "indiscretion" being brought against the author.²⁵⁸ The furor over the Principles was perhaps in part owing to the reputation which Arnold had made for himself in the "Essay on the Interpretation of Scripture" which he attached to the second volume of Sermons preached at Rugby Chapel.²⁵⁹ It was Arnold's conviction of the want of any general statement of principles of interpretation which would explain the Scriptures in "their true reference to the present state of England and of the world, as well as remove some of the intellectual difficulties, especially in the Old Testament, to which men's minds seemed to be growing more and more awake"²⁶⁰---it was this conviction which informed all his works, which in the "Essays" specifically caused objections to himself and "exposed him to more misunderstanding than any other of his writings,"²⁶¹ and which influenced the practicality of Literature and Dogma. In 1835,

²⁵⁷ Stanley, Life of Thomas Arnold, p. 204.

²⁵⁸ Page 203.

²⁵⁹ Sermons (Vol. II; preached at Rugby Chapel, with five sermons on the Social State of England, and an Essay on the Interpretation of Scripture, 1832). See Stanley's Life, pp. 541-542; 177. The date of publication in the list of Arnold's works is 1832, in the text of the Life, Dec. 1831.

²⁶⁰ Stanley, Life of Thomas Arnold, p. 177.

²⁶¹ Stanley, Life of Thomas Arnold, p. 177.

after some of the controversial impact of the "Essays" and the Principles had worn, Dr Arnold wrote to Justice Coleridge concerning his work: "The Idea of my life, to which I think every thought of my mind more or less tends, is the perfecting of the idea of the Edward the Sixth Reformers,---the constructing a truly national and Christian Church, and a truly national and Christian system of education."²⁶² As always, the aim was to remove some of the intellectual difficulties by way of explaining them in terms of the present state of England. The proposals for Church reform, originating in the political agitation of 1832 as well as the apparent need for reform, were designed to preserve the Church from political destruction. To this threat was added, of course, the threat of the Oxford Movement. "I hung back as long as I could, till the want was so urgent that I sat down to write, because I could not help it."²⁶³ To Arnold, preserve and reform meant the same thing; and he was, therefore, surprised at the reception of his proposals, which were indeed modest and conservative. The principles he advocated appeared to him "to follow necessarily from a careful study of the New Testament."²⁶⁴

²⁶²Stanley, Life of Thomas Arnold, p. 265.

²⁶³Stanley, Life of Thomas Arnold, p. 203.

²⁶⁴Stanley, Life of Thomas Arnold, p. 221 (Letter 70 [August 1833, to the Reverend Augustus Hare in answer to objections to the pamphlet]).

Thomas Arnold agreed that if he had written his pamphlet at any time after 1834 he might justly have been accused of indiscretion. "But," as he explained to a friend in 1840, "I wrote that pamphlet in 1833, when most men---myself among the number---had an exaggerated impression of the strength of the movement party [at Oxford], and of the changes it was likely to effect."²⁶⁵ Though the pressure on the Church Establishment eased somewhat and though the ideal of comprehending Dissent into the Establishment was confessedly only a vision, the "remedies" which he submitted he wished to stand. Apart from the actual matter of the pamphlet, however, the total effect, it seems, of the controversy around Dr Arnold was to drive him, as his son was driven, further into controversy; and as the opinions of his opponents waxed more positive, so did the opinions of Thomas Arnold, until he arrived at a place in his thinking where he struck against "what he conceived to be the two great evils of the age": the "idols of unbelief and superstition."²⁶⁶ Opposing views were seen, on the one hand, in the High Church party at Oxford, and, on the other hand, in the extreme branch of the Liberal party then dominant in the new London University.

²⁶⁵ Stanley, Life of Thomas Arnold, p. 203.

²⁶⁶ Stanley, Life of Thomas Arnold, p. 258. See Sermons, Vol. IV (Sermon 20, Sept. 1836), "The Christian Life, its Course, its Helps, its Hindrances."

At this point, a concise account of the contests might serve to show up the role of Dr Arnold in the religious controversy which continued to rage about him, which, in placing him on the middle ground, caused him to become isolated and condemned as both latitudinarian and bigot. The controversial aftermath of the publication of the Principles first began to take direction at Oxford in 1834, 1835, and 1836 (the year of the article on "The Oxford Malignants") when Arnold "found his path crossed suddenly...by a compact body, round which all the floating elements of High Church opinions seemed to crystallise as round a natural centre."²⁶⁷ While in the Postscript to the Principles, Arnold could still, according to Dean Stanley, in 1833 speak of "those extra-ordinary persons who gravely maintain that primitive episcopacy, and episcopacy as it now exists in England, are essentially the same," the considered from the beginning that the doctrines of the High Church were as great, if not greater, an obstruction to the development of national Christianity as was Dissent. To Arnold the seeming suddenness and the implications of the movement at Oxford represented an unexpected revival of "the worst evils of Roman Catholicism,"²⁶⁸ and by persons

²⁶⁷ Stanley, Life of Thomas Arnold, p. 259.

²⁶⁸ Stanley, Life of Thomas Arnold, p. 259.

whom he always considered the peculiar disgrace of the Church of England. The second contest in which Arnold involved himself concerned his nomination to a Fellowship in the Senate of London University. Hoping to implement and perfect the idea of the Edward the Sixth Reformers to develop a national and at the same time a Christian system of education, he grasped the opportunity which the appointment offered and agreed to join the enterprise with the provision that there would be no Scriptural examination for the degree which the university granted. However, he soon reversed himself in favor of such an examination---to the astonishment and unhappiness of the Senate, who were either indifferent or hostile to an examination in Scriptures or Gospels for the degree of Bachelor of Arts. In the end the Scriptural Examination was deleted from the final examination for the degree and in November 1838 Arnold withdrew from the Senate. "The only permanent result of his efforts was the establishment of the voluntary Scriptural Examination."²⁶⁹ During his three years' tenure of the Fellowship, Arnold thus met and collided with the extreme branch of the Liberal party, a party which did not, above all else, wish to see religious instruction as part of the curriculum of the universities. The primary source of

²⁶⁹Stanley, Life of Thomas Arnold, p. 263. The offer of the Fellowship came from Mr Spring Rice, Chancellor of the Exchequer, in September 1835.

information on Thomas Arnold, Dean Stanley, said it well when he said of these contests that Arnold's "antipathy to one extreme had only made his antipathy to its opposite more intense."²⁷⁰

Even though some liberal elements within the Church opposed the reform proposals of Thomas Arnold, the Liberal party, which emerged from the struggle between Orthodox and Evangelical parties, under the leadership of Dr Arnold succeeded where the Tractarians had failed and eventually became the reformers at Oxford. And in the rise of this newer school of religious opinion, the influence of Dr Arnold prevailed to the larger extent in carrying out the promise and the appeal of the conclusion to the Principles of Church Reform: to avoid the extremes and pitfalls of rationalism; to seek no attraction in the critical and metaphysical questions; to acknowledge, finally, that the causes of unbelief are but moral and political and that to check the causes of unbelief nothing is as necessary as a National Establishment, united, popular, and comprehensive. In the same year in which Newman and Keble preached the return to creeds, liturgies, and dogmas, the Principles were published, and loyalties within the Church of England tended from that time to pull in opposite directions. Thomas Arnold, like his opposite Newman, had been at Oxford a pupil

²⁷⁰ Life of Thomas Arnold, p. 264.

of Dr Whately's and a friend of Keble's. "But while in the case of Newman the influence of the devout friend soon overcame the cool intellectual acuteness of the tutor, with Arnold it was the reverse."²⁷¹ He thus set himself to work at the more difficult task. For while reform to his High Church colleagues meant only the slightest change perhaps in dogma and ritual, Arnold conceived reform in the broader sense of not only revising the language of creed and dogma and liturgy and amending the very constitution of the Church to meet the demands of the time but also opening the Church to all the nation, including Dissent. He saw the Oxford Movement, in its exclusiveness, as a movement "made in a false direction,...incapable of satisfying the feeling which prompted it," because it originated in minds "highly prejudiced before-hand, and under the immediate influence of passion and fear."²⁷² With his largeness of mind, he dedicated himself to the attainment of the truth of the Scripture as derived from the authority of the Scripture alone (not a doctrine), to the creation of a really national Establishment (not a church of the clergy), to the practice of holiness as a matter of everyday living. As teacher and man of letters, this is how he saw his task.

By the year 1841, when Matthew Arnold went up to Balliol, the threat of controversy had for the moment cleared from the

²⁷¹Pfleiderer, p. 365.

²⁷²T. Arnold, The Christian Life (Philadelphia, 1856), p. 35

atmosphere, and for the moment the young undergraduate seemed more interested (as were the members of his intimate group, Clough among them) in the new poets and somber romantic philosophies, the exercise of which for a longer moment diverted his attentions to poetry. But the religious issues, born of the earlier Oxford controversies, would again cloud the atmosphere, and remembering those conflicts in which his father had engaged, conflicts which he watched from Rugby, he too would announce a campaign against dogma. It was to some surprising that Matthew Arnold should inherit the mantle of his father, for "all who saw the boy and the youth, even his intimate friends, perhaps even himself, thought the son was the very antithesis of the father, [but they were wrong,] perhaps Matthew himself the wrongest of them all."²⁷³

²⁷³Trilling, p. 76.

II: The Religious Element in the Poetry of Matthew Arnold

The time between the events of the thirties, in which his father had been so admirably involved, and the events of the sixties, in which the son was to find himself increasingly drawn, was for Matthew Arnold, the poet, the time of romantic dreams and the time of groping through religious doubts and uncertainties. It was the time when, after leaving Oxford, he could look with yearning upon the high altar of the Grande Chartreuse, and though not fully understanding its significance, could sense that against the background of the Oxford Movement it represented a faith which for him was no longer possible. For although he was greatly attracted to that altar emotionally, he could not, in the light of his inheritance, subscribe to the theology for which it stood.

The poems which might be considered expressions of the religious dilemma facing Arnold from the forties include, among the early ones, the lines Written in Butler's Sermons, Mycerinus, Stagirus (or Desire), To Fausta, the narrative poem The Sick King in Bokhara, and the sonnets East London and Immortality. Among the later lyric poems, Dover Beach, The Youth of Nature and The Youth of Man, Progress, Morality, The Future, Self-Dependence, and Pis-Aller contain echoes of Arnold's religious thought. The elegies The Scholar-Gipsy, Thyrsis, Haworth Churchyard, and especially Rugby Chapel, the Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse, the Stanzas in memory of

the author of 'Obermann', and Obermann Once More are perhaps better than any other group of his poetry a guide to Arnold's thinking from around 1852, the date of the Stanzas in memory of the author of 'Obermann', to around 1867, the date of Obermann Once More, which marks Arnold's transition from the writing of poetry to the writing of prose criticism. The autobiographical Empedocles on Etna (1852) tends to reflect the philosophical outlook of the younger Arnold.

This interchapter proposes nothing like a definitive treatment of the religious ideas in the poetry of Matthew Arnold, for actually those ideas are very elusive, clouded by Arnold's own uncertainties, and at best incomplete. In addition to the difficulties involved in capturing the religious elements in Arnold's poetry, there remains the problem of definition; for, especially in the early poems of Arnold, where the influence of Wordsworth and the romantic ideal is great, it is difficult to determine the limits of religious criticism in poems dealing with Arnold's (romantic) philosophical outlook. The dramatic poem, Empedocles on Etna, is a case in point. Here, for example, one might ask, how much of the poem treats the larger philosophical problems, such as the fate of man, and how much of the poem deals with religious problems? How much of the poem is railing at Fate and how much expresses personal religious doubt? This is the problem in definition. Arnold himself made a clear distinction between philosophy and religion and to each area of inquiry assigned special functions. The

purpose here is to outline the religious elements which inform some of the poems and to bring out those ideas which later found their way into Arnold's religious criticism.¹

Although Arnold did not in his poetry or in the prefaces to his collected poems make any specific statement concerning the function of poetry relative to the expression of religious ideas, he did, in the first chapter of Essays in Criticism, Second Series, begin to evolve a poetic theory with respect to religion and religious practice. At the beginning of this chapter on the Study of Poetry he wrote:

Our religion has materialised itself in the fact, in the supposed fact; it has attached its emotion to the fact, and now the fact is failing it. But for poetry the idea is everything; the rest is a world of illusion, of divine illusion. Poetry attaches its emotion to the idea; the idea is the fact. The strongest part of our religion today is its unconscious poetry.

At no other place did Arnold approach so surely the relationship between poetry (in the larger meaning) and religion (as he con-

¹In this Section, rather extensive reference has been made to Isobel Macdonald's The Buried Self (London, 1949). Miss Macdonald's use of the novel form, and the consequent liability of her conclusions, has made necessary lengthy quotation. Iris Esther Sells' Matthew Arnold and France, The Poet (Cambridge, Eng., 1935) has proved a valuable index to the religious elements in Arnold's poetry, the French and German influences on Arnold the poet, particularly the influence of Senancour. John Shepard Eells' The Touchstones of Matthew Arnold (New York, 1955) has suggested the literary antecedents of Arnold's poetry. Indebtedness to The Poetry of Matthew Arnold, A Commentary (New York, 1940) by C. B. Tinker and H. F. Lowry is apparent throughout this Section. All page and line references to Arnold's poems are to the Oxford Standard Edition of The Poetical Works of Matthew Arnold (New York, 1950), ed., C. B. Tinker and H. F. Lowry. Unless otherwise indicated, dates of poems refer to time of first publication.

ceived it: morality touched by emotion). Quoting a letter of Arnold's to Arthur Hugh Clough, who had recently passed through a period of religious doubt, Mr E. K. Brown attached special importance to the following, which anticipates the statement in "The Study of Poetry":

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 power.²

But neither of these statements serves as a point of departure for a discussion of religious elements in Arnold's poetry as Arnold wrote poetry from about 1849 to about 1870, when he turned in earnest to religious issues. The passage from the letter to Clough and the passage from "The Study of Poetry" are only tentative guides. In the first, Arnold uses the word poetry in the broader (Greek) sense, and in the second he assigns to poetry the function which classical (Greek) dramatists gave to poetry. Unfortunately, nowhere in Arnold's poetry is there any indication that he followed the principles involved in these passages. The only attempt which Arnold seems to have made to carry his poetical principles into practice was in the attempt to write a drama on Lucretius. It is interesting to see that Arnold's best poetry is the poetry of his

²Matthew Arnold, A Study in Conflict (Chicago, 1948), p. 41.

youth, that, as Mr Harvey observed, "by the age of 35 he had produced the principal part of his poetry;" though "it is true that between the age of 35 and 45 he added several pieces of the highest order, particularly several of his great Elegies."³ This does not mean to say that in the period of his "youth," Arnold did not come under the influence of Spinoza and Goethe, as well as Senancour's Obermann and Marguerite. The great elegies are not necessarily better poetry, taken from the standpoint of Arnold's religious development, or, for that matter, his religious conviction. Arnold's poems show conflict and skepticism. Orthodoxy offered no outlet for his idealism; Stoicism offered no satisfaction. When Arnold was writing his best poetry (1840 and after), Newman was converted to Rome, the Tractarian movement was still in progress, and the spirit of scientific inquiry, applied to theology, was undermining the structure of orthodox Christian belief. These were the events and tendencies which were the matrix of Arnold's poetry.⁴ It might be claimed as a first approximation that Arnold became slowly but steadily interested in developing for himself, even experimentally, a "system" or critical attitude toward religion which sought fulfillment through poetry.

³Matthew Arnold (London, 1931), p. 44.

⁴Cf. Harvey, Matthew Arnold, pp. 45-46ff.

In their Introduction⁵ to a Commentary on the poetry of Matthew Arnold, Mr Tinker and Mr Lowry bring to light data concerning the Yale Manuscript of Arnold's Balliol College notebooks; but even these notebooks, interesting as their contents are, do not reveal much about Arnold's religious turn of thought while he was an undergraduate at the university. The first indications of Arnold's religious thought must be gathered from the letters, those to Clough in particular (Clough, whose inner conflict paled by comparison Arnold's own), and from the early poetry. From the 1849 volume of poems, The Strayed Reveler and Other Poems, Mycerinus, The Sick King, lines Written in Butler's Sermons, Stagirius, and To Fausta express the religious problem in terms of the question: what is the meaning of life? Mycerinus, for example, in the king's retirement from the world, anticipated in its romantic day dreaming The Scholar-Gipsy, and in its emphasis upon a "blind power," too strong "even for the gods to conquer," looks forward to Empedocles. Lines from the poem constantly remind one of Dewey's words: "No longer may man believe in his oneness with the dear nature about him." For the poem asks,

⁵The Poetry of Matthew Arnold (New York, 1940), pp. 8-17.

...is it some Force, too wise, too strong,
 Even for yourselves to conquer or beguile,
 Sweeps earth, and heaven, and men, and the
 gods along,
 Like the broad volume of the insurgent Nile?
 And the great powers we serve, themselves may be
 Slaves of a tyrannous necessity?⁶

So also the king in The Sick King in Bokhara is bound by this same necessity.

But hear ye this, ye sons of men!
 They that bear rule, and are obey'd,
 Unto a rule more strong than theirs
 Are in their turn obedient made.⁷

Arnold recognized in the king's sickness "an illustration of the supremacy of the law over the caprices of royal inclination. The young king, in spite of his sickness, realizes that, although he is himself the embodiment of the law in his kingdom, he has no power over it."⁸ But Arnold's dissatisfaction with this sort of "system" is evident in his rebuke to Bishop Butler in the lines Written in Butler's Sermons,⁹ in which he takes issue with the whole eighteenth century system of religious philosophy and moral psychology and their optimistic catch-words.

⁶Poetical Works, pp. 9-10, lines 37-42.

⁷Page 93, lines 185-188.

⁸Tinker and Lowry, The Poetry of Matthew Arnold, p. 89.

⁹It has been suggested that this sonnet was written into Arnold's own copy of the Sermons, his college text. See Tinker and Lowry, The Poetry of Matthew Arnold, p. 29.

Affections, Instincts, Principles, and Powers,
 Impulse and Reason, Freedom and Control---
 So men, unravelling God's harmonious whole,
 Rend in a thousand shreds this life of ours.
 Vain labour! Deep and broad, where none may see,
 Spring the foundations of that shadowy throne...¹⁰

Another of Arnold's early poems, To Fausta (more often titled A Question),¹¹ seems to embody in its last two stanzas the question (or hope) of immortality.

Our vaunted life is one long funeral.
 Men dig graves with bitter tears
 For their dead hopes; and all,
 Mazed with doubts and sick with fears,
 Count the hours.

We count the hours! These dreams of ours,
 False and hollow,
 Do we go hence and find they are not dead?
 Joys we dimly apprehend,
 Faces that smiled and fled,
 Hopes born here, and born to end,
 Shall we follow?¹²

At best, To Fausta offers little more than a negative sort of conviction. However, the unpoetic Stagyrius (or Desire) does, according to Tinker and Lowry, even less justice to what they call "the Christian conception of the word made flesh and of a God who, far from 'dwelling alone,' has his tabernacle among men."¹³

When the soul, growing clearer,
 Sees God no nearer;
 When the soul mounting higher,
 To God comes no nigher;
 But the arch-fiend Pride
 Mounts at her side,
 Foiling her high emprise,
 Sealing her eagle eyes...

¹⁰Poetical Works, p. 4, lines 1-6.

¹¹The first stanza of this poem was written into Dora Wordsworth's autograph album. See Tinker and Lowry, pp. 54, 63.

¹²Poetical Works, p. 44, lines 10-21.

¹³Tinker and Lowry, p. 51.

is the weakest expression, in all these pitiful fragments of melancholia, of Arnold's early period. The obvious immaturity of the sentiment may perhaps be credited to the poet's extreme youth, for what the poem lacks is content.

That content was evident in the poems which followed Arnold's reading from the period 1848-1849. Miss Macdonald has supplied the background to Arnold's poems of more religious and philosophical import thus. In her fictional treatment of Arnold's history, she has the young poet return from Brig to Leukerbad on September 29, 1848, with two books under his arm:

the Discourses of Epictetus and the songs of Béranger. Neither afforded him much consolation or entertainment. He felt too tired to make the slight effort required to read Greek, besides now that he was turning towards Thun again, and his mind was turning towards Marguerite, he was not sure that the maxims of the sage would avail him much.... How frigid, how rugged was the Stoic philosophy that had once propped his mind!¹⁴

If this imaginative reconstruction of the events around 1849 is at all accurate, there might be a connection between the Marguerite affair and the young Arnold's yearning after religious certitude and between his early romantic inclination to follow Obermann and his realization that the romantic ideal could not be reconciled with his growing skepticism. One fact at least seems clear: that the conflict which Mr E. K. Brown called "poses and uncertainties" did exist at this time. It can be discovered to some extent in the Marguerite poems, and

¹⁴Page 53. See pp. 223-224 of the Postscript.

more clearly in two of the poems of 1852, Empedocles and the Stanzas in memory of the author of 'Obermann'. The influence of the elusive Marguerite and the French authors de Senancour and M  nard, among others, should not be overlooked.¹⁵ As a follower of the romantic school, Arnold apparently felt attracted to writers like Senancour and M  nard, though later he discarded them in favor of Spinoza and Goethe, whom he had somewhat neglected in his following after the romantics. But Senancour did contribute toward the formation at this time of a kind of basis for his criticism, though Senancour was not primarily a religious writer.¹⁶ Perhaps it is naive at this juncture to link the basically romantic aspects of the Marguerite poems with the beginnings of Arnold's religious criticism, but Miss Macdonald might not be far wrong in her inference that Marguerite was for Arnold the embodiment of all the thought of Obermann. That "daughter of France," in spite of her own orthodoxy, seemed to reflect to the young Arnold the essence of the spiritual conflict which was not only Senancour's and M  nard's but also his.

¹⁵ Arnold might have become acquainted with the work of Senancour on his visit to George Sand, Nohant, 1846 (see Routh, p. 181).

¹⁶ See Arnold's appreciations of Joubert, the Gu  rins, and Heine.

But the spiritual conflict was a rather passive thing. Arnold's thoughts during the period October 1848 to October 1849, through the violent and controversial reception of James Anthony Froude's book, The Nemesis of Faith, were on anything but the controversy which Froude had stirred.

There was no need to make such a fuss, and the Church of England would never come to have saner ideas on Biblical inspiration, the person of Christ or eternal punishment, unless people who held these ideas kept on their white neckcloths, and quietly circulated them. Clough had done no good either to Oxford or to himself by his resignation [from the Oriel Fellowship], though, more fortunate than Froude, he had achieved the headship of University Hall without any objections being raised, although he had cavilled at undertaking the superintendence of any prayers, or even pledging himself to be present.¹⁷

By this time, apparently, Arnold was through his reading of Senancour, and the completion of this reading, together with the visit to the Continent, fortified his admiration for Senancour and began to undermine his belief in the supernatural. It was Senancour who gave him "confidence in the human intellect, and trust that goodness leads to happiness early in life, though he was not quite so sure of it all as he came to be later."¹⁸ And that "trust that goodness leads to happiness" is obviously the germ of the idea which pervades, in modified form, Literature and Dogma; it is the eudaemonism of his religious and social criticism; and it derives from more than the writings of Senancour. It should be noted that the influence of Senancour did

¹⁷Macdonald, p. 77.

¹⁸Macdonald, p. 228; cf. pp. 37-43.

not last very much longer than the Marguerite affair and that about 1850 Arnold was intensely studying Spinoza, who was gradually supplanting Senancour in the poet's serious thinking. Then the spiritual conflict within Arnold began to resolve itself, and he began to forget conversations with Marguerite such as the one Miss Macdonald imagines took place on his second visit to Switzerland in 1849.

'I have a book which I can lend you,' she said. 'I got it in Paris last year. But Mathieu, it is a very sad book, and I wonder if it would be good for you.'

'What is it?' he asked.

'It is Jaques Ortis by Ugo Foscolo, the Italian, in a translation by Dumas. The poor young man is in exile, and he loves in vain. He loses his faith in God. And at the end he kills himself.'

'Like Werther?'

'Yes, it is very like Werther, but not so charming...."¹⁹

A year from the date of this imaginary conversation, Arnold was thinking about the problem of exile and self-destruction, although no longer in terms of romance. He was studying the Ethics of Spinoza, making the greatest effort to understand the ontological proof of the existence of God, studying Locke, trying to understand the philosopher's too facile explanation of the existence of God and revelation and miracle.²⁰ After his return from Switzerland, during the spring of the following year, Arnold had shifted his attention from the Byronic sort of romancing to the "high seriousness" which became the mark of his later essays. According to Miss Macdonald, of the

¹⁹Pages 107-108.

²⁰Macdonald, p. 187; pp. 193-194.

Empedocles J. C. Shairp

seemed somewhat dubious, suggesting that the figure of Empedocles was a self-dramatisation, and that there was not enough freedom of the will in his [Arnold's] poems. 'Why, man, look at your titles!' he had said. 'Resignation! The World and the Quietist! And now you're writing about a philosopher whose only cure for the evils of life was to throw himself into a volcano! That sort of thing won't nerve us for a life of action, which Carlyle says is the only life for a man.... You are content to sit dreaming and doubtful. Ah, man, you're falling into a kind of fatalism, you are indeed.' Arnold said that to his mind [he never much cared for Carlyle] there was a deal too much action in the world, and too little intelligent consideration.²¹

Arnold had been working over his Empedocles for some time. It appears quite certain that after his return from the Continental trip of 1848, Arnold made notations which indicate he considered writing poems on Lucretius, Merope, and Empedocles. The poem on Lucretius never materialized beyond outlines in his notebooks. Poems were written on Merope and Empedocles. But Arnold wrote Empedocles first, as if it cried to be written, for even while at Thun, he had thought about it. And upon his return to the office of Lord Lansdowne, he had jotted down ideas for poems on "a system of the Universe," Marguerite, the death of Shelley, and one on "the religious yearnings, never quenched, of someone who had been educated by a chapel in his youth, on whom, as on his own mind, the beauty and tenderness of Christianity had been impressed in early days, so that it haunted him all his life."²² But Senancour had given Arnold a philosophy

²¹Pages 80-81.

²²Macdonald, pp. 61-62.

of life, and neither the orthodox tradition in which he was brought up nor the memory of his father could force or guide him back to his old faith. Arnold is supposed to have asked Lord Lansdowne for a post in the Foreign Office in order to support his bride; there might have been positions open at Oxford, positions in which candidates should be either married or in Holy Orders. To Lord Lansdowne's question whether Arnold would consider taking Holy Orders, Arnold answered with a tacit No. By 1851 Arnold had reached a point of no return; he could tell Lucy Wightman that he did not "believe in the Bible as literal fact very much," that "a great deal of it is legendary," that he did not believe in the Holy Ghost as an aspect of the Trinity, that he did not believe in the Virgin Birth, the Resurrection, and the "personality" of God. He could say: "God is not a Person.... He is a System---the system that holds everything together.... But one cannot pray to a System."²³

The second visit to Thun (1849) resulted in more of the Marguerite poems and in the spiritual progress in Arnold which is marked by the Stanzas in memory of the author of 'Obermann'. Mrs Sells noticed that "penetrated as Arnold was by the ideas of Obermann, it was inevitable that many of them should find their way into the long philosophic poem of

²³ Macdonald, pp. 200-202. See, p. 100

Empedocles. It is, nevertheless, still with some surprise that one is obliged to recognise how very forcibly the character and thought of Obermann are recalled in Empedocles."²⁴ For the major philosophical arguments of the poem, Arnold is constantly indebted to Senancour and to Obermann; for the question of man's destiny, the problem of fatalism and of self-destruction, for the pantheistic ideal and the use of Nature which pervaded To Fausta and Resignation, for the stoical outlook Arnold is in Empedocles indebted to Senancour and to Obermann.²⁵ Even by 1873, it is curious to see, Arnold had not forgotten Senancour: "...let us mention [observed Mrs Sells] that the épigraphe Arnold will choose to place, beside a longer quotation from Bishop Butler, on the title-page of his great book in defense of religious inwardness---Literature and Dogma---will be a saying from his favorite Obermann."²⁶

Beyond the less obvious indication of the poet's belief in the immortality of the human soul, which is contained in the song of Callicles, there are in Empedocles some instances of Arnold's religious thought.²⁷ The following passages illustrate not only Arnold's attitude but also aspects of the Obermann

²⁴Matthew Arnold and France, p. 165.

²⁵Matthew Arnold and France, pp. 149-165.

²⁶Pages 197-198.

²⁷Poetical Works, p. 426.

influence mentioned in the paragraph above.

What were the wise man's plan?---
 Through this sharp, toil-set life,
 To work as best he can,
 And win what's won by strife.---
 But we an easier way to cheat our pains have found.

So, loath to suffer mute,
 We, peopling the void air,
 Make Gods to whom to impute
 The ills we ought to bear;
 With God and Fate to rail at, suffering easily. 28

It is so small a thing
 To have enjoy'd the sun,
 To have lived light in the spring,
 To have loved, to have thought, to have done;
 To have advanced true friends, and beat down baffling foes--

That we must feign a bliss
 Of doubtful future date,
 And, while we dream on this,
 Lose all our present state,
 And relegate to worlds yet distant our repose?

I say: Fear not! Life still
 Leaves human effort scope.
 But, since life teems with ill,
 Nurse no extravagant hope;
 Because thou must not dream, thou need'st not
 then despair! 29

Before Empedocles throws himself into the crater, he foresees
 many rebirths of the soul, but his dilemma is not resolved,

²⁸Page 421, lines 267-271; lines 277-281.

²⁹Pages 425-426, lines 397-406; lines 422-426.

the dilemma which is expressed in the elegy to the author of Obermann.

Ah! Two desires toss about
The poet's feverish blood.
One drives him into the world without,
And one to solitude.³⁰

When read in relation to Arnold's abandoning poetry for prose in order, in his own words, "to see life steadily and see it whole," this stanza is perhaps more meaningful. But this is a large speculation. At least Arnold saw himself "brought forth and rear'd in hours/Of change, alarm, surprise---/What shelter to grow ripe is ours?/What leisure to grow wise?"³¹ Thus Arnold bade farewell to Obermann and his own romantic dreams.

Of the work of 1852 there remains outstanding the poem called Progress, which, according to Mrs Sells, contains elements of the religious problem inspiring other lyrics in the 1852 volume.

[Progress] contains an anticipatory fragment of the thought Arnold worked out in detail in his later religious writings. The idea of tolerance, of all the religious conceptions containing a germ of divine truth, and the need of seizing on this truth to fortify the soul, to enable us 'to think clear, feel deep, bear fruit well', was an idea already current in the middle of the century; and nowhere more so than in France.

³⁰ Poetical Works, p. 309, lines 93-96. See Tinker and Lowry, p. 256.

³¹ Poetical Works, p. 308, lines 69-72.

The French had in fact taken from German religious criticism ideas which, inaccessible to all but specialists, would have been lost without their renewed life under the less austere and more persuasive Gallic touch. The movement had been initiated by the appearance of Dr Kreuzer's treatise on the symbolism of the religions, and its translation during the period 1825 to 1849 by Guigniaut. But before this date, Benjamin Constant in 1824, and Edgar Quinet in 1841, had popularized the more important of Kreuzer's ideas.³²

Thus early, apparently, Arnold might have received indirectly through France impressions at least of German biblical criticism, and reinforced with Spinoza's idea of the intellectual love of God and Heine's attitude that the function of religion is to popularize morality and make it acceptable, he wrote the meditative lyrics of the 1852 edition of his poems. The Socratic and humanistic Arnold appear in Self-Dependence and Morality respectively. The companion poems The Youth of Nature and The Youth of Man and The Future all deal with the changelessness of the physical world and the transitoriness of man in the world, and this seems to be the single idea which inspires the whole group of lyrics in the Empedocles volume. Later, in the edition of New Poems, dated 1867, Arnold would write a group of sonnets in the same manner as he wrote the lyrics mentioned, with the exception that they would more nearly approach the theme of his prose criticism, namely, the importance of developing an inward spiritual consciousness.

³²Matthew Arnold and France, pp. 195-196.

Empedocles was the chief poem of Arnold's second volume. But in 1853, when he republished much of the material of his earlier output, Arnold significantly omitted Empedocles. He omitted the poem because, he said, it contained little action and was not, therefore, in the tradition of great poetry. But this was not the only reason. His dissatisfaction with it reveals also the influences which at the time were controlling his spiritual development.³³

It is most impressive, the feeling with which Arnold describes the modern sensitised consciousness, fixed on the conquest of spiritual happiness and penetrating into the tendencies of his age, only to find proofs of his limitations. How are we to look for the inner purpose and plan of life when 'the wind-bourne-mirroring soul' is spinning among new doctrines, winning a thousand glimpses and never striking to the core?³⁴

In 1867, however, after the publication of the article on "truth" and "edification," that is, the article on Colenso and Spinoza, Arnold would reissue Empedocles. This reissue would be followed by Obermann Once More, a poem of "unveiled rationalism," a poem also of the later sixties. By this time "Arnold has become an enthusiastic optimist; and Obermann, much to his astonishment, [would] undergo the same transformation."³⁵ Arnold would put away his speculations on Fate and tend toward a moderate rationalism, to see if there he could discover the truth of religion, if not the truth about himself.

The volume of Poems; a New Edition, 1853 contained The Scholar-Gipsy, published for the first time. Again, the reli-

³³Routh, p. 179.

³⁴Routh, p. 180

³⁵A. W. Benn, A History of English Rationalism in the Nineteenth Century (London, 1906), Vol. II, p. 284.

gious elements of this poem are difficult to define, if,,indeed, there are any. The poem on its surface deals with a young man's escape from what has been called the academic palsy in order to find in Nature and the simple life of the gypsies a faith which he has been wanting. The importance of the poem would seem to lie more in its association with Senancour than in the narrative. Mrs Sells links the elegy with Senancour and Obermann, implying that there is more to the poem of Alpine inspiration than of the Oxfordshire countryside. "In this character of the Scholar Gipsy the poet thus personified his own ideal hopes; and, it would seem, some of Senancour also."³⁶ Mr E. K. Brown agreed that "the mythic element comes to veil personal emotions even in poems which are in part lyrical, such as The Scholar-Gipsy and the Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse. Arnold's own feelings are there; but they are not there undisguised."³⁷ The comments fit: the Scholar Gipsy is Arnold; the admirer of the monks of the Grande Chartreuse is Arnold; and in both instances the poet realizes that it is too late to return to Nature, the simple life, the unquestioning faith. Mrs Sells noted that while Arnold's interest in Obermann was still fresh, he published, in 1855, the Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse.³⁸ At this point, in this poem, with the events of the Oxford

³⁶Sells, p. 200.

³⁷Matthew Arnold, p. 38

³⁸Matthew Arnold and France, p. 237. In her section on the Stanzas, Mrs Sells discusses the influence of Louis Ménéard's polytheism on the poem.

Movement in the background, the Grande Chartreuse is for Arnold the symbol of a system of belief and faith no longer possible for him to hold. The position taken in the Stanzas is somewhat by the last stanza in the Epilogue (added in 1877) to Haworth Churchyard (1855), in which an indication of Arnold's belief in immortality again appears.

Unquiet souls!
 ---In the sark fermentation of earth,
 In the never idle workshop of nature,
 In the eternal movement,
 Ye shall find yourselves again!³⁹

Even by 1855 Arnold had not sloughed off the influence of his early masters. Mr Carleton Stanley said of the poems to 1855 in general and of the Empedocles volume in particular,

In the 1852 collection is a group of poems which look not merely back to Wordsworth in part, and Arnold's youth, but forward to his prose works on religion: The Youth of Nature, The Youth of Man, Progress, Self-Dependence, Morality. Though consolation for human doubt and pain is their theme, one feels rather the doubt and pain. The concluding poem of the book, however, [the only optimistic poem, which nearly always stood last in the volume] The Future, succeeds where they fail; it succeeds also in being poetry.⁴⁰

Mr Stanley is supported by Miss Macdonald's claim that, with the few exceptions of Thyrsis, The Terrace at Berne, and Obermann Once More, Arnold had "conceived or written all his best poems" ---before "the fatal date in 1851" when he became an inspector of schools.

³⁹Poetical Works, p. 286, lines 134-138.

⁴⁰Matthew Arnold (Toronto, 1938), p. 59.

Even these exceptions prove the check that was given to his poetic life to be an exhausting and prosaic occupation, for each of them goes back to some experience of the earlier period: to the friendship with Clough and the scenery about Oxford already described in The Scholar-Gipsy: to Marguerite and Thun: to Senancour, the master of his wandering youth, and the journey from Glion over the Col de Jaman.... Dover Beach, the Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse, and Sohrab and Rustum seem to show that in 1851 Arnold, after a period of quiescence, might have been on the point of entering a new creative period, as rich and fruitful as was 1849....⁴¹

But Thyrsis at least has very little of the religious element, unless it is, as Tinker and Lowry suggest, the image of the "throne of Truth" (lines 144ff.) and the search for "a fugitive and gracious light...shy to illumine" (lines 201-202), and these are at best only tentative.

Before abandoning poetry, Arnold in 1867 (New Poems) returned briefly to the masters and experiences of his youth, commemorated in the lyric Dover Beach and the elegies Rugby Chapel and Obermann Once More. The sonnets East London and Immortality and the lyric Pis-Aller are the minor instances of the expression of Arnold's religious sentiment. Mrs Sells has suggested that all the sonnets of the 1867 edition of the Poems are "animated by the single idea, the need of cultivating our inward and spiritual life. Immortality...repeats the summons to the 'here-now', and to the perfecting of our lives as we must live them on earth.... Later, Arnold will define immortality as life 'in the eternal order, which never dies',"

⁴¹Macdonald, pp. 221-223.

wrote Mrs Sells, quoting the phrase from Arnold's "A Comment on Christmas", in the Irish Essays.

The energy of life may be
Kept on after the grave, but not begun;
And he who flagg'd not in the earthly strife,
From strength to strength advancing---only he,
His soul well-knit, and all his battles won,
Mounts, and that hardly, to eternal life.⁴²

Writing a chapter on Arnold and the Fatherhood of God, Mr James Main Dixon used the sonnet East London to support his contention that Arnold's "intellectual" rejection of the Fatherhood of God did not actually allow for his disavowal of "religious trust" in God.⁴³ The point is well taken, but there never seemed to be any question of Arnold's religious trust in God; none of his poetry or prose reflects anything like atheism, and one would find it a little difficult to make a case for agnosticism in Arnold. The sonnet, nevertheless, does make this clear. To the preacher, "much cheer'd with thoughts of Christ, the living bread," Arnold says,

O human soul! as long as thou canst so
Set up a mark of everlasting light,
Above the howling senses' ebb and flow,
To cheer thee, and to right thee if thou roam---
Not with lost toil thou labourest through the night!
Thou mak'st the heaven thou hop'st indeed thy home.⁴⁴

The theological, disillusioned, and poetically weak Pis-Aller reports a dispute between one who holds that the truth of

⁴²Poetical Works, p. 172, lines 9-14.

⁴³Modern Poets and Christian Teaching (New York, 1906), p. 161.

⁴⁴Poetical Works, p. 169, lines 9-14.

religion resides in revelation and another who contends that a humanistic outlook and a broad mind are more than sufficient for an inquiry into the truth of religion. The subject-matter, poorly handled in the poem, later becomes the controversial issue raised in the articles in religious criticism.

The lyrical Dover Beach uses, according to Mrs Sells,⁴⁵ the image of the sea which is furnished by Sainte-Beuve, not Obermann, although the beginning of the poem has "the mysterious beauty of an Obermannesque night."⁴⁶ Miss Macdonald imagines that the lyric was first formed in Arnold's mind at Dover on the first evening of his honeymoon. In either case, the poem shows that Arnold has risen above romantic Weltschmerz to Sophoclean stoicism. The figure of the Greek still haunts Arnold, who, "wandering between two worlds," wrote in the Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse,

Not as their friend, or child, I speak!
But as, on some far northern strand,
Thinking of his own Gods, a Greek
In pity and mournful awe might stand
Before some fallen Runic stone---
For both were faiths, and both are gone,⁴⁷

and in Dover Beach,

⁴⁵ Quoting Irving Babbitt in The Masters of Modern French Criticism (Boston, 1912), P. 104.

⁴⁶ Matthew Arnold and France, p. 224.

⁴⁷ Poetical Works, p. 301, lines 79-84.

Sophocles long ago
 Heard it on the Aegaeon, and it brought
 Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
 Of human misery; we
 Find also in the sound a thought,
 Hearing it by this distant northern sea.⁴⁸

The idea of the ebb and flow of the sea recurs in East London. The New Poems of 1867 contains two last tributes to masters of Arnold's youth: Obermann and his father. In Obermann Once More and Rugby Chapel, as nowhere else during the period of inner spiritual conflict, Arnold took a final positive stance with respect to the influences on his youth; the "poses" are dropped, and "uncertainties" dispelled. In the autobiographical Obermann Once More, Arnold reviewed three attempts to revise society: Obermann's history of Christianity, the French Revolution, and faith in the New Era. The poem, with its reflections of biblical criticism, anticipates Arnold the critic, seeking a new synthesis after the failure of the romantic ideal and seeking to bring to bear on his generation the best thought of the past.⁴⁹ The contrast between the first and second Obermann poem is revealing, the first reflecting the youthful and romantic Arnold groping for religious certitude, the second reflecting the mature and settled Arnold. Rugby Chapel, the other tribute, was for his father; and it was long in coming, for

⁴⁸Page 211, lines 15-20.

⁴⁹Tinker and Lowry, pp. 263-274.

to write a memorial of Dr Arnold was no easy task, even with the necessary poetic impetus; for though the poet was in full sympathy with the moral fervour of his father, he lacked the religious conviction which was its source.⁵⁰

Hence the predominance in the elegy of traditional ideas about Christianity, of "stanzas about the saving of souls, the journey to the city of God, and the future life."⁵¹ Mr James Main Dixon had said that "Arnold's aloofness from the main current of vital religion is modified when he actually touches noble personality. In no instance is this more apparent than in the exquisite apostrophe to his dead father...."⁵² But Arnold's religious position was not much modified when he wrote elegies on the deaths of Wordsworth and his brother, and on Obermann. Mr Dixon had continued: "Rejecting elsewhere, for intellectual reasons, the doctrine of the Fatherhood of God, and cutting it out peremptorily from his patchwork 'system,' he there restores this elemental truth of Christianity to its proper place."⁵³ It might be recalled that just before Arnold died he had been worshipping the God of his father in a church at Liverpool. No matter how much Arnold might have wanted to play the role, he was not an Obermann.

⁵⁰Tinker and Lowry, p. 240; pp. 241-242.

⁵¹Tinker and Lowry, p. 241.

⁵²Modern Poets and Christian Teaching, p. 157.

⁵³Page 157.

The opinion was expressed by Sir Edmund Chambers as he spoke before the British Academy in November 1931. Chambers said very little about religious elements in Arnold's poetry; and to the tentative conclusions which must accompany any discussion of the religious element in Arnold's poetry, he added this caution, suggesting that

philosophic optimism, if the term is not too intellectual a one to use, was never Matthew Arnold's. His rigorous teachers had purged his faith, and shown him 'the high, white star of truth', and in that clear and searching light he could see no certainty of such a harmony [as is implied in the term philosophic optimism]. His prevailing elegiac mood is one of disequilibrium. He can arrive at no coherent vision of the scheme of things to come....⁵⁴

He was speaking generally of the group of poems of which The Scholar-Gipsy, the Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse, Dover Beach, and Rugby Chapel form the core. He reminded his audience that the elegies represent only one aspect of Arnold's complex personality and that "it is possible to lay too much emphasis upon this [the religious, elegiac] side of Arnold's poetry."⁵⁵ The poetry of Arnold's youth, that inspired by his passion for Obermann and Sand,⁵⁶ for example, remained, in his opinion, Arnold's best, that is, considered as romantic poetry, without undue emphasis on religious overtones. Perhaps the reason for Arnold's inability to be like Obermann was that he came to feel

⁵⁴Matthew Arnold (British Academy, 1932), pp. 21-22.

⁵⁵Pages 21-22.

⁵⁶See Mrs Ward, I, 16.

more intimately the social significance of the atmosphere in which he was working, to sense that romantic melancholy was not in such times the most effective vehicle for the expression of religious doubt and uncertainty and that the poetry of doubt and uncertainty failed as poetry, as he came to define it, because it was divorced from the context of religious doctrine. It was, then, an intellectual restraint which prevented his being an Obermann. As Mr Lowry has pointed out:

The Revolution of 1848, for example, was for him an arresting spectacle. But [Arnold felt], amid all the new scheme that [was] supposedly dawning, that man restatevivere, after his plans for an Utopia have all been tried. It is to this living side of man that Arnold address[ed] himself in his social thinking, and in this he [saw] that man has, beyond his need for bread, two more central needs: the need for culture and the need for righteousness. The letters suggest this recognition.⁵⁷

Arnold's arrival at what Chambers called a coherent vision of the scheme of things entire occurred after the period of the poetry of youth, that poetry which he termed Arnold's "best," apart from the elegies, the "religious" importance of which he meant to minimize. Such poetry, born of the Romantic movement and written out of the context of religious doctrine, achieved at its best something not much more than piety.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Letters to Clough, p. 48. Cf. Arnold Whitridge, Men in Crisis (New York, 1949), p. 330.

⁵⁸ See C. C. J. Webb, A Study of Religious Thought in England from 1850 (Oxford, 1933), pp. 29-31. Webb indicates the "philosophical foundations" of the Romantic movement by reference to Spinoza (interpreted in the nineteenth century by Schleiermacher), Kant, Goethe, and Hegel.

Whether in the light of this failure or not, Arnold nevertheless turned in earnest to the writing of prose criticism, social, then almost inevitably, religious. The events of the sixties and seventies, which more or less engaged Arnold's attention and which formed the background to Arnold's writings on religion, now demand consideration. The religious revival of the sixties, the growth of Church journalism, the launching of Essays and Reviews, the publication of Bishop Colenso's Pentateuch...Critically Examined (each showing the influence and effects of biblical criticism), and the debates of the seventies, while highlighting the continuing struggle between the liberal Church and the High Church party and renewing the theological interests of advanced public opinion, increased in Arnold the recognition that though Keble's world might be dead, his father's was (or seemed) powerless to be born. The choice appeared to be in the direction of either ecclesiastical dogma or ecclesiastical democracy. The events of the decade before St Paul and Protestantism were filled with the threat of religious skepticism and seemed to Arnold carried to the borders of irreligion; they demonstrated to Arnold as much as anything else the need for reconciling extremes on the middle ground which was the scene of his father's battles and sometimes his victories. That middle ground was in these years a place of sound and fury, excited by Essays and Reviews (1860) and by Colenso's Pentateuch (1862). "The importance of these

two books in the history of religious thought in England [lay] in their proclamation of a view of Scripture which, at the time of their publication, seemed, as put forward by ordained ministers of the national Church, nothing less than revolutionary."⁵⁹ Essays and Reviews, while ostensibly the manifesto of the Broad Church⁶⁰ and claiming that there was nothing in the "new science" or in Biblical scholarship to undermine Christian faith, was, curiously enough, issued when the principles of the Broad Church were "provisionally out of place."⁶¹ Both the Essayists and Colenso's Pentateuch derived ultimately not so much from the contemporary struggle within the Church as from German sources. For in theological matters, England was the satellite of Germany; and both the Essayists and Colenso were indebted to German scholarship in part at least for their methods and conclusions.⁶²

⁵⁹Webb, pp. 71-72.

⁶⁰The term Broad Church, first used by Dean Stanley in an Edinburgh article, July 1850, was not originally intended to characterize any particular party within the Church. See Tulloch, p. 260.

⁶¹Benn, II, 320.

⁶²Routh, p. 219. Routh notes that though Essays and Reviews and Colenso's Pentateuch "appeared subsequent to The Origin of Species (1859)...both works are pre-Darwinian in the sense that they would have been just the same if Darwin had died of the fever which nearly prevented him from embarking on the Beagle."

III: The Contemporary Milieu.

According to Dean Stanley, Dr Thomas Arnold, like Schleiermacher, "believed that the student of the Scriptures should bring to his task some acquaintance with philological and antiquarian works, as well as a knowledge of the chief philosophers and poets."¹ This forcible union of theology with antiquarian and philosophical knowledge was the special characteristic---and part of the failure---of German biblical criticism. This criticism, with all its skeptical tendencies, came to a head in 1835 in Das Leben Jesu of David Friedrich Strauss (1808-1874) and provided a tradition upon which the critical writers of the sixties were to draw. The result toward the close of the sixties, as one historian reviewed the situation, was the absolute negation of orthodoxy and traditional religious practice on the part of advanced public opinion: "What Herbert Spencer called religion, what Lecky called Christianity, was the negation of all [orthodox religious beliefs held in the face of the "new" science]; what Seeley pointed to as Christ's real work, amounted to a scheme of social reform in which the supernatural had no place...."² Strauss had leaned too much on the Enlightenment,

¹Frederic E. Faverty, Matthew Arnold the Ethnologist (Evanston, 1951), p. 165; cited from Stanley's Life of Thomas Arnold.

²Benn, II, 302. Cf. review of Seeley's Ecce Homo, Fraser's Magazine, June-July, 1866.

and his approach lacked the organic, genetic (evolutionary), and imaginative sense of Herder, Coleridge, and Matthew Arnold. Armed with the historical and philosophical approach to the Scriptures which Thomas Arnold had believed indispensable to the interpretation of Scripture and raising questions concerning the validity of the Fourth Gospel and the reliability of the Synoptics, Strauss had proceeded with meticulous care to outline the limits of Jesus' career. "But the record of His life and teaching apparently died with Him. What we have received through the New Testament is the Jewish dream of a national hero, the allegories of a man-god fulfilling the Law and the Prophets, a theological romance...."³ The life of Jesus amounted to just this, according to the evidences collected by Strauss,⁴ and it was to this touchstone, the work of Strauss, that the English rationalists referred---with the results which have been noted above.

Strauss' aim was to reconcile Christian theology with Hegelian philosophy, destroy belief in the supernatural, write

³Routh, p. 216.

⁴In England, Chas Hennell's Inquiry concerning the origins of Christianity "opened a line of inquiry...akin to that of Strauss and the Tübingen School in Germany" (Tulloch, p. 257). Hennell's work was familiar to Strauss; and it was Hennell's wife who first undertook to translate Das Leben Jesu; but the task was given to George Eliot. The Eliot translation became a best seller in the forties, though in the German edition Das Leben Jesu had been known among informed persons (Routh, p. 217). For her work in theology George Eliot had acquired some practice through her reading of Spinoza.

a critical analysis of the Gospels which would be in harmony with history and science, and interpret the Gospel narratives in the light of myth. This appears to have been his original purpose, not to destroy faith in religion as such, but rather to destroy faith in the supernatural. The far-reaching effects of this purpose might be seen in a passage from the Westminster Review, written about thirty years after the publication of Das Leben Jesu: "The name of Strauss has long been a bugbear in the English 'religious world.' High Churchmen and Low Churchmen... hush naughty children with the name of Strauss."⁵ But to the end, amidst such popular criticism---if the statement in the Westminster Review is creditable, Strauss maintained that the old faith was gone, that though religion might remain, Christianity did not.⁶ However, the apologists for Strauss were many. Otto Pfleiderer, for one, in his introduction to the 1835 edition of the Life of Jesus, had defined the peculiar nature of the book in terms of the conflict between two theological traditions: On the one hand it represented the crisis in theology at which the doubts and critical objections of centuries as to the credibility of the Bible narrative had accumulated in such overwhelming volume as to break through and sweep away all the defences of orthodox apologetics. On the other hand, in the very completeness of the destructive criticism of past tradition, lay the germs

⁵ Cited in Chester Charlton McCown, The Search for the Real Jesus (New York, 1940), p. 9.

⁶ McCown, p. 10. See Strauss' elaboration of this position in The Old Faith and the New, A Confession [Der alte und neue Glaube], trans. Mathilde Blind (London, 1873).

of a new science of constructive critical inquiry, the work of which was to bring to light the truth of history.⁷

The chief (though not entirely original) contribution of Strauss lay in his thorough application of the concept of myth in the criticism of the New Testament.⁸ In his substitution of myth for "natural" or rationalistic methods alone in interpreting Gospel miracles, for example, he maintained that there could be no separation of the natural from the supernatural without the existence of concurrent narratives lacking the coloring of the supernatural; and such accounts, he maintained, the Gospels did not offer. He thus prepared for an "inexorable, but fallacious dilemma, either supernatural or mythical."⁹ Thus, on the basis of myth, Strauss explained, for example, the birth of Jesus, the taking of the census, the star of Bethlehem, and the events around Herod's pogrom; explained that Jesus was the son of an ordinary marriage, made divine because of the tendency in the ancient world of representing great men as demi-gods, that the gospel writers used the census simply as a device to get Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem in order to fulfill the prophecy

⁷D. F. Strauss, Life of Jesus, trans. George Eliot (London, 1906), p. v. Pfleiderer's apology for the method of Strauss was rewarded by a change in outlook: the fourth, definitive edition of Leben Jesu (1840) and Leben Jesu für das deutsche Volk (1864) show some amelioration of the destructive tendency.

⁸Life of Jesus, p. xii.

⁹McCown, p. 59.

of Micah that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, the City of David, even though at the time of Jesus' birth, according to historical accounts, the census of which Luke writes could not have taken place, that the star forecast in the Old Testament was not an unusual phenomenon, that the magi, Arabian merchants from a remote and heathen country, could know nothing of the birth of the Jewish Messiah, and that Herod's pogrom, designed to kill the infant Messiah, was either a blind act or the fiction of later reporters, since obviously Herod could, without much difficulty, have been informed of a child showered with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, if such were the case.¹⁰ In like manner, for the whole ministry of Jesus, Strauss gathered and reworked his evidence to support his concept of the "real" Jesus.

If the impact of Strauss' conclusions was strong upon the general reader, stronger still was the impact upon theologians, who became increasingly "distressed as the daring critic rudely, and without regard to consequences, roused them from the illusions of their sentimental or speculative dogmatism and their precipi-

¹⁰ See Strauss, Life of Jesus, pp. xii, 146f., 164f. An interesting footnote to Strauss is Samuel Butler's The Fair Haven (1873), a book based largely on a pamphlet published in 1865 on the Resurrection of Christ, a straightforward critical study later adapted in The Fair Haven as a piece of irony.

tate treaty of peace between faith and knowledge."¹¹ Pfleiderer perhaps overstated the case in his description of a precipitate treaty of peace between faith and knowledge but recognized exactly the implications of criticism made without regard to consequences. It was on just this point, the regard to consequences, that Matthew Arnold took issue with Strauss and the entire German school. And Matthew Arnold, who borrowed from the German school more than he dared to admit, quickly and continually noted that something in the German mind which he called "blunt-edged, unhandy and infelicitous,---some positive want of straightforward, sure perception, which tends to balance the great superiority of the Germans in special knowledge, and in the disposition to deal impartially with knowledge."¹² As in the case of Strauss and the German school, so with the extreme rationalists of the sixties, Colenso included, Arnold feared the consequences of that sort of minute specialization which took count of whether the Roman census was compiled during the rule of Herod the Great or at the beginning of the rule of Archelaus or whether it was possible to produce three generations of Israelites, allowing twenty years as the marriageable age for young men. In the

¹¹ Strauss, Life of Jesus, p. xii.

¹² M. Arnold, Works, VII, p. xxiii.

Preface to Literature and Dogma Arnold appealed again to his idea of culture when he wrote that

a man may have the facts and yet be unable to draw the right conclusion from them. In general, he may want power; as one may say of Strauss...that to what is unsolid in the New Testament he applies a negative criticism ably enough, but that to deal with the reality which is still left in the New Testament, requires a larger, richer, deeper, more imaginative mind than his. But perhaps the quality specially needed for drawing the right conclusion from the facts...is best called perception, justness of perception. And this no man can well have who is a mere specialist, who has not what we call culture in addition to the knowledge of his particular study; and so many theologians, in Germany as well as elsewhere, are specialists!¹³

In the same Preface Arnold betrayed, in addition, a greater fear, namely, that religion, which never had had much hold over the masses of the people, was, because of widespread skepticism fostered by critics of theology and certain ministers of the Church as well, entirely losing its hold over the masses of the people, "the lapsed masses, as some call them."¹⁴ He saw that biblical criticism in England, encouraged by the findings of the German school, the line of inquiry opened by Darwin and other writers on science, and more especially the controversies on doctrine within the Church of England itself, tended to teach the masses that "the Bible is an exploded superstition."¹⁵

¹³Pages xxii-xxiii.

¹⁴Page vi.

¹⁵Page vii.

But the publication of new theories concerning the origin of species and the opening clauses of the Creed of the Church were not as easily harmonized¹⁶ as Arnold might have wished them to be; and though Arnold himself held certain reservations about the Creed, the distances to which the school of Strauss had traveled he was unwilling to go.

Those who objected to the implications of Essays and Reviews and Colenso's Pentateuch¹⁷ pointed to the work of the German school and claimed that the Essayists and Colenso lifted their ideas wholly from that work. The charge was evidently not grounded in fact, for Dr Whately and Dr Thomas Arnold had anticipated several points of view (for example, toward Scriptural interpretation) later seen in Essays and Reviews,¹⁸ and Dr Hampden and Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, who denounced the Essayists, actually had expressed opinions as "heretical" as those held by Temple, Jowett and the others.¹⁹ Nevertheless, Dr Hampden's daughter, in her Memorials, indicated the bad influence of what she called "the neologian method of the German divines" on the "several clergymen of our Church"²⁰ and quoted at length extracts from an unpublished charge to the clergy in

¹⁶H. H. Henson, The Church of England (Cambridge, Eng., 1939), p. 79.

¹⁷See Blackburn, Introduction to Literature and Dogma (Yale diss., 1943).

¹⁸Pfleiderer, p. 388.

¹⁹Benn, II, 130. Wilberforce authored the anonymous review of Essays and Reviews which appeared in the Quarterly.

²⁰H. Hampden, Memorials, p. 212.

which her father condemned Strauss, the idea of myth in interpreting the facts of the gospel, and the Essayists.²¹ But the opposition to the Essays and Reviews was based more immediately in the articles published against the book in the Westminster Review and the Quarterly, "which," according to the historian R. B. Kennard, "excited the popular mind against the writers, and became the occasion of the persecution...."²² The real cause of the controversy over the book was the implicit conflict between reason and authority in the interpretation of Scripture and inevitably in the interpretation of doctrine; and Wilberforce, the Bishop of Oxford, was the foremost agitator in defending Scriptural and doctrinal authoritarianism.²³ There appeared to be nothing very new in the Essays, at least in the method of robust scholarship, and though they stirred a commotion in English theological circles in 1860 similar to that stirred by Strauss in 1835, the causes of the commotions were not of equal importance.²⁴ For even before Strauss had written, Dr

²¹Pages 210-221. The charge was delivered in 1862 and its subject was "Mythical Interpretation of the Recorded Facts of the Gospel."

²²R. B. Kennard, Essays and Reviews (London, 1863), p. 136.

²³Kennard, pp. 137, 150.

²⁴Pfleiderer, p. 387.

Hampden had in his "Bampton Lectures" demonstrated a "change in the relations of theology to religion in the recognized application of the inductive method of inquiry to the grounds and origins of the historical records and dogmatic terminology of the Church."²⁵ Furthermore, the Essayists themselves could have appealed with some justification to the precedent set not only by their accuser, Bishop Hampden, but also to the precedent set by Bishop Butler, whom Hampden greatly admired.²⁶ They had hoped to present ideas, as they daid, to be "received as an attempt to illustrate the advantages to the cause of religious and moral truth, from a free handling, in a becoming spirit, of subjects peculiarly liable to suffer the repetition of conventional language, and from traditional methods of treatment."²⁷

²⁵Kennard, p. 148. Hampden's "heresies" (Bampton Lectures, 1832) were quite forgotten and Hampden himself might well have altered his opinions considerably, for he was, though not without opposition, in 1848 elevated to the episcopacy (see G. W. Cox, Life of John William Colenso [London, 1888], Vol. I, Appendix B). In a letter to Lord John Russell, the bishops C. J. London, J. Lincoln, Hugh Carlisle, Rich. Bath and Wells, E. Sarum, J. Ely, Samuel Oxon, C. Winton, Charles Bangor, G. Rochester, J. H. Gloucester and Bristol, H. Exeter, and A. T. Chicester all expressed "apprehension and alarm" over the "rumoured nomination" of Dr Hampden to the vacant see of Hereford (Correspondence relating to the appointment of Dr Hampden to the see of Hereford, with the recommendations of the Crown [London], p. 7). Lord John Russell, in his reply of Dec. 8, 1847, defended Hampden's fitness for the bishopric (Cox, I, 8) and after Hampden's letter of Dec. 9 to Russell (Cox, I, 25ff) the appointment was made. Essays and Reviews had other critics: J. W. Burgon (Inspiration and Interpretation) and H. L. Mansel, Wm Fitzgerald, et al. (Aids to Faith).

²⁶Kennard, pp. 11-12.

²⁷Kennard, pp. 1-2.

Bishop Hampden had attempted something quite similar in his "Bampton Lectures," with perhaps a difference: Essays and Reviews treated subjects outside the scope of the Articles (hence the failure of the proceedings which were brought by the Bishop of Salisbury against Williams).²⁸

What the Essayists²⁹ did was to apply to theology the (Baconian) inductive method.³⁰ Their contributions grew out of a need, they felt, for "some accredited organ for expressing the views of the more liberal-minded English Churchmen---'of a journal which should treat of theological subjects in a manner resembling the free and scientific tone in which they are handled in France and Germany."³¹ According to R. B. Kennard's

²⁸Kennard, p. 174. Archdeacon Hare had predicted the failure of the proceedings against the Essayists even as they were pending in Convocation, asserting that the proceedings "would only end in the confirmation, by learned authorities, of the statements most complained of in the Essays" (Kennard, p. xiv).

²⁹Fred. Temple, Headmaster of Rugby, Chaplain to the Queen and later Abp of Canterbury, wrote the introductory essay on The Education of the World; Rowland Williams, professor of Hebrew and vicar in the Church, wrote on Bunsen's Biblical Researches; Baden Powell, Professor of Geometry at Oxford, wrote on the Study of the Evidences of Christianity; Henry B. Wilson, Vicar of Great Staughton, described the National Church from the point of view of Séances Historiques de Genève; C. W. Goodwin wrote on Mosaic Cosmogony; Mark Pattison outlined Tendencies of Religious Thought in England, 1688-1750; and Benj. Jowett, Professor of Greek at Oxford, wrote on the Interpretation of Scripture. Insofar as historical and scientific approach was concerned, the Essayists wrote from a synoptic point of view. Jowett's essay was the longest. See Basil Willey, More Nineteenth Century Studies (New York, 1956), pp. 137-185.

³⁰Kennard, p. 1. Whately had edited Bacon's Essays.

³¹Kennard, p. 17.

history, a trend in the direction of Essays and Reviews was started when such a scheme was discussed by Archdeacon Hare, Thomas Arnold, Whately, and Hampden around the year 1835;³² but Dr Arnold, for one, abandoned the idea. It remained, then, until the sixties for the English reader to observe the spectacle of seven English commentators on Church and religion advancing through the wilderness of theology with science at their side. Temple outlined the religious development of "the human race" from earliest times,³³ and Williams, who distinguished himself by becoming the object of prosecution for heresy, rehearsed Baron Bunsen's Biblical researches, "some of the most important results of modern Biblical criticism."³⁴ Baden Powell accomplished the "most purely scientific [essay] in the volume,"³⁵ cited the evidences (revelations) of Paley, Bishop Butler and others, and made Whately and the "new" science his frame of reference, only to discover that Whately, his brother-in-law, held a low opinion of his Essay and the volume as well.³⁶ Wilson proposed that "in a nation such as [England] the Church and the State ought

³²Page 17.

³³Page 32.

³⁴Page 47.

³⁵Page 66.

³⁶Page 64

to be co-extensive [and regarded the] substitution of dogmatic standards for moral ends...the great impediment to the practical application and perfect realization of [this] principle."³⁷

Goodwin offered a history of our planet, then sought "to vindicate the mutual independence of Genesis and Geology, and to show the utter futility of all attempts to bring the one into harmony with the other."³⁸ Mark Pattison reviewed the theological writings of the eighteenth century and considered the influence they continued to exercise on the religious beliefs of the nineteenth.³⁹ His essay received favorable notice in Arnold's "Bishop Butler and the Zeit-Geist," because, said Arnold, it made clear the correspondence between what eighteenth century English society argued and what theology answered. Jowett purposed to interpret Scripture by determining the meaning of the author of the passage in Scripture.⁴⁰ If this scholarly performance did not awaken the English reader from his religious conservatism, it most surely revealed to him his ignorance of theology.⁴¹

Frederick Temple, Thomas Arnold's successor as Headmaster of Rugby, expressed the unifying theme of the Essays in "The

³⁷Page 87.

³⁸Page 95.

³⁹Page 103.

⁴⁰Page 116.

⁴¹Cf. Henson, p. 112.

Education of the World," which served as introduction to the volume and took all knowledge as its province.

He is guilty of high treason against the faith who fears the result of any investigation, whether philosophical or scientific, or historical. And therefore nothing should be more welcome than the extension of knowledge of any and every kind---for every increase in our accumulations of knowledge throws fresh light upon these real problems of our day. If geology proves to us that we must not interpret the first chapters of Genesis literally; if historical investigation shall show us that inspiration, however it may protect the doctrine, yet was not empowered to protect the narrative of the inspired writers from occasional inaccuracy; if careful criticism shall prove that there have been occasionally interpolations and forgeries in the Book, as in many others; the results should still be welcome.⁴²

The other Essayists were one with Temple in agreeing that biblical studies of the sort proposed should take precedence over all other studies. But Williams stated the case more eloquently when he wrote that "considerations, religious and moral, no less than scientific and critical, have, where discussion was free, widened the idea of Revelation for the old world, and deepened it for ourselves; not removing the footsteps of the Eternal from Palestine, but tracing them on other shores...[for, he added, acceptance of the miracle but for its implicit moral] prove[s] the ethical element to be the more fundamental."⁴³ The ethical character of Revelation Baden Powell further separated from the clap-trap of theology when he cautioned: "It must...be borne in mind, that, unlike the essential doctrines of Christianity, 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever,' these external

⁴²Essays and Reviews (London, 1860), p. 47.

⁴³Page 51. Rowland Williams, "Bunsen's Biblical Researches."

[theological] accessories constitute a subject...perpetually taking somewhat...of a new form, with...successive phases of opinion and knowledge."⁴⁴

However much the Essayists were indebted to the preliminary investigations of German scholarship they disclaimed all connection with Germany in matters of technique, for they affirmed that they were

by no means likely to be mystified by their philosophical speculations, nor to be carried away by an inclination to force all facts within the sweep of some preconceived comprehensive theory. If the German biblical critics have gathered together much evidence, the verdict will have to be pronounced by the sober English judgment. But, in fact, the influence of this foreign literature extends to comparatively few among us....⁴⁵

The skeptical tendencies of the generation were not, moreover, the result of passion, but, as Wilson noted, thought and observation.⁴⁶ He meant that the movement of which he was a part derived basically from English sources, as in his Essay his primary concern was the national establishment, an exposition of its characteristics and a defence of its constitution. The controversy had arisen within the Church of Geneva with respect to its relations to the state. This controversy was incidental to Wilson's purpose, though of course it did point up the advantages inherent in a union of Church and State, as Wilson had noticed

⁴⁴Page 94. "On the Study of the Evidences of Christianity."

⁴⁵Page 151. Henry B. Wilson, "Séances Historiques de Genève. The National Church."

⁴⁶Page 152.

such precedents in the Hebrew theocracy and as he wished to see it in the Church of England. But there were difficulties.

If [he wrote] the national Church is to be true to the multitudinist principle, and to correspond ultimately to the national character, the freedom of opinion which belongs to the English citizen should be conceded to the English Churchman; and the freedom which is already practically enjoyed by members of the congregation, cannot without injustice be denied to its ministers.⁴⁷

The freedom of the ministers of the Church was restrained, it was supposed, by reason of their subscription to the Thirty-Nine Articles; but it was hard to define the legal obligations of those who thus subscribed, for "the Articles do not make any assumption of being interpretations of Scripture or developments of it."⁴⁸ The Articles and the so-called constitution of the Church had developed, as Mark Pattison explained, from the via media between Atheism and Athanasianism, and the structure of the Church revealed this compromise between itself and the State,⁴⁹ since it had absorbed before the shocks of Methodism, the Evangelical movement, and the growth of rationalism and had dispelled the incursions of secularism. The Church in the nineteenth century was again suffering from the influences of these "agenceis," as Pattison (and Matthew Arnold) called them.⁵⁰

⁴⁷Page 180.

⁴⁸Pages 181, 184.

⁴⁹Pages 256ff., 259ff. Mark Pattison, "Tendencies of Religious Thought in England, 1688-1750."

⁵⁰Pages 256ff.

Wilson's call for freedom of religious opinion for English Churchmen Mark Pattison amplified by his reference to a catalogue of theological writers in the eighteenth century who held beliefs hostile to the official position of the Church.⁵¹

The remaining Essayists in the group, C. W. Goodwin and Benjamin Jowett, appeared to be concerned more intimately with the interpretation of Scripture, Jowett's Essay being the most literary of the collection.⁵² Goodwin's Essay "On the Mosaic Cosmogony" treated the Ptolemaic and Copernican theories of the universe, the adherence of the Roman Church to the former and of Protestantism to the latter, reviewed the growth of geology, offered a minute analysis of the Hebrew of Genesis, and lamented the fact that Christian nations are taught that the earth is six thousand years old and that it was made in six days.⁵³ The problem of reading Genesis aright was compounded, Goodwin felt, when theologians "evade[d] the plain meaning of language...and introduce[d] obscurity into one

⁵¹One of Pattison's special interests was the Deistic controversy and the persons engaged in it. Cf. M. Arnold, "Bishop Butler and the Zeit-Geist," §2.

⁵²Credit for beginning Biblical studies in England on any formal basis should go to Jowett, who in 1855 had published his exegetical work, The Epistles of St Paul to the Thessalonians, Galatians, and Romans, with Critical Notes and Dissertations (2 vols.), "in which he introduced to his countrymen the results of Baur's critical labours" (Pfleiderer, pp. 386-387). Jowett's views can best be described as being midway between Baur and orthodoxy.

⁵³Essays and Reviews, pp. 218-219ff.

of the simplest stories ever told, for the sake of making it accord with the complex system of the universe which modern science [had] unfolded."⁵⁴ It was "painful and humiliating" for him to see able writers thus attempting "the impossible."⁵⁵

Jowett, according to the testimony of Mrs Ward, had said: "Half the books that are published are religious books, and what trash this religious literature is!"⁵⁶ He had in mind religious literature which attempted the impossible, attempted to make Scripture mean something without adequately determining what it is and what it does. In the opening paragraphs of his Essay "On the Interpretation of Scripture" he indicated the method he would follow:

The diffusion of a critical spirit in history and literature is affecting the criticism of the Bible in our own day in a manner not unlike the burst of intellectual life in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Educated persons are beginning to ask, not what Scripture may be made to mean, but what it does. And it is no exaggeration to say that he who in the present state of knowledge will confine himself to the plain meaning of words and the study of their context may know more of the original spirit and intention of the authors of the New Testament than all the controversial writers of former ages put together.⁵⁷

⁵⁴Pages 249-250.

⁵⁵Page 250.

⁵⁶A Writer's Recollections, Vol. I, p. 174. In a letter to Mrs Ward, written a year after the publication of David Grieve and shortly before his death in Sept. 1893, Jowett wrote: "I seldom get anyone to talk on religious subjects. It seems to me the world is growing rather tired of German criticism.... We must give up doctrine and teach by the lives of men, beginning with the life of Christ.... And the best words of men...will be our Bible" (Mrs Ward, II, 159).

⁵⁷Essays and Reviews, pp. 340-341.

The principles which Jowett employed in The Epistles of St Paul he expounded in this Essay on interpretation: the method of Thomas Arnold, the method of the classical scholar, the reading of the Bible as literature, and the noting of language and the noting of the difference between the meaning and inspiration of Scripture. For, as he said, "the interpretation of Scripture has nothing to do with any opinion respecting its origin.... Rigid upholders of the verbal inspiration of Scripture, and those who deny inspiration altogether, may nevertheless meet on the common ground of the meaning of words."⁵⁸ The mischief in the meaning of words allowed what he called the temper of accommodation, which showed itself in two ways, the adaptation of Scriptural truth to the doctrine of creeds and the adaptation of Scriptural precepts "to the language or practice of our own age."⁵⁹ Thus, in his analysis of texts of Scripture⁶⁰ Jowett discovered the "weakness" of theology in attempting to derive from Scripture ideas, apologies, precedents on such diverse matters as divorce, marriage with a wife's sister, infant baptism, the divine right of kings, the episcopacy, and original sin. He then exposed a favorite occupation of the Article-makers, the manner in which specific words

⁵⁸Pages 350-351. Cf. Pfleiderer, p. 387.

⁵⁹Page 353.

⁶⁰Pages 358-359ff.

in Scripture are singled out and incorporated in systems like stones taken out of an old building and put into a new one. They acquire a technical meaning more or less divergent from the original one. It is obvious that their use in Scripture, and not their later and technical sense, must furnish the rule of interpretation.⁶¹

The difficulties were many and well-known to Jowett, as they were well-known to Whately and would be to Matthew Arnold, but he sensed that there was no ignoring the results of recent criticism, that religion was "in a false position when all the tendencies of knowledge [were] opposed to it."⁶² The protraction of such a situation, in which enlightened persons were less and less coming into the influence of religion, could endure no further protraction. What remained? The answer for Jowett lay in his proposal, an old one indeed, to "Interpret the Scripture like any other book." Such an interpretation will disclose that Scripture is in many respects unlike any other book. "The first step is to know the meaning, and this can be done in the same careful and impartial way that we ascertain the meaning of Sophocles or of Plato."⁶³ Scripture has but one meaning---the one in the mind of the prophet who first spoke and his hearers: "we have not reason to attribute to the Prophet or Evangelist any second or hidden sense different from that which appears on the surface."⁶⁴ This statement

⁶¹Page 367.

⁶²Page 374.

⁶³Page 377.

⁶⁴Page 380.

recognizes the importance of reading the Bible like any other book written in a time and country "of which little or no other literature survives, and about which we know almost nothing except what is derived from its pages." Each writer and each age has its own characteristics, and "the Old Testament is not to be identified with the New, nor the Law with the Prophets, nor the Gospels with the Epistles, nor the Epistles of St Paul to be violently harmonized with the Epistle of St James."⁶⁵ This is not to say that Scripture has no continuity. It has.⁶⁶ Though Scripture had "an inner life or soul," it had also "an outward body or form" which was language; and it was the knowledge of the original language of the Bible which Jowett felt alone would lead more certainly than any other method of procedure to the sense of what the Scripture does.⁶⁷ This was Jowett's contribution to Essays and Reviews, but his writings in that "trash" of religious literature did not end here. As his friend Mrs Ward recalled the continuing controversy: "Balliol versus Christ Church--- Jowett versus Pusey and Liddon---while Lincoln despised both,

⁶⁵Page 382.

⁶⁶Page 384.

⁶⁷Pages 389, 391.

and the new scientific forces watched and waited---that was how we saw the field of battle, and the various alarms and excursions it was always providing."⁶⁸

The shocks and collisions which followed in the wake of Essays and Reviews are indicated to some extent in the letters of Matthew Arnold, who had some reservations about the indisposition of a part of the clergy to persecute the Essayists.

As to the Essays [he wrote to his mother], one has the word of Scripture for it that 'new wine should be put into new bottles,' and certainly the wine of the Essays is rather new and fermenting for the old bottles of Anglicanism. Still the tendency in England is so strong to admit novelties only through the channel of some old form, that perhaps it is in this way that religion in England is destined to renew itself, and the best of the Essayists may have some anticipation of this, and accept their seemingly false position with patience in this confidence. Temple's position [as Head Master of Rugby], however, seems to me very difficult, for the last quarter in which people in general wish to admit religious uncertainty is in the education of the young.... The other Essayists are quite secure, and will be rather fomented than abated by all this clamour.⁶⁹

By February 21, 1870, however, Temple's position was not so difficult, for Arnold reported to his mother from The Athenaeum that he had seen Temple, "looking very well in his new dress [as bishop]," and told him he approved of his withdrawing his Essay (the first in Essays and Reviews), "which the Liberals,

⁶⁸ A Writer's Recollections, Vol. I, p. 175. The critics had done their work well. As Mrs Ward stood on the threshold of the twentieth century she saw any number of books by Oxford and Cambridge men making concessions to "modern critical and historical knowledge" (Mrs Ward, II, 249).

⁶⁹ Letters, I, 151-152 (Dated from Maidstone, Mar. 14, 1861).

who turn religion into mere politics, are so angry with him for," and he seemed quite pleased. "I told him also that I thought the Essays and Reviews could not be described throughout as 'a free handling, in a becoming spirit, or religious matters,' and he said he quite agreed with me...."⁷⁰ Temple had shifted his loyalties; but Jowett apparently did not fare so well, since he held to the original propositions of Essays and Reviews: "There is a move to turn [Jowett] out of his Fellowship for his heresies, and Stanley chooses this moment to revive in Congregation the question of his salary [as professor of Greek]. I suspect it is Colenso's book which has re-animated the orthodox party against Jowett and the Essayists."⁷¹ Colenso's book very likely did have an adverse effect on the later critical reception of Essays and Reviews, though Arnold, writing to his mother from Oxford, May 14, 1861, observed that the intellectual life there was "much more intense than it used to be," having its disadvantages in "the envies, hatreds, and jealousies that come with the activity of mind of most men."⁷² For example, Goldwin Smith had attacked Stanley's Edinburgh articles on the Essayists and had become an "element of bitterness and strife."⁷³ Thus, with or without Colenso's book,

⁷⁰Letters, II, 32.

⁷¹Letters, I, 203-204. Stanley had gone to the rescue of his personal friends Temple and Jowett (see Benn, II, 130).

⁷²Page 157.

⁷³Page 157.

strife seemed inevitable. The only difference between Colenso and the Essayists was that Colenso applied with a heavier hand and more ruthless logic principles which the Essayists had introduced into England; and the bluntness reminded his accusers too much of Germany.

Though the Essayists had felt the wrath of the conservative faction within the Church and the matter had been prosecuted to such an extent that "Dr Pusey had so far forgotten himself as to write private letters to one of the judges to influence his decision in the interests of eternal damnation"⁷⁴ and though the Essayists were vindicated when brought to trial before the House of Lords, the issue was still hotly debated. The issue was hotly debated when Colenso published his Pentateuch and Book of Joshua Critically Examined (1862),⁷⁵ and the controversy which followed added more heat to the general debate, which attracted the attention of Hampden, Wilberforce, Pusey, Maurice, Arnold, and Gladstone.⁷⁶ According to its policy, the

⁷⁴Trilling, p. 210.

⁷⁵The Pentateuch antedated by sixteen years Julius Wellhausen's Prolegomena to the History of Israel, trans. Black and Menzies (Edinburgh, 1885), the main thesis of which was that "the Mosaic history was not the starting point for the history of ancient Israel, but for the history of Judaism" (p. v). Colenso's sources were Ewald (Geschichte des Volkes Israel) and Kurtz (History of the Old Covenant). See Pentateuch, I, 13.

⁷⁶Other critics of Colenso were Alex. McCaul, John Cumming, and Robt B. Seeley. Cumming and Seeley found fault with the arithmetic of The Pentateuch. See G. W. Cox, I, 214.

High Church party, led by Wilberforce and Bishop Gray, won from Convocation a condemnation of Colenso. Lawsuits followed, and, to the dismay of Keble and Gladstone, Colenso's position was sustained, his salary continued, his excommunication voided. Colenso had won a moral victory through the efforts of liberals who rallied to his cause; while the High Church party were made the objects of the ridicule of German scholars.⁷⁷ The persecution gave Colenso recognition as the most realistic churchman in England and discredited the conservative faction as a group far behind the times. "In spite of all that may be said from any one of the many points of view taken by those who would not have quiet things disturbed [wrote Sir George Cox, Colenso's biographer], the publication of the Bishop's work on the Pentateuch marks a stage in the progress of religious thought in England."⁷⁸ The Pentateuch was an important event no less, as Sir George Cox was careful to point out,

for the conclusions reached by the inquiry than in its relation to the religious and the general thought of the land. The way in which these criticisms were received by that which is commonly spoken of as the religious world was still more remarkable. The object of the investigation was simply the

⁷⁷ Even as the controversy raged, R. W. Mackay published The Tübingen School and its Antecedents (1863) on the influence of modern philology on the doctrine of the belief in miracles and on the work of Strauss and Baur (see Pfleiderer, p. 391).

⁷⁸ Life of John William Colenso, Vol. I, p. 212.

discovery and the establishment of the truth; and it was obvious to all impartial minds that the result must affect the value put upon certain books, either by adding to that value or by lessening it.⁷⁹

Some of these "certain" books of the Bible were for Colenso inadequate even in their "conception of spiritual realities." The establishment on Colenso's part of not only the literal truth (or untruth) of the Scriptures but also of the spiritual realities (or lack of them) in the Scriptures (which was the greater heresy it is difficult to say) won for him not the immediate praise of his scholarship as he had perhaps expected but ecclesiastical contumely in general and even some private requests to resign his see, requests submitted just after the appearance of the first part of The Pentateuch.⁸⁰ The discovery on Colenso's part of the truth (or untruth) of the Scriptures won for him, in the words of Matthew Arnold, "a titter from educated Europe."

But the Bishop of Natal,⁸¹ John William Colenso (1814-1883), went forth into the wilderness well equipped. He had behind him, as his publications on the subjects testified, a sound knowledge of the intricacies of both algebra and the Zulu

⁷⁹Page 409.

⁸⁰G. W. Cox, I, 184.

⁸¹Colenso was appointed bishop of the South African see of Natal in 1853 (see G. W. Cox, I, Appendix B and Henson, p. 216).

tongue.⁸² It was while he was translating the Old Testament into the Zulu tongue that he accidentally discovered, as he told Dr Harold Browne,⁸³ the untruth of at least part of the Scriptures:

Here...amidst my work in this land, I have been brought face to face with the very questions which I then put by. While translating the story of the Flood, I have had a simple-minded, but intelligent, native...look up and ask, 'Is all that true? Do you really believe that all this happened thus,---that all the beasts, and birds, and creeping things upon the earth,... from hot countries and cold, came thus by pairs, and entered into the ark with Noah?'⁸⁴

Colenso had to agree, because he was, as he said, "a true man" and could no longer shut his eyes "to the absolute, palpable self-contradiction of the narrative,"⁸⁵ with the disclosures in Lyell's Elementary Geology that a universal deluge like that described in Genesis could not have taken place.⁸⁶ The so-called Mosaic narrative had too many "'impossibilities' involved in it:"⁸⁷ the self-contradiction of the narrative itself and not the fact that Colenso found "insuperable difficulties with regard to the miracles, or supernatural revelations of Almighty God"⁸⁸ prompted his rejection of the Pentateuch as historically untrue.⁸⁹

⁸² See Pentateuch, I, 4. In addition to treatises on algebra and trigonometry, Colenso wrote a Zulu grammar and a translation (1861) of St Paul's Epistle to the Romans.

⁸³ Dr Browne, Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, by 1865 Bishop of Ely. The letter to Dr Browne, never sent, was made part of the Preface to The Pentateuch, Vol. I.

⁸⁴ Pentateuch, I, 4.

⁸⁵ Page 51.

⁸⁶ Page 6.

⁸⁷ Page 52.

⁸⁸ Page 51.

⁸⁹ See Pentateuch, Vol. I, Chaps V, XI, XIV.

The character of his work, he was quick to see, would link him with the Essayists and ultimately with the German Rationalists: "Some...may be ready to say of this book, as the Quarterly says of the Essayists, 'the whole apparatus is drawn bodily from the German Rationalists.' This...is not the case."⁹⁰ There were not a few points on which, he said, he differed with the Essayists, but he was not at all sure that "the apparent consequence of the course they are pursuing" would of necessity lead either to atheism or infidelity.⁹¹ He had set forth nothing new in the first part of his work, and this fact was another complaint of his critics; but, he said, "the very point of my argument in Part I was this,--- that these difficulties were not new, though many of them were new to me, when I first began to engage in these investigations."⁹² Other critics countered with the information that since the idea of a literal inspiration for Scripture had already been generally abandoned among the enlightened, such a work as his was unnecessary.⁹³ But, conscious of the unique character of his inquiry into the real origin, age, and authorship of the Pentateuch, Colenso offered six reasons why he con-

⁹⁰Pentateuch, I, 13.

⁹¹Page 8.

⁹²Pages 5-6.

⁹³Pentateuch, I, 7.

sidered such a work necessary. (1) Only an Englishman in his position, living in a land much like ancient Israel in thought and habit and translating the Scripture into Zulu, would see the Scripture in a different light. (2) Hebrew was a language not regularly studied---indeed it was neglected by modern English scholars. "And English common sense has not yet brought to bear on a rational study of the Bible." (3) Some English theologians dismissed the stories of the Creation, the Fall, and the Deluge as relatively unimportant allegories or catastrophes having little effect upon the Pentateuch narrative as a whole. (4) Those clergymen who maintained an orthodox point of view, when questioned much, passed over the areas of interpretative difficulty. (5) German scholarship, expressed in a difficult language and in excessive detail, was not yet widely translated into English. (6) The disciples of the German school had not entered into biblical criticism with an open mind, but had taken for granted from the beginning the unhistorical nature and the non-Mosaic origins of the Pentateuch without testing the credibility of the narrative.⁹⁴

For these reasons, then, Colenso undertook the presentation of his thesis to the English public, and Part I at least was well received by English readers generally.⁹⁵ The zeit-geist was right, he thought, for such a presentation, in spite of the

⁹⁴Pages 20-23.

⁹⁵Pentateuch, II, 3. See G. W. Cox, II, 481-696 for a detailed analysis of the matter, composition, and growth of the entire work.

persecution which might follow. The risk appeared worth the satisfaction of free expression, and, what appeared more important, the complaints of advanced laity had to be considered in the light of two undeniable facts. (1) University students no longer consecrated their lives to the service of the Church, because the "condition" of their entry into the ministry was that they "surrender...all freedom of thought, or, at least, of utterance, upon the great questions which the age is rife in...."⁹⁶ It became increasingly evident to Colenso that "the Church of England must fall...by its own internal weakness,---by losing its hold upon the growing intelligence of all classes,---unless some remedy be very soon applied to this state of things."⁹⁷ (2) Ecclesiastical restraint on scientific inquiry prevented men of science from following through with proofs of religious problems which were based on science. It was this restraint, as Colenso viewed the matter, which was the real cause of the dangerous drift into "irreligion and practical atheism."⁹⁸

These were the thoughts which informed Colenso's writing as he treated in Part I the unhistorical character of the Pentateuch on arithmetical grounds and as he treated in Part II the unhistorical character of the Pentateuch on philological

⁹⁶Pentateuch, I, 23-24.

⁹⁷Page 24.

⁹⁸Page 24.

grounds.⁹⁹ and as he quietly documented his hypotheses and conclusions with the authorities of traditional and contemporary theology. The English reader could not help being impressed, for were not the very bases of the national Church laid in "Truth itself"?¹⁰⁰ But that "Truth itself" was at the core of the controversy which followed hard upon the publication of The Pentateuch and involved Bishop Hampden and Robert Gray, Bishop of Capetown, and leaders of the High Church party at the centre, while at the peripheries lesser dignitaries of the clergy threw into the issue their groatsworth of opinion.

One of the first articles against Colenso was a letter sent by the bishop of Hereford to his clergy in order to quiet and reassure skeptics within his diocese.¹⁰¹ He described as startling "the strange phenomenon of a Bishop of the Church presenting himself on ground on which we have hitherto had to encounter only the deistical objectors, or the exclusive advocate of Natural Religion, and the professed unbeliever and

⁹⁹The Preface to Part I is dated from London, Oct. 4, 1862, that of Part II from London, Jan. 24, 1863. Part II closes with a promise of a third part in which Colenso was to examine more closely the Book of Genesis (Pentateuch, II, 266). The philological character of Part II is remarkable, Colenso's special concern being the evolution of the word for God.

¹⁰⁰Pentateuch, I, 35.

¹⁰¹H. Hampden, Memorials, pp. 230-231.

scoffer."¹⁰² To Hampden's mind, Colenso was twice as guilty as former heretics, since Colenso as a bishop of the Church had said that Moses never wrote the five books which bear his name.¹⁰³ Bishop Hampden therefore exhorted his clergy to mark well the attack made upon the authenticity of the Books of Moses and Joshua and to remember that the Old Testament could not in the past be undermined by the "Marcionite and Manichaeian sectaries," nor could it now, especially by "a less skillful hand."¹⁰⁴

I only wish you to be on your guard, on behalf of your respective flocks, against the possible seduction of the weak and the unstable among them; though even with respect to these, and the public in general, I am inclined to think, there is so deep-rooted a conviction in the minds of the people of this country, of the sacred value of the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament, that the present attempt to disturb that conviction will surely fail, as all former attempts have failed.¹⁰⁵

To the point of this utterance Hampden had come a long way since 1832. Colenso had no purpose to seduce the weak and unstable, nor to subvert the sacred value of Scripture. Hampden had no reason to fear the skill of Colenso's hand. Nor had he

¹⁰²R. D. Hampden, "[Letter] To the Reverend the Clergy of the Diocese of Hereford" (April 1863), p. 1.

¹⁰³Page 2. Spinoza had also questioned Moses' supposed authorship, stating that there was much evidence to prove that he did not write the Pentateuch entire: "It is clearer than the sun at noonday that the Pentateuch was not written by Moses, but by someone who lived after Moses" (Spinoza, I, 120, 124).

¹⁰⁴Pages 1-2.

¹⁰⁵Page 2.

any reason to fear Colenso's arithmetic, to explain away the difficulty which Colenso encountered by saying that he had misread possibly the numerals in the manuscripts of ancient languages, to point to the third chapter of Part II of Butler's Analogy as a good example of the proper discovery of the Truth of Christianity, to suggest the reading of the late Professor Blunt's "Undesigned Coincidence in...the Old and New Testament" to persons seeking "a refreshing of spirit from the weariness of the task of counting and measuring and weighing, imposed on them by the author, in the first part of his work."¹⁰⁶ Obviously Colenso's work was quite apart from the sort of thing which Butler and Blunt had done. However, Bishop Hampden could enjoy one consolation: the philological second part of The Pentateuch was "happily not of that popular character which is likely to attract the general reader."¹⁰⁷ To such an esoteric and relatively impractical study Bishop Hampden could not object; his objection centred on the verifiable facts of geology and mathematics and the use which Colenso had made of such facts in his treatment and explanation of miracles and the supernatural,¹⁰⁸ resolving the supernatural and miraculous "into a supposed adaptation of an historical

¹⁰⁶Pages 3-4.

¹⁰⁷Page 5.

¹⁰⁸Pages 7-8.

narrative by some human author, compiling and setting it forth for the purpose of moral and religious instruction."¹⁰⁹

Bishop Hampden thus saw his Bible no longer Divine but only a compilation of religious sentiments, expounded by the Bishop of Natal with unparalleled "dogmatism."¹¹⁰ "Let us only then [he admonished his brethren] hold fast to the sacred treasure deposited with us...however a daring and remorseless Criticism may profanely strive to blot out of the Sacred Volume those words in the Law...and...the Prophets...."¹¹¹

The tone of Bishop Hampden's letter to his clergy appears to betray his willingness at the time to make an issue of Colenso's modest investigation which the scope of that investigation did not warrant. The issue was the insubordination, in the face of episcopal policy enunciated before 1862 in private Convocation and in public controversy, of the Bishop of Natal in dealing independently with such religious matters as could at any moment explode into a controversy over doctrine.

Colenso's metropolitan, Gray, the bishop of Capetown, would "acknowledge no subordination of the Church to the State in spiritual matters. Thus [even the] doctrinal issue expanded into a controversy on the whole relation of Church and State,"¹¹²

¹⁰⁹Pages 8-9.

¹¹⁰Page 10.

¹¹¹Page 14.

¹¹²Henson, p. 216.

and led ultimately to the Lambeth Conference of 1867.¹¹³ "The theology of [Colenso] may have been wrong, but it was not aggressive. That of the Bishop of Capetown [according to Colenso's biographer] would admit of no differences...;"¹¹⁴ and "the one over-mastering desire" which by his own testimony actuated his criticisms of Colenso was not to prove the falsity of Colenso's reading of the Pentateuch but to prevent the publication of Colenso's findings.¹¹⁵ This desire represents a strange shift in Gray's attitude, for two years before Gray delivered his (in)famous Charge, that is, in the spring of 1862, Colenso had told him that he had finished the rough draft of his book, that it had been printed, "not for circulation in the colony, but solely that it might be submitted to the judgment of valued friends in England."¹¹⁶ Among his friends Colenso had counted the Bishop of Capetown, for they were "as brothers" until Colenso's trip to England in 1862, though perhaps the beginnings of the rift between the two could be marked from Colenso's publication of his Commentary on St Paul's Epistle to the Romans (1861), in which he had first expressed

¹¹³Henson, p. 216.

¹¹⁴G. W. Cox, I, 274.

¹¹⁵G. W. Cox, I, 172.

¹¹⁶G. W. Cox, I, 174.

his doubts on Scripture.¹¹⁷ Colenso's grave doubts on Scripture, reinforced as they were on the pages of The Pentateuch, had given Bishop Gray such discomfort that on May 18, 1864, in the Cathedral Church of St Peter at Pietermaritzburg he delivered a Charge to the diocese of Natal, touching "the trial and condemnation of your Bishop" and warning against his writings,¹¹⁸ because he had expressed himself on such questions as Have we a written Revelation or not? Is our Lord, God incarnate? Is Christianity true?¹¹⁹ The language which Colenso had used in his answers to these questions was, to say the least, "strong," according to Gray, and he could only conclude that "we have it here [in The Pentateuch] affirmed that the Bible is not the exclusive record of God's Revelation."¹²⁰ Why then should Colenso be persecuted? Because, Gray answered, "the Church holds that Christ died to reconcile His Father to us [and] Dr Colenso says that He did not;" because the Church holds that faith is needful to justification and Dr Colenso says it

¹¹⁷G. W. Cox, I, 171-172; 272. Cf. Henson, p. 216. Colenso had returned to England to raise funds. But Gray had preceded him there to argue his side of the controversy. The so-called "trial" at Capetown, in which Colenso was refused access to his own church, was the plan not only of Gray but also of "Wilberforce and his colleagues in England" (G. W. Cox, I, 288).

¹¹⁸Robt Gray, "A Charge delivered to The Diocese of Natal" (Pietermaritzburg, 1864), p. 12.

¹¹⁹Page 13.

¹²⁰Page 20.

is not; because the Church holds the sacraments necessary to salvation and Dr Colenso says they are not.¹²¹ At the worst, if Gray's accusations had any credibility, this was the extent of Colenso's heresy, though Colenso, in his "Remarks upon the Recent Proceedings and Charge of Robt Lord Bishop of Capetown" (London, 1864), challenged Gray and all "his adversaries to point out a single passage in his works, which is condemned by the existing laws of the Church."¹²²

Colenso had chosen to press the legal phase of the controversy, and legally he was in the right, for notwithstanding the strict warnings of the leaders of the High Church party that there should be no tampering whatsoever with the doctrines and dogmas of the Church, there seemed to be little in the way of legal machinery to enforce these warnings. But Colenso had also opponents more concerned over the purely literary aspects of The Pentateuch. F. D. Maurice, with whom Colenso had carried

¹²¹Pages 27ff. About a month before Gray delivered his Charge, Colenso had complained that Capetown had no legal right to deprive him of his bishopric, that he had not been allowed time to lodge an appeal of his "trial" with the Archbishop of Canterbury, that he would petition Her Majesty to have the question of Gray's jurisdiction settled in England, and that "on six of the nine charges brought against me, it will be plain ...that the judgement of the Privy Council...would be certainly given in my favour" ("A Letter to the Laity of the Diocese of Natal" [London, Apr. 20, 1864], pp. 1, 2, 9. 13).

¹²²Page 58. In this pamphlet, a reply to Gray's Charge, Colenso appealed for the protection of the laws of England and stated that "if he had found that the laws of the Church of England forbade the publication of his views on the Pentateuch," he would have resigned his see "for the sake of the truth" (p. 57).

on a lengthy correspondence before the break came between the two---Maurice, who himself was later presecuted as an heretic, believed in the historical accuracy of the Pentateuch perhaps in much the same manner as Thucydides likely believed in the nucleus of history in some of the events of the Troy story.¹²³

It was Matthew Arnold, however, who expressed the views of perhaps the majority of Englishmen,¹²⁴ that The Pentateuch, failing of the two major requirements of a religious book to inform the much-instructed and edify the little-instructed, served only to confuse the public. Less than a month after the date of the Preface to Part I of The Pentateuch, Arnold wrote to his mother a letter in which he proposed

apropos Colenso, of doing what will be rather an interesting thing---I am going to write an article called "The Bishop and the Philosopher," contrasting Colenso and Co.'s jejune and technical manner of dealing with Biblical controversy with that of Spinoza in his famous treatise on the Interpretation of Scripture, with a view of showing how, the heresy on both sides being equal, Spinoza broaches his in that edifying and pious spirit by which alone the treatment of such matters can be made fruitful, while Colenso and the English Essayists, from their narrowness and want of power, more than from any other cause, do not. I know Spinoza's work very well, and I shall be glad of an opportunity of thus dealing with them; the article will be in Fraser or Macmillan---I don't know which.¹²⁵

Arnold's reaction to The Pentateuch, a denunciation of both Colenso and his work, appeared in the January 1863 number of Macmillan's Magazine, in which Arnold recalled without much

¹²³G. W. Cox, I, 444.

¹²⁴Pfleiderer, p. 390.

¹²⁵Letters, I, 204 (Dated from Chester Square, Nov. 19, 1862).

relevance to the issue before him the writings of Spinoza, a critical spirit in whom, he admitted, were the sources of his religious thought. Colenso emerged as a theological "scape-goat," a typical product of German rationalism, while Spinoza, after Arnold's commendatory phrases, emerged as a perfect illustration of the method of Biblical inquiry bounded on one side by caution and on the other by piety. "Occasionally, the uncritical spirit of our race determines to perform a great public act of self-humiliation. Such an act it has recently accomplished. It has just sent forth as its scapegoat into the wilderness, amidst a titter from educated Europe, the Bishop of Natal."¹²⁶ In this way, Arnold at the outset of his article betrayed his misunderstanding of both the spirit of the times and the state of mind which forced the writing of The Pentateuch; and he sophisticated things in his stricture:

Literary criticism regards a religious book which tends to edify the multitude as a dispute for God's sake; it regards a religious book which tends to inform the instructed as a dispute for God's sake; but a religious book which tends neither to edify the multitude nor to inform the instructed, it refuses to regard as a dispute for God's sake.¹²⁷

Arnold had not asked whether Colenso's intention was to write a dispute for God's sake or whether Colenso's conclusions detracted any from a dispute for God's sake. Nor had he con-

¹²⁶M. Arnold, "The Bishop and the Philosopher," Macmillan's Magazine, VI(1863), 241.

¹²⁷Page 242.

sidered whether The Pentateuch was meant "to advance culture, either by edifying the little-instructed, or by further informing the much-instructed."¹²⁸ This was indeed a high standard for religious writing; but since Arnold's great fear was the fear of extremes, he imagined that if The Pentateuch did enlighten but at the same time failed to edify the masses whose future in religion so troubled him then The Pentateuch would have the unhappy effect of sweeping every vestige of belief among the masses. It was not the function of religious liberalism, Arnold repeated, to aid the forces of irreligion and atheism. And this he saw clearly, that

knowledge and truth, in the full sense of the words, are not attainable by the great mass of the human race at all. The great mass of the human race have to be softened and humanised through their heart and imagination before any soil can be found in them where knowledge may strike living roots.¹²⁹

Until scholarship could touch the heart and imagination of the masses, until then, intellectual demonstrations such as Colenso's were useless. Such was the attitude, an exclusive attitude and as such essentially correct, of the apostle of culture toward The Pentateuch.

¹²⁸Page 242.

¹²⁹Page 243.

Surely, Arnold could have said, the edifying portions of Colenso's book were not to be found in the detailed and absurd arithmetical and geological demonstrations which cluttered its pages, and since Arnold was not interested in that sort of science, how then could the masses be interested, for example, in the number of years which would be required for the production of three generations, allowing twenty years as the marriageable age?¹³⁰ Arnold chose for his attack on Colenso the most unfortunate examples of his reasoning, for Arnold's choice made all the more effective his ridicule of Colenso,¹³¹ who had intended to enlighten the masses to some extent but more vitally to lend intellectual support to the Church.¹³²

¹³⁰Page 243.

¹³¹"Arnold's method [in "The Bishop and the Philosopher"] was one almost ideally suited to stir a maximum of controversy and controversy of an acrimonious kind. That it did so we should be able to deduce from the mere title of the sequel, "A Word More about Spinoza," even without the evidence [which] Arnold's letters supply about the outbreak of rejoinders and challenges which "The Bishop and the Philosopher" precipitated. ...But the true sequel to that first essay in this group is the paper on "Dr Stanley's Lectures on the Jewish Church," which followed it in the next issue of the same magazine [Macmillan's, VII(1863), 327-336]....The essay is not, however, wholly concerned with Stanley. Colenso is almost as prominent in it as in the preceeding paper. The contrast between Stanley, who conducts his work as a liberal and wise clergyman should, and Colenso, who does not, is repeatedly emphasized. Colenso has ignored the obligation resting upon the clergy to edify: enlightenment had been his major aim; and although he made occasional gestures toward the obligation to edify, these were visibly inadequate" (Brown, Matthew Arnold, pp. 73, 74). Mr Trilling says that "Spinoza and the Bible" (originally "The Bishop and the Philosopher"), the article on Dr Stanley, and "Marcus Aurelius" are "concerned with distinguishing between the life of religion and the life of the intellect" (Matthew Arnold, p. 193).

¹³²See Colenso, Pentateuch, I, 8.

As an interpretation of Scripture, Arnold believed Spinoza's work much freer in outlook, the result of a "noble and lofty character..., a character...in the grand style,"¹³³ the result of culture and refinement. Compared with culture and refinement, the proper accoutrements of the grand style, the cold and crude and altogether scientific contribution of Colenso to what Arnold believed to be untoward heterodoxy was as nothing, but nevertheless a thing to be feared for its adverse influence upon the multitude. The comparison exhausted, Arnold concluded:

The author of the Tractatus is not more unorthodox than the author of the Pentateuch, and he is far more edifying. If the English clergy must err, let them learn from the outcast of Israel to err nobly! Along with the weak trifling of the Bishop of Natal, let it be lawful to cast into the caldron, out of which the new world is to be born, the strong thought of Spinoza!¹³⁴

The rather ambiguous end to Arnold's labors over Colenso and Spinoza---labors which on the face of the article appeared to be a criticism of the bishop but which actually used the bishop as a foil to the greater glory of the philosopher---marked just the beginning of Arnold's estimate of the religious Zeit-Geist. Nor would Colenso cease to speak: in the early seventies he would be lecturing, on such edifying subjects as---the Moabite stone.

¹³³M. Arnold, "The Bishop and the Philosopher," Macmillan's, VII, 243.

¹³⁴Page 256. See "A Word More about Spinoza," Macmillan's Magazine, IX(1863), 140.

During the period between the middle sixties and the early seventies, while Matthew Arnold was occupied principally with revamping the social and political morality of the realm, the question of the place of religion in education was becoming larger. The traditional refusal of the English to separate religion from education and the always intimate connection of education with the nation's politics gave rise to particular debates growing in part out of earlier religious controversies just rehearsed and in part out of the problem of the relation between Church and State. For the doctrinal issues raised innocently or deliberately by Colenso and the Essayists had had this effect. And even while the controversy raged about Colenso and the Essayists a Commission of the Duke of Newcastle was set up "to inquire into the present state of popular education in England," with the result that a vote was counted to continue public aid to elementary and secondary schools.¹³⁵ But Arnold's earlier investigations into education

¹³⁵ Letters, I, 168-173. The Commission reported in 1861. Matthew Arnold's reaction to the educational controversy of 1861 is partially revealed in a letter to his mother, dated from Hertford, Mar. 5, 1862, in which he continued the discussion against the Revised Code: "I hope I have supplied a readable popular statement of the case against [those holding to the provisions of the Revised Code] which will take hold and do good....I see Lord Derby and the Bishop of Oxford are coming to take the very ground I could wish them to take, namely, that the State has an interest in the primary school as a civilising agent, even prior to its interest in it as an instructing agent. When this is once clearly seen nothing can resist it, and it is fatal to the new Code" (Letters, I, 187). Arnold had submitted to the Commissioners on Education three reports: Popular Education in France (1861), A French Eton (1864), and Schools and Universities on the Continent (1868).

had taught him the importance of affecting a close connection between education and the State. "These two leading, and, for Arnold, inter-related policies of the extension of State influence, and the diffusion of culture penetrated all his work, so that there is hardly an essay that he wrote upon any topic that does not contain a reference to one or other, or both of them."¹³⁶ There was more than the diffusion of culture involved in the education problem, and that was the problem of religious instruction in the schools. It had been the "express" wish of the Queen "that the youth of this country should be religiously brought up, the rights of conscience being respected."¹³⁷

The religious-educational issue which had smouldered during the late sixties came to a head in three controversies of the early seventies: the debate over Forster's Education Bill, the so-called Westminster Scandal, and the debate over the Athanasian Creed. Each of these, according to Mr Blackburn, formed the immediate background to Literature and Dogma,¹³⁸ took Arnold irrevocably into the arena of religious contro-

¹³⁶Connell, p. 276. Arnold's specific treatment of education appears in the Preface to Popular Education in France (reprinted as "Democracy" in Mixed Essays), A French Eton, the Preface to Culture and Anarchy, and the Rede Lecture, "Literature and Science," later reprinted in Discourses in America.

¹³⁷Connell, p. 11. Quoted from Parliamentary Debates, CXIX, 379.

¹³⁸See William M. Blackburn, "The Background of Arnold's Literature and Dogma," Modern Philology, XLIII(1945), 130ff.

versy, an arena in which he had had some practical experience. These controversies, which summoned up all the passionate conflicts of the years of the Oxford Movement and its aftermath, were given added significance for Arnold, in this period of his preachment on culture and its enemies, by the speech of Lord Salisbury at the dedication of Keble College. To the events of June 23, 1870 Mr Blackburn has attached an importance, as he says, hitherto disregarded by students of Arnold. On the morning following the formal dedication of the college, the chancellor of Oxford, Lord Salisbury, presided over a public meeting of the Memorial Fund, the object of which was to raise money to complete the building of the college. Present at the meeting were dignitaries of the High Church party and Matthew Arnold, present to receive the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Laws at the Commemoration of the new addition to the University, present, as "a man always given to observing family pieties," to honor the name of his godfather. High-churchmen considered the meeting as "a rally of the faithful," for Newman himself had characterized Keble as the prime mover of the Oxford Movement. Lord Salisbury, aware of the tense partisan spirit of the meeting, then spoke in words which Arnold would criticize in articles in the Cornhill, and then in Literature and Dogma.

I think this college exists to pledge us to a religion which shall not be the formless, shapeless creature of fable such as goes by the name of unsectarian religion---but shall be unsectarian in the higher sense because it is thoroughly Catholic; and that there shall be no more within these walls the idea of

severing religion and dogma than there is the idea of severing the daylight from the sun.¹³⁹

The statement of policy was the epitome of all High Church thinking since the early days of the "religious difficulties" of the nineteenth century. Arnold the critic---Culture and Anarchy had been published a year and a half before the dedication of Keble College and St Paul and Protestantism just one month previous to that dedication---Arnold the critic immediately took up the cudgels and two days after Lord Salisbury's speech wrote to his mother, saying that Salisbury had performed his part well:

He is a dangerous man, though, and chiefly from his want of any true sense and experience of literature and its beneficent function. Religion he knows, and physical science he knows, but the immense work between the two, which is for literature to accomplish, he knows nothing of, and all his speeches at Oxford pointed this way. On the one hand, he was full of the great future for physical science, and begging the University to make up her mind to it, and to resign much of her literary studies; on the other hand, he was full, almost defiantly full, of counsels and resolves for retaining and upholding the old ecclesiastical and dogmatic form of religion. From a juxtaposition of this kind nothing but shocks and collisions can come; and I know no one, indeed, more likely to provoke shocks and collisions than men like Lord Salisbury. All this pressed a good deal upon my mind at Oxford, and made me anxious, but I do hope that what influence I have may be of use in the troubled times which I see before us as a healing and reconciling influence, and it is this which makes me glad to find---what I find more and more---that I have influence.¹⁴⁰

According to Arnold, "dogma means not necessarily a true doctrine, but merely a doctrine or system of doctrine determined, decreed,

¹³⁹ Blackburn, "The Background of Arnold's Lit. & Dog.," MP, XLIII(1945), 131.

¹⁴⁰ Letters, II, 41. Cf. Blackburn, "Background of Lit. & Dog.," MP(XLIII), 132.

and received;"¹⁴¹ and such dogma was inimical to both literature and religion. With the implications of Salisbury's speech pressing heavily upon his mind, Arnold left Oxford with a full awareness of the low opinion which science and ecclesiastical dogmatism had of literary studies, a recognition of the fact that dogmatic religion was out of tune with the intellectual revolution, and an acknowledgement of his role as mediator between science and religion.¹⁴²

The dedication of Keble College was surrounded by political and religious controversies, which, though perhaps not very closely connected with Literature and Dogma, do, nevertheless shed light on the character and dimensions of the religious trend of the seventies. By 1870 the Gladstone ministry had turned from Irish to English reform, and in the area of education one of the first steps of the ministry was to break the monopoly exercised by the Church of England over the appointment of fellows and professors to the universities. Then the government attempted to reform elementary education, in spite of the small appropriation which Parliament granted for the purpose, in spite of the accepted principle of laissez-faire, and in spite of the knowledge that there would be difficulty

¹⁴¹ Blackburn, "Background of Lit. & Dog.," MP(XLIII), 131.

¹⁴² Blackburn, "Background of Lit. & Dog.," MP(XLIII), 133.

in reconciling the interests of Conservatives and Nonconformists alike. The general apathy of Parliament did not, however, prevent one member of Gladstone's cabinet, William Edward Forster, Matthew Arnold's brother-in-law, from sponsoring a bill to subsidize the existing voluntary schools and set up so-called "board" schools in which there would be instruction in Bible, without, however, any other kind of religious instruction. This provision, it was thought, would satisfy both those who wished some sort of religious instruction in the schools and those who feared the teaching of Anglican doctrine. Conservatives took no exception to the Forster Bill, for they controlled the so-called voluntary schools through the Church of England. But Nonconformists, believing Forster was a traitor, objected to the idea of subsidizing and establishing "board" schools or even church schools by funds raised by general taxation; and their distrust of any "Bible teaching" which might include Anglican doctrine only added to their misgivings.¹⁴³ "The religious difficulty" was kept alive both before and after the passage of the Education Bill. Before its passage the debates in Commons, together with the great public meetings staged by the National Education League or the National Education Union, convulsed the country."¹⁴⁴ But Arnold was hopeful of passage:

¹⁴³ Blackburn, "Background of Lit. & Dog.," MP(XLIII), 131f.

¹⁴⁴ Blackburn, "Background of Lit. & Dog.," MP(XLIII), 133.

"I think William's Bill will do very well. I am glad it is so little altered since I heard its contents in November," he had written to his mother in February 1870.¹⁴⁵ There followed then the hotly contested elections to the School Boards which would control the rate-supported schools. Nonconformist objections to the elections and the methods of instruction were met by compromise. Gladstone admitted into the Forster-sponsored bill an amendment which excluded "every Catechism and formulary distinctive of denominational creed" and which at the same time provided that religious instruction should come at the commencement or at the close of the school day, thus making it possible for those of religious conscience to withdraw their children from such instruction.¹⁴⁶ With this compromise, obstacles to

¹⁴⁵Letters, II, 31.

¹⁴⁶This was the famous Cowper-Temple clause. See Hugh Owen, The Education Acts, 1870-1902 (London, 1903), p. 18. The provisions for religious instruction are contained in §7 and §14 of An Act to provide for Public Elementary Education in England and Wales ([33 & 34 Vict....Ch. 75] 9 Aug. 1870). §7 provides that no compulsory attendance be required of any student to religious exercises, if the parent wishes to withdraw a child from such exercises. Also, school inspectors were to be prohibited from examining any child in his religious knowledge (Act, p. 3; cf. Owen, pp. 206-207). §14, on the management and maintenance of the schools by school boards, provides that there be no teaching of "religious catechism," the teaching of the Apostles' Creed not being considered "a contravention of this enactment" (Act, p. 6; cf. Owen, pp. 210-213). In its final form, the Act contained the salient features of the original Forster bill. Arnold's hopes were realized.

the passage of the bill were apparently lowered; for on June 25 Arnold could write, "The majority on the Education Bill is a great relief; it will now, if William has tolerable luck, get through safely this session."¹⁴⁷ To Mrs Ward, who sat in the Ladies' Gallery of the House of Commons on the day of Forster's speech,

the scheme of the bill was largely influenced by William Forster's wife, and, through her, by the convictions and beliefs of her father. The compromise by which the Church schools, with the creeds and the Church catechism, were preserved, under a conscience clause, while the dissenters got their way as to the banishment of creeds and catechisms... in the schools founded under the new School Boards...has practically held its ground for nearly half a century. It was illogical; and the dissenters have never ceased to resent the perpetuation of the Church school which it achieved. But English life is illogical.¹⁴⁸

And while Mrs Ward thus reflected on the illogical character of English life, she remembered also that "it was [Stanley] who invited Colenso to preach in the Abbey, after his excommunication by the fanatical and now forgotten Bishop of Cape Town, where the Unitarian received the Sacrament of Christ's death beside the Wesleyan and the Anglican, and who bore with unflinching courage the idle tumult which followed."¹⁴⁹ The idle tumult was the "Westminster Scandal" in which the alleged indiscretion of Dean Stanley in offering Holy Communion to the Unitarian minister Vance Smith "caused one of the minor

¹⁴⁷ Letters, II, 42.

¹⁴⁸ A Writer's Recollections, Vol. I, p. 47.

¹⁴⁹ Page 124.

theological tempests of the times." Bishop Wilberforce had in the spring of 1870 made a motion in convocation for the appointment of a committee of both Houses and Provinces to consider a revision of the Bible, either by the addition of marginal notes or otherwise; whereupon the committee recommended that selection of revisionists be left to Convocation. Accordingly, revisionists were nominated, and, with the cooperation of a joint committee of both Houses, two groups of scholars, one for the Old Testament and one for the New, were chosen for the undertaking. Charles Ellicott, Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, Bishop Wilberforce of the High Church party, and Dean Stanley, leader of the Broad Church party comprised the group assigned to the revision of the New Testament; and on June 22, 1870, in the Jerusalem Chamber of Westminster, the men held their first meeting. Arthur Stanley, as Dean, had invited all revisers to a special celebration of Holy Communion in the Henry VII Chapel, and among those present were prominent Scottish Presbyterians, English Nonconformists, and the Reverend Mr Vance Smith. The attitude of the High Church toward liberal theology was seen, when, at the next meeting of Convocation, the "scandal" of the communion was bitterly denounced.¹⁵⁰

Vance Smith was excluded from association with the revisers not because of his separation from the Church of England but

¹⁵⁰ Blackburn, "Background of Lit. & Dog.," MP, XLIII, 134.

because of his denial, according to Bishop Wilberforce, or our Lord's Godhead. By August 1870 the "sandal" had reached such a point of controversy that demands for the excommunication of Dean Stanley were not thought unusual. Mr Blackburn reports,

The English Church Union, dedicated to the defense of the Tractarian faith, was the prime mover against Stanley. It called his indiscretion 'a dishonor to our Lord and Saviour of gravest and most emphatic character.' Such terms occur repeatedly in the memorials to the archbishop as 'a gross profanation on the Sacrament,' 'an outrage on Revealed Religion,' 'a horrible sacrilege.' Some zealots, according to Stanley, expected, and almost wished, that a frightful, sudden death, such as that which befell Arius in the streets of Constantinople, would descend upon Vance Smith.¹⁵¹

However, the Franco-Prussian War caused some diminution of the feeling against Stanley and Smith, though the controversy was continued at the February Sessions of Convocation in 1871.

But by that time the opinions of at least some of the bishops had undergone considerable change. The last battle in the conflict was fought appropriately enough in Westminster; for when, in December 1872, Dean Stanley was nominated one of the Select Preachers of Oxford University, the High Church party challenged the elevation of a Broad Churchman to the pulpit from which Newman had once preached. But since the abolition of the Universities Tests Act in 1871, the High Church party had lost much of its power within Congregation, and when the question of Stanley's appointment came to a vote the party's

¹⁵¹"Background of Lit. & Dog.," MP, XLIII, 134-135.

attempt to block election was defeated by a vote of three hundred forty-nine to two hundred eighty-seven.¹⁵² Though the power of the party had diminished, it was still a formidable force.

According to Mr Blackburn, in his history of the background events leading to Literature and Dogma, the contests of the early seventies continued in a debate over the Athanasian Creed, a debate in which the clergy of the universities engaged with vehement though not always reasonable conviction. Oxford's Professor J. W. Burgon (who had answered Essays and Reviews) spoke for the defenders of the Creed when he declared, "'There shall be no tampering with the Athanasian Creed.'" ¹⁵³ Archdeacon Denison of Taunton walked out of Convocation "as a protest against the Prolocutor's refusal to stop Dean Stanley's 'raid' upon the Creed as 'untruthful, unchristian, and the like.'" ¹⁵⁴ Dr Pusey, "the high priest of Anglo-Catholicism," and his disciple, H. P. Liddon declared that any alteration of the Creed would surely be followed by their resignations from the Church of England, ¹⁵⁵ for Pusey believed the Creed to be the statement of the two indispensable High Church doctrines, the Trinity and the Incarnation, though Newman, it was known, would gladly have deleted certain parts of it. ¹⁵⁶ But High

¹⁵² Blackburn, "Background of Lit. & Dog.," MP, XLIII, 136-137.

¹⁵³ Page 137.

¹⁵⁴ Page 137.

¹⁵⁵ Page 137.

¹⁵⁶ Page 138.

Church authority appealed in general to the narrow and orthodox tradition in which Keble had characterized the Creed as the

Creed of the Saints, and Anthem of the Blest
And calm-breathed warning of the kindest love
That ever heaved a wakeful mother's breast,
(True love is bold, and gravely dares reprove,)
Who knows but myriads owe their endless rest
To thy recalling, tempted else to rove? 157

Others, principally the members of the Broad Church, and chief among them Dean Stanley and F. D. Maurice, maintained the inadequacy of the Creed in contemporary worship and pressed in the periodical articles in the Contemporary Review for its withdrawal from the Church service. Dean Stanley claimed that nineteen members of the Ritual Commission of the Church, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Winchester, and the Dean of Westminster, each giving their reasons, in fullest detail, had "expressed their desire...that the Creed shall cease to be enforced in public worship...."¹⁵⁸ In his history of "the Creed of St Athanasius," he had said that the Creed had reached in 1870 "a critical moment in its existence," that the reception and use of the Creed in Christendom was a "remarkable literary mistake,"¹⁵⁹ that "the argument of the Creed chiefly turns on the distinction between two words,

¹⁵⁷Page 138.

¹⁵⁸A. P. Stanley, "The Athanasian Creed [a P. S. to the article by Maurice in the August number]," Contemporary Review, XV(1870), 531. Maurice's article, which followed Stanley's earlier one on "The Athanasian Creed," was entitled "A Few More Words on the Athanasian Creed."

¹⁵⁹A. P. Stanley, "The Athanasian Creed," Contemporary Review, XV(1870), 133.

translated into English as 'substance' and 'person',¹⁶⁰ and that the revival of the Creed, in revised form, could meet with a "general acquiescence, such as...could render it desirable."¹⁶¹ For Maurice, the Creed no longer had meaning, since it required too much explanation and its language was so ambiguous; and he agreed with Stanley: "I am as much convinced as the excellent writer of the article on the Athanasian Creed in the August number of this Review, that it is impossible much longer to retain that Creed as part of our services. This conclusion has been forced upon me by the arguments of its recent apologists...even more than by those of its impugners."¹⁶² Maurice suggested then that the least revision that could be made would be the deletion of the opening sentences of the Creed, its "damnatory clauses," thus making it harmless.¹⁶³ Church liberals who in these and in other ways ---there were proposals for a new translation of the Latin or an optional use of the Creed---sought redefinition of the Creed within the context of the contemporary Church or its abandonment were disappointed. The influence of Bishop Wilberforce prevailed and won the argument for the High Church cause, and the Creed, with an explanatory note appended to it, was retained.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁰Page 140.

¹⁶¹Page 152.

¹⁶²F. D. Maurice, "A Few More Words on the Athanasian Creed," Contemporary Review, XV(1870), 479.

¹⁶³Page 485.

¹⁶⁴Blackburn, "Background of Lit. & Dog.," MP, XLIII, 138.

In this condition the Creed remained, substantially as it was from Arnold's Oxford days, surviving, as its most ardent champions were certain it would, the incursions of all criticism and Matthew Arnold's bold prediction, hopefully announced in St Paul and Protestantism, that it should shortly disappear from the Prayer Book:

Every one who perceives and values the power contained in Christianity, must be struck to see how, at the present moment, the progress of this power seems to depend upon its being able to disengage itself from speculative accretions that encumber it. A considerable movement to this end is visible in the Church of England. The most nakedly speculative, and therefore the most inevitably defective, parts of the Prayer Book, the Athanasian Creed and the Thirty-Nine Articles,---our generation will not improbably see the Prayer Book rid of. But the larger the body in which this movement works, the greater is the power of the movement.¹⁶⁵

Notwithstanding the power of the movement within the Church, the Creed remained, and Arnold found it necessary to protect his critical reputation by suppressing from the third (1875) and subsequent editions of St Paul and Protestantism this particular aspect of his view of the Church of England.¹⁶⁶

Such a deletion should not have been necessary. It had for some time seemed to Arnold that Keble's world was dead. For Keble himself had for some time now fallen as "the idol of every well-disposed Anglican household;" and furthermore, he

¹⁶⁵M. Arnold, Works, IX, 163-164.

¹⁶⁶Brown, Studies, p. 37.

of the "Flibbertgibbet, fanatical, twinkling expression" (as Arnold had described him),¹⁶⁷ "Misoneolugus, Hater of New Ideas" (as he had described himself),¹⁶⁸ was dead. But even before the poet of the Creed was dead, Arnold had quite put behind him the influence of "the quiet Fox How household, with its strong religious atmosphere, its daily psalms, its love for The Christian Year, its belief in 'discipline'"¹⁶⁹ and, it might be added, its partly academic cast of Christian piety. The sterner influence of Arnold's own beloved zeit-geist, with all its din of social and religious controversy, had impressed him with the importance of hitting the mark in a materialistic world, which wanted proper conduct as well in religion as in society. Thus it was that he became "concerned supremely with securing for the England that was taking shape the moral basis that he knew to be indispensable."¹⁷⁰ Thus it was that Arnold became concerned with the religious problem as he saw it set against the background of his inheritance, in the tedious discipline of his youth, against the background of his milieu, in the lessons learned from unhappy and disunifying controversy. Specific aspects of Arnold's religious legacy and environment

¹⁶⁷Mrs Ward, I, 69.

¹⁶⁸Trilling, p. 36.

¹⁶⁹Mrs Ward, I, 49.

¹⁷⁰Connell, p. xv. F. Clarke's Introduction.

have already been rehearsed. This matrix which finally yielded the articles in religious criticism, of which St Paul and Protestantism marked the formal beginning,---this matrix enclosed other influences, from Homer and Epictetus (and perhaps Marcus Aurelius) and Sophocles, "who prop...[his] mind" as early as 1849,¹⁷¹ to Carlyle ("I never much liked Carlyle"¹⁷²) and Emerson, Wordsworth, Sainte-Beuve, Goethe, and Newman, whom he acknowledged, as late as 1872, as his guides.¹⁷³ The acknowledgments are but general expressions of obligations to teachers, nothing more;¹⁷⁴ but there is perhaps a matter more important to consider than merely the recognition of teachers, and that is the factor common to each of them. "The thread which holds such a diverse lot together is their concern with the problems of establishing some acceptable values and standards amid the flux of a changing society."¹⁷⁵ For himself, Arnold returned to the concept which he fancied he created, Culture, the shibboleth which was guide and criterion in all matters of human conduct. If, in a milieu such as that described

¹⁷¹See Arnold's poem "To a Friend."

¹⁷²See Trilling, p. 390.

¹⁷³Connell, p. 33.

¹⁷⁴The Note-books give little indication of the sources of Arnold's main ideas.

¹⁷⁵Connell, p. 33.

[Arnold] is accused of drawing religion too exclusively into morals, are we not equally open to accusation in the converse sense, that we have failed to keep close, as the nineteenth century did, the effective relation between religion and conduct, and become too tolerant of the hiatus between profession and actual behaviour. There may have been, after all, an element of integrity in Arnold that is less strong with us than it was with him.¹⁷⁶

The pre-occupation with religion in its relations to conduct and the larger area of Culture (the writings on religion are, properly speaking, an extension of the theory of Culture) can be seen as the distinctively informative element in Arnold's work from the seventies, whether in a concern over the importance of the Established Church and religious instruction in State education,¹⁷⁷ the comprehension of Dissent into the Church of England in order to lift it out of its narrow sectarianism, or in an academic concern over the invasions of theology and science into the provinces of poetry. Arnold's task, as he performed it, would be to defend these provinces by reconciling the purposes of both dogma and science to a new appreciation of the function and value of a literary reading of the Bible and a new appreciation of the role of conduct. His task would be, as a man of letters, to build a more acceptable practice of religion upon the ruins of Keble's world.

¹⁷⁶Connell, p. xv.

¹⁷⁷See Arnold's "A Bible Reading for Schools" (1872). In a letter to George de Bunsen, May 30, 1872, Arnold wrote: "I am sending you a little book [A Bible Reading], which will show you that I am trying to help popular education in an untried, but, as I think, an important sort of way" (Letters, II, 97).

IV: The Power of Edification

When Arnold left Oxford in June 1870, with the speech of Lord Salisbury on dogma and science pressing heavily on his mind, he was more convinced than ever that though Keble's world was dead the ecclesiastical dogmatism for which he stood could not be easily shattered, and the world of the future, Thomas Arnold's world, could not be easily born. Arnold was convinced, moreover, that the role of the critic should be to reconcile dogma and science, outworn, traditional orthodoxy and the extremes of rationalism, to the religion of the Bible in such a fashion that the conduct of life should reflect the due fruits of the religion of the Bible. To this end, the mediation of such opposites, Arnold devoted a decade of his labors, bringing to bear on the task his knowledge and love of God and his awareness of the edifying power of literature. He who had been baptized in the presence of Keble, he who in his youth had "echo[ed] Keble's yearning to escape from the rationalistic and industrial present to a past that had never been,"¹ now looked forward to the "changes for which, here in England, the moment had come."² For Arnold had been baptized in the presence of

¹Trilling, p. 39.

²Letters, II, 23 (Letter to his mother, Nov. 13, 1869).

his father also, and the fulfillment of the religious desires which his father had anticipated were now at hand.³

A. A Truer Method of Interpretation.

The object of this treatise is not religious edification, but the true criticism of a great and misunderstood author. Yet it is impossible to be in presence of this Pauline conception of faith without remarking on the incomparable power of edification which it contains. It is indeed a crowning evidence of that piercing practical religious sense which we have attributed to Paul.

St Paul and Protestantism, p. 70.

Actually, Arnold began his work of mediation months before Lord Salisbury's speech at the Keble College dedication. He wrote to his mother of his work just after the publication of the second installment of "St Paul and Protestantism" in the November issue of The Cornhill Magazine: "I was much interested and touched by your letter, showing your willingness...to receive and comprehend what is new.... In papa's time the exploding of the old notions of literal inspiration in Scripture, and the introducing of a truer method of interpretation, were the changes for which, here in England, the moment has come."⁴

³From October 1869 through November 1876 Arnold expressed his religious ideas in periodical essays in the Cornhill, the Contemporary Review, and Macmillan's. St Paul appeared first as two chapters in the Cornhill for Oct. and Nov. 1869 and was published in book form in 1870. "Puritanism and the Church of England" appeared first in the Cornhill, Feb. 1870, and was reprinted in St Paul. See Trilling, pp. 340-341n.; also Brown, Studies, pp. 133-134.

⁴Letters, II, 23.

In his father's time Whately had done a similar study of St Paul, a study which Arnold knew,⁵ and upon which he modelled his St Paul, at least insofar as he emphasized the importance of language in his reading of the apostle. In Arnold's own time, Jowett had written on St Paul, as had Renan, who had learned from the German theologians and Christologists and through his reading of the languages and literatures of the Bible, "that the Bible, the ultimate authorisation of Christianity, was a collection of very fallible books, riddled with contradictions and falsehoods,"⁶---Renan published a study of St Paul which in a sense was the more immediate reason for Arnold's writing. Also in Arnold's own time, the theologians Eduard Reuss published a history of the development of Christian theology in the apostolic age,⁷ Arnold's acknowledged guide in Pauline matters,⁸ for, as Arnold's emendations of the text of St Paul show, Arnold had only limited information on such a technical subject.⁹ Thus the version of St Paul's line of thought, as he stated in the Preface to his essay, was nothing new, not of his discovering:

⁵Arnold was reading Whately's Life in the later sixties. See Letters, I, 396-397. Arnold had asked Whately, then Archbishop of Dublin, to fill the office of godfather for one of his sons. See Letters, I, 55-56.

⁶Routh, p. 67. Routh says that Renan began "in the Newmanite spirit seeking 'la conciliation d'un esprit hautement religieux avec l'esprit critique!'" In 1845, when Newman joined the Church of Rome, Renan left the seminary of St Sulpice.

⁷Histoire de la théologie chrétienne..., 3d ed., Strasbourg, 1864, translated from this edition in 1874.

⁸See M. Arnold, Works, IX [St Paul], p. 5.

⁹Brown, Studies, p. 34.

It belongs to the 'Zeit-Geist,' or time-spirit, it is in the air, and many have long been anticipating it, preparing it... till there is not a part, probably, of all we have said, which has not already been said by others before us, and said more learnedly and fully than we can say it. All we have done is to take it as a whole, and give it a plain, popular, connected exposition of it....¹⁰

The version which he propounded of St Paul's line of thought appeared rather as a theological sequel to "Culture and Anarchy," in which Arnold reminded England that the remedy for its social ills, particularly the social ills of the Dissenters, was Culture. Of the Dissenters he had seen much during his journeys as inspector of schools: their manners were bad, their ideas limited. As a first step toward their redemption "from this degraded position," he considered that they should return to the Church of England, which they should not have left, from which they separated because of an "unfortunate misunderstanding."¹¹ His scheme for their readmission into the Church of England, based to some extent upon the Church-reform principles of his father, was enunciated without the sanction either of the Nonconformists or of the Anglicans. The essay, though it ostensibly had a practical purpose, was an academic performance, designed to compare Puritan doctrine with St Paul's¹² and to show that "What in St Paul is secondary and subordinate, Puritanism has made primary and essential; what in St Paul is figure and

¹⁰M. Arnold, Works, IX, xii.

¹¹Benn, II, 303.

¹²M. Arnold, Works, IX, 4.

belongs to the sphere of feeling, Puritanism has transplanted into the sphere of intellect and made formula."¹³ On the cultural side, Arnold contended, Puritanism was guilty of Mialism and Millism, the degenerate forms of Hebraism and Hellenism,¹⁴ while on the moral side it was guilty of betraying humanity in its escape into a God-centred doctrine. "The passiveness of man, the activity of God, are the great features in this scheme [of predestination, election, and justification]; there is little of what man thinks and does, very much of what God thinks and does."¹⁵ Such was the background and purpose of the essay.

The immediate antecedent of St Paul and Protestantism, as was stated above, was Renan's study of St Paul, in which the French theologian concluded that "After having been for three hundred years the Christian doctor par excellence, Paul is now coming to an end of his reign."¹⁶ This conclusion Arnold challenged at the outset of his essay: "Precisely the contrary, I venture to think, is the judgment to which a true criticism of men and of things, in our own country at any rate, leads us."¹⁷ Arnold did not invariably agree with Renan: the study of St Paul was a case in point, where Arnold used Renan as a

¹³Page 6.

¹⁴Pages xxxvi-xxxvii.

¹⁵Page 14.

¹⁶M. Arnold, Works, IX, 1.

¹⁷Pages 1-2.

beginning for his own discussion or modified Renan's thesis to suit his own purpose. But quite early the influence of Renan Arnold had recognized; in 1859, for example, Arnold wrote to his sister "K" of "the essential resemblance between the work of Ernest Renan and his own. Renan is the spokesman for morality, for its claims are likely to be taken too lightly in France; Arnold is the spokesman for intelligence, which in England runs an equal risk."¹⁸ A further indication of the resemblance between the work of Renan and Arnold is offered by Mr Frederic Faverty.

In Ernest Renan [1823-1892] all these elements---racial, religious, philological, and philosophical---were brought together to explain a theory basic to much of his work, the contrast between the geniuses of the Semitic and the Indo-European races. And, except for Dr Thomas Arnold, no contemporary writer, perhaps, exercised more influence on Matthew Arnold's thinking. The affinity between Ernest Renan and Matthew Arnold is evident at a glance. Saintsbury remarked that Arnold's style, already somewhat lacking in vigor, was too much modelled on that of Renan, in which the dominant element was sweetness. But the resemblance extends beyond mere elements of style. It is evident in their deepest interests, in the opinions they held, in the very aims they pursued.... In the subjects to which they devoted completed essays or entire books their common interests were revealed: Spinoza..., and Marcus Aurelius, whose Meditations served for both as a manual of the life of resignation. Arnold's St Paul and Protestantism followed hard upon the heels of Renan's St Paul. The former's A Persian Passion Play and the latter's The Teaziehs of Persia were alike inspired by Gobineau's The Religions and Philosophies of Central Asia (Paris, 1865). Arnold spent ten years and Renan thirty years of his life in comment on the Bible, both believing that one of the solidest evidences of the worth of the book lay in its having

¹⁸Brown, Matthew Arnold, p. 91. Cf. Letters, I, 111-112.

survived is commentators.... Such being Arnold's familiarity with Renan's labors, it is not surprising that he carried over into his own works Renan's underlying and often repeated contrast between the Semitic and the Indo-European races.¹⁹

A reviewer of Renan's "The Poetry of the Celtic Races, and other Studies," writing in the Saturday Review (London), said that "the tracing of a thread of influence from the French critic to the English one through successive books would be a highly interesting exercise,"²⁰ but pointed out also the fact that Arnold, sparing of his references to Renan, appeared unwilling to emphasize the relation to Renan, perhaps because there was something of the "Philistine" in Arnold in his ignoring the influence of the writer who was branded an "arch-heretic" after the publication of his Vie de Jésus (1863),²¹ even though Renan had spent a year toning down the language of his life of Jesus. Again on the cultural, and now ethnological, side of Arnold's work, the satire on the institutions of Puritanism, drawn in terms of Mialism and Millism, has added significance in the light of Renan's influence, whether that influence was specifically acknowledged or not. One of the principal objections to what was called Arnold's supercilious treatment of Dissent was based upon his use of satire,²² which apparently

²⁰"Renan's Influence upon Matthew Arnold," Saturday Review (London), LXXXII([Oct. 10]1869), 399.

²¹Page 399. See a review by J(oseph) B. Lightfoot, the critic on Pauline letters, of Renan's St Paul, The Academy, I ([Oct. 9]1869); 10-11; also a review by H. Lawrenny of Arnold's St Paul, The Academy, I(1870), 282-283. Each asserts the connection between Arnold and Renan.

²²See a review of St Paul, The Athenaeum, I([May 21]1870), 669-670.

missed its aim if it intended to awaken the dissenters to their cultural as well as their religious limitations. The essay on "Puritanism and the Church of England," which from the second edition (1870) of St Paul followed the St Paul essay,²³ perhaps should not have introduced the St Paul essay. As one reviewer remarked, "This volume [St Paul] has the disadvantages of having been written backwards, with the argument, that is to say, at the end, and the application at the beginning, and moreover with an argument and an application that have very little to do with each other."²⁴ Thus in the first edition of St Paul, unhappily the essay on Puritanism introduced the study of St Paul, and reviewers cautioned readers to see the more important last chapter of the volume first, since Arnold's estimate of English Puritanism demanded a knowledge of his interpretation of Pauline theology. Owing to the original arrangement of the volume, perhaps much of the impact of Arnold's criticism was lost; but he explained in the Preface that the essay on Puritanism was "meant to clear away offense or misunderstanding which had arisen out of [the essay on St Paul]."²⁵

²³Brown, Studies, p. 133.

²⁴The Academy, I(1870), 282. Cf. The Athenaeum, I(1870), 669.

²⁵M. Arnold, Works, IX, vii; see also pp. xxvii-xxviii.

The offense or misunderstanding with respect to the strictures against the Puritans at least was not, however, cleared away, and would not be cleared away as long as Puritanism maintained its "cardinal points...fixed by the terms election and justification,"²⁶ the very bases of its existence,²⁷ and Arnold maintained that "The Protestantism which has so used and abused St Paul is coming to an end.... But the reign of the real St Paul is only beginning...."²⁸ This was the dilemma which presented itself at the outset of St Paul and Protestantism: the doctrines or dogmas of Puritanism on the one hand and Arnold's assertion, in the face of Renan's thesis, that the reign of St Paul was not coming to an end.²⁹ Indeed the reign of the new St Paul, reinterpreted in the light of the zeit-geist and, furthermore, appealing to science for the verification of St Paul,³⁰ was just beginning. But first, in order to interpret the apostle the better, Arnold turned to an examination of the weaknesses of Puritanism. "The study of dogma...was only one branch of theology;"³¹ and apparently Arnold felt that if he

²⁶Page 3.

²⁷Page 4.

²⁸Page 2.

²⁹Page 1.

³⁰Pages 8-9.

³¹[M. Arnold,] "The Present State of Religious Controversy," Fraser's Magazine, LXXX(1869), 541.

were to launch on a study of dogma as part of his theological inquiry, the criticism of Puritanism, since it quite naturally followed from the earlier pronouncements on Culture,³² should precede the criticism of the Church of England. Moreover, the joining of the discussion of Puritanism with the discussion of St Paul offered Arnold the double advantage of tracing through history the growth of Puritanism (and by implication the growth of the Church of England) as well as of dwelling on the moral elements in the writings of St Paul. The use of the historical method allowed, of course, for Arnold's many illustrations, which lent support to the points he made, that is, with regard to Puritanism's increasingly Hebraic attitude; but in so doing he perhaps overworked his notion of St Paul in a system of morals, though he quite ignored St Paul's theology.³³ With this omission of St Paul's theology, some readers at least, were satisfied, especially English Unitarian divines, who, though Arnold seemed not to recognize the fact, had been doing work on the same line as Arnold's. "Unitarians were...among the first to appreciate his essay..., considering

³²Culture and Anarchy had appeared originally in a serial version as "Anarchy and Authority" in The Cornhill Magazine, XVII(1868), 30-47, 239-256, 745-760.

³³Benn, II, 304.

how [well] it harmonised with their own religious ideas, on the Scriptural side."³⁴ By disconnecting St Paul from the trammels of theology, Arnold sought to make him attractive for modern man, inasmuch as Arnold's St Paul was the St Paul of Culture, not the St Paul of Puritanism or of Scriptural Protestantism.³⁵ The St Paul of Culture would be considerably involved with morality (Arnold labored the point), morality with conduct, and conduct with three-fourths of life. Religion, for Arnold certainly, was concerned with these elements. The St Paul of Puritanism would be concerned with theology and the basing of theology upon a doctrine or dogma based in turn upon a text of Scripture, without regard for the meaning, truth, or purpose of that text or the literary climate in which it was written. Culture's St Paul derived from a literary and flexible reading of Scripture, Puritanism's St Paul from a dogmatic and rigid reading of Scripture. Above all, the reading of St Paul was not to be "scientific."³⁶

We have used the word Hebraise [Arnold wrote] for another purpose, to denote the exclusive attention to the moral side of our nature, to conscience, and to doing rather than knowing; so, to describe the vivid and figured way in which St Paul, within the sphere of religious emotion, uses words, without carrying them outside it, we will use the word Orientalise. When Paul says: 'God hath concluded than all in unbelief that he might have mercy upon all' [Rom., xi, 32] he Orientalises; that is

³⁴Benn, II, 305.

³⁵See M. Arnold, Works, IX, ixff.

³⁶M. Arnold, Works, IX, 26.

he does not mean to assert formally that God acted with this set design, but being full of the happy and divine end to the unbelief spoken of, he, by a vivid and striking figure, represents the unbelief as actually caused with a view to this end.³⁷

The difficulty with St Paul became greater when, as Arnold demonstrated, "prosaic and unintelligent Western readers who have not enough tact for style to comprehend his mode of expression"³⁸ insisted upon perverting the words of the apostle from their literary sense into a theological sense. Arnold's difficulty was the greater because he faced the prospect of attempting the revision of the nation's reading habits, habits, which in the sects of the Puritans, at any rate, encouraged, from the time of the Reformation, the misunderstanding of St Paul.³⁹

Another example of St Paul's tendency to Orientalise, here more strictly in the area of religion, righteousness, is his "central doctrine, and the doctrine which makes his profoundness and originality,"⁴⁰ the doctrine of necrosis.⁴¹ Arnold's careful exposition of this Pauline doctrine reveals not only his interest in extending the criteria of literature into Scriptural interpretation but also his belief in the totality of the Christian

³⁷Pages 28-29.

³⁸Page 29.

³⁹Puritans at the time of the Reformation "misunderstood St Paul's dogmatic teaching more grievously than the Church of England, but on that point we think he proves his case," according to R. H. Hutton in "Mr Arnold on St Paul and his Creed," The Contemporary Review, XIV([Jan.]1870), 329.

⁴⁰M. Arnold, Works, IX, 71.

⁴¹See 2 Cor., iv, 10.

community in which our neighbor is an extension of our individual selves. As Arnold defined the doctrine,

The elemental power of sympathy and emotion in us, a power which extends beyond the limits of our own will and conscious activity, which we cannot measure and control, and which in each of us differs...in force, volume, and mode of manifestation, he [St Paul] calls into full play, and sets it to work with all its strength and in all its variety. But one unalterable object is assigned to this power: to die with Christ to the law of the flesh, to live with Christ to the law of the mind.... Whoever [thus] identifies himself with Christ, identifies himself with Christ's idea of the solidarity of men. The whole race is conceived as one body, having to die and rise with Christ, and forming by the joint action of regenerate members the mystical body of Christ.⁴²

According to this definition of the doctrine, the essentials or the terms of Pauline "theology" are not, therefore, as in popular or Puritan theology "calling, justification, sanctification," but rather "dying with Christ, resurrection from the dead, growing into Christ."⁴³ This is the true meaning of St Paul's conception of the resurrection from the dead and has nothing to do with physical death and resurrection, nothing of the sense of popular theological belief. For St Paul's "line of thought as we have endeavoured to trace it," shows that it cannot be this physical and miraculous aspect of the resurrection which principally attracted him, that death "is living after the flesh, obedience to sin," that life "is mortifying by the spirit the deeds of the flesh, obedience to righteousness," that resurrection is essentially "the rising, within the sphere of our

⁴²M. Arnold, Works, IX, 70-71, 72, 74-75.

⁴³Pages 75-76.

visible earthly existence, from death in this sense to life in this sense."⁴⁴ So it was, according to Arnold, with the resurrection of Christ. For the real life has its beginning in the mystical death and resurrection: "Paul's point is, that Jesus Christ in his earthly existence obeyed the law of the spirit, and bore fruit to God; and that the believer should, in his earthly existence, do the same."⁴⁵ Thus St Paul's special interpretation of the resurrection emphasized the importance of the here and now, in Arnold's words, "a resurrection to righteousness,"⁴⁶ which is life itself, for those who day by day preach the gospel are delivered unto death. This figurative language Arnold wished his readers to apprehend. As Eduard Reuss noted: "The physical resurrection of the future is inseparably linked to the spiritual resurrection of the present; such is the Pauline, the Christian form of the doctrine. Those who have no part in the first resurrection---that which alone is of essential importance---will remain strangers to the second."⁴⁷

The idea of righteousness which informed St Paul and Protestantism and Literature and Dogma derived from St Paul,

⁴⁴Pages 77-78.

⁴⁵Pages 78-79.

⁴⁶Page 79.

⁴⁷E. Reuss, History of Christian Theology in the Apostolic Age, Vol. II, pp. 194, 178-179.

in whom it took "foremost place" and marked the essentially social qualities of religious practice. For St Paul righteousness was a primary concern, whereas for Puritanism, which "finds its starting point either in the desire to flee from eternal wrath or in the desire to obtain eternal bliss,"⁴⁸ righteousness was of necessity a secondary concern. While Puritanism derived its religion from theology and authority, St Paul derived his from experience.⁴⁹ While Puritanism maintained its position that "Paul's doctrines derive their sanction, not from any agreement with science and experience, but from his miraculous conversion," Arnold countered with the observation that for science "his conversion adds to his doctrines no force at all which they did not already possess in themselves."⁵⁰ The empirical St Paul, according to Arnold's reading, starts not outside the sphere of science but starts rather with an appeal to reality and experience. And the appeal here with which he commences has, for science, undoubted force and importance; for he appeals to a rational conception which is a part, and perhaps the chief part, of our experience; the

⁴⁸M. Arnold, Works, IX, 38-39; 31.

⁴⁹Page 48.

⁵⁰Page 49.

conception of the law of righteousness, the very law and ground of human nature so far as this nature is moral. Things as they truly are,---facts,---are the object-matter of science; and the moral law in human nature, however this law may have originated, is in our actual experience among the greatest of facts.⁵¹

Having placed St Paul in a system of morals and having defined in his sophistication the proper meaning of righteousness and the importance of "conformity to the will of God, as we religiously name the moral order,"⁵² Arnold asked: how to achieve this righteousness, "our peace and happiness."⁵³ Granted the existence of the moral law, what, Arnold asked, would be the force to bring man "into obedience to the central tendency?"⁵⁴ Not the adherence to either the Mosaic law or the law of righteousness; adherence to either or both could not be enough. At this point, Arnold thought, St Paul entered the sphere of religion, which is that "which binds and holds us to the practice of righteousness."⁵⁵ Throughout the discussion of St Paul's literary and moral refinements, Arnold was quick to discover, there was not a reference to or a hint of the loathsome ideas inherent in the terms predestinarianism and solifidianism, or what Puritanism called the gospel. Arnold succeeded in making the point which the theologian R. H. Hutton conceded he

⁵¹Page 41.

⁵²Page 45.

⁵³Page 45.

⁵⁴Page 45.

⁵⁵Page 47.

had made. "We have thus reached Paul's fundamental conception without even a glimpse of the fundamental conceptions of Puritanism, which, nevertheless, professes to have learnt from St Paul and from his Epistle to the Romans."⁵⁶

As long as Puritanism persisted in its view that it was the keeper of the gospel in its special doctrines of predestination and justification, as long as Puritanism persisted in setting itself up separately and exclusively for the preaching of these doctrines, the, Arnold felt, there was no possible way to comprehend Puritanism into the Church of England. "The good of comprehension in a national Church is, that the larger and more various the body of members, the more elements of power and life the Church will contain, the more points there will be of contact...the more growth in perfection both of thought and practice."⁵⁷ Lack of comprehension represented to Arnold a significant "waste of power," hindering the vitality of the national Church. Arnold's avowed purpose in the essay on "Puritanism and the Church of England" was to show how the historic Church, the Church of England, grew out of its narrow sectarianism, and to prove his thesis and highlight the backwardness of Puritanism he ransacked Bishop Wilson, Bishop Butler,

⁵⁶Page 86.

⁵⁷Pages 115-116.

Hooker, and Dr Newman,⁵⁸ ranging over the whole history of the Church from the time of Henry VIII. The uncritical argument which Arnold submitted against Puritanism for its separation from the Church for the sake of opinions, R. H. Hutton answered in an article in the Contemporary Review:

But even Dissenters will scarcely be more sensitive than most Churchmen to the sting of the reasoning by which Mr Arnold condescends to bring home to them the iniquity of dissent. That iniquity consists, he says, in separating, for opinions, from a Church which does not exist for the sake of opinions, but for the sake of moral practice,---and he means by 'opinions,' not the finer distinctions of individual thought, but the broad faiths to be entertained about God, creation, evil, propitiation, immortality, for he tells us there has never yet come a time proper for the development of these great ideas.⁵⁹

Arnold carried the argument against separation to the extent that he claimed that all those who separated from the Church of England on points of dogma were wrong.⁶⁰ But as Hutton reminded his readers: "It is hardly fair to brand Dissent for its captiousness in separating from the Church on dogmatic grounds...."⁶¹ Hutton's criticism of Arnold appears to be valid. However "uncritical" Arnold's argument against Puritanism (for its captiousness and lack of liberalism⁶²) might have been, his critics tended to overlook the connection, enunciated

⁵⁸Pages 117-118ff; 135ff.

⁵⁹"Mr Arnold on St Paul and his Creed," The Contemporary Review, XIV(1870), 330.

⁶⁰Page 331. Cf. M. Arnold, Works, IX, 111-112ff.

⁶¹Page 332.

⁶²Arnold said the Puritans were not liberal. According to the historian Benn, Puritanism from the time of the English Reformation was as liberal as Anglicanism. See Benn, II, 305.

from the beginning of St Paul to its "gravely cadenced" conclusion,⁶³ Arnold made between his reading of St Paul and his concept of Culture. This tying of the theory of Culture to the reading of St Paul may be seen in Arnold's view of expiation, a special view of expiation which was, as Mr E. K. Brown pointed out,⁶⁴ a favorite notion with Arnold. The sort of thing which Arnold attempted is here seen as an arresting and provocative contrast to the reading of popular Puritanism.

The term sacrifice, in men's natural use of it, contains three notions: the notion of winning the favour or buying off the wrath of a powerful being by giving him something precious; the notion of parting with something naturally precious; and the notion of expiation, not now in the sense of buying off wrath or satisfying a claim, but of suffering in that wherein we have sinned. The first notion is, at bottom, merely superstitious, and belongs to the ignorant and fear-ridden childhood of humanity; it is the main element, however, in the Puritan conception of justification. The second notion explains itself; it is the main element in the Pauline conception of justification. Jesus parted with what, to men in general, is the most precious of things,---individual self and selfishness; he pleased not himself, obeyed the spirit of God, died to sin and to the law in our members, consummated upon the cross this death; here is Paul's essential notion of Christ's sacrifice.⁶⁵

The third notion, the notion of expiation (and there is much of it in St Paul's idea of justification) requires that "he who would 'cease from sin' must nearly always 'suffer in the flesh,'" requires also that he who would cease from sin must

⁶³Brown, Studies, p. 113.

⁶⁴Page 35.

⁶⁵M. Arnold, Works, IX, 100-101.

recognize the fact that "so far as we ourselves are concerned, ...the bitter experience that the habit of wrong, of blindly obeying selfish impulse, so affects our temper and powers, that to withstand selfish impulse, to do right, when the sense of right awakens in us, requires an effort out of all proportion to the actual present emergency."⁶⁶ Arnold continued:

We have not only the difficulty of the present act in itself, we have the resistance of all our past; fire and the knife, cautery and amputation, are often necessary in order to induce a vital action, which, if it were not for our corrupting past, we might have obtained from the natural healthful vigour of our moral organs. This is the real basis of our personal sense of the need of expiating, and thus it is that man expiates.⁶⁷

This is the truer interpretation of Jesus' dying, the "real conception of Jesus Christ's sacrifice,"⁶⁸ precluding the notion of the appeasement of the wrath of an angry God, which is the notion of Puritanism, based on dogmatic grounds, dis- regarding the essentially moral element in St Paul.

⁶⁶Page 101.

⁶⁷Pages 101-102.

⁶⁸Page 103.

B. The Due Fruits of the Religion of the Bible.

Our mechanical and materialising theology, with its insane licence of affirmation about God, its insane licence of affirmation about a future state, is really the result of the poverty and inanition of our minds. It is because we cannot trace God in history that we stay the craving of our minds with a fancy-account of him, made up by putting scattered expressions of the Bible together, and taking them literally; it is because we have such a scanty sense of the life of humanity, that we proceed in the like manner in our scheme of a future state. He that cannot watch the God of the Bible, and the salvation of the Bible, gradually and on an immense scale discovering themselves and becoming, will insist on seeing them ready-made, and in such precise and reduced dimensions as may suit his narrow mind.

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. But to take this very first step, some experience of how men have thought and expressed themselves, and some flexibility of spirit, are necessary; and this is culture.

Literature & Dogma (5th ed., Smith, Elder), pp. xiv-xv.

In his original purpose to strip religion of its theological unessentials and give it a functional simplicity, Arnold was not deterred when he came to write his most comprehensive statement of religious liberalism, Literature and Dogma.⁶⁹ For indeed,

⁶⁹On Sept. 25, 1871 Arnold wrote to his mother: "I have carried the second part of Literature & Dogma through the press [the Oct. 1871 issue of the Cornhill contained Lit. & Dog. in two installments, very topical in references], and given it the form I finally wished..." (Letters, II, 73). After its first publication in book form, Arnold made several textual revisions, remarkable because they reflected his changing attitudes toward various aspects of the work. In the 1873 edition Arnold made extensive revisions for the text of the 4th edition: the 1873 edition was noteworthy for its stiffening attitude toward miracles and its prediction of an early end to the belief in the infallibility of the Bible. See Blackburn, ed., Literature and Dogma (Yale diss., 1943), pp. v-vi; also Brown, Studies, pp. 46-78.

to the longstanding attitude toward Dissent, which, according to one historian received a "supercilious treatment" in St Paul and Protestantism,⁷⁰ there had been added the speech of Lord Salisbury, which only served to reinforce Arnold's opinion that in England, for an enlightened public, the choice was between literature and dogma, a flexibility in reading the Bible or rigid narrowness. Throughout its several editions and revisions Literature and Dogma remained the constant expression of Arnold's governing purpose: to relate religion to the times through a summary of the evolutionary nature of religion and a new emphasis upon the outstanding antecedent developments in English theology. This work Arnold considered essentially the work of Culture, and in this respect Literature and Dogma was a continuation of the position taken in St Paul and Protestantism, for Arnold's St Paul was the St Paul of Culture, as he said; not the St Paul of that Protestant theology which based all doctrine upon a Pauline text without regard for the meaning, truth, and purpose of that text; but the St Paul of religious experience. In this Arnold followed the example of Spinoza, who exposed the falsity of Protestant theology as it derived from the prophets of the Old Testament. The St Paul of Culture was concerned primarily with morality, morality with conduct, conduct with life, as Arnold said many times. In this Arnold's view represented a kind of separatism for opinions also, as the definition of the nature, scope, and purpose of religion outlined in Literature and Dogma clearly indicated.

⁷⁰See Benn, II, 305.

Thus, while Arnold criticised Dissent, he held separatist opinions of his own. "His celebrated definition of a personal God as 'a magnified non-natural man in the next street,' which first occurred in the essay on St Paul,"⁷¹ the equally famous definition of religion as "morality touched by emotion," "whatever its defects as a definition," one which is "distinctively English,"⁷² and the "overweening regard for the zeitgeist" (for Arnold could not "forego the use of his slightly monotonous appeals to the 'Time-Spirit'"⁷³) did not, however, constitute the only ground for Arnold's separatism. He had separatist tendencies of his own, in spite of his criticism of Dissent, and, more curiously, in spite of his desire to defend, because he was the son of Dr Arnold and the friend of Dean Stanley, the principles of the Broad Church. It is important to notice that in Literature and Dogma, as much as anywhere else in his writing and perhaps more than anywhere else, Arnold appeared again as the apostle of Culture, insisting that "the 'Hebraic' morality which the English middle class [had] derived from the Bible as interpreted by the Puritans should be supplemented by an 'Hellenic' respect for beauty and knowledge."⁷⁴ For Arnold had long felt that Hebraism and Hellenism, in the

⁷¹Benn, II, 306.

⁷²Webb, p. 38.

⁷³G. P. Fisher, The Nature and Method of Revelation (New York, 1890), p. 244.

⁷⁴Webb, p. 40.

words of Mr Trilling's figure, "like buckets in a well...[were] passing each other through the ages, the decline of one bringing the rise of the other,"⁷⁵ while neither the one nor the other constituted "the whole law of human development and apparently mankind [had] not yet learned to possess itself of either without submerging its antithesis and complement."⁷⁶

In this particular aspect at least, Literature and Dogma is the continuation in the area of religious thought of Arnold's theories concerning the relative merits of Hebraism and Hellenism, to which, specifically, he had dedicated the book on Culture and Anarchy. And taken as he apparently was by the prevailing nineteenth-century theories of race, Arnold attached considerable importance to what seemed to him the genius of the Semitic race as opposed to the genius of the Indo-European race. Mr Faverty, in dealing with this neglected phase of Arnold's social and religious criticism, has given the significance of the race theory as in part antecedent to any discussion of Literature and Dogma:

The fullest and most explicit development of the contrast between the two geniuses was reserved...for Literature and Dogma (1873). In this book, Arnold tried to rescue Christianity from the theologians, who treated religion as a science, and

⁷⁵Trilling, p. 256.

⁷⁶Page 256.

to restore it in its simpler and grander and more practical form to the people. The basic assumption of the book was well expressed seven years later in the opening paragraph of The Study of Poetry (1880).... With such a project in hand, Arnold found Burnouf's La Science des Religions apt to his purpose. By its very title it was dedicated to the thesis that Arnold held to be inadmissible. In Burnouf's system, religion and metaphysics were one; and for this science the Aryan race displayed exceptional capacity whereas the Semitic race displayed none. The result, as Arnold expressed it, was that 'Israel, therefore, instead of being a light to the Gentiles and a salvation to the ends of the earth, falls to a place in the world's history behind the Aryan....' Arnold treated with levity in Literature and Dogma these preposterous scientific notions.⁷⁷

Arnold paraphrased M. Emile Burnouf in La Science des Religions (Paris, 1872) to this effect: "that the oracles of God were not committed to a Semitic race at all, but to the Aryan; that the true God is not Israel's at all...."⁷⁸ To which Arnold answered, "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...,⁷⁹ since religion and metaphysics were not one, according to Arnold's view. And part of his task was to show both Puritans and Anglicans alike, during a period "when churchmen

⁷⁷ Matthew Arnold the Ethnologist, pp. 179, 180.

⁷⁸ M. Arnold, Literature & Dogma, 5th ed., (Smith, Elder), pp. 121-122. The fifth edition of Lit. & Dog., published in London by Smith, Elder, & Co. in 1876, appears much less controversial in tone than the earlier editions (see Blackburn, ed., Lit. & Dog. [Yale diss., 1943], p. vi). Though substantially the same as the text contained in the Works of Matthew Arnold in Fifteen Volumes (London, 1903-1904), the text of the fifth edition is taken as the original of the final form which Arnold wished for the text.

⁷⁹ Pages 126; 123, 176.

were still nervous about the aftermath of the Oxford Movement"⁸⁰ and the Church was recovering from the controversies stirred by the Essayists and Bishop Colenso, that, within the framework of Culture as he conceived Culture, religion and metaphysics were not one, that Puritans and Anglicans alike in considering religion and metaphysics as one or confusing one with the other were missing the essential moral truth of the Bible, and that (as Spinoza saw the matter) "the life and practice of Christian nations professing the religion of the Bible, are not the due fruits of the religion of the Bible."⁸¹

Arnold had "gently but firmly rasp[ed] the nation's religious susceptibilities...[and] he had...gone too far to hang back;"⁸² but in a sense the way had been prepared for him by Lecky's The Rise and Influence of Rationalism (1865), in which Lecky had said that "each dogma is the embodiment and inadequate expression of a moral truth, and is worthless except as it is vivified by that truth."⁸³ The statement could very well have served as a guide for Arnold's pronouncements on Dogma. But actually Arnold had his own guide in the events surrounding the publication of Colenso's Pentateuch...Critically Examined (1862). For it was there that Arnold evolved his

⁸⁰Routh, p. 202.

⁸¹M. Arnold, Works, III, 340.

⁸²Routh, p. 202.

⁸³Routh, p. 204.

method of religious criticism in the mediation between orthodoxy and the extremes of rationalism, in the edification of the masses for the purpose of reconciling them to the Bible. In the largest sense, this meant mediation between Enlightenment rationalism and mediaeval scholasticism. Arnold's position was the result of the combining of literary criticism and the new study of history and myth. And though it was the article on the Bishop and the Philosopher which launched him in the seas of religious controversy, it was not until the writing of Literature and Dogma that Arnold, with elements of his religious inheritance, with particular trends in rationalistic thinking, with the confusion of the contemporary scene behind him---or before him---formulated, and with specific reference to these trends and confusions, his contribution to the emancipation from dogma. Each of the six main aspects of Literature and Dogma⁸⁴ clearly reveals the sources from which Arnold derived the materials for his religious synthesis, in his bias against metaphysics, his distinction between scientific and literary language, his bias against anthropomorphism, his rationalism, his emphasis upon eudaemonistic ethics and upon the doctrine of necrosis. The anti-metaphysical bias derived from Dr Arnold and was grounded in the contention that whereas popular religion found its authority in miracles, learned religion found its support in metaphysics, making the

⁸⁴"Matthew Arnold's Literature & Dogma", (Yale diss., 1943), pp. lxix-lxx.

acceptance of either equally impossible: "When we behold the clergy and ministers of religion lament the neglect of religion and aspire to restore it, how must we feel that to restore religion as they understand it, to re-inthronize the Bible as explained by our current theology, whether learned or popular, is absolutely and for ever impossible!"⁸⁵ The aversion against both learned and popular religion became reinforced in Arnold's mind on his recognition of the failure of both to distinguish between what he called scientific and literary language; for it might be asserted that the governing design of Literature and Dogma, from a more than merely philological standpoint, was Arnold's attempt to prove, as he said, that "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."⁸⁶ In addition to this initial step, Arnold saw the need of two pre-requisites, both the attributes of Culture: "some experience of how men have thought and expressed themselves, and some flexibility of spirit."⁸⁷ The understanding that the language of the Bible is literary, not scientific or metaphysical, would preclude any possibility of belief in anthropomorphism, all notions of anthropomorphism deriving ultimately, Arnold felt, from the

⁸⁵Lit. & Dog., 5th ed., p. ix.

⁸⁶Page xv.

⁸⁷Page xv.

dogmatic propositions of scientific language, the technical language of metaphysics. This bias against what Arnold called scientific language took a rather central position in Literature and Dogma, and it had the effect of disconnecting Arnold from religion as mystery and religion as superstition. Arnold's belief that miracles do not happen did not, however, cloud his vision of emotion attached to religion; it was clear to him that a religion dried up by the metaphysics of Anglican ecclesiastics on the one hand and by the rationalizations of the Tübingen school on the other hand could leave but little room for poetry; and science was not the vehicle for moving man to virtuous action. To this extent did Arnold's rationalism inform Literature and Dogma, rationalism not in the sense in which German theologians and their English allies had used the term, rationalism not for the demolition of the Scripture as simply an exploded myth, but rationalism for the putting on the Bible "the right construction" to give it "a real experimental basis, and keep on this basis throughout; instead of any basis of unverifiable assumption...such as the received theology necessitates."⁸⁸ It will be remembered that the salient conclusion of Literature and Dogma is the apparent unwillingness, or inability, of Arnold to subscribe to traditional Christian theology, in terms of its creeds, dogmas,

⁸⁸Pages xii-xiii.

and formularies, even though he willingly accepted the Christian ethic emotionally. "Religion, if we follow the intention of human thought and human language in the use of the word, is ethics heightened, enkindled, lit up by feeling; the passage from morality to religion is made when to morality is applied emotion. And the true meaning of religion is this, not simply morality, but morality touched by emotion."⁸⁹ Religion as ethics heightened has, then, as its object, according to Arnold, the law of righteousness, a great part of which belongs, as Arnold said, to the not ourselves, for we did not make ourselves or our nature, nor did we provide that happiness should follow conduct, "as it undeniably does; that the sense of succeeding, going right, hitting the mark, in conduct should give satisfaction, and a very high satisfaction."⁹⁰ This Old Testament conception of eudaemonism was given new freshness on the advent of Jesus: "The thing was, by giving a fuller idea of righteousness, to reapply emotion to it, and thus by reapplying emotion, to disperse the feeling of being amiss and helpless, to give the sense of being right and effective; to restore, in short, to righteousness the sanction of happiness."⁹¹ Thus was satisfied the need of making righteousness not so

⁸⁹Pages 20-21.

⁹⁰Pages 27, 28.

⁹¹Pages 88-89.

much a national matter, as with the Hebrews of the Old Testament, but an inward and personal matter. This Jesus did. But Arnold did more than simply to define the relationship between proper conduct and the personal happiness of the individual; in terms of Bishop Butler's psychology of the three sources of human action and the passions, he reconstructed the scale of the levels of human conduct, such as with respect to love, conduct, conscience, showing in each of the levels the relationship of moral obligation to personal happiness. Arnold's approach to the religion of the Bible found its literary and ethical culmination in the doctrine of necrosis, one of his central religious ideas, concerned with death and resurrection. In his essay on St Paul, Arnold had given more than an indication of his use of the doctrine; in Literature and Dogma, in ethical terms it became a rule of action: to rise from sin daily, in the spiritual sense, before, not after, the death of the body, with religious inwardness. The doctrine thus became the embodiment of the central truth of Christianity, that the religion of the Bible is a kind of psychological, surely an ethical, and a spiritual experience, addressed to the living side of man; and this is what Arnold meant when he asserted that to put the right construction on the Bible, we give it a real experimental basis. The striving in this direction is seen in Arnold's three-fold purpose in Literature and Dogma, to emphasize the historical, evolutionary nature of Christianity, to demonstrate the advantages of ethical religion as a means

of bringling the masses back to the Bible, to reconcile the divergent tendencies of the times, religion and science. In these its literary and ethical aspects the book offered itself as a contribution to the intellectual deliverance of the age.

Arnold would, of course, if forced to a decision, have "concede[d] to rationalism all it claimed," and then shown the "realities of faith" which remained untouched by reason. This would be the task of literature---to show the realities of faith remaining untouched by reason---but "English divines were not willing to surrender their dogma at the bidding of literature; and English agnostics persisted in treating the poet of 'Empedocles' and 'Obermann' as one of themselves."⁹² The task of literature Arnold well understood, especially as literature concerned the public statements of Lord Salisbury and the Bishops of Winchester and Gloucester:

The distinguished Chancellor of the University of Oxford thought it needful to tell us on a public occasion lately [*i.e.*, in his Keble College speech], that 'religion is no more to be severed from dogma than light from the sun.' Everyone, again, remembers the Bishops of Winchester and Gloucester making in Convocation their remarkable effort 'to do something,' as they said, 'for the honour of Our Lord's Godhead,' and to mark their sense of 'that infinite separation for time and for eternity which is involved in rejecting the Godhead of the Eternal Son.' ⁹³

This criticism of the advocates of dogma appeared in the Introduction to Literature and Dogma, more severe in the earlier editions of that book. Arnold wished that Salisbury had said

⁹²Benn, II, 316.

⁹³Lit. & Dog., 5th ed., p. 4.

instead that "Religion is no more to be severed from the true doctrine of religion than light from the sun."⁹⁴ And Arnold hastened to add that "dogma and the true doctrine of religion are not exactly synonyms. Dogma means, not necessarily a true doctrine, but merely a doctrine or system of doctrine determined, decreed, received."⁹⁵ Arnold could, therefore, as he said, "honestly tell our dogmatic friends, that we agree with them in disliking an indefinite religion, in preferring a definite one. Our quarrel with them is, not that they define religion, but that they define it so abominably."⁹⁶ Arnold would, therefore, demonstrate the relationship of letters to religion, "of their effect upon dogma, and of the consequence of this to religion,"⁹⁷ thereby re-defining religion. The demonstration was apparently worth the effort; it was clear to Arnold that dogmatists loved religion, since they made it the professional business of their lives.⁹⁸ "For the good of letters is, that they require no extraordinary acuteness such as is required to handle the theory of causation like the Archbishop of York, or the doctrine of the Godhead of the Eternal Son like

⁹⁴Page 188.

⁹⁵Page 188.

⁹⁶Page 189.

⁹⁷Page 6.

⁹⁸Page 6.

the Bishops of Winchester and Gloucester."⁹⁹ Apparently, as far as York and Winchester and Gloucester were concerned, Arnold was willing, in the phrasing of the historian Benn, to concede to rationalism all it claimed, but as far as certain German theologians and their English allies were concerned, Arnold was apparently unwilling to concede to rationalism all it claimed, though Benn took pains to point out Arnold's indebtedness to the German school, how much he took from it, and the greater amount which he took and which he tried to make small by his sneers.¹⁰⁰ He did admit, in God and the Bible, "The freethinking of one age is the common-sense of the next, and the Christian world will certainly learn to transform beliefs which it now thinks to be untransformable."¹⁰¹ But German criticism, "both negative and constructive, appears to me to be often extremely fanciful and untrustworthy," although some of the critics "are men of great ability."¹⁰² The insights and abilities of Ferdinand Christian Baur (1792-1860) Arnold admired, though he dedicated part of God and the Bible to controverting Baur's theories on the Fourth Gospel. For

⁹⁹Page 7. See the important Prefaces to Literature and Dogma and God and the Bible. Less topical are the references to the bishops of Winchester and Gloucester in editions of Lit. & Dog. subsequent to the fourth. Arnold had harsh words for Saml Wilberforce, Bishop of Winchester since 1869, though he later somewhat regretted those words. See Brown, Matthew Arnold, pp. 153-154.

¹⁰⁰Benn, II, 318.

¹⁰¹M. Arnold, Works, VIII[God and the Bible], xliv.

¹⁰²Page v.

such as Colenso, who, according to Arnold, offered nothing to take the place of what they took away from the Bible, he reserved his most bitter criticism: Colenso had "merely" destroyed "the illusions of popular Christianity," which was an "indefensible" act; Colenso had not united men's imaginations (imagination in the Wordsworthian sense) with their sense of virtue and conduct.¹⁰³

This was one of Arnold's purposes, to "re-unite man's imagination," he wrote in the Preface to God and the Bible, "with his virtue and conduct," a difficult thing to accomplish, especially "when," as he said, "the tie between them has been once broken."¹⁰⁴ This governing idea of both Literature and Dogma and God and the Bible, the re-uniting of the imagination with virtue and conduct, was intended to apply to the man "who is conversant with the Bible, who can feel the attraction of

¹⁰³Pages xi-xii. The work of Baur was a good example of corrective criticism. His commentary on the significance corrected Strauss' limitations. The intellectual leader of the "new" Tübingen school, Baur, in interpreting the Fourth Gospel, worked far in advance of Strauss, as the latter himself acknowledged. An essential difference between the two was one of method: where the approach of the former was more metaphysical, that of the latter more historical. Strauss had really to answer the question, "What is the historical kernel of the evangelical tradition? what was the real character of Jesus' personality and ministry?" (See Strauss, Life of Jesus, p. xviii). This "kernel" Strauss' "myth" dialectic could not supply (McCown, p. 60).

¹⁰⁴Pages xi-xii.

the Christian religion, but who has acquired habits of intellectual seriousness, has been revolted by having things presented solemnly to him for his use which will not hold water, and who will start with none of such things even to reach what he values."¹⁰⁵ In both books the appeal was not to intellectual seriousness for its own sake; the appeal was to the intellectual honesty of the individual, to show the individual that in matters religious there was nothing to be lost by the application to religion of intellectual seriousness.¹⁰⁶ The method which Arnold chose to illustrate his appeal to intellectual seriousness was not the writing of a history of religion, he protested, but rather the tracing of its "effect on the language of the men from whom we get the Bible."¹⁰⁷ And the starting point for Arnold was, therefore, in Israel, where he discovered that the idea of God in the Hebrew consciousness and the idea of righteousness in the Hebrew nation fitted nicely with his idea of conduct. But to re-unite man's imagination to this idea of conduct Arnold had first to seek out, in a most interesting sort of intellectual exercise, the literary meaning, pragmatic use of the word or the idea of the word God.

¹⁰⁵Page xxxvii.

¹⁰⁶Page xxxvii.

¹⁰⁷Lit. & Dog., 5th ed., p. 30.

Since the God of theology was inadmissible into Arnold's concept of religion, he set about to re-define the idea of God.

The seemingly incurable ambiguity in the mode of employing this word is at the root of all our religious differences and difficulties. People use it as if it stood for a perfectly definite and ascertained idea, from which we might, without more ado, extract propositions and draw inferences, just as we should from any other definite and ascertained idea. ¹⁰⁸

It was ever so: "Terms...which with St Paul are literary terms, theologians have employed as if they were scientific terms."¹⁰⁹

Arnold had at length shown the mischief of such usage in St Paul and Protestantism; now in Literature and Dogma he showed the mischief of such scientific and at the same time inaccurate usage with reference to the term God, "a term of poetry and eloquence, a term thrown out, so to speak, at a not fully grasped object of the speaker's consciousness, a literary term, in short; and mankind mean different things by it as their consciousness differs."¹¹⁰ Thus the word God, used in connection with the idea of morality and perfection, could not of itself, even when so used, be considered a definite and ascertained idea, although morality and perfection are in themselves definite and ascertained ideas:

¹⁰⁸Page 11.

¹⁰⁹Page 10.

¹¹⁰Page 12.

Morality represents for everybody a thoroughly definite and ascertained idea:---the idea of human conduct regulated in a certain manner. Everybody, again, understands distinctly enough what is meant by man's perfection:---his reaching the best which his powers and circumstances allow him to reach. And the word 'God' is used, in connection with both these words, morality and perfection, as if it stood for just as definite and ascertained an idea as they do; an idea drawn from experience, just as the ideas are which they stand for.¹¹¹

For Arnold an alternative worse than the identification of God with the definite and ascertained ideas of morality and perfection was the scientific or theological sense of the word God which derived from notions of an "infinite and eternal substance," a personal first cause, and "the moral governor of the universe."¹¹² Philologically speaking, the basic idea of the term God, assuming that persons in general use the term in its poetic sense,---from the point of view of philology, of which Arnold made some use, the word God, or Theos, Deus, Deve, all have the meaning of shining or brilliant.¹¹³ Arnold stressed the value of "etymological definition [which] becomes [important] when the imported meaning is unfixed."¹¹⁴ The poet in Israel defined the idea of God best in the relations of the idea of God to Experience, that is, to conduct; and in his poetry the poet found the Eternal and expressed the eternal in terms of conduct or righteousness. Apparently through the philological interpretation of the idea of God Arnold began to work his way toward his concept of righteousness in Israel. For the law of

¹¹¹Page 11.

¹¹²Page 13.

¹¹³Page 12.

¹¹⁴M. Arnold, Works, VIII[God and the Bible], p. 29. Placing value upon an etymological definition was contrary, according to Arnold, to Archbishop Whately, who "blames those who define words by their etymology."

righteousness was the object of attention to the Hebrew nation, religion to the Hebrew nation being a binding to righteousness, as Arnold traced the development of the idea of God. On the simplicity of righteousness, as opposed to the complexity of metaphysics, all moralists, Arnold said, are agreed:

'Let any plain honest man,' says Bishop Butler, 'before he engages in any course of action' (he means action of the very kind we call conduct), 'ask himself: Is this I am going about right or is it wrong? is it good or is it evil? I do not in the least doubt but that this question would be answered agreeably to truth and virtue by almost any fair man in almost any circumstance.'¹¹⁵

This is not metaphysics; this is religion; and religion has as its object conduct, "and conduct is really, however men may overlay it with philosophical disquisitions, the simplest thing in the world."¹¹⁶ To the objection that this is not religion but merely morality, "morality, ethics, conduct being by many people, and above all by theologians, carefully contradistinguished from religion,"¹¹⁷ Arnold answered that religion "means simply either a binding to righteousness, or else a serious attending to righteousness and dwelling upon it,"¹¹⁸ wholly apart from any notions concerning the God-head of the Eternal Son, or the particularly Puritan notions of justification and election. Thus morality, or better yet morality touched by

¹¹⁵Lit. & Dog., 5th ed., p. 18.

¹¹⁶Page 14.

¹¹⁷Pages 19, 20.

¹¹⁸Page 20.

emotion, is well defined in the word righteousness, for while conduct and morality might be the words reserved for common life and philosophical disquisition respectively, righteousness remains the word of religion.¹¹⁹ Now this idea of righteousness, strongly felt in the Hebrew nation in terms of conduct, the word of everyday living,¹²⁰ was, to be sure, personified in the idea of the Eternal. Israel was orator and poet.

Man never knows how anthropomorphic he is, says Goethe, and so man tends always to represent everything under his own figure. In poetry and eloquence man may and must follow this tendency, but in science it often leads him astray. Israel, however, did not scientifically predicate personality of God; he would not even have had a notion what was meant by it.¹²¹

Notwithstanding Israel's "turn for personification," his lack of ability in "abstruse reasoning," his "scientific disadvantages" in short, or rather because of these disadvantages, "the tongue of Israel kept a propriety, a reserve, a sense of the inadequacy of language in conveying man's ideas of God, which contrast strongly with the license of affirmation in our Western theology."¹²² It was not out of the concern over the scientific proof of God ---"for science, God is simply the stream of tendency by which all things fulfil the law of their being"¹²³ ---but out of the

¹¹⁹Page 21.

¹²⁰Page 26.

¹²¹Page 34.

¹²²Page 39.

¹²³Page 43.

concern over conduct that the sense of morality and religion grew, the motive to do right being to please not ourselves but to please God. It was at this point that Arnold begged to erase the distinction between the ethical and the religious. There should then be no antithesis between ethical and religious, as there is no antithesis between natural and revealed religion. "For that in us which is really natural is, in truth, revealed;" and this appears so in the sense that "the religion of the Bible..., well said to be revealed, [asserts] the great natural truth, that 'righteousness tendeth to life.'"¹²⁴ The religious is the ethical; both are one in the same: if happiness derives from man's knowing that he is in any way, as Arnold said, fulfilling the law of his being, that he is "succeeding and hitting the mark," then happiness in proportionately greater abundance derives from "so great a thing as conduct."¹²⁵ Quintillian demonstrated how right conduct gives joy. And Bishop Butler, "at the view of happiness from conduct, breaks free from all hesitancy and depression which so commonly hangs on his masterly thinking. 'Self-love, methinks, should be alarmed! May she not pass over greater pleasures than those she is so wholly taken up with?'"¹²⁶ But to qualify Butler's abandon

¹²⁴Pages 50, 51-52.

¹²⁵Page 46.

¹²⁶Page 46.

in the matter Arnold reflected that the "English are taunted with our proneness to an unworthy eudaemonism, and an Anglican bishop may perhaps be a suspected witness."¹²⁷ God, then, or the Eternal, in this connection, was another way, "a dēeply moved way of saying conduct or righteousness."¹²⁸ Arnold thus arrived at his definition of God, within the context of Israel's concept of righteousness.

The real germ of religious consciousness, therefore, out of which sprang Israel's name for God, to which the records of his history adapted themselves, and which came to be clothed upon, in time, with a mighty growth of poetry and tradition, was a consciousness of the not ourselves which makes for righteousness. And the way to convince oneself of this is by studying the Bible with a fair mind, and with the tact which letters, surely, alone can give. ¹²⁹

Arnold defended his definition of God; and a clear understanding of his definition, in all its eudaemonistic aspects, which have been outlined here, was, he felt, important; otherwise, "all fruitful discussion in theology is impossible."¹³⁰ For Arnold, the God of popular religion---may it be written again ---was a legend, "a fairy-tale" which "learned theology" had "dressed metaphysically;"¹³¹ for Arnold, the God of experience was verifiable in religion and in ethics, taking both words to mean practical in the sense that conduct passes into the habit

¹²⁷Page 47.

¹²⁸Page 48.

¹²⁹Page 53.

¹³⁰M. Arnold, Works, VIII, 25, 26. See Fisher, p. 245.

¹³¹M. Arnold, Works, VIII, 18.

of attending to righteousness.¹³² He denied that the introduction of the not ourselves into the idea of God only contributed to what he called the seemingly incurable ambiguity in the mode of employing the word God; he denied that his definition of God was nothing more than "a refined metaphysical conception."¹³³ It is perhaps true that what Arnold himself said of the scientific definition of God, namely that "it attempts far too much,"¹³⁴ could also apply to his own definition. Nevertheless, Arnold succeeded insofar as he related the idea of God to the language of the Hebrew religionist, the language of poetry and emotion, to the motives of conduct of the Hebrew nation.

The conception of the God of religion as a poetical personification¹³⁵ with the object of religious faith and practice in conduct and morality, but morality touched by emotion,--- such a conception of God is not a scientific conception in the theological or metaphysical sense but a purely poetic conception, covered by the term aberglaube. "Latter belief," that which was imposed upon the "religion given" of the Hebrew nation, Arnold called a "fairy tale."

It is exactly what is expressed by the German word 'Aberglaube,' extra-belief, belief beyond what is certain and verifiable. Our word 'superstition' had by its derivation this same meaning, but it has come to be used in a merely bad sense, and to mean a childish and craven religiosity. With the German word

¹³²M. Arnold, Works, VIII, 34-35.

¹³³M. Arnold, Works, VIII, 127.

¹³⁴Lit. & Dog., 5th ed., p. 43.

¹³⁵See Pfleiderer, p. 330.

it is not so; therefore Goethe can say with propriety and truth: 'Aberglaube is the poetry of life,---der Aberglaube ist die Poesie des Lebens.' It is so. Extra-belief, that which we hope, augur, imagine, is the poetry of life. But it is not science; and yet it tends always to imagine itself science, to substitute itself for science, to make itself the ground of the very science out of which it has grown.¹³⁶

An aspect of Arnold's use of aberglaube is the idea of the Eternal, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness, in the view of historian Pfleiderer nothing new either in Holland or in Germany, where it was "simply another form of the sittliche Weltordnung which Fichte...pronounced the essence of the idea of God."¹³⁷ Arnold's objection to aberglaube was not so much in its religious use per se but in its metaphysical use; he apparently saw little danger in a man's helping himself achieve the object of religion, conduct, "by taking an object of hope and presentiment as if it were an object of certainty...."¹³⁸ But this advantage could have drawbacks. He explained,

When the generation, for which this advent [of Jesus] was first fixed, had passed away without it, Christians discovered by a process of criticism common enough in popular theology, but by which, as Bishop Butler says of a like kind of process, 'anything may be made out of anything,'---they discovered that the advent had never really been fixed for that first generation by the writers of the New Testament, but that it was foretold, and certainly in store, for a later time. So the Aberglaube was perpetuated, placed out of reach of all practical test, and made stronger than ever.¹³⁹

¹³⁶Lit. & Dog., 5th ed., pp. 80-81.

¹³⁷Pfleiderer, p. 331. In Literature and Dogma and God and the Bible "Matthew Arnold has advocated, as a substitute for supernatural religion, an ethical idealism very much of the same nature as that of Fichte" (Pfleiderer, p. 330).

¹³⁸Lit. & Dog., 5th ed., pp. 111-112.

¹³⁹Page 110.

Thus it was taken that the germ of Christianity was to be found in the Old Testament. But the "religion given" of the Old Testament was greatly enhanced by the "religion new-given" of Jesus Christ, by still another aspect of righteousness; and that other aspect was what Arnold called religious inwardness, for the religion of the Old Testament was primarily a matter of national and social conduct.¹⁴⁰

Conduct, righteousness, is, above all, a matter of inward motion and rule. No sensible forms can represent it, or help us to it; such attempts at representation can only distract us from it. So, too, with the sense of the oneness of God. 'The Lord our God is one Lord.' People think that in this unity of God, ---this monotheistic idea, as they call it,---they have certainly got metaphysics at last. They have got nothing of the kind. The monotheistic idea of Israel is simply seriousness. There are, indeed, many aspects of the not ourselves; but Israel regarded one aspect of it only, that by which it makes for righteousness.¹⁴¹

In "religion new-given," together with the poetic implications of aberglaube, it was "Jesus Christ's new and different was of putting things" which made his "secret" and his success where the prophets of the Old Testament, for example, had failed.

"And this new way he had of putting things is what is indicated by the expression epieikeia,---an expression best rendered... by these two words: 'sweet reasonableness.'¹⁴² But Jesus Christ also exhibited two other qualities which tended to enhance the idea of the not ourselves, which tended to counteract

¹⁴⁰Page 85.

¹⁴¹Page 36.

¹⁴²Pages 90, 91.

"our ordinary self." These qualities were self-renouncement and mildness.¹⁴³ And here Arnold continued the eudaemonism which he defended in God and the Bible:

From our use of the proof from happiness, accusations have been brought against us of eudaemonism, utilitarianism. We are reproached...with utilitarianism, with making, 'conformably to the tradition of the English school self-interest the spring of human action.' Utilitarianism! Surely a pedant invented the word; and oh, what pedants have been at work in employing it! But that joy and happiness are the magnets to which human life inevitably moves, let not the reader of Literature and Dogma for a moment confuse his mind by doubting. The real objection is to low and false views of what constitutes happiness. Pleasure and utility are bad words to employ, because they have been so used to suggest such views. But joy and happiness, on the whole, have not. We may safely say, then, that joy and happiness are the magnets to which human life irresistibly moves.¹⁴⁴

Arnold then summoned to his side St Augustine, Pascal, Barrow, and Bishop Butler. "'It is manifest [said Butler] that nothing can be of consequence to mankind, or any creature, but happiness.'¹⁴⁵ Sweet reasonableness thus pointed up the salutary effects of conduct and righteousness: "For that which is epieikes is that which has an air of truth and likelihood; and that which has an air of truth and likelihood is prepossessing."¹⁴⁶ When Jesus in his manner of self-renouncement and mildness re-defined the Old Testament idea of righteousness he revived a religion of personal

¹⁴³Page 93.

¹⁴⁴M. Arnold, Works, VIII, 154-155.

¹⁴⁵Page 155. The loudest objections to the happiness principle came, Arnold said, from theologians of the Unitarian school (God and the Bible [Works, Vol. VIII], p. 156).

¹⁴⁶Lit. & Dog., 5th ed., 91.

inwardness: the method of Jesus, then, was in his setting up an inward movement of "attention and verification in matters which are three-fourths of human life."¹⁴⁷ This kind of self-examination required of the individual by the method was not, however, according to Arnold, enough to provide a rule for virtuous action by itself, though the inducement to attend to conduct offered joy and peace on this line as on the other. The rule of action which motivated the method of Jesus was his secret, and the secret was necrosis. "It was this of which the Apostle Paul afterwards possessed himself with such energy, and called it 'the word of the cross,' or, necrosis, dying. The rule of action St Paul gave was: 'Always bearing about in the body of the dying Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our body.'¹⁴⁸ Inwardness. Self-renouncement. This interpretation of necrosis, not in the popular sense of "pleading the blood of the covenant," emphasized the taking up of the cross daily;¹⁴⁹ this sense of necrosis made of the concept of the death and resurrection not only a psychological and literary thing but also an experimental thing,¹⁵⁰ quite apart from the compelling nature of the thing taken as a miracle.

¹⁴⁷Page 202.

¹⁴⁸Page 207.

¹⁴⁹Pages 207-208.

¹⁵⁰M. Arnold, Works, VIII, 39.

Religious affirmation stems not from miracles or creeds, Arnold repeated in both Literature and Dogma and God and the Bible. The object of Literature and Dogma, Arnold said, "has never been to argue against miracles [but] to save the revelation in the Bible from being made solidary, as our Comtist friends say, with miracles; from being attended to or held cheap just in proportion as miracles are attended to or are held cheap."¹⁵¹ This was Arnold's position: that the miracles of the Church, the Roman Catholic Church for example, and the miracles of the Bible together or separately would not, contrary to the view of Archbishop Whately, "stand sifting by a London special jury or by a committee of scientific men."¹⁵² Nor could the creeds of the Church, those certain formularies, the Apostles' Creed (popular science), and the Athanasian Creed ("learned science with a strong dash of temper"), composed in the period of the re-invasion of aberglaube, in the period of "declining criticism," and out of "educated people's Aryan genius with its turn for making religion a metaphysical conception," ---nor could these Creeds, the learned and popular science of Christianity, stand much sifting.¹⁵³ All such false criticism of the Bible would, Arnold wished to believe, be gone with the

¹⁵¹Lit. & Dog., 5th ed., p. 259.

¹⁵²Page 134.

¹⁵³Pages 288, 291.

coming of the new zeit-geist, and not just the so-called damnatory clauses of the Athanasian Creed, "but the whole Creed; not the one Creed only, but the three Creeds,---our whole received application of science, popular or learned, to the Bible. For it was an inadequate and false science, and could not, from the nature of the case, be otherwise."¹⁵⁴

At this point, Arnold again called upon Bishop Butler, this time to take exception to him:

Now, it is remarkable what a resting on mere probabilities, or even less than probabilities, the proof for religion comes, in the hands of its great apologist, Butler, to be, even after he has started with the assumption of his moral and intelligent Governor. And no wonder; for in the primary assumption itself there is and can be nothing experimental and clearly known. So that of Christianity, as Butler grounds it, the natural criticism would really be in these words of his own: 'Suppositions are not to be looked upon as true, because not incredible.' However, Butler maintains that in matters of practice, such as religion, this is not so. In them it is prudent, he says, to act on even a supposition, if it is not incredible. Even the doubting about religion implies, he argues, that it may be true. Now, in matters of practice, we are bound in prudence, he says, to act upon what may be a low degree of evidence; yes, 'even though it be so low as to leave the mind in very great doubt what is the truth.'¹⁵⁵

Arnold was thinking of the masses. Was there ever, he asked, such a way, as Bishop Butler had suggested, of establishing righteousness? "And suppose," he offered, "we tried this with rude, hard, downright people, with the masses, who for what is told them want a plain experimental proof, such as that fire

¹⁵⁴Page 300.

¹⁵⁵Pages 331-332.

will burn if you touch it."¹⁵⁶ He seemed certain, at any rate, that the masses, though, as he said, they ought to accept the Bible and religion "on a low degree of evidence...it is quite certain that on this ground they never will take them."¹⁵⁷ He appealed in God and the Bible to the unchallengeable rule of Descartes, "never to receive anything as true without having clearly known of it for such" and re-iterated his opposition to Butler's proposal "that we should take as the foundation of our religion something for which we had a low degree of probability!"¹⁵⁸ Arnold's critics protested that his whole argument rested upon the assertion that miracles did not, do not, happen and that he had failed to prove their impossibility; and Arnold answered that his repeated admission was that miracles did not and do not happen. "That miracles cannot happen we do not attempt to prove; the demonstration is too ambitious. That they do not happen, that what are called miracles are not what the believers in them fancy, but have a natural history of which we can follow the course, the slow action of experience...shows; and shows, too, that there is no exception to be made in favour of the Bible-miracles."¹⁵⁹ He found no need in Literature and Dogma to discredit miracles, since already they were so widely discredited.¹⁶⁰ Religious

¹⁵⁶Page 332.

¹⁵⁷Page 332.

¹⁵⁸M. Arnold, Works, VIII, 58.

¹⁵⁹M. Arnold, Works, VIII, 368, 369.

¹⁶⁰M. Arnold, Works, VIII, 369-370.

affirmation consisted, then, in the kind or degree of value to be placed upon the residue of the revelation of the Bible, exclusive of the ornamentation of miracle and formulary.

To popular Christianity, from those who can see its errors, is due an indulgence inexhaustible, except where limits are required to it for the good of religion itself. Two considerations make this indulgence right. One is, that the language of the Bible being,---which is the great point a sound criticism establishes against dogmatic theology, ---approximate, not scientific, in all expressions of religious feeling approximate language is lawful.... Learned religion, however, the pseudo-science of dogmatic theology, merits no such indulgence. It is a separate accretion, which never had any business to be attached to Christianity, never did it any good, and now does it great harm, and thickens an hundredfold the religious confusion in which we live.¹⁶¹

For the true greatness of Christianity lay "in that immense experimental proof of the necessity of it,"¹⁶² while dogmatic theology impaired that Christianity and, by implication, conduct (and the Bible is, according to Arnold, the Book of Conduct).¹⁶³ So Arnold returned once more to Culture and coupled with it the idea of righteousness, its religious manifestation; for "Culture, then, and literature are required, even in the interest of religion itself, and when, taking nothing but conduct into account, we make God, as Israel made him, to be simply and solely 'the Eternal Power, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness.'"¹⁶⁴

¹⁶¹Lit. & Dog., 5th ed., pp. 355-356, 358.

¹⁶²Lit. & Dog., 5th ed., p. 387.

¹⁶³Lit. & Dog., 5th ed., p. 399.

¹⁶⁴Lit. & Dog., 5th ed., p. 401.

To Matthew Arnold, all this, the intricate relationships of Culture and righteousness, virtue and happiness, was quite clear. To Matthew Arnold's critics, however, these relationships were not always clear, nor were his definitions, which seemed to some inadequate and to others merely the shibboleths of his own "technical" language. Some of his critics took exception to his dilettantism, to his logic, to his peculiar brand of dissent, to his lack of originality; while others challenged his ruling ideas and claimed that he did not make plain the connection between letters, or Culture, and modern society. The criticism of Literature and Dogma, not mild yet moderate,¹⁶⁵ surprised Arnold, and this

in spite of a tolerably long experience of men's propensity to mistake things. Again and again I was reproached with having done, in [Literature and Dogma], just what I had formerly blamed the Bishop of Natal for doing. But Literature and Dogma had altogether for its object, and so too has the present work [God and the Bible], to show [Arnold insisted] the truth and necessity of Christianity, and its power and charm for the heart, mind, and imagination of man, even though the preternatural, which is now its popular sanction, should have to be given up.¹⁶⁶

Arnold insisted he had not made any attempt to do what the Bishop of Natal had done; rather he had sought in Literature and Dogma, through the exposition of the verifiable portions of the Bible, those portions verifiable by experience, and the

¹⁶⁵M. Arnold, Works, VIII, 3.

¹⁶⁶Page x.

literary, poetical, aspects of the Bible, the restoration of its general use.¹⁶⁷ Nevertheless, F. W. Newman, in a review of Literature and Dogma,¹⁶⁸ specifically charged Arnold, who had given "scandal to sincere men by strictures on Bishop Colenso," with now making a clean breast of it: "He does not explain why such utterances [as Colenso's] were premature ten or twenty years ago. It is easily understood that he [Arnold] was not then ripe; but as the times were ripe, and other men were ripe, they did not deserve his rebuke." Newman noted that Literature and Dogma was to be accepted as "virtually an apology to Bishop Colenso, though his name, we believe, is not found in it." Besides this lack of originality on Arnold's part, Newman referred to Arnold's linguistic "technicalities" in the use of "method," "secret," "sweet reasonableness," "Eternal;" and he found it difficult "to understand how a man who talks so much of sweetness can have managed to steep his pen in such monotonous sourness..., how one who surveys the field of thought from a loftier plane can descend into such pettiness of jangling."¹⁶⁹ Arnold's use of phrasing from the Bible which suited his purpose, his rejection of all orthodoxy, the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Atonement, Justification, the Resurrection of the body, and

¹⁶⁷Page 25.

¹⁶⁸Fraser's Magazine, [n.s.], VIII(1873), 114.

¹⁶⁹Page 115.

all miracles, in the manner of the Unitarians, "whom he treats with very needless insolence," his certainty that Culture was the remedy for the "lapsed masses," indeed his use of Culture in a technical sense---all this Newman felt to be an inadequate basis for the founding of morality on anything but inspired Scripture.¹⁷⁰

Among the first of the reviewers to attack Arnold's position was the reviewer who acted as spokesman for the orthodox¹⁷¹ in The Dublin Review. He described Arnold as an "independent literary critic indeed, with a remarkable turn for calling common things by most uncommon names, and with a turn equally remarkable for speaking of the highest things in not quite the highest terms."¹⁷² He objected (and this was the objection of others, too) primarily to the definition of God by Arnold as first the stream of tendency by which all things seek to fulfil the law of their being and then as the Eternal Power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness, though neither he nor the others took into account the social and moral context into which Arnold cast his definition, insisting rather that Israel had thought of God as a person and citing passages from Scripture which appeared to prove the point. The reviewer, describing

¹⁷⁰Pages 116, 119, 120, 121.

¹⁷¹Faverty, p. 183.

¹⁷²"Literature and Dogma," The Dublin Review, [n.s.], XX([Apr.]1873), 360.

Arnold's religion touched by emotion, directed his readers: "Contemplate some moral proposition; wait till it moves you; make some eloquent remark, or utter some excited exclamation, and you have got religion. Religion in reality is chiefly made up of dashes, interjections, and notes of exclamation."¹⁷³ When England would come at last to make the choice, the reviewer predicted, between "God and the stream of tendency, between Catholicity and Nihilism, we have no doubt where her choice will fall;"¹⁷⁴ to which Arnold replied, in God and the Bible, that "an Englishman should always ask himself with shame: If Irish Catholicism is provincial in its violence and virulence, whose fault is it?"¹⁷⁵ The writer in The Dublin Review apparently had in mind, when he spoke of Nihilism, Strauss' new book, Der alte und der neue Glaube, which appeared in an English translation in 1873: "The two latest expounders of the new system are Dr Strauss and Mr Matthew Arnold."¹⁷⁶ Strauss' new book tempered somewhat the earlier strictures of Das Leben Jesu, showed the influence of Darwin, offered its readers the choice of their own morality and explained that the consciousness of the self was equivalent to the consciousness of God, and concluded that religion is valid for mankind with only culture

¹⁷³Page 363.

¹⁷⁴Page 380.

¹⁷⁵M. Arnold, Works, VIII, 3.

¹⁷⁶The Dublin Review, [n.s.], XX(1873), 359.

working upon the imagination and not on the reason.¹⁷⁷ Reviewers claimed outright or implied that the whole of Literature and Dogma derived from Strauss and the Tübingen school.¹⁷⁸ But Arnold did not imitate in the least that close sort of scholarship which was the characteristic of the German school, and in this respect certainly the accusations against him were unwarranted. In God and the Bible Arnold made a special point of it. "It is contested [he remarked]...that inquiries as to the exact date, the real authorship, the first publication, the rank of priority..., of our four Gospels, can with any truth be called, as we have called them, unessential, or that the data are insufficient...."¹⁷⁹

Theologians objected to the man of letters thus invading their domain, a man of letters, a literary adventurer, as the reviewer in Blackwood's charged, disporting himself and whetting his appetite for speculation and culture.¹⁸⁰ The reviewer for Blackwood's considered Arnold's work on literature and dogma merely a pamphlet directed against the bishops of Winchester and Gloucester,¹⁸¹ exhibiting in a "most aggravated form" the faults of the author,¹⁸² and continuing the "vein of flippant personality,

¹⁷⁷See D. F. Strauss, The Old Faith and the New, §43; also Routh, p. 217.

¹⁷⁸See a Review of Lit. & Dog., Lippincott's Magazine, XII (1873), 126. Also, The North American Review, CXVII(1873), 243. Also, "Doctrine and Dogma," The London Quarterly Review, XL(1873), 413.

¹⁷⁹M. Arnold, Works, VIII, 162.

¹⁸⁰Blackwood's Magazine, CXIII(1873), 679.

¹⁸¹Page 681.

¹⁸²Page 681.

designed as pleasantries, which marked" in St Paul the attitude toward Dissenters and which in Literature and Dogma marked the attitude toward bishops.¹⁸³ In spite of Arnold's conception of dogma, the reviewer continued, "as a mere excrescence or disease of religion,"¹⁸⁴ "Dogmatic Theology will survive Mr Arnold's witticisms, and even the touch of the 'Ithuriel spear of the Zeit-Geist' which he evidently thinks he wields with no little effect."¹⁸⁵ A month after Blackwood's attack, The Theological Review amplified the cry against Arnold and the logic of his reasoning:

Mr Arnold's loathing of Dissent, as often as he mentions it, the peculiar want of insight and 'culture' which for him obliterates all distinction between political nonconformity and the righteous protest of the individual conscience which cannot join in the public declaration of Creeds which reason sees to be false, and of conceptions of God which the soul rejects as below the standards of humanity, is so akin to the one defect in himself, want of the simple reflectiveness that presents a living God to the living spirit, which spoils the perfection of his book and limits him to a treatment of ethical and literary aspects of religion, that, very reluctantly, we are compelled to notice it.¹⁸⁶

The Theological Review had to notice the book, because, as it admitted, Arnold's mouth was at last opened and because "things have become so bad that they cannot possibly be made worse [and] it must be confessed that he speaks now to some purpose."¹⁸⁷

¹⁸³Page 681.

¹⁸⁴Page 691.

¹⁸⁵Page 692.

¹⁸⁶"Religion in the Hands of Literary Laymen," The Theological Review, X(1873), 378.

¹⁸⁷Page 381.

However, the reviewer continued, if the language of the Bible is literary, not fixed or scientific, as Arnold had said, then Arnold had not overlooked the fact that "the religion of England is all made to rest upon Dogma, and the Dogma is made to rest upon the language of the Bible, and this is to make figures of speech the basis of scientific language."¹⁸⁸ Perhaps the remedy for the unhappy situation was large reading, the "width of literary culture" which the reviewer mentioned; perhaps the only verifiable basis of the Bible was to be found in righteousness;¹⁸⁹ but Arnold's shibboleths did not assure the remedy.

Arnold's shibboleths did not at all assure the remedy insofar as The Fortnightly Review was concerned. If Arnold's purpose was to demonstrate that literary culture was a better means than philosophy and science and theology or apprehending the Bible,---and this is what Arnold did demonstrate in Literature and Dogma,---he had not convinced The Fortnightly Review:

Mr Arnold has a 'secret' as well as a 'method,' and his prejudice against...abstract or...precise reasoning prevents his making the connection between the two as plain as might be wished; but he gives us a very interesting literary example of the truth which he fails to state irrefragably; and, perhaps, the best praise of the wide and various culture he recommends is to be found in the fact that it has brought a critic of rare tact and fine perception to practical conclusions scarcely distinguishable from those of his best adversaries.¹⁹⁰

There were many he had not quite convinced. The objections to

¹⁸⁸Page 381.

¹⁸⁹Pages 381-382.

¹⁹⁰The Fortnightly Review, [n.s.], XIII(1873), 543.

Literature and Dogma took various forms, some reviewers explaining merely that Arnold's use of Culture meant hardly more than a literary method applied to the reading of the Scriptures,¹⁹¹ some charging that literary catch-words would not satisfy and that, moreover, Arnold did not make fast the connection between his idea of Culture and the zeit-geist,¹⁹² some complaining that the title of the book "describes but ill the essential substance of the matter presented, which is really Mr Arnold's view of what was the Jewish conception of God,"¹⁹³ some opposing the reduction of the Bible to what they called "the refined and spiritual stoicism of an Epictetus,"¹⁹⁴ some taking issue with Arnold's choice of words and tone, citing passages from Arnold's text and singling out "the most vulgar piece of English that we have seen from the pen of Mr Arnold,"¹⁹⁵ some asserting that Arnold's theories "will be accepted by some as the last effectual mingling of literary grace and spiritual insight; but others, especially when they find him saying that conduct cannot be perfected except by culture, will think this work the sheep's head and shoulders covering the bust of Voltaire."¹⁹⁶

¹⁹¹The North American Review, .CXVII(1873), 241.

¹⁹²"Modern Culture," The Quarterly Review, CXXXVII(1874), 402. Cf. M. Arnold, Works, VIII, 136ff., 148.

¹⁹³The Nation, XVII(1873), 131.

¹⁹⁴The Penn Monthly, IV(1873), 580.

¹⁹⁵The London Quarterly Review, XL(1873), 421.

Cf. Lit. & Dog., Ch. VII.

¹⁹⁶Lippincott's Magazine, XII(1873), 128.

But it was not on points of theology that Literature and Dogma was criticized primarily. On sociological and anthropological points too, according to Mr Faverty, "his [Arnold's] hypothesis was held to be untenable.... A conception of God as a personal deity, according to the Westminster Review, was the first stage in the history of every religion...."¹⁹⁷ Taking issue with Arnold's definitions, The Westminster Review objected to Arnold's view that Israel worshipped a not ourselves which makes for righteousness.¹⁹⁸ Such strictures, some of the petty, Arnold answered in God and the Bible, particularly one of the main objections to Literature and Dogma, his conception of God.¹⁹⁹ It seemed for a time as though the admirers of Literature and Dogma might be found in the most unlikely places, for when Arnold was bringing out the fourth edition of the book, a French army surgeon wrote to him to say that he had made a translation of it.²⁰⁰

What Arnold had attempted in Literature and Dogma was the forcible union of Hebraism and Hellenism. Perhaps this reduces Arnold's work to a simplicity which it does not have; and perhaps

¹⁹⁷Faverty, p. 183.

¹⁹⁸"The Bible as Interpreted by Mr Arnold," The Westminster Review, [n.s.], CI(1874), 312ff. See also Old and New, VIII (1873-74), 746ff. Also Old and New, VIII(1873-74), 497.

¹⁹⁹In November 1874 Arnold wrote to Miss "Fan" Arnold that "Review of Objections," which became God and the Bible, would be conservative and directed against negative criticism of the Bible (Letters, II, 139).

²⁰⁰Letters, II, 132.

again, as the historian Benn viewed the book, Arnold's way of looking at life was essentially an ethical or Greek or Aristotelian way of looking at life. For Dr Arnold had, after all, sent his son to Oxford to get a sound training in Aristotle.

The clerical tutors..., believing...in Aristotle's infallibility, made it their business to harmonise his ethical teaching with Christianity, and especially to show that the great outstanding problems of the Ethics, how to make a pleasure of virtue, finds its solution in the Gospels; Matthew Arnold had, moreover, like other pupils of his father, received a lifelong bias from the religious revival of the twenties and thirties, which worked in the same direction.

Here, then, is the key to Literature and Dogma. It is an attempt to show how the essence of Biblical religion may be preserved, even after the elimination of a personal God and a future life, by the application of Greek ethical methods to its contents.²⁰¹

What misled Arnold, according to Benn's estimate of Literature and Dogma, "was the confusion between law in the physical sense and law in the ethical sense, between what is and what ought to be." For the laws of change and complexity, the complex structure of the universe, of they were to be acknowledged, ruin "his attempted reconstruction of religious beliefs."²⁰² In taking as its object what Benn called the elucidation and justification of that definition of God "which most persons understood as a confession of atheism;...[in] show[ing] also, what was more difficult, that an impersonal 'stream of tendency' could be so interpreted as to cover the religious teaching of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures,"²⁰³ Literature and Dogma

²⁰¹Benn, II, 309.

²⁰²Page 308.

²⁰³Page 307.

represented "a return from the standpoint of 'Empedocles on Etna' to the objective theism of the Bible."²⁰⁴ And in this theism there is implied

a division between the thing and its law...; [there is suggested] a certain inability on the thing's part to be itself, a demand for help from without, or an admission that such help has been received. Now let us substitute moral for physical law, and the separation becomes complete, the need for help notorious. There is a standard of right action and good feeling to which we do not live up, and even cannot live up so long as we are left to ourselves; while at the same time we are conscious that only by living up to it can our true nature be realised. And so on Arnold's interpretation of Nature the obvious course is to look for help in the same eternal order that ensures the performance of their legitimate offices by the things of which morality is not predicated.

At this point Matthew Arnold substitutes for his original 'stream of tendency' the quite different idea of a 'Power not ourselves which makes for righteousness;' thus transforming... something very like Spinoza's pantheism into something more like the ethical theism of Amos. ²⁰⁵

The strength of Arnold's religious conceptions lay in Arnold's ethics, or, to use his word, morality. But in this morality, granted that religion is morality touched by emotion, there is a weakness also. Arnold's view of the Scriptures, a view colored by his personal inclinations, bears out this seeming inconsistency. For example, Arnold condemned the "rationalism" of the German school when it stated that Jesus did not arise from the dead but merely recovered from a swoon. "Yet," Benn wrote, "something of the same false rationalism seems to have vitiated his own interpretation of religious

²⁰⁴Page 310.

²⁰⁵Page 310.

beliefs. According to him the psalmists, proverbialists, and apostles deceived themselves when they assumed the existence of an anthropomorphic deity...."²⁰⁶ However, Arnold insisted, when the psalmists, proverbialists, and apostles discovered the relationship between virtue and happiness "they observed and reported on the facts of experience with absolute accuracy."²⁰⁷ Arnold's difficulty might have been in his definition of religion as morality touched by emotion, a definition based on the assumption and the belief that conduct is three-fourths of life. But why, Benn asked, cannot religion be science or patriotism touched by emotion, and, furthermore, what exactly is so important about the element of emotion in religion? Arnold quoted Scripture "in which emotional colouring is displayed."²⁰⁸ How was it then that the psalmists and proverbialists and apostles reported the facts of experience accurately in their connection of happiness with virtue? According to Literature and Dogma, "the moral judgments of the Bible fulfil themselves naturally without the intervention of supernatural volitions."²⁰⁹ Arnold's explanation of miracles, for instance, including so-called "verifiable" examples of healings reported in the Bible, miracles which even science could admit without

²⁰⁶Page 314.

²⁰⁷Page 314.

²⁰⁸Pages 312, 314.

²⁰⁹Page 314.

denying natural law, was in terms of "cures...effected by what we call the magnetic influence of a commanding personality."²¹⁰ It is, rather, Arnold's ethical stand that remains valid: happiness is to be "annexed" to "life subserving actions; morality contributes both to the happiness of the individual and the community;"²¹¹ and on the ethical plane Culture can be a remedy for religious ills, is a remedy when applied as a literary method in interpreting Scripture.

C. The Form of Religion.

'The form of religion [Butler wrote] may indeed be where there is little of the thing itself; but the thing itself cannot be preserved amongst mankind without the form.'

M. Arnold, Works, IX, 274.

In God and the Bible Matthew Arnold was on the defensive; in Last Essays on Church and Religion²¹² he was again on the

²¹⁰Page 314.

²¹¹Page 314.

²¹²The following is the order of publication of the articles which comprise Last Essays. "Bishop Butler and the Zeit-Geist" appeared first in the Contemporary Review (Feb. and Mar. 1876); "The Church of England" in Macmillan's (Apr. 1876); "A Last Word on the Burials Bill" in Macmillan's (July 1876); and "A Psychological Parallel" in the Contemporary Review (Nov. 1876). The essays were reprinted in this order---"A Psychological Parallel," "Bishop Butler," "The Church of England," "A Last Word"---as Last Essays, with an important Preface. The first edition was published by Smith, Elder and Co. (1877). See Trilling, p. 341n.; also Brown, Studies, pp. 133ff.; also The Athenaeum, I(1877), 439.

defensive, re-iterating certain of his earlier convictions. According to the Preface to the Last Essays, the year 1877 was to mark the conclusion to Arnold's religious criticism, for it was not, Arnold said, his wish to take up the criticism of religious issues in the first place.²¹³ The thing which he had proposed for himself to do had, "so far as my power enabled me to do it, been done."²¹⁴ From 1877, the year in which Arnold declined the nomination to the Lord Rectorship of the University of St Andrews, Arnold proposed to attend to more strictly literary subjects.²¹⁵ But Arnold would return to religious controversy after his promise to write no more on the religious question: in 1888 he would plead the cause of the Church of England, saying that "disestablishment in Wales" would lessen the "security" of the Church of England.²¹⁶ There were those who could not decide whether Arnold's abandonment of religious questions would be a change for the better or not;²¹⁷ some critics were not impressed with Arnold's last words on religion and only hoped that Arnold had indeed uttered his last words on the subject.²¹⁸

²¹³M. Arnold, Works, IX[Last Essays on Church and Religion], 173.

²¹⁴Page 173.

²¹⁵Page 173.

²¹⁶"Disestablishment in Wales," National Review, XI(1888), 13.

²¹⁷The Athenaeum, I(1877), 439.

²¹⁸The Saturday Review, XLIII(1877), 490.

The re-iteration of the convictions which motivated Literature and Dogma appeared in Last Essays: Arnold maintained that what he called the transformation of religion, "which is essential for its perpetuance, can be accomplished only by carrying the qualities of flexibility, perceptiveness, and judgment, which are the fruits of letters, to whole classes of the community,"²¹⁹ that a "religion of abstractions and intellectual refinements" was proven by experience to be no longer tenable, and that the old religion, anthropomorphic and miraculous, was steadily losing its hold upon the masses as well as upon the minds of inquiring Christianity.²²⁰ He defended the position which he had taken in Literature and Dogma, described in England as "a book revolutionary and anti-religious."²²¹ The day would come, he said, "when the great body of liberal opinion in this country will adhere to the first half of the doctrine of Continental liberals,---will admit that traditional religion is utterly untenable."²²² The danger in this admission, as Arnold saw it, was that there would be some who would consider Christianity untenable; and since even liberal opinion tends to identify Christianity and traditional religion, it was

²¹⁹M. Arnold, Works, IX, 174.

²²⁰Page 175.

²²¹Page 176.

²²²Page 181.

therefore important to distinguish Christianity and religion, "so all-important to insist on what I call the natural truth of Christianity, and to bring this out all we can,"²²³ the best example of the natural truth of Christianity being the Protestantism of the early Reformation, the most lasting impression of it being the justness, perfect balance, unerring felicity ("sweet reasonableness") of Jesus.

The religious practice of the nineteenth century did not have the natural truth of Christianity because it busied itself with miracles which never happened and metaphysical proofs of God which were marvellous works of logic but not much else. Miracles and metaphysics, Arnold repeated, were not ever part of Christianity.²²⁴ And since traditional religion did not possess the natural truth, Arnold found it once more necessary to return from rhetoric and theology to fundamentals, beginning with conduct and the idea that right action brings happiness and aiming for the comprehension of the idea of righteousness. Conduct remained for Arnold that "very considerable part of life."²²⁵

²²³Page 181.

²²⁴Page 182.

²²⁵Page 183.

It will generally be admitted, too, that all experience as to conduct brings us at last to the fact of the two selves, or instincts, or forces,---name them how we will, and however we may suppose them to have arisen,---contending for the mastery in man: one, a movement of first impulse and more involuntary, leading us to gratify any inclination that may solicit us, and called generally a movement of man's ordinary or passing self, or sense, appetite, desire; the other, a movement of reflection and more voluntary, leading us to submit inclination to some rule, and called generally a movement of man's higher or enduring self, or reason, spirit, will.... Nor will it be denied that...all come to the conclusion that for a man to obey the higher self, or reason, or whatever it is to be called, is happiness and life for him; to obey the lower is death and misery.²²⁶

Arnold's application of the concept of the two, the higher and lower, selves to Christianity was indeed an interesting literary performance. Arnold felt that the concept of the Hebrew nation, the concept of righteousness (or what Arnold himself chose to call conduct) was but imperfectly comprehended, "and finally, when their misconceived righteousness failed them in actual life more and more, they took refuge in imaginings about the future, and filled themselves with hopes of a kingdom of God, a resurrection, a judgment, an eternal life,"²²⁷ which only served, as time went on, to reinforce their misconceived sense of righteousness. It was, then, this misconception of conduct or righteousness which Jesus found in the minds of his people, and certainly part of his greatness lay in his recalling to them

²²⁶Pages 183-184.

²²⁷Page 185.

"the solid, authentic, universal fact of the experience about [righteousness], the fact of the higher and lower self in man, inheritors the one of them of happiness, the other of misery."²²⁸ It was in the teaching of Jesus, in the manner of his teaching, what Arnold styled his secret ("He that will save his life shall lose it; he that do lose his life shall save it.") that the misconception of conduct or righteousness was set aright. It was at this point that Arnold recalled the abiding value of literature in the parable of the two lives of man, the real and seemingly real. Eternal life has meaning in the sense of the higher, immortal self; judgment has meaning in the sense of the testing of the conscience of the two selves; resurrection has meaning in the sense of "the rising from bondage and transience with the lower self to victory and permanence with the higher."²²⁹ And so on. With the Christian virtues, with charity for example, the appeal again is to experience: "We go here simply on experience, having to establish the natural truth of Christianity. That the 'new commandment' of charity is enjoined by the Bible, gives it therefore, we shall suppose, no force at all, unless it turns out to be enjoined also by experience if experience shows that it is necessary to human happiness...."²³⁰ The necessity of charity, the experience of it, the fact that men cannot "get on" without it is, Arnold contended, in this case the reason for the being of happiness. The

²²⁸ Pages 185-186.

²²⁹ Page 186.

²³⁰ Page 187.

essential solidarity, as Arnold called it, the essential solidarity of men also bears out the necessity for happiness. "If there was ever a notion tempting to common human nature, it was the notion that the rule of 'everyman for himself' was the rule of happiness."²³¹ Actually, though, the only happiness lies in the objectification of the self into a higher self. "He that loves his life does really turn out to lose it, and the new commandment proves its own truth by experience."²³² So with the other Christian virtue, pureness. Arnold's recitation of the views of Literature and Dogma in the Preface to the Last Essays on Church and Religion and to a degree in the individual essays themselves thus appeared to make his effort in religious criticism too longwinded, although, according to one reviewer, the earlier faults of Arnold's style seemed not so noticeable in Last Essays and "on the whole, the book show[ed]...its author clothed in more of his old raiment, and displaying more of his right mind than any other of his more recent utterances."²³³ But he maintained the position which he took in the earlier book, namely:

In Literature and Dogma I have pointed out that the real upshot of the teaching of Jesus was this: 'If every one would mend one, we should have a new world.' And I think I sufficiently marked, in the address at Sion College, the way in which the world was to be reached. Still, to insist on this new world,

²³¹Pages 187-188.

²³²Page 188.

²³³The Athenaeum, I(1877), 439.

on felicity, as the result of the widespread cultivation of personal religion, and as the goal for mankind to have in view, is most important, and, I think, is overlooked by many who insist on personal religion.²³⁴

On this side of human experience did Arnold make his appeal, nowhere more particularly than in the essay on "Bishop Butler and the Zeit-Geist," in his criticism of "the rationalistic psychology which leads Butler to go 'clean counter to the most intimate, the most sure, the most irresistible instinct of human nature'---which is not the mere negative instinct to avoid pain, uneasiness and sorrow but the positive one to seek happiness."²³⁵ Arnold had answered Bishop Butler in Literature and Dogma, answered him in part; had attacked natural theology in God and the Bible;²³⁶ had perceived that the Analogy was no longer applicable; for though Butler had "been dead a very long time,...the Zeit-Geist [had] got hold of him, and [had] been making terrible work with his remains."²³⁷ The reviewer who would observe that the Zeitgeist had Bishop Butler in its grip was certainly not commending Arnold for his attitude toward the Analogy. But there were other, ethical, considerations with Arnold:

²³⁴ Letters, II, 150. Arnold was writing to George Macmillan, May 6, 1876. The address at Sion College to which he referred was on the Church of England, delivered at Sion College to the London clergy.

²³⁵ Trilling, pp. 102-103. Arnold thought "Bishop Butler's conception of freedom as the end of human life was a mere formalism; the true fulfilment of life was Joy" (Trilling, p. 387).

²³⁶ See Benn, II, 317.

²³⁷ The Saturday Review, XLIII(1877), 490-491.

If there are moral difficulties in Revelation---original sin, vicarious satisfaction, eternal punishment...---there are difficulties equally great in natural religion, in the theory that the world of experience was created by a just and beneficent deity. The world is a scene of frightful injustice.... This emphatic endorsement of Butler's plea implies nothing less than the frank admission that life is a hell on earth. Otherwise the difficulties would not be, what they are alleged to be, as great for natural as for revealed religion.²³⁸

But perhaps Arnold did hold some misconceptions of the Analogy.²³⁹

He perhaps misapprehended the scope and purpose of the Analogy, for he rejected and denied the foundation of the Analogy.²⁴⁰

The Analogy was not intended as a positive proof of Christianity; it was built on the assumption of a personal God; it assumed that the "proper motives of religion are the proper proofs of it."²⁴¹ The Analogy presented a religion built on conscience, and perhaps, with respect to his reading of Butler at least, Arnold's idea of righteousness was defective, for according to Arnold, righteousness could be a source of joy.²⁴² And although the idea of righteousness and the idea of religious conscience might have brought Arnold and Butler together on a common ground, nevertheless, Arnold said, the Analogy was a failure for the nineteenth century; but not so Butler's Sermons at Rolls, the more detailed explanation of his moral philosophy.²⁴³ Arnold's

²³⁸Benn, II, 316.

²³⁹See The Academy, XI(1877), 430-431.

²⁴⁰"Mr Arnold on Butler," The British Quarterly Review, LXVI(1877), 87, 90.

²⁴¹Page 97.

²⁴²Pages 97, 111.

²⁴³Page 95.

limitations in his reading and application of Butler to the Zeitgeist caused one reviewer for The British Quarterly to venture: "We believe we are correct in saying that Mr Arnold's arguments were promptly rejected in Edinburgh."²⁴⁴ On the side of experience, the essential "practicality" with which Arnold treated Butler and the Church of England, and indeed the whole matter of religion in everyday living---from Literature and Dogma through the Last Essays,²⁴⁵ Arnold's critics had little objection, though they passed minor strictures on his "touches of longueur" ("Butler's appalling style" very likely did not help Arnold's treatment of his subject-matter),²⁴⁶ his lack of spontaneity, his "mannered" prose, the "most unpleasant reserve in [his] manner," his "offensive" indulgence in personalities (there were objections to Arnold's objections to Dissenters).²⁴⁷

But Matthew Arnold was one of many---and not, surely, the most imposing---of nineteenth century critics of Bishop Butler. If ever Butler received his due it was in the nineteenth century, when his work was assigned reading for students of the

²⁴⁴Page 86. "Bishop Butler and the Zeit-Geist" was delivered as a lecture in two parts before the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution.

²⁴⁵See The Athenaeum, I(1877), 439; also William Blackburn, "Bishop Butler and the Design of Arnold's Literature and Dogma," Modern Language Quarterly, IX(1948), 206.

²⁴⁶The Athenaeum, I(1877), 439.

²⁴⁷The Contemporary Review, XXIX(1877), 953-954. See The Nation, XXV(1877), 30.

liberal arts and the object of both censure and defense.²⁴⁸

In 1877, the date of the publication of Last Essays, the Reverend J. R. T. Eaton, speaking before an audience at Oxford University, opened a "public" lecture on Bishop Butler and his critics by saying: "A hard fate certainly has overtaken Bishop Butler. For more than a hundred years he has been placed on an elevation apparently superior to criticism. No considerable reply to the 'Analogy' has ever been attempted, and very little in the way of skirmishing."²⁴⁹ Quoting Leslie Stephen, he recalled that Butler made little impact upon his age, even though the Analogy had within the year of its publication reached a second edition. The influence of the Analogy, he therefore concluded, was felt more in the nineteenth than in the eighteenth century, especially since, as he noted, it influenced the views of "Lord Kames, Dugald Stewart, Chalmers, Channing, James Mill, John Henry Newman, Fred. D. Maurice."²⁵⁰ The Reverend Mr Eaton also recalled Leslie Stephen's comparison of the Analogy to "some mass of rock-piercing strata, of a different formation, immoveable and undecayed; but yet solitary, exceptional, and barren."²⁵¹ Whether

²⁴⁸ See M. Arnold, Works, IX, 259-260.

²⁴⁹ J. R. T. Eaton, Bishop Butler and his Critics (London, 1877), p. 2.

²⁵⁰ Page 4.

²⁵¹ Page 5.

Dr. Stephen's statement is to be taken as an objection to the Analogy, it is difficult to say. This much seems certain, and Arnold as well as Eaton called attention to it: that perhaps something "of the present exaggeration of dispraise, exhibited towards the memory and writings of Butler, may be set down to a reaction from the extravagance and absolutism of a previous homage."²⁵² Those admirers of Butler in general and of the Analogy in particular most responsible for the undue amount of veneration accorded Butler had, Eaton pointed out, "a faulty appreciation of the historical method of criticism."²⁵³ The chief objection to Bishop Butler centred in the belief that "Butler is now...accused of worshipping as God the human conscience deified. The men whom Butler fought at least admitted a God, whose attributes are discoverable by reason or observation; a God of Nature, whose laws are the embodiment of reason."²⁵⁴ As Eaton saw the trend in Butler criticism, the matter came to this, an attack on the "psychology" which informed Butler's view of the universe.

²⁵²Page 5. Cf. M. Arnold, Works, IX, 259-265.

²⁵³Page 6.

²⁵⁴Page 9. Eaton's was not the only summary of Butler criticism in the nineteenth century. W. E. Gladstone, in Studies Subsidiary to the Works of Bishop Butler, reviewed the work of Mr Bagehot (1854), Miss Hennell (1859), Dr Martineau (1840), Mr Leslie Stephen (1876), Arnold (1877), and Maurice, Mark Pattison, and Goldwin Smith. See Studies, Part I, Ch. III. Also Stephen's History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century and his article on Butler in DNB.

Gladstone, "the most persistent defender of Butler in the late nineteenth century,"²⁵⁵ and, unlike Arnold, willing to submit to the authority of Butler, said that Arnold's review of Butler

is the most thoroughgoing. He introduces his hostile review with an admiring and sympathetic account of Butler, which is of the highest interest. There is nothing petty in the matter or spirit of his charges. His friends need not fear that his character as a man will suffer from the publication of his (I think) unfortunate essay on 'Bishop Butler and the Zeitgeist'; a Zeitgeist of which we read from page to page in the title, but hear very little in the text. This perhaps may be accounted for by the supposition that, in the critic's own view, the term is but a synonym for 'Matthew Arnold'....²⁵⁶

Gladstone also called attention to the fact that Arnold's religious thought did not put him in a position to be genial toward Butler, whose idea of Christianity, colored by the exigencies of the age in which he wrote, was quite different from his own, especially as regards the role of reason in connection with the interpretation of revelation. "The critic does not recognize this radical difference as in any degree the cause of his hostility to Butler; but, whatever view we may take of the merits, there can be no doubt that the system of Butler, and the system of Matthew Arnold, cannot stand together."²⁵⁷ Arnold seemed to take Bagehot's position, "the

²⁵⁵Mossner, p. 224.

²⁵⁶Gladstone, Studies, pp. 55-56. The first mention of the Zeitgeist appears a third of the way through the essay. See M. Arnold, Works, IX, 288, 333.

²⁵⁷Page 56.

general position that a Revelation repeating the difficulties of Natural Religion is monstrous as it but emphasizes doubts already existing;"²⁵⁸ and from this point of view it appeared also that Arnold took exception to not only the Analogy but also the Sermons. In short, Arnold objected specifically to "the theistic account of conscience, and in the Analogy, to the proof from probability of the hereafter on which the remaining structure leans."²⁵⁹ The nineteenth century critics of Butler seem in general agreement that Butler's failure reflected for them the failure of the eighteenth century faculty for Reason, that the religion of Nature, the religion of Revelation, the religion of Science had little, if any, validity for these Victorians, and, finally, that for religious doubt and uncertainty, which the deists, for example, had solved by formulae, there was no ready solution. What Arnold, for one, proposed in place of Butler was, of course, his own (tentative and eclectic) system, the one he had outlined in Literature and Dogma.

In Literature and Dogma, where Arnold ridiculed the idea of self-love with considerable vigor, one of the central objections to Bishop Butler's system first appeared. Nevertheless,

²⁵⁸Mossner, p. 214.

²⁵⁹Mossner, p. 216.

as moralists, Butler and Arnold had much in common; so that, in the end of the reading of "Butler's mournful language [with its something of exaggeration]"²⁶⁰ and of Arnold's "touches of longueur"²⁶¹ it appears that what Butler termed virtue, what the Bible (and Arnold himself) termed righteousness, what goes generally under the term of goodness results in both writers in what they fancied was the victory ultimately of good over evil, in goodness leading to happiness,²⁶² that the transformation of personal morality in this world through the recognition of this eudaemonism and the acceptance of the idea would assure our having the new world. This Arnold saw in Bishop Butler.²⁶³ He saw that in spite of the failure of the Analogy ---since the Zeitgeist "breathes upon it...and it has the spell and the power no longer"²⁶⁴ ---"no one has spoken more truly and nobly than [Butler], of the natural victoriousness of virtue, even in this world."²⁶⁵ Arnold concluded that "the wonderful thing about the Analogy is the poor insignificant result, even in Butler's own judgment,---the puny total outcome,---of this accumulated evidence from analogy, meta-

²⁶⁰M. Arnold, Works, IX, 283.

²⁶¹The Athenaeum, I(1877), 439.

²⁶²See God and the Bible (Works, VIII, 140-141).

²⁶³M. Arnold, Works, IX, 339. See Blackburn, "Bishop Butler and the Design of Arnold's Literature and Dogma," MLQ, IX(1948), 203.

²⁶⁴M. Arnold, Works, IX, 333.

²⁶⁵Page 337.

physics, and Bible-history,"²⁶⁶ recalled from the beginning of his estimate of Butler that "our author, as he stood, was not right, not satisfactory,"²⁶⁷ but he conceded also that on Butler's own account and on the basis of the praise given his writing he "deserves that one should regard him very attentively."²⁶⁸ For he who had "formed and concluded a happy alliance between faith and philosophy,"²⁶⁹ had indeed achieved something of which the Time-Spirit could justly be proud, namely, the pushing aside of provincialism; and if Butler had accomplished this, "he [was] indeed great,"²⁷⁰ with a greatness and cosmopolitanism quite apart from his recognition of the general disregard of religion in his own day, quite apart from his entering into the religious controversies of his time, as Arnold himself had done, and quite apart from his standing alone "in his time and amongst his generation."²⁷¹ For Butler had formed and concluded a happy alliance between faith and philosophy, and if in addition he had achieved that universality which was the peculiar mark of the Zeitgeist then his greatness was no less. Arnold's last estimate of Butler and the Zeitgeist saw Butler somewhat lacking in the attributes of universality which the Zeitgeist so favored.

²⁶⁶Page 331.

²⁶⁷Page 260.

²⁶⁸Page 261.

²⁶⁹Pages 288, 262.

²⁷⁰Page 287.

²⁷¹Pages 276, 274.

Specifically, Arnold objected to Butler's method of argumentation.²⁷² While Butler argued from analogy, Arnold persuaded from the point of view of sweet reasonableness, "the very word to characterize true Christianity. And true Christianity wins, not by an argumentative victory, not by going through a long debate with a person...and making him confess that, whether he feels disposed to yield or no, yet in fair logic and fair reason he ought to yield."²⁷³ To put the matter of embracing religion in such a way that it is, as Arnold said, "prepossessing," to encourage right practice is the way of epieikeia. However, Butler's way of converting the religiously wayward of his time was to ply them "with evidence sufficient in reason to influence their practice," thus to put them "into a state of probation; let them behave as they will in it."²⁷⁴ But Arnold wondered if this method were satisfactory: after all, the object of religion [he said] is conversion, and to change people's behaviour. But where, then, is the use of saying that you will inquire not what people are, but how in reason they ought to behave? Why, it is what they are which determines their sense of how they ought to behave. Make them, therefore, so to feel what they are, as to get a fruitful sense of how they ought to behave.²⁷⁵

²⁷²See Last Essays (Works, IX, 298-299; 301-304; 318; 319; 320; 322-328).

²⁷³M. Arnold, Works, IX, 285.

²⁷⁴Page 287.

²⁷⁵Page 287.

Butler's account of the determination of right action in terms of instinct or intuition and principles of action Arnold quoted from the Preface to the Sermons, which, Butler said, "were intended to explain what is meant by the nature of man, when it is said that virtue consists in following, and vice in deviating from it; and by explaining that the assertion is true."²⁷⁶

To which Arnold added significantly, "it may be at once allowed that Butler's notion of human nature as consisting of a number of instincts and principles of action, with conscience as a superior principle presiding over them, corresponds in a general way with facts of which we are all conscious...."²⁷⁷

Perhaps instinct or intuition does determine right action; and Butler is perhaps correct when he appeals to right action deriving from instinct and the superior principle of conscience, "when he calls [therefore] our nature 'the voice of God within us.'"²⁷⁸ In an article on Butler's eudaemonism and the "design" of Arnold's Literature and Dogma, an article in which he has attempted to answer the question What is nature in religion? Mr Blackburn has posed the question, in the light of Arnold's reading of Butler, "Is God, the, the Happiness Principle? the Stream of Happiness by which all humanity may attain to happiness, if they follow their true nature?"²⁷⁹ After reading

²⁷⁶Page 290. See Blackburn, "Bishop Butler and the Design of Arnold's Literature and Dogma," MLQ, IX(1948), 200.

²⁷⁷Page 290. Arnold had always questioned Butler on the hierarchy of the principles of action. See the sonnet "Written in Butler's Sermons."

²⁷⁸Page 291.

²⁷⁹Blackburn, "Bishop Butler," MLQ, IX(1948), 207.

Arnold, this was the conclusion which F. H. Bradley had reached.²⁸⁰ The very "practicality" of Arnold's ethics appears to make the conclusion "inescapable: Arnold's God is a pragmatist and a utilitarian also."²⁸¹ "We did not make ourselves, or our nature [it is to be remembered what Arnold wrote in Literature and Dogma], or conduct as the object of three-fourths of that nature; we did not provide that happiness should follow conduct, as it undeniable does...." This idea Arnold had seen expressed before in Butler; it was the common denominator of their ethics.²⁸² Our nature is the voice of God within us. And Butler's appeal was not to reason in governing the principles of action, though it might have been a means employed in argumentation. Here the idea of Arnold's epieikeia reveals its worth; for Butler had said (and Arnold quoted him): "'Reason alone, whatever any one may wish, is not in reality a sufficient motive of virtue in such a creature as man....'"²⁸³ Butler's aim was the establishment of a sure system of morals, and in order to aid in this establishment, he devised, so to speak, a hierarchy of instincts and affections, in short, a "psychology," and said that these instincts and affections were "placed in us

²⁸⁰Blackburn, "Bishop Butler," MLQ, IX(1948), 207.

²⁸¹Blackburn, "Bishop Butler," MLQ, IX(1948), 206.

²⁸²Blackburn, "Bishop Butler," MLQ, IX(1948), 206.

²⁸³M. Arnold, Works, IX, 294.

by God, to put us upon and help to carry us through a course of behaviour suitable to our condition."²⁸⁴ But the difficulty, as Arnold saw it, with Butler's system of morals, especially that portion depending so strongly upon his psychology, was that the foundations of the system, upon close examination, disintegrate. "Then the arbitrary assertions of such a psychology as this of Butler's will be felt to be perfectly fantastic and unavailing."²⁸⁵ Butler's assumption was that all the appetites, instincts and affections, placed by God in human nature, "are all equally natural, that they all have a useful end to serve and have respect to that end solely."²⁸⁶

On this aspect of Butler's system of morality, the general uniformity of the application of the "psychology," Arnold was most severe, particularly so in his criticism of Butler's doctrine of self-love, which, even at the age of fifty-four, he approached "with a shiver of uneasiness."²⁸⁷ Arnold's continued reaction to the doctrine is interesting:

[Butler] describes self-love, occasionally, as 'a general desire of our own happiness.' And he knew well enough, that the pursuit of our own interest and happiness, rightly understood, and the obedience to God's commands, 'must be in every case one and the same thing.' Nevertheless, Butler's constant notion of the pursuit of our interest is, that it is the pursuit of our temporal good, as he calls it; the cool consideration of our own temporal advantage.... But to define self-love

²⁸⁴Page 297.

²⁸⁵Page 299.

²⁸⁶Page 300.

²⁸⁷Page 305.

as a private contracted affection [as Butler did],...and then to say, as Butler does, that from self-love, thus defined, love of our neighbour is no more distant than hatred of our neighbour, is to sophisticate things.²⁸⁸

The business of the moralist, Arnold concluded, "is to help towards practice."²⁸⁹ Butler had set up a system of instincts and principles of action which he considered to be fixed and permanent, while all the time they were flexible and interdependent phenomena.²⁹⁰ "Thus the moral life, according to Butler, is a life of rational self-love, of rational benevolence, and of the love of God, presided over by the magisterial faculty of conscience."²⁹¹ Arnold noted that Butler was apparently afraid of explaining human nature entirely in terms of the desire for happiness, "because he was apprehensive of the contrasted self-love, and of the contrasted judgments, of the individual."²⁹² To rectify what he considered to be the error of Butler, Arnold proposed to substitute the phrase the instinct to live for the desire of happiness, since he believed the two meant the same thing and the words life seemed better than the word happiness, because "it is, moreover, the Bible-word...."²⁹³ To Arnold this was not to sophisticate things. But apart from

²⁸⁸Pages 305-306.

²⁸⁹Page 306.

²⁹⁰Page 307.

²⁹¹Blackburn, "Bishop Butler," MLQ, IX(1948), 201.

²⁹²M. Arnold, Works, IX, 310.

²⁹³Page 310.

his mere quibbling with Butler's phrasing, he again summoned up the figure which he had explained in the Preface to the Last Essays, that of the two lives of man, the permanent and impersonal, the transient, what he styled the higher and real, and the inferior and apparent, asserting that in man "the instinct...truly to live, the desire for happiness, is served by following the first self and not the second."²⁹⁴ Then Arnold made the fine distinction:

It is not true that the affections and impulses of both [selves] alike are, as Butler says, the voice of God; the self-love of Butler, the 'cool study of our private interest,' is not the voice of God. It is a hasty, erroneous interpretation by us... of the instinct to live, the voice of God. And it has to be corrected by experience. Love of our neighbour, Butler's benevolence, is the affection by which experience bids us correct it. Many a hard lesson does the experience involve, many a heavy blow. But the satisfaction of our instinct to live, of our desire for happiness, depends on our making and using the experience.²⁹⁵

Experience is Arnold's touchstone.²⁹⁶ "As to the fact [of life] experience [alone] is the touchstone."²⁹⁷ The "fundamental weakness" of Butler was, according to Arnold, his inability or unwillingness to base his reasoning in experience. Butler had achieved something of lasting worth in the Analogy, but Arnold wanted to know "What has the Analogy got to enlighten and help us?"²⁹⁸ If its object was to make men embrace religion by means of the analogy of natural and

²⁹⁴Page 310. Cf. Blackburn, "Bishop Butler," MLQ, IX(1948), 201.

²⁹⁵Pages 311, 312.

²⁹⁶Page 319.

²⁹⁷Page 322.

²⁹⁸Page 317.

revealed religion, how well did it succeed as something more than "a mere intellectual feat"? The difficulty with Butler, said Arnold, was that he proposed to attract men to religion by offering it to them "in the form of what is called orthodox Christianity, with its theosophy and miracles."²⁹⁹

Butler's proof for the existence of the next world was inadequate for Arnold, and he protested that the existence of the next world, like the existence of this, must be proved positively, and in both cases by experience.³⁰⁰ Furthermore, "Butler in his Analogy affirms... 'the direct and fundamental proof of Christianity' to be, just what the mass of its adherents have always supposed it to be:---miracles and the fulfilment of prophecy."³⁰¹ If this is why, with the Time-Spirit breathing upon him, Butler was for Arnold not right, not satisfactory,---if this is why the Analogy was a failure for the nineteenth century, both as an academic performance and as a call to the religious life, with or without the enforcing power of experience, then Arnold apologized for Butler, for Butler could not have handled miracles and prophecy properly anyway; "the time [said Arnold] was not ripe for it."³⁰² The

²⁹⁹Page 318.

³⁰⁰Page 319.

³⁰¹Page 328.

³⁰²Page 329.

time was not ripe for it because, as Basil Willey has suggested, "Arnold, from his own 'European' standpoint, saw that the undercutting of Christian 'foundations' by the zeit-geist had proceeded much further than was dreamed by average believers in England;"³⁰³ and after all, Arnold saw what Butler could not possibly see. Butler had addressed himself to men who were content with Christianity, who, at the worst, scorned Christianity as an academic exercise. But Arnold. "To what particular audience did Arnold address himself? Not to those who were content, or 'striving to be content', with the received theology...."³⁰⁴ For the received theology he himself had little use; it was always so. For the received theology the "lapsed masses" had little use; this was becoming increasingly apparent. However,---and here Arnold called upon Butler,---everyone had use for goodness, access to it and to what it brought, the happiness of the individual. "Nothing interests people, after all, so much as goodness; and it is in human nature that what interests men very much they should not leave to private and chance handling, but should give to it a public institution."³⁰⁵

³⁰³Nineteenth Century Studies (New York, 1949), p. 265.

³⁰⁴Willey, Nineteenth Century Studies, p. 266.

³⁰⁵M. Arnold, Works, IX, 349. The essay on the Church of England echoed in the main the ideas of Arnold's father on the necessity of a national establishment.

Hence the concept of the Church of England as "a great national society for the promotion of goodness."³⁰⁶ This, its guiding the morality of the nation, was, Arnold believed, the very reason for the existence of the Church, for, constituted in any other manner and for any other purpose it could not long stand.³⁰⁷ The attraction of all people to the Church depended, he thought, upon its ability to institute religion, as Bishop Butler had said, "'a standing publication of the Gospel,' 'a serious call upon men to attend to it,' and therefore of an 'effect very important and valuable.'"³⁰⁸ The Church, thus coming properly under the guardianship of the Bible and Christian principle and not under the aegis of the clergy, thus instituting religion in a national establishment and in conformity with that establishment, though not necessarily the creeds and doctrines of the Church, could restore itself, adjust its doctrines to the times, harmonize with the Zeitgeist. The tenets of the Church, the Thirty-Nine Articles, the Athanasian Creed, the Book of Common Prayer itself required belief in the traditional, the miraculous, the metaphysical, all the aspects of orthodox Christianity which Arnold attacked

³⁰⁶Page 349. Cf. M. Arnold, Works, IX, 230.

³⁰⁷Pages 355-356.

³⁰⁸Page 351.

in Literature and Dogma. Yet the Church was so important. Even though righteousness, conduct, morality, goodness could be shown to exist in the general behavior of the individual toward his neighbor or toward God, nevertheless, virtue in itself, religious, or moral, or any sort of virtue is only a means, and not an end in itself. Literature and Dogma, in all its "practicality," in its address to the living side of man, in its very insistence upon conduct, shows precisely Arnold's position that virtue is to be useful. The Church, then, would be not only the guide of the nation's morality but also in the better sense the repository of its morals and a society for the promotion of goodness. Beliefs held contrary to the specific teaching of the Church need not, Arnold was careful to point out, force a break with the Church. Writing on St Paul in "A Psychological Parallel," Arnold said:

As I have examined the question whether a man who rejects miracle must break with St Paul because Paul asserted them, so let me examine whether such a man must break with the Church of his country and childhood. Certainly it is a strong thing to suppose a man taking orders in the Church of England who accepts, say, the view of Christianity offered in Literature and Dogma. For the Church of England presents as science, and as necessary to salvation, what it is the very object of the book to show to be not science and not necessary to salvation.³⁰⁹

³⁰⁹Page 230.

He hoped to see revisions in the Prayer Book and the deletion from the services of the Church certain generally unacceptable rituals. But these changes would not be brought about by a spirit of "negation" but by the "impulse to express in our church-services somewhat which is felt to need expression, and not to be sufficiently expressed there already."³¹⁰ At any rate, "such change will happen, not in a sweeping way; ---it will come very gradually, and by the general wish."³¹¹ His loyalty to the Church was based quite noticeably on what he called "a form and wording consecrated by so many years and memories,"³¹² and though the old forms of religious expression, which once were in all ways valid, "were men's sincere attempt to set forth with due honour what we honour also,"³¹³ Arnold could not, in fine, abandon that which, as a man of letters, he sensed preserved the poetical and therefore the true spirit of the Bible. This is the religious dilemma for Arnold: willing to accept the Christian ethic emotionally and rationally, he found himself unable, in the

³¹⁰Page 241.

³¹¹Page 241.

³¹²Page 241.

³¹³Page 240.

light of the critical inquiry in religion and literature and in natural and mathematical science, in the light of all that goes under the name of the Time-Spirit, to subscribe to Christian theology.

This has been rehearsed at some length, first, in relation to Arnold's reading of Spinoza and Bishop Butler, and in the religious controversies of the early thirties wherein the work of Whately and Hampden and Thomas Arnold was seen as opposing the authoritarianism of the Church in its most influential aspect, the Oxford Movement. The religious dilemma has been considered, in the second instance, from the point of view of Arnold's poetry, the poetry of doubt and uncertainty and of Christian piety. Arnold's turn for polemics, in what has been styled the contemporary milieu, has been described in terms of the influence of the writers of Essays and Reviews, because their work to a large degree reflected the incursions of the "new science" in Biblical criticism as well as in geology and in the bold application of the historical method, and in terms of the work of Bishop Colenso, which, unfortunately, represented to Arnold a yet greater degree of "new science." The controversies of the early seventies, considered as part of the contemporary milieu and as a third instance of the religious dilemma, emphasized for Arnold the connections of religious questions with education as well as with Church

doctrine. Arnold's growth as a controversialist has been traced from the article on the Bishop and the Philosopher through his solution for the religious dilemma. That solution hinged, as far as Arnold was concerned, on what he called Culture, and all his writing on religion has been taken as an extension, therefore, of his social point of view. For Culture is not only the best that has been thought and said; it is conduct; it is righteousness; it is virtue leading to happiness; it is every-day practical ethics heightened. The abiding value of such an experimental basis for goodness has, fortunately, not gone unrecognized:

the overwhelming need to renew moral values in our civilization, and to establish, by nurture and education, the habits that grow out of them, should not lead us into the error of moralism. Conduct may be, as Matthew Arnold used to say, three-fourths of life; but the aim of ethics is not simply to promote good conduct: its essential aim is to further life; and this means something more than the capacity for ethical evaluations and acts. Here lies the mistake of all phariseeism and to some extent one of the recurrent errors of religion itself. The vigilant application of ethical norms is essential in every living function; but one misconceives this duty if one holds that goodness displaces every other kind of value: that for the sake of 'being good' one may and should renounce love and marriage, art and science, sport and play. Such desert island virtue is as meaningless as it is easy.³¹⁴

³¹⁴Lewis Mumford, The Conduct of Life (New York, 1951), p. 155.

It is to be remembered, because it is important to the understanding of the function of virtue, what Arnold said in this connection, that "the sense of succeeding, going right, hitting the mark, in conduct...give[s] satisfaction, and a very high satisfaction...."³¹⁵

The "apostle of culture," as Arnold has been called, was in the matter of living not restricting himself to the desert island kind of morality. Nor was he reducing conduct to the simplicity given it by W. H. Mallock in his description of Mr Luke, the loud and "supercilious-looking" apostle of culture, when Mr Luke, that parody of Matthew Arnold, is supposed to have said,

Culture...is the union of two things---fastidious taste and liberal sympathy. These can only be gained by wide reading guided by sweet reason; and when they are gained...we are conscious, as it were, of a new sense, which at once enables us to discern the Eternal and the absolutely righteous, wherever we find it, whether in an epistle of St Paul's or in a comedy of Neander's.³¹⁶

Culture might very well be the union of taste and sympathy, but in Matthew Arnold it is much more. It is the recognition of the enduring value of literature as it expresses the life of man and seeks the reconciliation of what goes under the name of science with what goes under the name of religion and speculates on the nature of the relationship of man not only to his neighbor but also to his God. It is the invitation,

³¹⁵Lit. & Dog., 5th ed., 28. Cf. Blackburn, "Bishop Butler," MLQ, IX(1948), 206.

³¹⁶The New Republic (London, 1878), pp. 31, 15.

extended on the basis of need, to the life of virtuous action, emphasizing the connection between goodness and happiness. It is the comprehension of Dissent for practical purposes in the scheme of a national Church, the admission also of religion and religious instruction into the education of the nation's youth. It is the appeal to an awareness of the essential solidarity of mankind, social and religious, finding its basis in the Bible as a book of conduct and a history of the idea of righteousness. It is the hope that Christian nations professing to discover their religion in the Bible do in practice represent the due fruits of the religion of the Bible. It is the wish to instruct, the wish to edify, to instruct where instruction is needed, to edify where edification is needed. It is the power of edification, the answer to the religious dilemma which forces a choice in form, practice, belief, interpretation between this and this; whether that dilemma be phrased in terms of the conflict between religion and science (the rationalism of the Enlightenment or the scholasticism of the Middle Ages) or literature and dogma, the choice is there to be made, and Culture, in its varied aspects, finding its sources in experience and the Time-Spirit, demands a decision on the side of literature. Arnold's view of Culture (as well as Arnold's religious thought) thus derives from the imperatives of the Time-Spirit. Arnold's permanent value lies in his affirming the need and the validity of spiritual exercise, in his emphasizing the importance

of thinking on religious problems no matter how confusing the problems or the thinking may at times be, in his repeating the function of conduct and the means of fulfilling the best self of man, in his discovering that if religion had failed to provide a pattern of living then science would also fail, in his attempting to make Christianity understandable to all, in his concluding that the literary temper and a critical turn of mind can make religion meaningful.

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ABSTRACT

The present essay on the position of Matthew Arnold in the religious dilemma of his time elucidates Arnold's literary and social criticism through an examination of certain antecedent and contemporary theological influences and an evaluation of Arnold's mediating role in terms of the relations of conduct to the larger concept of Culture. In Arnold's religious criticism Culture made explicit the application of literary principles to the interpretation of Scripture and the recognition of the social and moral integrity of man based on the Bible as a book of conduct and a history of the idea of righteousness.

Though Arnold's religious criticism was immediately inspired by his proximity to the controversies of the sixties and seventies, his growth as a religious controversialist depended ultimately on theological movements of the thirties, including the Oxford Movement. Thomas Arnold's historical researches and his definition of the bases of the liberal church, Bishop Whately's re-interpretation of St Paul according to literary principles, Dr Hampden's inquiry into the language of Scripture and his exposition of Scholastic Theology were influences which, against the background of German biblical criticism, helped to shape Arnold's attitudes in Literature and Dogma, in which Arnold related religion to the contemporary world by tracing changes in religious thought through a developing biblical literature. Since to Arnold the Bible

was more than a "progressive revelation" of the idea of righteousness, Literature and Dogma placed a practical emphasis not only on the outstanding antecedent developments in English theology but also on the ethical sources of religious thought.

Thus, Arnold's "justness of perception" in interpreting the Bible as literature was owing in large part to the influence of Spinoza and Bishop Butler; for both freed religious thought from the literalism of orthodoxy and the Enlightenment, Spinoza in his study of miracles and Old Testament narrative, Bishop Butler in his inquiry into the relationship between virtue and happiness. Through both Arnold came to an understanding of his role in religious criticism: the mediation between orthodoxy or mediaeval scholasticism and Enlightenment rationalism. Arnold rejected both dogma and "natural religion" as untenable in the contemporary world, since neither the appeal to dogma nor dry-as-dust intellectualism could exert the power of edification on the masses and reconcile them to the Bible. Arnold's method represented a combination of literary and ethical approaches to religion. These approaches took into account the development of new scientific and rationalistic methods of biblical criticism, but more importantly they took into account literary methods and values which rationalism ignored (for example, ethnology, the origin and development of myth and legend). Literature and Dogma, the primary expression

of method in religious criticism, reflected Arnold's attempt to get the popular mind to receive a proper balance of scientific and literary approaches to the Bible.

Arnold's formal consideration of religious topics, enhanced by the legacy of Spinoza, Bishop Butler, and Thomas Arnold, was given significance by the appearance of Essays and Reviews and the publication of Colenso's Pentateuch and Book of Joshua. Colenso's unmistakable indebtedness to German biblical criticism brought into sharp focus the religious dilemma of the time. The impact of Strauss' conclusions concerning the mythical bases of the Scriptural record had been strong. The Essayists and Colenso in particular represented to Arnold the extremes of rationalism, without regard to consequences; and Arnold's great fear was the fear of extremes, whether of the scientific approach to Scripture or of the dogmatic approach to religion. Through the seventies, when Arnold was occupied with the religious problem, his task involved the reconciliation of science and dogma to the religion of the Bible.

VITA

Charles Kenneth Kenosian, the son of Charles and Dorothy (Peters) Kenosian, was born in Lynn, Massachusetts, February 27, 1926. He attended the public schools of Lynn, graduating from Classical High School in 1943. In 1943 he entered Tufts College, concentrated in English literature, and graduated in 1946 with the B.A. degree. The following year he took the M.A. degree, also from Tufts College. In 1947 he entered the Graduate School of Boston University and began course work for the Ph. D. From 1948 to 1954 he taught English and Humanities at Boston University. Since 1954 he has taught English at the State Teachers College at Boston.

