

MATTHEW ARNOLD IN FRANCE:  
AN ESSAY IN VICTORIAN BI-CULTURALISM

John Eric Pearson

A THESIS  
in  
The Department  
of  
English

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree of Master of Arts at  
Sir George Williams University  
Montreal, Canada

April, 1973



## ABSTRACT

By John E. Pearson

Matthew Arnold in France: An Essay in Victorian Bi-Culturalism

This paper is a study of the influence of French writers on the poetic and prose writings of Matthew Arnold.

Arnold was born into the post-romantic period of English literature. He did not favour this school of writing, nor did he find any satisfaction in the works of his own contemporaries. Therefore, Arnold turned to French literature as representing the "best that was known and thought" in the world. Paradoxically this brought him face-to-face with such French romantics as George Sand, Etienne Senancour, and Charles Sainte-Beuve.

Following Sainte-Beuve's critical precepts, Arnold interpreted such French writers as the deGuérins, Amiel, Renan, and Joubert to his "own" countrymen. Ironically he chose to ignore writers such as Baudelaire, Verlaine, Corbière, and Mallarmé who would eventually become more important to nineteenth century French literature.

Nevertheless, Arnold remains one of the finest interpreters of French literature to the English reading public.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. Introduction - - - - -	1
II. Matthew Arnold the Poet, and the French	
Influence - - - - -	7
III. Matthew Arnold the Critic, and the French	
Influence - - - - -	48
IV. Summary and Conclusion - - - - -	93
BIBLIOGRAPHY - - - - -	114

NOTE.

The following material, written by Matthew Arnold, has been used extensively in the writing of this essay. The editions indicated below have been used and they have been abbreviated in the footnotes as follows:

- Essays Crit. I                    Essays in Criticism: First Series, Macmillan and Co., Ltd., London, 1910.
- Essays Crit. II                   Essays in Criticism: Second Series, Macmillan and Co., Ltd., London, 1910.
- Five Essays                        Five Uncollected Essays of Matthew Arnold. ed. by K. Allott. University Press of Liverpool, Liverpool, 1953.
- Letters                              Letters of Matthew Arnold, 1848-1888, ed. G. W. E. Russell, two vols., Macmillan and Co., Ltd. London, 1901.
- Letters to Clough                The Letters of Matthew Arnold to Arthur Hugh Clough, ed. H. F. Lowry, Oxford University Press, London, 1932.
- Poems                                The Poems of Matthew Arnold, ed. K. Allott, Barnes and Noble, Inc. New York, 1965.
- Unpub. Letters                    Unpublished Letters of Matthew Arnold, ed. A. Whitbridge, Yale University Press. New Haven, 1923.

## CHAPTER I

Cross-channel literary fertilization between continental Europe and Great Britain is of considerable interest to the English scholar studying the nineteenth century English literary scene. The question of the extent of the influence has long been, and no doubt will continue to be, an area of critical concern. Such questions as "... who influenced whom?", "... were the influences as great as we generally believe?", "... was the influence that was exerted really meaningful in terms of either country's literature?" may come to mind and although there are numerous evidences of contact given in biographical material, many aspects of the phenomenon bear closer examination. In this context I would like to consider the influence of France, French writers, and French institutions on Matthew Arnold. Arnold's reaction to "things French" differed widely from that of his romantic predecessors and also from his contemporaries.

In the closing years of the eighteenth century William Wordsworth, while a young man in his twenties, was swept into the arms of the French revolutionaries and became a stalwart friend of the movement. Upon returning to England, he remained for a time a proponent of the revolution. However, by the time he was twenty-eight his disenchantment with Napoleonic-France was evident; he turned his back on the continent and his writing was centred upon nature and England. Wordsworth's mature work shows very little evidence of French influence, and his interest in the French literary world was virtually non-existent. Wordsworth's lack of interest in French literature was symptomatic of the English Romantics. Robert Southey

expressed one extreme view when he declared that poetry was as impossible in the French language as it was in the Chinese.<sup>1</sup>

Years later many mid-Victorian writers continued to display both a distrust of and contempt toward France. Alfred Tennyson articulated what the majority felt when he wrote "...the red fool-fury of the Seine"<sup>2</sup> and spurned the troughs of Zolaism.

Later in the century, however, a change in attitude towards the French literary scene became evident. By 1860, Algernon Swinburne was commending French writers such as Victor Hugo and Théophile Gautier, and also lauding Charles Baudelaire in a review of his Les Fleurs du Mal in The Spectator. Swinburne was only one of a number of English writers of the late nineteenth century who recognized that a new and fresh literary movement was afoot in France. Others who became excited by the seemingly - new French talent included Oscar Wilde, George Moore, Walter Pater and, of course, Arthur Symonds. These writers were aflame with enthusiasm for the French writers of the decadent period. There was an orgy of translation and imitation, and the Rhymer's Club, in itself an un-English phenomenon, was an attempt to create a London version of a typical Parisian cenacle. To look to Paris for le dernier cri in art and letters was an attitude which lasted up to the fall of France in World War II.

Caught somewhere between Wordsworth and Southey at the beginning of the century, whose indifference to and distaste for French literature reflected their disenchantment with the Revolution, and the late

nineteenth century writers, who embraced France as a mode of anti-Victorianism, there is Matthew Arnold. Here was a Victorian who was influenced by France and certain of her writers but who failed to recognize a seemingly minor but important new literature which appealed to the more decadent English poets later in the century. Arnold's choice of French literary figures seems odd in perspective today. Senancour and the deGuérins<sup>3</sup> are largely forgotten, and even Sainte-Beuve is of interest chiefly to academics. Arnold's particular selection of such writers may partially account for his eventual rejection of the "French fact." This rejection followed an enthusiasm for French writers and literature in his earlier career, a cooling-off in his middle years, followed by a resurgence, and then final rejection.

One of the most suitable ways to study the French influence on Matthew Arnold<sup>3</sup> requires the segmenting of Arnold's literary career into phases. Arnold provides precedence for such an approach in several ways in his own writings. He practices the technique of fragmenting in the establishment of movements in some of his poetry, i.e. 'Balder Dead' and 'Tristram and Iseult'; he uses it in his social criticism defining and analyzing the people of Victorian England in Culture and Anarchy as the Philistines, the Barbarians, and the Populace; he uses it in 'The Study of Poetry' from Essays in Criticism (Second Series) in order to define the significant periods of English literature; he considers using it for structuring his own poetry by dividing his "...poems according to their character and subject, into Antiquity -- Middle Age -- and Temps Modern";<sup>4</sup> and finally he advocates studying other critics by means of

---

<sup>3</sup>The spelling of the name deGuérin is used throughout the paper as it is often spelt this way. The correct French spelling would be de Guérin.

chronological division as he writes that the "...work of Sainte-Beuve divides itself into three portions -- his poetry, his criticism before 1848, and his criticism after that year."<sup>5</sup>

Arnold does not use this technique in the interests of isolating one part from the whole. Instead it is his means of developing a more comprehensive understanding of the overall subject, and showing the relationship between the various parts of any subject. He uses this technique in the same way that he changes the "...new born clear-flowing stream" of the 'The Future' so that it finally loses its "echoing screams" and emerges as "a wider, statelier stream."

Following Arnold's own emphasis on this time, we may use his paradigm to evaluate both the man and his writings as they relate to French literature. Certainly his early interests, before his marriage to Frances Wightman in 1851, were those of a typically romantic youth who frequently traveled to France, who devoured the novels of George Sand, who worshipped the French actress Rachel, who idealized Senancour and Sainte-Beuve, and who busily penned his own love lyrics. The mature period after 1851 brought with it Arnold's own doubts about the validity of his idealization of much of romantic French literature. He turned then to such French writers as Sainte-Beuve, Renan, Joubert, and the deGuérins in a search for critical and ethical standards. Finally, Arnold reversed much of his earlier thought as he took a retrospective view of his earlier positions. Such stratification of Arnold's attitude has been used before<sup>6</sup> and it will assist immeasurably in understanding



Arnold's total relationship to the French literary scene.

Critics are not in agreement with respect to Arnold and les belles lettres en français. Consider Ruth Z. Temple's statement in The Critics Alchemy "...his [Arnold's] service to the cause of his countrymen's appreciation of French literature and especially French poetry was dubious at best."<sup>7</sup> Miss Temple goes on to show that the rising generation of English writers paid little or no attention to those French writers in whom Arnold believed. Miss Temple in fact observes that, for the poets of the twentieth century who savoured the works of Laforgue, Corbière and Baudelaire, Matthew Arnold's views would be of doubtful benefit. Iris Sells, in Matthew Arnold and France, agrees with Miss Temple as she notes Arnold's "...apparent arbitrariness in his preference for nobodies."<sup>8</sup> Frank J. Kermodé<sup>9</sup> feels that Arnold himself was responsible for his own precarious critical position. He writes that Arnold was potentially the first of the aesthetes, but was too committed to his other "selves" to assume the role. This applies to Arnold's relations with the poets in England as well as in France. Louis Bonnerot compared Arnold to some of his French contemporaries in Matthew Arnold, Poète and he identified some significant relationships when he wrote:

Ces révélations sont d'ordre intellectuel: c'est-à-dire qu'Arnold se contente de nous donner les pensées, les commentaires que la vie lui a suggérés. Elles sont aussi d'ordre moral, en ce sens qu'elles ne concernent que le moi purifié, ou du moins repentant du poète. Arnold n'est pas un Baudelaire, ni un Verlaine: il ne met pas son coeur à nu, ne nous montre pas les "wishes unworthy of a man full-grown." Quand je dis donc qu'il est d'abord et toujours un poète introspectif, je n'entends point suggérer que son oeuvre est une confession, mais

souligner l'effort de discipline par lequel Arnold  
cherche à ordonner son monde interieur. 10

However, we cannot overlook a critic such as George Saintsbury who saw beyond the poetry to the prose and wrote that Arnold was the chief herald and champion of the new French criticism.<sup>11</sup> There is also Eliot's remark, already cited, and Enid Starkie's comment, on Arnold's interpretation of French literature to the English reading public, that "... in spite of his ultimate recantation, Arnold had done his work well."<sup>12</sup>

I turn now to consider Arnold's first phase.

## CHAPTER II

To consider Matthew Arnold as the interpreter of French literature and culture in mid-Victorian England has been a common critical assumption for many years. He was well qualified for such a mission both in intellectual background and in breadth of interest, and also in his congenial relations with a number of French writers. If his interest in France stemmed partly from his discontent with the quality of life in England, he was all the more motivated to seek out what was for him the best of French literature, and bring it to the attention of his countrymen.

Matthew Arnold benefitted greatly from his father's perseverance in introducing contemporary languages into Rugby<sup>1</sup> to supplement the study of the classics. Although young Arnold studied and enjoyed French, a number of biographical references indicate that his ability to use the language resembled that of a schoolboy. Nevertheless despite any lack of professionalism it is quite evident that he was eventually able to converse, read, and write the language sufficiently well to satisfy such diverse critics as George Sand, Ernest Renan, and Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve. In addition, there was in his own temperament an empathy with the gaiety and cosmopolitanism which he found far more evident in France than in England. He was described by many of his friends at Balliol as a "dandy," partially because of his avidness for the French theatre and partially because of his continental mannerisms. Later he looked for civilizing values in such French institutions as the Literary

Academy because England's chief interest appeared to be in commerce rather than in arts and letters.

In his early years, Matthew Arnold made a number of trips to the continent. His first brief visit, when he accompanied his father, took place when he was fourteen. This was followed by a second visit with his father and his brother immediately preceding the death of his father in 1842. When Arnold was twenty-three he made a pilgrimage to Nohant to visit George Sand and later that same year, in 1846, he journeyed to Paris for the sole purpose of enjoying several stage performances by the renowned French actress Rachel. Two more continental visits, this time to Switzerland, followed in 1848 (at the time of the revolution) and again in 1849. These visits to the Swiss area are closely associated with the mysterious Marguerite of "real or imaginary fame." These early years saw one more visit to the continent -- this time embracing Italy, France, and Switzerland, which Arnold took with his wife in the autumn of 1851 as a delayed honeymoon.<sup>2</sup>

His familiarity with the French language, a profound interest in the French literary and cultural scene, and also a love of the French and Swiss countryside all contributed to Arnold's involvement with "things French," and no doubt made it easier for him to question the quality of life in England. By 1845, Arnold's knowledge of the French language was sufficiently advanced to permit him to enjoy French tragedy on the stage. He was enthusiastic about Elisa Felix Rachel in the roles

of Phèdre and Andromaque in her British appearances in London and Edinburgh, and by late 1846 he journeyed after her and wrote "... I followed her to Paris, and I never missed one of the representations."<sup>3</sup> Arnold's enthusiasm for the young actress, who was the same age as himself, must have been obvious to Arthur Hugh Clough, a schoolhood friend, who wrote:

Matt Arnold is just come back from Paris, his stay at the latter end seems to have been very satisfactory to him...[he] is full of Paris and the things of Paris specially the theatres... Matt is full of Parisianism; theatres in general and Rachel in special. 4

But it was an enthusiasm in which Clough could not share.<sup>φ</sup> It was shortly after Matthew Arnold's return from France in 1847, that Clough wrote to a friend:

... he enters the room with a chanson of Beranger's on his lips -- for the sake of French words almost conscious of tune: his carriage shows him in fancy parading the rue de Rivoli; -- and his hair is guiltless of English scissors; he breakfasts at twelve, and never dines in the hall. 5

Such performances as these then were interpreted by his acquaintances as "dandyism," a term which would be vindicated by his worship of one of Europe's unique yet notorious women of the nineteenth century -- George Sand. He visited George Sand at Nohant in 1846, a visit which precipitated not only an early idol-worship of Sand but also a new and powerful

---

<sup>φ</sup>Arnold's youthful delight in Rachel is not evident in the only poetry in which he commemorates the French actress. He wrote a sonnet sequence with elegaic qualities a few years after the tragedienne's death in 1858. It is a brief sequence portraying a dying middle-aged woman rather than a brilliant young actress in such lines as: "Worn with disease,/ Rachel, with eyes no gazing can appease,"

interest in French literature.

Mrs. Humphrey Ward, Arnold's niece, wrote that her uncle, his brother and a small group of close friends at Oxford discovered Sand along with Emerson and Carlyle in the early 1840s.<sup>6</sup> It was probably George Sand's novel Indiana<sup>7</sup> which first caught Arnold's attention, and it was early in 1846 that he was "...tracing an itinerary to Berry, locating the tiny villages and roadways which he planned to include in his pilgrimage."<sup>8</sup>

One can read many accounts of Arnold's visit to the French novelist. His own account, written many years later in 1877, just one year after Sand's death, shows the memory still very vivid:

It seems to me the other day that I saw her yet it was... more than thirty years ago. From Boussac I addressed to Madame Sand the sort of letter of which she must in her lifetime have had scores, a letter conveying to her in bad French, the homage of a youthful and enthusiastic foreigner who had read her works with delight... The mid-day breakfast at Nohant was not yet over when I reached the house and I found a large party assembled... Madame Sand's manner put me at ease in a moment... the main impression she made was an impression... of simplicity, frank, cordial simplicity... After breakfast she led the way into the garden, asked me a few kind questions about myself and my plans, gathered a flower or two and gave them to me, shook hands heartily at the gate, and I saw her no more. 9

This visit consisted of a few brief hours which, no doubt, were considered a period of enlightenment by Arnold; a few brief hours which established the direction in which Arnold was moving -- towards the French literary scene.

It was "... the cry of agony and revolt, the trust in nature and beauty, the aspiration towards a purged and human society"<sup>10</sup> that Arnold admired in George Sand's books. He was attracted to the poetry and the lyricism of Valentine and Lélia. Fraser Neiman<sup>11</sup> writes that the feeling of the power of nature and beauty as eternal consolers, and a sympathy with Sand's expression of humanitarian idealism, also fascinated Arnold. Such noble quotations from Sand's works as "Non, nous n'avons plus affaire à la mort, mais à la vie," and "Il faut que la vie soit bonne afin qu'elle soit féconde,"<sup>12</sup> are liberally sprinkled throughout Arnold's 1877 eulogy to Sand. Yet he had ignored the real life situation in which her jealous lover Alfred deMusset had depicted her in a pamphlet entitled "Gamiani" in which she was the centre of a heterosexual-lesbian triangle.<sup>13</sup> Here was a story like similar to that of Théophile Gautier's Mlle. deMaupin, another work of the same period, which was ignored by Arnold in spite of its succès de scandale. Sand's novels were radical because they emphasized the role of the liberated woman and as Marchand points out, they shocked the public. But for Arnold at this stage, they conveyed only high-minded sentiment.

Arnold's fascination with George Sand was shared by his friend Clough who, as early as 1845, was writing to another friend that he had found time to read Jeanne and considered it the "... most cleanly French novel I ever read" and even ten years later wrote to Ralph Waldo Emerson that "... Sand's Histoire de ma Vie is well worth reading."<sup>14</sup> But it was not an enchantment shared by many Englishmen of the mid-nineteenth century. There are other exceptions,<sup>15</sup> however, and we do have an essay

written about George Sand, written by Frederick W. H. Myers, which appeared a few months earlier than Arnold's essay. It also praised her work for its truth and force and the essay concluded that she had written "... under the influence of a meditative idealism and an ethical purpose."<sup>16</sup> Arnold in his late 1877 essay also found the interest in man's ethical nature as the central point of George Sand's works, and he illustrated this with the quotation:

Le sentiment de la vie idéale, qui n'est autre que la vie normale telle que nous sommes appelés à la connaître. (the sentiment of the ideal life, which is none other than man's normal life as we are called upon to recognize it). 17

Arnold was later to describe this period of his life as his "Lélia days,"<sup>18</sup> his days of youth and his days of romantic idealism. It was in Lélia that he encountered the character type that embodied the malady of ennui, which was brought upon the soul by "... excessive intellectualism operating on a highly developed sensibility."<sup>19</sup> Here was a variation of the strange evil which Arnold had noted in the works of Byron and now found in his readings of Werther and Obermann. This was the kind of sensibility which Arnold identified in Sand, Senancour and Sainte-Beuve, but which he failed to follow in its subsequent modification in the French writers of the last half of the nineteenth century.

In 1884, long after the "Lélia days," in another essay written on George Sand, Arnold ignored Lélia and cited Indiana, Mauprat, and Jean de la Roche as characteristic of her work. He wrote:

Bien dire, c'est bien sentir, and her ample and noble style rests upon large and lofty qualities. 20



Gone by that time was his interest in ennui; rather he was looking back to Sand's humane idealism as the central force in her works.

Arnold's visit to George Sand established the direction in which he was to pursue his search for literary values at this stage, for it was Sand who suggested that since he intended to visit the lake at Geneva and Luasanne, that he should not fail to visit Imenstrom, the home of Senancour. This was Matthew Arnold's introduction to the writings of Etienne Senancour, who had died earlier that year. It is probable, because of Sand's inspiration, that he first read Obermann in the 1840 version for which she had written the preface, as it was from this text that he nearly always quoted.

It has become apparent by now that this meeting at Nohant was a crucial point in Matthew Arnold's career. He was drawn to a development in French literature which was not to have lasting influence in England, nor for that matter in France itself, despite support from Clough, Myers, and eventually Babbitt in America. Arnold was, because of this early commitment, virtually blind to the significant new movement in French literature. Iris Sells concludes in the introduction to her book that:

... the apparent arbitrariness of his preference for 'Nobodies' like the deGuérins, for the genius of a George Sand rather than a Balzac; the seemingly divergent nature of his interests, in subjects so disparate at first sight as the works of Foscola, Joubert, and Amiel; or those of Senancour, Quinet, Sainte-Beuve, La Villemarque and Renan will be seen to have their origin in the days of his first revelation of French literature, from the oracular lips of George Sand. 21

Although Miss Sells may not have been entirely fair in her sweeping

catalogue of so-called third-rate French literary figures, she does make a strong case in her book for the importance of this meeting as a turning point in Arnold's literary development. Perhaps though, the tendency to turn to French romanticism in his post Oxford days is associated with his early identification with the English romantics.<sup>22</sup> Despite his later denunciation of the English romantics and the impossibility of continuing their strain in his own work, his latent romanticism gave him an affinity for French romanticism.<sup>23</sup>

Undoubtedly the works of Sand and later Senancour, both of whom indulged in "religious naturalism,"<sup>24</sup> re-enforced by Arnold's early veneration of Wordsworth, misled him into supposing that romantic naturalism was as important in France as it was in England. In addition it no doubt represented for the young graduate an international substitute for the Christianity of both his father and John Newman. Whether or not Arnold should be labelled a romantic, despite his evident lack of sympathy with the movement, is not the issue of this paper. But that he was strongly influenced by romanticism from both sides of the channel has long been an accepted fact and this theory is discussed at length and in all of its complexities by D. G. James in his Matthew Arnold and the Decline of English Romanticism.

Arnold was drawn to France by Rachel and George Sand and through the latter came to know Sainte-Beuve and Senancour. In turn he was drawn to Switzerland by Senancour's Obermann and there met Marguerite, who was to be an inspiration for some of his most beautiful short poems

and fragments. His meetings with a young lady, identified only as Marguerite, in Switzerland during the summers of 1848 and 1849, have been a source of much speculation and concern. T. S. Eliot dismisses Marguerite as "at best a shadowy figure neither very passionately desired, nor very closely observed, a mere pretext for lamentation;"<sup>25</sup> Lionel Trilling states that it "...used to be frequently said... that the two series of love poems which Arnold called 'Switzerland' and 'Faded Leaves' were not inspired by an actual love affair. However, the evidence of several sentences in the letters of Arnold to Clough seems to refute the belief that the Marguerite of the poems was only a poetical figment."<sup>26</sup> Even granting that the affair<sup>27</sup> took place, critics are not unanimous about its significance, nor about the relationship of the poems to the affair. G. R. Stange considers the series an exercise in the craftsmanship of poetry sometimes brilliant and sometimes faulty.<sup>28</sup> Stange also feels Arnold's continuous reworking of the poems bears ample evidence of the writer's own dissatisfaction with them. For the purposes of this paper, however, I wish to pursue these works as a part of a Arnold's French liaison, whether Marguerite is a shadow, a symbol, or a woman. The poems will be considered in the order in which they appear to have been written according to Kenneth Allott's dating, rather than the groupings which Arnold eventually established.

In actual fact all the evidence we have about Marguerite is found in the poems themselves and in references in Arnold's letters to Clough. The first of these letters was written from the Baths of Leuk on the twenty-ninth of September, 1848, in which Arnold states "Tomorrow

I repass the Gemmi and get to Thun; linger one day at the Hotel Bellevue for the sake of the blue eyes of one of its inmates: and then proceed..."<sup>29</sup>

A second reference is more indirect but undoubtedly refers to Marguerite because of the association in the letter with the Switzerland poem

'Parting'. Arnold wrote from Thun on September the twenty-third in 1849:

I am here in a curious and not altogether comfortable state: however, tomorrow I carry my aching head to the mountains and to my cousin the Bhunlis Alps.

[He then goes on to include the lines which would eventually, after modification, become ll. 25 to 34 of 'Parting'.]

Fast, fast by my window  
The rushing winds go  
Towards the ice-cumber'd gorges,  
The vast fields of snow.  
There the torrents drive upward  
Their rock strangled hum,  
And the avalanche thunders  
The hoarse torrent dumb.  
I come, O ye mountains --  
Ye torrents, I come.           30

Earlier in the same letter his general disillusionment is evident as he writes "...I often think of you among the untoward generation with whom I live and of whom all I read testifies," and it is possible that this is also evidence of his attitude towards Marguerite, as he would soon be leaving her. No doubt speculation in scholarly circles as to the authenticity of Marguerite will continue, but the best evidence we have at the present time is to be found in the poems.

There are a number of short poems which were not included in either the 'Switzerland' collection or in the 'Faded Leaves' collection, but which are closely associated with the events surrounding the visits

to Switzerland. One of the earliest poems of this period is 'A Memory Picture' in which Arnold has difficulty in recalling Marguerite as an entity but one-by-one he begins to recall her attributes. In order to fix these recollections firmly in his mind he continually calls on his muse, Memory, to re-enforce his recollection before it fades away. This poem in its half-mocking tone is reminiscent of a Donne or a Marvell. Throughout this poem the speaker has difficulty in remembering as he wishes he could, and the reader has the impression that Memory is on the verge of dissipating. Nonetheless the poem does give us a picture of a rather lovely, sympathetic, young girl.

Arnold's return to Thun in 1849 is commemorated in the first of the 'Switzerland' poems entitled 'Meeting'. The reader can recognize Marguerite with her graceful figure, her eyes of blue, and her soft enkerchiefed hair. The poem is ominous in tone and doom is evident as God's tremendous voice is heard to say "Be counselled and retire"<sup>(l. 12)</sup>. The speaker in the poem is disturbed that the gods are to play such a fateful role in his affair and he cries out against them bitterly "...warn some more ambitious heart,/ And let the peaceful be!" <sup>(ll. 15-16)</sup>.

'Parting', the second poem of the series, refers to Arnold's leaving of Thun for a few days (mentioned in the letter to Clough dated September twenty-third, 1849) to consider the events which had taken place. The general tone of the poem is one of despondency and isolation, which is brought about by the interplay of an outer calm and tranquility and an inner turbulence and uncertainty. The "storm-winds of Autumn"<sup>(l. 1)</sup>

have come rushing through the lakes and disturbed the tranquility of the area. It has turned the upland woods into sadly yellowing arms and is now "bound for the mountains"<sup>(l. 9)</sup>, and the inner soul is hopelessly enmeshed in this cruel, uncertain nature. Juxtaposed with this turbulence is the voice on the stairs which is reminiscent of an English dawn and which moves ever closer to the speaker. But before the speaker can appear the rushing winds drive the torrents up the mountain slopes and drowns out everything that is foreign. The calmness and tranquility does not stay submerged, and through the half-opened door a figure casts a shadow; the blue eyes, the soft hair, the gentle paleness, and the unconquered joy move ever closer towards him. Once more the wind interferes and directs the speaker's attention toward the mountains covered with "unspotted snow," and finally the poet cries "I come, O ye mountains" (l. 57).

The first five stanzas have been constructed as a conflict between the two forces; one with its sheer power and the other with an almost pitiful translucent beauty. Marguerite is represented by two beautiful eight-line stanzas, while Arnold's inner turmoil, which is depicted by the wind, is developed in three much longer stanzas. Marguerite of the poem cannot combat nor even control Arnold's restless uncertainty. The poet, once he has decided to leave, apologizes to the girl saying "Forgive me! forgive me!"<sup>(l. 59)</sup> because despite his yearnings and doubts a sea rolls between them. Her past torments him and he continues bitterly:

To the lips, ah! of others  
 Those lips have been praised,  
 And others, ere I was  
 Were strained to that breast; (ll. 67-70)

and he then invokes the winds to carry him to the very mountain tops where he can be far removed from the spotted and sordid world.

Once the poet has made his decision to part from Marguerite, the stanzas become uniform and more lyrical. The turbulent wind takes on a more sympathetic role along with the god-like qualities which are capable of transporting him to the secret centre from "Whence issued the world" (l. 90). Although 'Parting' probably represents Arnold's decision to leave Thun for a brief time in order to reconcile his love for Marguerite with the inner turbulence which she caused him, one cannot help feeling that this decision to part briefly will be permanent. The poem presents, in beautiful yet hesitant verse, the vacillation which must have been present in Arnold.

In 'Isolation. To Marguerite', Arnold's doubt expressed in 'Parting' seems to have disappeared and at the outset he attempts to bridge the chasm which seems to separate Marguerite and himself. The evil of inconstancy now seems to be his and he bids his heart "... to grow a home for [Marguerite]" (l. 4). There is no response and the narrator in despondency cries out "What far too soon, alas, I learned/ ...Thou lov'st no more" (ll. 8-12) and he sadly admits "Farewell! Farewell!" His remorse causes him to reflect that for him she has remained a "chaste queen," but the lines of the poem convey a sense of coldness, almost frigidity. Marguerite is alone and yet touched by:

...unmating things--  
 Oceans and clouds and night and day;  
 Lorn autumms and triumphant springs; (ll. 32-34)

He realizes that the two of them are unsuited and he describes her but also expresses his own situation in the haunting line "Thou hast been, shalt be, art alone"<sup>(l. 30)</sup>. This is not the cry of the wounded cavalier, or even the rejected suitor, but merely the resolute and undemonstrative Englishman overcoming his Gallic passion.

The next Marguerite poem 'To Marguerite -- Continued'<sup>31</sup> was originally published as 'To Marguerite, in Returning a Volume of Ortis', later changed to 'Marguerite', and by 1869 was included in the poems under its present title. Although this poem might be considered as a postscript to 'Isolation. To Marguerite' it carries the sense of isolation to its ultimate degree. The "sea of life" has now divided the lovers into separate islands just as it has forced "mortal millions [to] live alone"<sup>(l. 4)</sup>; a sea that has spread its "watery plain" over what had formerly been a unified continent. This "unplumbed, salt, estranging sea"<sup>(l. 24)</sup> has drowned all visible means of communication amongst the millions and now it is doing the same thing to Arnold and Marguerite.<sup>32</sup>

'A Farewell', the last significant poem<sup>33</sup> involving Marguerite, refers to the final parting of the pair after Arnold returned from the mountain expedition mentioned earlier. This poem is more disciplined than his other outbursts of love and isolation, but by comparison it is insipid and unimaginative. The autumn winds, which a few days earlier



transported him to the mountain tops, have now turned into "blind gusts," while the powerful sea which divided millions has been stilled and has now become a calm and moonlit sea. The parting of Marguerite and Arnold has been complete. No hope for a reunion can be held because only "gentleness" and a "thirst for peace"<sup>(l. 84)</sup> is left.

Arnold's September letter to Clough, which was mentioned earlier, probably foretold the outcome of his relationship with Marguerite. He writes "My dearest Clough these are damned times -- everything is against one," and he particularly identifies "light profligate friends," although Marguerite may not have been intended she was no doubt considered in his thoughts in this statement. The full importance of the Marguerite incident and its true significance will probably never be known, but Arnold did seem to find passion akin to love with this daughter of France,<sup>φ</sup> and yet almost immediately he came to realize its limitations, and he was soon to change the "sweet eyes of blue" for a "fair stranger's eyes of grey."<sup>34</sup> The poetry and passion that he felt with Marguerite was renounced by Arnold just as he would eventually renounce many of his early French passions.

Arnold was to use a similar style and theme to that of "Marguerite" in a collection of poems grouped together under the title of 'Faded Leaves'.

---

<sup>φ</sup>The parallel between Arnold's and Marguerite's love affair in France, of which little is known, and the affair several decades earlier between William Wordsworth and Annette Vallon, of which much more is known, cannot be overlooked. Interestingly enough, Arnold probably had Wordsworth's sonnet at Calais in mind when he wrote 'Dover Beach'.

These poems, along with the single poem 'Calais Sands', were all written late in 1850 at the time he was courting Lucy Wightman. There is just enough ambiguity in the five short poems to make it difficult to establish whether they look back on Marguerite or forward to Lucy. The "arch eyes" and "that mocking mouth" of 'The River' probably resembled Lucy because they are very different from the kind, blue eyes which have "Mockery ever ambush'd in" from the Marguerite poems. Yet the passion of the speaker and the settings of the poems are similar to those used by the poet in the Marguerite series.

In the third poem of the series 'Separation' we can only think of Miss Wightman when Arnold questions:

Who, let me say, is this stranger regards me  
With the grey eyes, and the lovely brown hair? (ll. 15-16)

In 'On the Rhine', Arnold appears ready to renounce his youthful escapades when he contemplates the hills edging the Rhine which were once young with their folds and their faults. Like him, their youthful formation has ended and, like him, they find "joy" in their calm. They are no longer youthful but instead are weathered, rounded, and formed. Arnold himself has also lost his youthfulness and had been forced into the man who, in his weathering, wants to forget Marguerite and find peace.

Following his return from France early in 1847, Arnold probably began to read Senancour and Sainte-Beuve, because on his next visit to the continent in the autumn of 1848, he went to many of the locations described in Obermann. It was also in this period, immediately after his return to England, that he became private secretary to Lord Lansdowne --

a position which was to permit him ample time to work on his first major book of poems.

Arnold's view of Senancour's major work and Sainte-Beuve's critical view of this work are closely interwoven. Etienne Pivert de Senancour was born in 1770. Although he wrote several novels, he was not, nor has he become posthumously, a writer of any stature. It was only Senancour's Obermann which seemed to interest Arnold. This substantial novel, thought by many to be autobiographical, is written as a series of letters over a ten-year period. The work is logically structured by letter number and date, and subdivided into chapters, each one corresponding to one year of the ten-year period which it covers. The central character, Obermann, spends most of his time journeying through the byways of Switzerland in search of his destiny and in search of a meaning in life. George Sand described Obermann as "... a manly breast with feeble arms, an aescetic soul possessed by a cankering doubt which betrays its impotence instead of exhibiting its daring."<sup>35</sup> Obermann doubted that there was a meaning to life, a doubt in which he expressed the mood of many men of the nineteenth century. His philosophy follows that of Rousseau in advocating the return to a simple and more basic life; accordingly he turned his back on the city and searched for answers in his beloved countryside. In his search, however, a form of indolence and indifference develops into an inertia -- an ennui.

Both Sand and Sainte-Beuve felt that the individual parts of the novel were far greater than the whole, and that it showed to best advantage

in its various segments.<sup>36</sup> However, a critic of the late nineteenth century, M. Levaloes, states that it must be read in its entirety because "... it exhibits the only unity possible in a work of this kind, a unity of soul... a personality sometimes in harmony, sometimes disordered, but always in touch with Nature."<sup>37</sup> Although Arnold did not discuss this point we can probably assume that he would also want to understand it only by "seeing it clearly and seeing it whole."

In the opening pages of his book, Senancour sets the stage for his hero by having him write:

... I enquired of men if they felt as I did. I enquired of the facts of life whether they were suited to my tastes, and I discovered that there was no harmony either between myself and society, or between my needs and what society has produced...Everywhere I found emptiness. 38

Very early in the letters, Obermann sees clearly that we must:

... be what we ought to be, and then let us yield to the drift of circumstances, endeavouring simply to be true to ourselves. Thus whatever happens we shall regulate our circumstances without superfluous anxiety; not by altering things themselves, but by controlling the impressions they make upon us. 39

Obermann begins to find a meaning to life in Nature as the rhythmic sounds of the waves give power to his soul, but this is fleeting and he returns to the everyday world only to face the emptiness of life in the faces and actions of men. He envies men who are able to banish any feeling of ennui by inventing anti-intellectual diversions which occupy their minds and forestall a need to reflect on the reality of the universe.

Arnold in his sonnet 'In Harmony with Nature', which was written

prior to his reading of Obermann, is also searching for strength in mankind, a strength and an intellectual capacity to come to terms with Nature. In the poem he gives to man the role of human uncertainty and to Nature the role of inflexibility. But in the conclusion he tells man that if he has not the intellect to pass beyond Nature, he should become subservient to her. Surely, then, he saw in Obermann someone who had the ability to go beyond Nature by recognizing her for what she is -- a stage set for his very presence.

Obermann could never quite escape his concern for the primacy of nature. By the sixth year of his letter writing, he finally saw nature in its relationship to man:

What would Nature be to man if she did not speak to him of other men? Glorious mountains, shuddering rush of drifted snows, lonely peace of wooded vales, yellow leaves borne by some still stream -- all would be dumb, if our fellows were no more. If I were left the last man on earth, what meaning could I find in the weird sounds of the night, in the solid stillness of wide valleys, in the sunset glow of a pensive sky above unruffled waters. 40

We begin to realize that Obermann, although seemingly a pantheist, is well aware that Nature is only significant in its relationship to man. Arnold admittedly to a lesser degree than either Obermann or Wordsworth, also begins to see Nature as a teacher of man but not to the extent that he sees it as the panacea for mankind's ills. In 'Lines Written in Kensington Gardens' he demonstrates this with:

Calm soul of all things! make it mine  
To feel, amid the city's jar,  
That there abides a peace of thine  $\phi$  (ll. 37-39)

---

$\phi$  In this poem, Arnold finds Nature able to offer some form of peace and contentment to the urban scene.

The feeling is akin to Obermann's acceptance of the interdependence of man and nature but it is not as strong.

Obermann censures any writer who lacks an understanding of his subject whether he be a gifted writer or not.<sup>41</sup> Obermann then turned critic by detaching himself from the mainstream of life, because he felt the value of criticism justified his position of spectator.<sup>42</sup>

A similar view of the poet is expressed by Arnold in his poem 'Resignation'. Although this poem is considered to be a product of the mid eighteen-forties, it was not published until 1849 and it is known that many revisions were made between the date of writing and the date of publication. The poet, Arnold writes, is affected by the world of nature and it causes him to have a quicker pulse and awakens in him a zeal which causes him to look at mankind and not at himself. But it is a mankind that he must "scan" as he "pass(es) on the proud heights" as if "From some high station he looks down"(l. 164). The section of the poem describing the role of the poet is filled with non-participatory verbs; consider such verbs as exults, envies, surveys, and sees. The poet wants to "mingle with the crowd"(l. 162), but for the most part his strength rests in "lean [ing] upon the gate"(l. 172) and looking on, and though he craves for a normal life where he may walk in the rain through the countryside, he finds instead that he has received from fate a "sad lucidity of soul"(l. 198). These are surely, then, the words of a man who sees and experiences the world from a distance; the philosophy of a detached destiny which Obermann also found to be his lot in

life. D. G. James writes<sup>43</sup> that Arnold, in fact, found a match for his own restlessness and inconstancy in Obermann, and that Senancour's work fed his "temperamental loneliness" and his "feeling of not belonging" which in turn provided him with a satisfaction and a justification for his own life.

Senancour realized that man is only conscious of Nature as it relates to humanity, and that if there is an eloquence of things that it must be an eloquence of man. Arnold seems to be much closer to Senancour's man-nature view than he is to Wordsworth's view of this relationship. Nevertheless, nature does not remain the centre of the universe for Arnold as it did for Obermann.

As a result one generation of critics finds Arnold unsympathetic to nature poetry per se. J. W. Beach notes that Arnold, who was obviously under the influence of both Wordsworth and Goethe, showed in his reference to nature "...in the abstract...a certain confusion of attitudes," and that furthermore he displayed a lack of warmth and richness that mark the Romantic treatment of nature.<sup>44</sup> Robert Stange writes that Arnold had little respect for landscape in his poetry.<sup>45</sup> But of course, the best testimony is still to be found in Arnold's own writings where he condemns Tennyson for "dawdling with the painted shell of the universe", or in 'Harmony with Nature' where he writes "Nature and man can never be fast friends"(l. 13). Although Arnold's ultimate view of nature differed somewhat from Senancour's, the Frenchman's concept must have caused Arnold some concern. This conflict was finally resolved in

Arnold's poem 'Obermann Once More' (see pp. 38-39).

Obermann's attitude towards life and its meaning is evident as a thread woven into the fabric of 'The Scholar-Gipsy' which, although not written until the 1852-53 period, was originally planned in 1848. Although the particular tale that inspired Arnold's poem was from Joseph Glanvil's The Vanity of Dogmatizing, the scholar-gipsy is also Obermann. Glanvil's book had been read by both Arnold and Clough in their days at Balliol. The story concerns a former student of Oxford who had been forced by poverty to quit his studies and who in wandering the Cummer Hills, found and joined a gipsy band. The spirit of the youth continued to haunt the hills and in its freedom and detachment from the world inspired both Arnold and Clough. Arnold's distaste for modern life is expressed even more clearly, than in his earlier poems, when he eulogizes the scholar-gipsy's age:

... born in days when wits were fresh and clear,  
And life ran gaily as the sparkling Thames;  
Before this strange disease of modern life,  
With its sick hurry, its divided aims,  
Its heads o'ertaxed, its palsied hearts, was rife - (ll. 201-205)

and he warns the spirit of the gipsy away, not wanting to contaminate him: "... fly our paths, our feverish contact fly!" (l. 221). Whether by influence or coincidence, Arnold joins with Senancour in rejecting civilization. In the scholar who was "seen by rare glimpses, pensive and tongue-tied" (l. 54) and who was known to have love "retired ground," we see a likeness to Arnold's earlier view of Obermann; and both the gipsy and Obermann must be preserved from the "...infection of mental strife" (l. 222). Obermann yearns for the days gone by and sees the



great power as a kind of "universal consciousness;" a consciousness which will some day send a message helping him to understand life.<sup>46</sup> In his reflections on lost youth and the days gone by, and in his apathy towards the activities of modern man, we begin to hear Arnold's eulogy of the scholar-gipsy.

Robert Stange, in his analysis of the 'The Scholar-Gipsy', sees the structure as a cluster of "elementary contrasts" of which the principal one "... is between the fullness and vitality of nature and the deprivation and arid anxiety of modern man."<sup>47</sup> This poem seems to take up where 'Stanzas in Memory of the Author of Obermann' leaves off, which was with the last farewell to the alpine wanderer. No more, however, does Arnold look for the breath of the wanderer to "Once more upon me roll," but instead he calls upon the wanderer/gipsy to "... plunge deeper in the bowering wood! /.../ wave us away, and keep the solitude!" (ll. 207-210). The narrator is even more adamant now that modern life will not provide the answer to the poet, to the lyricist, or to the lover of beauty. But it is also abundantly clear that Arnold at this stage is not interested in finding an alternative to the "strange disease of modern life."<sup>48</sup> He considers this attempt at a reconciliation of the traditional and the modern as simply awakening a pleasant melancholy.

There are many instances where we can speculate on the specific influences of Obermann on Arnold. One such instance would be the flowers embodying Nature in 'Lines Written in Kensington Gardens' where the narrator says:

Here at my feet what wonders pass,  
 What endless, active life is here!  
 What blowing daisies, ... (ll. 13-15)

These could very well be those same daisies which Obermann relates to Eden as carrying "...[him] back vividly to the past as if these links of time called up the thought of happy days"<sup>49</sup> and he sees in the daisies the infinite illusion of his fleeting life. Although the imagery may not be similar, the nuances and the tone of the following lines from one of Obermann's earlier letters certainly suggests Arnold's 'Dover Beach':

The moon appeared, I stayed on...Towards morning  
 she diffused overland and water the exquisite  
 melancholy of her last beams...one heard in one's  
 long meditation the roll of the waves on the  
 lonely shore. 50

Here, specifically, we can almost hear Arnold in Obermann's opening letter. Senancour writes:

Let us then...be what we ought to be, and then let  
 us yield to the best of circumstances, endeavouring  
 simply to be true to ourselves. Thus...we shall regulate  
 our circumstances...not by altering things  
 themselves, but by controlling the impressions they  
 make on us. 51

Although there is no turning to love as a desperate alternative here, there can be little doubt that this is the genesis of Arnold's 'Dover Beach' which was written in 1851, but was not published until 1867.

Perhaps, though, it is in the relationship between Obermann's view of contemporary life and its contrast with the ideal life that we detect the strongest connection between Senancour's philosophy and Arnold's. Obermann writes "I love existing things, and I love them as they are... I only want, I only demand of Nature and of men for my

whole life, what Nature of necessity contains, and what all men ought to possess."<sup>52</sup> He is of course referring to a hunger for permanence, he does not want "... things that are new-fangled, changing, manifold," and he goes on to say that what "... has already pleased me will always please me." The hero becomes more explicit later in his writings when he pens:

...how delightful home life would be if two friends, and the head of two small and united families, lived neighbors to each other amid wood-encircled meadows within reach of town, yet far from its influence. 53

Obermann very early leaves the "tenanted and fertile fields" and instead follows the footpath through the meadows. He sees man's civilization from a distance and he describes the bridge, the castle, and the flowing Rhone as making "a most charming picture," and the nearby town is seen as a romantic whole embodying "a kind of simplicity" and "a touch of melancholy."<sup>54</sup> Obermann is not willing to see the works of man in close detail; it is almost as if he could look at mankind through the reverse end of a telescope. So he keeps civilization at a distance and retreats to the mountain solitudes:

...where the sky is vast, the air calmer, the flight of time less hurried, and life more permanent

and where:

...all nature expresses a nobler plan, a more evident harmony, an eternal wholeness (and where mankind) recovers that true self which may be warped but cannot perish; (and where) he breathes a free air untainted by the exhalations of social life 55

The attitude displayed by Obermann towards contemporary life is one that Matthew Arnold was drawn to in his earlier years, before his resolution to "join" society developed. Obermann could find no solutions, no answers, and no rest in modern civilization. Time after time, throughout the course of his letter writing, the hero tells of his attempts to integrate himself into society only to be faced with the "Frustrations of life which curb us." He writes that there is:

... need to withdraw periodically from human affairs, not to see that they might be different, but to strengthen one's faith that they will be (different) 56

Although he must of necessity live in a modern environment he finds it totally devoid of meaning, and he writes:

... what strikes me most of all is the bustle of effort for so empty a result, this immensity of toil for an end so uncertain, barren, and perhaps opposed to one's aim. 57

Arnold, too, at this stage of his career, did not find an explanation of life in his own modern environment. In his poetry he tended to use masks such as classical personae ('Empedocles on Etna') or semi-romantic personae ('The Scholar-Gipsy') to articulate his malaise. The solitary figure, whether on a mountain top or in the harsh roar of the city, is his recurrent persona.

Obermann's story, however, is concerned not only with his indifference to the modern world. In his correspondence he discusses his views on religion and the church, on love, sex, and fidelity, and on morals and ethics, mysticism and stimulants. The prevailing mood,

however, focuses on the boredom of life.<sup>φ</sup> Obermann writes that all objects "...exhibit with ghostly realism the ingenious but dreary mechanics of their skeleton,"<sup>58</sup> and these objects involve him without actually quickening his life. In his dejection and apathy he continues:

Time flows steadily away; I rise with reluctance,  
I go to bed weary, I wake up without desires. I  
shut myself up and I am bored...I blunder along,  
not knowing which way to turn. I am restless be-  
cause I have nothing to do; I talk to escape  
thinking; I am lively through sheer dullness. 59

Obermann also believed that the true centre of man is within, and that outside influences thwart and threaten the real individual. Senancour writes:

...The real of man...is within himself; what he  
receives from without is only accidental. The  
effect things have upon him depend much more on  
the state of mind in which they find him than on  
their intrinsic characters. 60

and that man reflects little change because although:

...influence [s] may so far modify him that he  
becomes their handiwork, but in the never-ending  
procession of events he alone stands fixed  
though plastic, while the eternal objects re-  
lated to him are completely altered. 61

These thoughts are expressed by Arnold in 'The Buried Life' where the speaker identifies the hostile nature of man's environment:

---

<sup>φ</sup>This malady was not localized to the literary figures of France and England. One similar character which comes to mind is Oblomov. This character from Goncharov's Russian novel entitled Oblomov (published in 1859) is the extreme characterization of laziness and ineffectiveness. It is the novelist's portrait of the anti-modern, anti-efficient, anti-industrialized man who reflects a concern for retaining old-world tradition.

But often in the world's most crowded streets,  
 But often in the din of strife,  
 There rises the unspeakable desire  
 After the knowledge of our buried life. (ll. 45-48)

These words also have the echo of Lucretius who felt that all things are made from a chance composition of atoms, and the creatures and things are not made by gods. Moreover, he felt that the body, the soul, and the mind, are united and the atoms of the soul, which are particularly fine, are diffused throughout the body. Lucretius<sup>62</sup> further postulates that this structure gives the body, with its intellectual centre, a stronghold or fortification against the movement of atoms outside of itself. Arnold, in his Lucretian fragments written during the period in which he was reading Obermann, captures the turmoil outside of man in the closing lines of the ninth stanza from 'Fragments from "Lucretius"' with "Thus yesterday, today, tomorrow come,/ They hustle one another and they pass;". Arnold, like Obermann, cannot fully accept the Lucretian theory that the earth and humanity are an accident and made without the help of gods. Obermann's recognition of a great power, a "universal consciousness" has become God in Arnold's fragments.<sup>63</sup> More and more the influence of Senancour's work on the young Arnold may be seen. For it was during these years that Arnold was poetically so creative.

Clearly, Senancour led Arnold to his most characteristic mood of 'stare', the mood of controlled alienation. While Senancour created a character through whom to demonstrate his ennui and melancholy,

Arnold projected the same moods through poetic imagery -- the Sea of Faith, the buried life, the scholar-gipsy, the Tyrian trader, the monastery children. The sum of these symptoms is to be found in many famous phrases "the strange disease of modern life," "wandering between two worlds," "we mortal millions live alone," and so forth. A distrust of collective mankind by the isolated man plus an inability to withdraw, were the factors that impelled Empedocles into Etna's crater, and drove the narrator of 'Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse' to the refuge of the Carthusians only to reject it.

I turn now to the two poems which Arnold addressed specifically to the author of Obermann. Arnold's first poem to Senancour was written in the autumn of 1849, and it is one of the few poems that were dated by the author. 'Stanzas in Memory of the Author of Obermann, November, 1849' is Arnold's tribute to the sensitivity and the power in Senancour's Obermann. It was written during the same period in which the affair with Marguerite came to an end. In fact, in September of that year, Arnold's letter (quoted earlier) to Clough, included two lines which would eventually be incorporated in the Obermann poem. It is apparent, as one reads the letter to Clough, that Arnold is still searching for a destiny, for a direction, or perhaps a re-birth. He writes:

Marvel not that I say unto you, ye must be born  
again. While I will not much talk of these  
things, yet the considering of them has led me  
constantly to you the only living one almost I  
know of

The children of the second birth  
Whom the world could not tame -- 64

Here are the words of one Oxonian writing to another, hoping to impart some of his anxiety in an effort to resolve his dilemma. No doubt it was a period of uncertainty for Arnold because the affair with Marguerite had either drawn to a close or was on the very verge of ending. Furthermore, Arnold had not made a firm decision about his own career because the post of private secretary to Lord Lansdowne could be considered neither satisfying nor demanding. On the other hand, he must have been less than completely satisfied with his own literary output thus far. These, then, must have been the words of a man searching for a "rebirth." Arnold saw Obermann as one of the "children of the second birth" who could not be tamed but who was, instead, transfigured. This seemingly belated eulogy for Senancour, who had died in 1846, is probably the best example of Arnold's wistful leaning towards romanticism.

The Alpine countryside depicted in the poem speaks of Obermann in every facet of its nature from the hard and very real "rocky stair" to the ubiquitous "mists rolling like the sea." The spirit of Obermann has transcended the entire area until the very ground-tone is that of "human agony." Recognizing the almost deathlike winds which are blowing past the glaciers and chilling the high pasturing kine, Arnold questions why "the world around/So little loves thy strain?"(ll. 39-40), but he has by this time answered his own question.

Having established the world's lack of interest in the author, the poem becomes a tribute to Senancour as Arnold compares him with Wordsworth and Goethe, who, through their own spirits, have attained poetic recognition



in this troubled time. He continues:

By England's lakes, in grey old age,  
His quiet home one keeps;  
And one, the strong much-toiling sage,  
In German Weimar sleeps. (ll. 49-52) 65

However, Arnold feels that although their times were also hard, their youth was spent in a more "tranquil world" than that of Arnold and his contemporaries. He depicts his own troubled times in three lucid stanzas interwoven with a meaningful simile:

But we, brought forth and reared in hours  
Of change, alarm, surprise --  
What shelter to grow ripe is ours?  
What leisure to grow wise?

Like children bathing on the shore,  
Buried a wave beneath,  
The second wave succeeds, before  
We have had time to breathe.

Too fast we live, too much are tried,  
Too harrassed to attain  
Wordsworth's sweet calm, or Goethe's wide  
And luminous view to gain. (ll. 69-80)

and it becomes apparent that the lines serve not only as a eulogy for Senancour but also as a lament for Arnold and his generation. Arnold, then, sees that Senancour provides some measure of clarity, and perhaps a qualified remedy for life in Victorian England and nineteenth century Europe. Senancour's Obermann has a cold deep-seeing, detached view of the world which is one way that a poet is able to operate as he is driven by his "feverish blood" into solitude. Arnold wants to share Senancour's pleasures in the detached world of the hills above Switzerland's Lake Lemman, but he is unable to do this because he is first and foremost a practical man. In a pathetic comment on his own lost poetic

powers, Arnold sees his talent slipping swiftly away. He is not willing to follow Obermann's lead. But Arnold has not escaped unscathed because he cries:

I go, fate drives me; but I leave  
Half of my life with you (ll. 131-2)

and he reiterates his sadness at turning his back on Obermann and on the romanticism which Obermann stood for:

Farewell! Under the sky we part,  
In this stern Alpine dell.  
O unstrung will! O broken heart!  
A last, a last farewell! (ll. 181-4) 66

Senancour's pastoral France was not Arnold's Victorian England. But the main reason for Arnold's break with Senancour's Obermann was a change in temperament between Arnold as a youth and Arnold as a critic of society. This aspect of Arnold will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

'Obermann Once More' was written twenty years later. Not only had Arnold nearly completed the metamorphosis from alienated poet to social reformer, but he had read the Origin of Species. For him, as for his contemporaries, Nature can never be the same again. In the second Obermann poem, Arnold calls to Obermann as if he were an uncertain, unclear, Alpine muse in the lines "...but thou must be, in truth,/  
Obermann.../ Thou master of my wandering youth,/" (ll. 37-39), an almost unrecognizable spirit of his earlier poetical days. Having established this perspective, Arnold proceeds to draw upon the Obermann that had attracted him earlier as he writes that the sadness of the earlier Obermann causes him to:

... feel the words inspire  
 Their mournful calm, serene,  
 Yet tinged with infinite desire  
 For all that might have been -- (ll. 49-52)

Suddenly Arnold is confronted by the spirit of Obermann, who challenges him with "And is it thou," and the spirit goes on to say that he realizes the Englishman has for a moment turned his back on the contemporary world and regained his youth as well as his faith in Obermann. Obermann, however, accuses Arnold of deserting him once "Thou fledst me when the ungenial earth, / Man's work-place, lay in gloom" (ll. 77-78), but the spirit soon lapses into his own earlier thoughts of a world that once was. Most of the poem consists of Obermann's account of the early world of Lucretius and of Christ that existed before the "... sheets of scathing fire" overtook Europe. This is more an attempt by Arnold to analyze his youthful romanticism than it is to see things in a new light. But the voice of Obermann proves to be unreal, the experience had simply been a vision which eluded Arnold as he awoke. The only vestige remaining to him was that of the morning breaking -- symbolically dissipating itself into the day-to-day world. Gone, then, is the spark of Arnold's earlier enthusiasm in which "the glow" and "the thrill of life" abounded in Obermann.

At about the same time as he was composing his second Obermann poem, Arnold was also writing an article on Obermann for The Academy. This article<sup>67</sup> dated October 9, 1869, attempted to explain Obermann and Senancour, both of whom Arnold identified as one person, to the English reading public. He speaks briefly of Senancour's life; he relies on

the analysis of the French author's work to convince his readers that Senancour is worthy of their attention. This persuasively written essay establishes three main characteristics of the writer to help the reader in his understanding. He confronts his reader with the French writer's "constant inwardness," his "sincere sincerity," and "his exquisite feeling for nature." His approach to his subject is scholarly as he analyzes the individual parts, but in so doing he overlooks the 'sum of the parts' -- a weakness which was not evident in his first poem on the subject but which is very evident in the second poem. It is only as he begins to include Senancour's works themselves that we begin to understand the empathy which Arnold once felt for the works of Senancour. As Arnold points out, Senancour could only be happy when he helped to rid the world of chaos by contributing to the world of order. Arnold quotes "... who can answer for its [life's] being any happier, so long as it is and must be sans accord avec les choses, et passee au milieu des peuples souffrants?"<sup>68</sup> and it is this concern and yet this isolation which is implied in his second Obermann poem, though less clearly than in his first Obermann poem. Towards the end of the article, when Arnold discusses the ennui of Senancour, he writes "Il y a dans moi un derangement, ...c'est le désordre des ennuis" but then quickly attempts to temper such feelings by finding "gleams which receive...discouragement." This is the Arnold of the 1853 Preface rejecting once again the romantic notion that ennui is satisfying.

Several poems, written between his first and second Obermann

poems, show the "private" voice of Arnold, still re-enforced by the French influences of his earlier years. Primary amongst these is 'Empedocles on Etna'. This poem appeared in 1852 in a volume entitled Empedocles on Etna and Other Poems. The poem, which demonstrates the poet's isolation most dramatically, has received a large share of critical comment. Madden sees Empedocles' creed as a mixture of the stoicism of Epictetus, the work ethos of Carlyle, and the philosophical monism of Lucretius. Beach, too, sees only the philosophical overtones as he listens to Empedocles railing against the world. On the other hand, Culler sees beyond the philosophical stance of the poem to its psychological message. Culler sees all three characters in the poem as physicians: Empedocles heals by intellect, Pausanias heals by spells, and Callicles heals by music.

Regardless of the interpretation, the theme of isolation has been written large in this poem. The scene is the summit of Etna, removed from the social life of the court, and even removed from the forest in which Callicles observes the philosopher. In the long poem the philosopher and the musician never confront one another. They use Pausanias as a mediator but they each wrap a shawl of isolation around themselves. This lack of sympathy with one another, perhaps best demonstrated by Callicles' song which continues long after Empedocles plunges to his death, clearly represents Arnold's dilemma and perhaps the dilemma of many Victorians -- their own feeling of isolation in the world.

Arnold, at this point in his writing, was still very much the

romantic and it was not until he began to write criticism that the "modern spirit" began to awake in him. This backward look towards life in another day, which was so evident in 'The Scholar-Gipsy', is also evident in the ode in Act I, Scene II, of 'Empedocles on Etna'.

Born into life! - man grows  
 Forth from his parents' stem,  
 And blends their blood, as those  
 Of theirs are blent in them;  
 So each new man strikes root into a far fore-time.

Born into life! - we bring  
 A bias with us here,  
 And, when here, each new thing  
 Affects us as we come near;  
 To tunes we did not call our being must keep chime.

Born into life! - in vain,  
 Opinions, those or these,  
 Unalter'd to retain  
 The obstinate mind decrees;  
 Experiences, like a sea, soaks all-effacing-in.

Born into life! - who lists  
 May what is false hold dear,  
 And for himself make mists  
 Through which to see less clear;  
 The world is what it is, for all one dust and din. (ll. 187-206)

...

But still, as we proceed  
 The mass swells more and more  
 The volumes yet to read,  
 Of secrets yet to explore  
 Our hair grows grey, our eyes are dimm'd, our heat is tamed.  
 (ll. 332-336)

Empedocles, in the same long central ode, speaks of the secret of his suffering. He finds no joy, and experiences only indifference to life. The following stanzas taken from Scene II of Act I particularly demonstrate this:

We do not what we ought,  
 What we ought not, we do,  
 And lean upon the thought  
 That chance will bring us through;  
 But our own acts, for good or ill, are mightier powers.

...

Nature, with equal mind,  
 Sees all her sons at play;  
 Sees man control the wind,  
 The wind sweep man away;  
 Allows the proudly-riding and the foundering bark (ll. 237-261)

Empedocles vacillates between society and solitude as he cries to himself at the edge of the crater: "Thou canst not live with man nor with thyself."

In his climactic statement a few moments later he remonstrates again this sense of frustration:

Where shall thy votary fly then? back to man?  
 But they will gladly welcome him once more,  
 And help him to unbend his too tense thought,  
 And rid him of the presence of himself,  
 And keep their friendly chatter at his ear,  
 And haunt him, till the absence from himself,  
 That other torment, grow unbearable;  
 And he will fly to solitude again, Act II, (ll. 220-227)

These lines lead directly to Empedocles' suicidal leap and give action to his feelings, thereby ending his own terrible isolation. This withdrawal is also the solution for Callicles, the aesthete, who turns from life to listen to the stories of Apollo. Frustrated though they were, both characters found their individual and limited solutions to their own isolation.

However, Arnold was not satisfied that he had found the solution

in either Empedocles' leap or in Callicles' resignation, because a year later in his Preface to the 1853 volume of poems he excluded 'Empedocles on Etna'. He stated that he took this action on the premise that poetical enjoyment cannot be found in a poem which:

...suffering finds no vent in action; in which a continuous state of mental distress is prolonged, unrelieved by incident, hope, or resistance; in which there is everything to be endured, nothing to be done. 69

Frank Kermodé<sup>70</sup> claims that Arnold's rejection of the poem was, in itself, a future repudiation of the French poets of the "tragic generation" and of the symbolist movement in poetry which was to be born in France but not to come to England for many years. But there were also pragmatic reasons for excluding 'Empedocles' in the 1853 volume, because the critics had pounced on the earlier edition.

Later Arnold was to allow again the publication of 'Empedocles' and although one can only feel that this reversal was made simply to placate the spirit of the craftsman within him, Trilling writes<sup>71</sup> that it came about as a result of Robert Browning's insistence.

Arnold's poem 'The Buried Life' also demonstrates the spirit of isolation which prevailed in his poetry during his "romantic era." In this poem, the poet looks for an answer to and the meaning of his isolation in the psychology of man. The poem is typical of the melancholy which is prevalent in so much of his work. The sadness of the central section gives voice to this melancholy:



But often, in the world's most crowded streets,  
 But often, in the din of strife,  
 There rises an unspeakable desire  
 After the knowledge of our buried life;  
 A thirst to spend our fire and restless force  
 In tracking out our true, original course;  
 A longing to inquire  
 Into the mystery of this heart which beats  
 So wild, so deep in us - to know  
 Whence our lives come and where they go. (ll. 45-64)

Obermann's influence extended well into the decade of the 1850s when Arnold published his 'Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse'. It was through the reference in Obermann<sup>72</sup> that Arnold had come to read of the monastery. In this poem, he attempted a direct confrontation with his own ordeal of faith.

The monastery of the Carthusians, located in France between Grenoble and Chambéry, was included on Arnold's itinerary when he honeymooned in France in the autumn of 1851. The isolated setting is used by the poet to emphasize the isolation of man. Although the narrator, like the scholar-gipsy, is looking for meaning to life -- he has not found the same satisfaction. The speaker in 'Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse' finds himself outside of, and therefore unprotected by, the abbey walls. He is; "Wandering between two worlds, one dead,/ The other powerless to be born"(ll. 85-6), watching the troops and listening to the hunters but unable to join them. He can feel nothing but empty isolation as he cries:

...I behold  
 The House, the Brotherhood austere!  
 -And what am I, that I am here?

For rigorous teachers seized my youth,  
 And purged its faith, and trimmed its fire,  
 Showed me the high, white star of truth,  
 There bade me gaze, and there aspire. (ll. 64-70)

The speaker cannot move into the "House" nor does he hold to the "star of Truth." No longer is he wandering or searching in the same way that Senancour's Obermann wandered relentlessly; instead he is hiding from the truth.

Arnold's poems of this period would seem to have anticipated Charles Baudelaire's Les Fleurs du Mal which were published in 1857 and which included sentiments which Arnold, would not have thought unsatisfying or unpoetic. Such poems as 'Que Diras-Tu?' and 'Au Lecteur' convincingly portray man's isolation in the world. Arnold's poetry would also seem to anticipate Stéphane Mallarmé's loneliness while living in the midst of humanity as portrayed in 'Les Fenêtres' and 'Angoisse'. But since he rejects his own isolation when he symbolically rejects 'Empedocles on Etna', he probably severs unwittingly the possibility of a connection between himself and the French post-romantic and symbolist movements. This new poetic movement was rejected unknowingly, but he was also to reject openly George Sand, Senancour, and other French romantics.

The poems of this period and specifically 'Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse', mark a transitional phase in Arnold's life. The Romantic philosophy of acknowledged melancholy no longer seemed worthwhile exploring nor did it any longer provide him with the answers to the meaning of life. Neither the moralistic notions, which are expounded by

George Sand, nor the ennui of Obermann, were acceptable. He had to turn to something else, something that was more substantial and more suitable. The poet was dying and in his place the social reformer was emerging. Arnold, writing to Clough from the Milford Boys' School in October of 1852, summarized his feelings:

More and more I feel the difference between the mature and a youthful age of the world compels the poetry of the former to use great plainness of speech as compared with that of the latter. 73

Ironically, by throwing himself into the crater, Empedocles is a symbolic release from Arnold's latent romanticism. This enabled Arnold to turn more to the spirit of his age, to the zeitgeist, which he found in reading the writings of such a man as Heinrich Heine rather than in the writings of Senancour.

### CHAPTER III

Matthew Arnold's early exposure to the French literary scene not only influenced his youthful "private voice" as expressed in his earlier volumes of poetry, but also influenced his mature "public voice" as represented by his prose. The prose period of Arnold's life properly opened with his 1853 Preface; which probably serves as the water-shed of Arnold's literary career. This was a time in the poet's life when he suddenly realized that his youth was gone. It was in the 1850s, when he was in his early thirties and Clough was still very much his confidant, that Arnold expressed his acute awareness of his "lost youth." In December of 1851, Arnold wrote to Clough advising him to seek employment:

But be bustling about it; we are growing old and  
advancing towards the deviceless darkness: it  
would be well not to reach it till we had at least  
tried some of the things men consider desirable. 1

In these lines we see a composite of the practical Arnold, and the youth who had never quite got over his continental temperament and still displayed a certain savoir-faire et élan. A few months later the realization that youth, in fact, had passed him by is evident as he writes again to Clough: "How life rushes away, and youth. One has dawdled and scrupled and fiddle faddled -- and it is all over."<sup>2</sup>

Late in 1852, Arnold wrote his eulogy to his youth when he penned the words "... what a difference there is between reading in poetry and morals of the loss of youth, and experiencing it!"<sup>3</sup> With the loss of youth, age came to him quickly. The following lines written in 1853, resemble those of bitter middle age:

I do not like to put off writing any longer, but to say the truth I do not feel in the vein to write even now, nor do I feel certain that I can write as I should wish. I am past thirty, and three parts iced over -- and my pen, it seems to me is even stiffer and more cramped than my feeling. 4

Possibly he felt that his youthful days of poetic inspiration were behind him. Certainly, most of his poetic production was published by 1853.

This then was obviously an Arnold who had changed radically from the spirited youth who had followed Rachel to Paris, and who had made a pilgrimage to see George Sand at Nohant. Here was a man who had assumed the responsibilities of married life, having taken Frances Lucy Wightman as his wife in 1851. He had also established a career for himself, having received, with the help of his good friend and former employer Lord Lansdowne, the appointment of Inspector in the English public school system.

These were also the years of a growing stoic attitude evident both in Arnold's life and in his writings. The stoicism in turn brought about a form of resignation through which Arnold was to accept life and to become more moulded by it than a moulder of it. William Madden describes these symptoms after analyzing some of Arnold's correspondence:

His letters indicate that in the early fifties, convinced that the mind mocks man, that in intellect no final resting place could be found, on the contrary that the intellect discovers merely the perpetual flux of time and mirrors this flux in its own eternal restlessness. 5

With the "aging" or maturation of Arnold, a shift is evident in his writings. But Arnold was not to find the transition, from one

style to the other, easy to make. In 1853, after finishing his Preface, he wrote to Clough:

The Preface is done -- there is a certain Geist in it I think, but it is far less precise than I had intended. How difficult it is to write prose: and why? because of the articulations of the discourse: one leaps these over in Poetry -- places one though cheek by jowl with another without introducing them and leaves them -- but in prose this will not do. It is of course not right in poetry either -- but we all do it. 6

To his preoccupation with poetry Arnold added, during this period, a preoccupation with prose and it was his literary criticism which began to reach fruition during these years. Madden identifies the turning point as the inaugural lecture in 1857 when, as the newly appointed Professor of English at Oxford, Arnold censured Lucretius "... for having withdrawn from the world into sullen solitude."<sup>7</sup> Ironically, this is the same attitude which Arnold had earlier admired in Obermann.

Most students of Arnold, feel that the 1853 Preface was the turning point in Arnold's literary career. It led to the publishing of further critical writings and contributed significantly to the paradoxical appointment of a self-styled, withdrawn poet to the Oxford Chair of Poetry. Arnold himself admitted that the decline in a "poetic temperament" and the rise of a "prose temperament" during these years stemmed from a number of factors. His letters identified these factors variously; one was that the loss of youth brought with it a loss of poetical inspiration; also that his need to formulate his own critical theory led to a greater production of critical works and fewer poetical writings; and finally, there was the influence of his mentor,

Sainte-Beuve, who had begun to write extensively as a critic after 1848.

Critics are far from unanimous in their attitude towards Arnold's prose. D. G. James says:

...when the days of his poetry were over, and prose was his medium, his elegaic sadness took the form of writing about men he implicitly judged to be like himself: deGuérin, Falkland, Joubert, Marcus Aurelius: men he thought who were touched by the finger of doom, men of pathetic beauty in the grasp of fatality. 8

But he admits in Matthew Arnold and the Decline of English Romanticism, that when Arnold writes about poetry, as a poet and not as a critic, that he comes much nearer to creating poetry.<sup>9</sup> James is also critical of Arnold's view that the "strongest part of our religion today is in its unconscious poetry" because he sees Arnold breaking the poetic thread as he observes that:

...the spiritual unity proclaimed by the great Romantic writer is broken in his hands. Poetry and science, imagination and thought, knowledge and being, fall apart, and no centre is left. 9

This break was caused, observes James, because Arnold was looking for something that could sit in judgment over poetry and Arnold found this to be criticism. John Holloway, in The Victorian Sage, censures Arnold for the prose essays in which Arnold continually quotes other writers without developing ideas of his own.<sup>10</sup> Perhaps even more damning are the words of Paull Baum who writes:

There have been those who complained that the poet died giving birth to the critic and who submitted their various reasons for this particular phenomenon. But now when his critical work has been sifted and weighed, we have come more and more to recognize that on his poetry rests his real claim to immortality and

from this recognition must follow his belated revival in the new Victorian resurgence. 11

Baum obviously disliked Arnoldian prose.

R. H. Super in The Time-Spirit of Matthew Arnold, on the other hand, views Arnold's prose as enhancing his poetic form; he waxes enthusiastic about 'Thyrsis' and goes on to say:

...the poet in Arnold, in fact, near died; passage after passage in his essay continues to show the poet's gift with language, and -- an even more significant point -- his whole career in poetry and prose is dominated by the kind of creative imagination that is the poet's highest virtue. 12

and H. J. Mikell<sup>13</sup> also feels that Arnold's prose is not only worthwhile but that his criticism provides his only real claim to fame.

Lowery, in the introduction written to his collection of Arnold's poems, feels that Sainte-Beuve's influence was probably the most significant factor in changing Arnold from the poet to the critic. He writes:

There is, I think, no doubt about Sainte-Beuve's course having its influence. In Arnold's copy of Portraits contemporains [1847 edition by Didier], he has carefully marked and spent time upon the essay entitled 'Dix ans après en littérature.' 14

In this essay Sainte-Beuve gives a rallying call to criticism. It is the essay in which the French critic invites young poets to turn to this other important art.

Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve, born of an English mother and a French father in Boulogne, France in 1804, had written some poetry as well as a novel in his younger days. However, it is as a literary critic that he gained his measure of fame. He was equally at home in both the French



and English languages, and he was recognized by later English writers including D. H. Lawrence, and George Saintsbury, as well as by Arnold. Sainte-Beuve gained less respect and recognition in France and he was particularly abused by his contemporary, Honoré de Balzac. Marcel Proust, many years later, condemned his criticism because he had ignored in his own time many of his country's finest writers.

According to Proust,<sup>6</sup> Sainte-Beuve was taking a safe course in which he did not consider controversial French literature, but instead applied established historical and critical precepts to established writers. Justin O'Brien analyzes Proust as being:

...unable to forgive him [Sainte-Beuve] for failing to recognize the value of his contemporaries such as Balzac, Flaubert, and Baudelaire,...The critic's blindness according to Proust derived from "his confusing the writer's soul with the accidental human envelope that clothed it" and consequently he [Sainte-Beuve] maintained that a poet's work can be illuminated by observing the poet and studying his biography. To Proust on the contrary a book is the product of a different self from the self we manifest in our habits, in our social life, in our vices. Hence, Sainte-Beuve, whom any French literary man constantly counters in his path figures for Proust as the complete Philistine. 15

Editors of a recent American translation of Sainte-Beuve summarize the situation as follows:

...an increasing number of literary men (in the last two generations) seem to have felt that Sainte-Beuve's contribution as a critic was valueless, and that his reputation is grotesquely overblown. This feeling has been most prominently voiced in a number of essays by Proust, written in 1908 and published in 1954 under the title of "Contre Sainte-Beuve"... Proust's objections seem to centre chiefly around Sainte-Beuve's failure to recognize the genius of such

---

<sup>6</sup>The fact that Proust bothered to write about Sainte-Beuve, and that he continues to divide opinion is proof that Sainte-Beuve must be reckoned with in more current critical circles.

contemporaries as Balzac, Stendhal, and Baudelaire, and his reliance on 'analysis' and biographical background rather than on intuition. 16

For Arnold, however, Sainte-Beuve was an exemplary critic. His name as well as his ideas appear in many of the critical essays. Arnold dedicated one short essay to Sainte-Beuve, and compiled biographical datum on the French writer for the Encyclopedia Britannica. Perhaps it is surprising that a more comprehensive essay was not written by Arnold about the man whom he describes as his mentor. But he does identify strongly with him. In the essay, written in 1886, Arnold divided Sainte-Beuve's literary career into three segments in a manner which reflect the three stages of his own literary output. Arnold writes that:

...the work of Sainte-Beuve divides itself into three portions, his poetry, his criticism before 1848 and his criticism after that year. His novel Volupte may properly go with his poetry... 17

Arnold analyzed Sainte-Beuve's attitude towards contemporary poetry and claimed that it was not French poetry with which Sainte-Beuve was concerned, but English poetry. Arnold's essay includes Sainte-Beuve's advice to aspiring poets of mid-nineteenth century France:

Since you are fond of poets I should like to see you read and look for poets in another language, in English for instance. There you will find the most rich, the most dulcet, and the most new poetical literature... 18

Sainte-Beuve also questions the merit of the current French poetical output and compares it unfavourably with the English poetry of his day:

Our French poets are too soon read; they are too slight, too mixed, too corrupted for the most part, too poor in ideas even when they have talent for strophe and line to hold and occupy for long a serious mind...If you know English you would have treasures to draw upon. They have a poetical literature far superior to ours and, above all, sounder, more full. Wordsworth is not translated; these things are not to be translated, you must go to the fountain-head for them. 19

Sainte-Beuve refused to recognize the new wave of French poets, and his conservatism no doubt influenced Arnold. Both men were committed to the romanticism of their youth.

Sainte-Beuve's poetry reflects his sympathy with the writers of the Romantic period (particularly Sand and Hugo), just as Arnold's debt to Wordsworth and Keats is apparent. Later commentaries found Sainte-Beuve's poetry narrow and puny, and its style as slowly dragging and laborious, yet by ironic reversal, Baudelaire and Verlaine expressed admiration for Sainte-Beuve's poetic style.<sup>20</sup>

Arnold did not care for it. Perhaps he was aware of the excessive subjectivity that he was trying to eliminate from his own poems. He particularly disliked Sainte-Beuve's last two volumes of poetry Livre d'Amour and Pensées d'Août. A letter to his mother contains the astonishing statement:

I have been bothered composing a letter to Sainte-Beuve, who has sent me the new edition of his poems ...it is not on Sainte-Beuve's poems that his fame will rest...I do not see that French verse can be truly satisfactory. 21

"Raw provincialism" can go no further. At any rate, it is apparent that there was little cross-fertilization between Sainte-Beuve the poet, and Arnold the poet. On the other hand, Arnold's interest in Sainte-Beuve

the critic cannot be overestimated.

At the age of thirty-three,<sup>φ</sup> Sainte-Beuve turned away from poetry and began lecturing on French literary history of the seventeenth century. These lectures were eventually brought together under the title Port-Royal. Later he was elected to the Bibliotheque Mazarine and he embarked on a career of critical evaluation of French literature. He did this in a series of literary portraits, a technique which was later to be called re-creative criticism. However, it was with his weekly contribution to the newspaper Le Constitutionnel that he gained far-reaching fame. His famous Lundis, consisting of critical and biographical essays, were later collected as Causeries du Lundi in three volumes (1851), but the collection was expanded to fifteen volumes when it was republished with notes a decade later. Another large collection, consisting of thirteen volumes, was published under the title of Nouveaux Lundis between 1863 and Sainte-Beuve's death in 1869. He established a critical perspective which not only challenged popular French writers but re-identified writers who had been long forgotten. His critical canon serves as a major reassessment of all French literature up to the early years of his own century. His own words "Si j'avais une devise ce serait le vrai, le vrai seul" are inscribed on the pedestal of his bust in Paris.

David deLaura claims that there is very little relationship between Arnold and Sainte-Beuve and that any such possible relationship

---

<sup>φ</sup> Sainte-Beuve had had an interest in literary history for a few years prior to that time. His first article appeared in Le Globe in 1824, and, with his Tableau de la poésie française in 1826, he resurrected almost single-handedly the French poets of the Renaissance.

could not be considered a transmission of larger ideas but only as a relationship of "habits and methods."<sup>22</sup> One may, however, see many parallels in the literary careers of the two men. At the age of thirty-three, the French writer had turned away from poetry, while Arnold had written most of his meaningful poetry by the time he was thirty-five.<sup>23</sup> Sainte-Beuve's poetic output consisted of four volumes as did Arnold's, and in each case the first volume of poetry was published anonymously. Furthermore, in both instances, their early poetic period was followed by a period of stabilization in which they were associated with the academic milieu and which launched them into very significant and extended periods of critical writings. Both men were born into the post-Romantic<sup>φ</sup> period and as a result were present at the finale of their countries' current poetic mood. Sainte-Beuve could not identify with his younger French literary contemporaries any more than Arnold could identify with his English contemporaries. As a result one can understand the similarity between the critical pensées of Sainte-Beuve and Arnold's Essays in Criticism.

Arnold established a correspondence with Sainte-Beuve which eventually culminated with another (the first being breakfast with George Sand) "literary highpoint" in his life -- that of meeting and eating with the French writer.<sup>24</sup> It was in 1854 that Arnold wrote to Sainte-Beuve enclosing a copy of his 1853 edition of his poems. Following this there was an exchange of letters over the span of the next several years.<sup>25</sup> Their friendship had obviously flourished sufficiently through this correspondence that while Arnold was abroad in France, in

---

<sup>φ</sup>The Romantic period in France is generally considered 1820-1830.

1859, he wrote to his wife:

After writing to you on Friday, I strolled out a little, came back and dressed, and drove to Sainte-Beuve's. He had determined to take me to dine chez le Restaurant du Quartier, the only good one, he says, and we dined in the cabinet where George Sand, when she is in Paris, comes and dines every day. Sainte-Beuve gave me an excellent dinner and was in full vein of conversation, which as his conversation is the best to be heard in France, was charming. After dinner he took me back to his own house, where we had tea, and he showed me a number of letters he had had from George Sand and Alfred deMusset at the time of their love affair and again at the time of their rupture. You can imagine how interesting this was after Elle et Lui. As for George Sand and him, Sainte-Beuve says: "Tout le mal qu'ils ont dit l'un de l'autre est vrai." But deMusset's letters were, I must say, those of a gentleman of the very first water. Sainte-Beuve rather advised me to go and see George Sand, but I am still disinclined "... to take so long a journey and see such a fat old muse" as M. deCircourt says in his funny English... I stayed with Sainte-Beuve till midnight, and would not have missed my evening for all the world. I think he likes me, and likes my caring so much about his criticisms and appreciating his extraordinary delicacy of tact and judgment in literature. 26

This letter establishes beyond a doubt the reason for Arnold's reverence for Sainte-Beuve - a devotion bordering on idolization. Further insight into this relationship may be gained by considering another letter, written to his mother, two years after his meeting with Sainte-Beuve, in which he says:

I have got Sainte-Beuve's book on Chateaubriand, in which my poem on Obermann is given. It has given me great pleasure... The poem is really beautifully translated, and what Sainte-Beuve says of me is charmingly said. I value his praise both in itself and because it carries one's name through the literary circles of Europe in a way that no English praise can carry it. But, apart from that, to any one but a glutton of praise, the whole value lies in the way it

is administered by the first of living critics, and with a delicacy for which one would look in vain here. 27

It is Arnold's tribute to Sainte-Beuve writ large.

The friendship Arnold had with Sainte-Beuve remained active and vital throughout his entire life and closed, if anything, on a stronger note. An unpublished letter of 1869, written to his mother, reveals Arnold's reaction upon hearing of Sainte-Beuve's death. He writes:

I have learnt a great deal from him, and the news of his death struck me as if it had been that of some one very near to me. When George Sand and Newman go; there will be no writers left from whom I have received a strong influence; they will all have departed. 28

This excerpt can be better understood in the context of the quasi-friendship which existed between the two men. That Arnold treated Sainte-Beuve with the deepest respect is abundantly evident in his essays and in his correspondence. Although there is less evidence of Sainte-Beuve's reciprocation of Arnold's feelings, we do have one complete letter and excerpts from others in which Sainte-Beuve acknowledges Arnold's poetry. On the other hand, he virtually ignores Arnold's literary criticism.

There is mention of Arnold as early as 1850 in Sainte-Beuve's correspondence when in discussing Senancour, Sainte-Beuve writes:

...il a sa postérité secrète qui lui restera fidèle. Un jeune poète anglais, fils d'un bien respectable père, et dont le talent réunit et pureté et la passion, M. Mathieu Arnold, voyageant en Suisse et y suivant la trace d'Obermann lui a dédié un poème où il a évoué tout son esprit et où, lui-même, a la veille

de rentrer par devoir à la vie active, il fait ses adieux au grand méditatif rêveur. Je donnerai ici ce poème parfaitement inconnu en France et dans un traduction que la poète a daigné avouer 29

Another excerpt from a letter written years later reveals a friendly though not intimate relationship between the two men:

Je connais Arnold; il nous aimait beaucoup dans sa jeunesse; il est allé voir George Sand à Nohant; c'était un Français et un romantique égare là-bas. C'était piquant chez le fils du respectable Arnold, la grand réformateur de l'instruction publique en Angleterre. Depuis il s'est marié, s'est réglé, et dans ses poésies il reste fidèle au cult des anciens et de l'art... Quand M. Arnold vient à Paris, nous dinons ensemble je sens en lui un ami ancien et antérieur que j'ai trop peu connu mais que j'aime et sens par divination 30

A previously unpublished letter which appeared in 1921, (written by Sainte-Beuve in 1863 as a result of receiving a copy of one of Arnold's works), established an even more personal relationship between the two men.<sup>φ</sup> Ultimately, however, one cannot help but feel that it is a relationship that was more meaningful to Arnold than it was to Sainte-Beuve.

The significance of Sainte-Beuve to Arnold in pointing the way to certain French writers cannot be overstated. Nancy Orwen writes:

It is not easy to sum up Arnold's debt to Sainte-Beuve in a few words. Yet perhaps the most important things he may have learned from this French critic include the value in criticism of scientific detachment and a passion for truth, and the necessity for proper tone... 31

---

<sup>φ</sup>The letter is reproduced in full at the end of this chapter.



Arnold in his 1886 essay, written two years before his death, gets quickly to the heart of the matter by stating:

... nowhere shall we find such interest more completely and charmingly brought out than in the Causeries du Lundi and the Nouveaux Lundis of the consummate critic of whom we have been speaking. As a guide to bring us to the knowledge of the French genius, he is unrivalled -- perfect, in knowledge of his subject, in judgement, in tact and tone. Certain spirits are of an excellence almost ideal in certain lines; the human race might willingly adopt them as its spokesman, recognizing that on these lines their style and utterance may stand as those, not of bounded individuals, but of the human race. 32

And comparing Sainte-Beuve with the truly great literary figures, Arnold continues:

So Homer speaks for the human race, and with an excellence which is ideal, in epic narrative; Plato in the treatment at once beautiful and profound of philosophical questions; Shakespeare in the presentation of human character; Voltaire in light verse and ironical discussion. A list of perfect ones indeed, each in his own line! and we may almost venture to add to their number, in his line of literary criticism, Sainte-Beuve. 33

Although the final statement is tentative, the "heady" relationship has been clearly established by Arnold. As we shall see, much of Arnold's literary criticism was inspired by Sainte-Beuve's interest in a relatively narrow group of French nineteenth century writers.

It must be conceded, however, that there is a negative aspect to the relationship. Because of this powerful influence, any interest that Arnold might have had in a broader concern for contemporary French authors found no nourishment in Sainte-Beuve. On the whole, Sainte-Beuve's critical judgments of older authors are often keen and illuminating, but

his judgments of the anti-romantics and decadents were virtually non-existent. Sainte-Beuve was either not prepared to write about such men as Gautier, Verlaine, Baudelaire, Mallarmé and Rimbaud or he did not feel they deserved recognition. This reluctance on the part of Sainte-Beuve no doubt had an affect upon Arnold's own lack of interest in these French writers and their works.

Arnold's first prose work, reflecting the influence of France in a major way, was a collection of articles which eventually became part of Essays in Criticism (first series). The first one of interest for purposes of this paper is entitled 'Maurice deGuérin', which appeared in Fraser's Magazine in January, 1863. Arnold had obviously written the article in 1862 as he mentions it in a letter to his mother in November of that year. He had also delivered a brief monograph on the French author in one of his Oxford lectures, but his interest in the young French author dates back two decades. At the outset of the composition he writes that:

In 1840 Madame Sand brought out the 'Centaur' [deGuérin's poetic composition] in the Revue des Deux Mondes, with a short notice of its author, and a few extracts from his letters. A year or two afterwards she reprinted these at the end of a volume of her novels; and there it was that I fell in with them. I was so much struck with the 'Centaur' that I waited anxiously to hear something more of its author, and of what he had left. [deGuérin died in 1839 at the age of twenty-eight.] 34

Arnold had indeed a long wait because it was 1862 before a complete edition of deGuérin's works was collected and edited by a M. Trebutin. Arnold's interest in the young French writer must have gained considerable impetus from the fact that Sainte-Beuve wrote the introduction. No

doubt Arnold saw himself as interpreting this work to the English reading public just as Sainte-Beuve was bringing it to the French reading public.

Arnold, of course, had to deal with deGuérin's poetic style despite the misgivings he had about the French Alexandrine. Early in the essay, Arnold defines the power of poetry in terms which seemed to anticipate the symbolist poets later in the century. Arnold wrote:

...the grand power of poetry is in its interpretative power...the power of so dealing with things as to awaken in us a wonderfully full, new, and intimate sense in them, and of our relations with them. When this sense is awakened in us...we feel ourselves to be in contact with the essential nature of those objects, to be no longer bewildered or oppressed by them, but to have their secret, and to be in harmony with them; and this feeling calms and satisfies us as no other can. 35

Ironically Arnold was not to apply this touchstone to French poetry or else he would have recognized its value. But it was not really deGuérin's poetry that interested Arnold because after identifying the power necessary in poetry, he continues:

...eminent manifestations of this magical power of poetry are very rare and very precious: the compositions of Guerin manifest it...in singular eminence. Not his poems, strictly so called, -- his verse, -- so much as his prose...It is in the prose remains of Guerin, -- his journals, his letters, and the striking composition...the 'Centaur' -- in which his extraordinary gift manifests itself. 36

Most of Arnold's essay consists of extracts taken from deGuérin's correspondence which are translated by Arnold into English. These excerpts, although prose in form, are lyrical in their description of the beauties of nature in the countryside around Brittany, and they are also

compassionate in their description of the ideal family life.

The essay is essentially biographical as it gives a resumé of deGuérin's early life, his days spent in a monastery while considering the taking of vows, his return to the secular life, and then his marriage. The essay concludes with a brief synopsis of deGuérin's major work 'The Centaur'. It is the lyrical beauty<sup>φ</sup> of his prose that attracted Arnold and which provided him with the "jumping-off" point to evaluate deGuérin's writings in terms of poetry. Arnold quotes from deGuérin's own work: "I owe everything to poetry, for there is no other name to give to the sum total of my thoughts," and Arnold comments:

Poetry, the poetical instinct, was indeed the basis of his nature; but to say so thus absolutely is not quite enough. One aspect of poetry fascinated Guérin's imagination and held it a prisoner. Poetry is the interpretess of the natural world, and she is the interpretess of the moral world; it was as the interpretess of the natural world that she had Guérin for her mouthpiece. 37

Having established deGuérin's natural bias, Arnold moves from the role of biographer to that of critic and evaluates Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Keats, and Shelley against this same touchstone. In this brief section, which is actually a digression, Arnold provides the most valuable critical contribution in the essay.

After reading this particular essay, one can only speculate as to the real reason for Arnold's concern with the subject, because it is woefully lacking as an evaluation of deGuérin's literary output. No doubt Arnold did want to interpret French literature for the provincial Victorians, and since Sainte-Beuve had written on deGuérin it

---

<sup>φ</sup>Arnold calls it a "... profound and delicate sense of life and nature." (p. 85).

must have seemed natural for Arnold to do so. The fact that deGuérin was, if anything, a French romantic (although he denied being a naturalist) did not concern Arnold because it provided him with an occasion to define the English poetic tradition. He did not interpret, and perhaps was incapable of interpreting, the nuances of deGuérin's style.<sup>38</sup> Despite the seeming weaknesses of the essay, it does permit Arnold to establish a base for his future evaluation of English poets.

Probably the strongest theme related to deGuérin, which runs through the essay, concerns deGuérin's own isolation. Since Arnold read deGuérin early in the 1840s, it is quite possible that some of the material that Arnold used in his earlier writings could have originated or been re-enforced by the young Frenchman's letters. Maurice deGuérin, in actual life, was caught between the cloister and the secular world. In his biographical prose composition, deGuérin wrote that he is:

Wandering along at [his] own will like the rivers,  
feeling wherever [he] went the presence of Cybele,  
whether in the bed of the valleys, or on the height  
of the mountains [he] bounded whither [he] would,  
like a blind and chainless life 39

This philosophy is also contained in the closing lines of Arnold's 'The Buried Life': "The hills where his life rose,/And the sea where it goes" (ll. 97-98), and also in the long simile of 'The Future' where the wanderer functions as a river:

Whether he wakes  
Where the snowy mountains pass,  
Echoing the screams of the eagles,  
Hem in its gorges the bed  
Of the new - born clear - flowing stream;  
Whether he first sees light  
Where the river in gleaming rings (ll. 8-14)

The echoes are even stronger between 'Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse' in the key lines:

Wandering between two worlds, one dead,  
The other powerless to be born,  
With nowhere yet to rest my head,  
Like these, on earth I wait forlorn (ll. 85-88)

and deGuérin's much earlier composition in which he relates a story told by his teacher at the cloister:

'Do you know what it is,' M. Feli said to us on the evening of the day before yesterday, 'which makes man the most suffering of all creature? It is that he has one foot in the finite and the other in the infinite, and that he is torn asunder...between two worlds' 40

Is it any wonder, then, that deGuérin's name is prominent in Arnold's first volume of critical essays?

Arnold, however, was not through with the name deGuérin because in 1863, he wrote to his mother:

I am very glad you like Guérin; he and his letters are really charming. I mean to do his sister also when I can find the time. 41

Plans were more concrete a month later because he wrote that he was scheduled to write an article on Eugénie deGuérin for Cornhill. No doubt Arnold was encouraged in the second project by a "...long and charming letter from Sainte-Beuve about [his] article on Guérin"<sup>42</sup> and another letter<sup>43</sup> from a French editor who had acted as an intermediary for Maurice's sister, Marie deGuérin, in sending him Eugénie's volume of Remains [the works of Maurice]. Arnold was surprised that his magazine article on Maurice was noticed by the French, of whom he writes:

...but they have what Guizot calls the 'amour des choses de l'esprit' so strong that they manage not to miss anything capable of interesting them when the subject is anything that is marquant in their literature 44

With such encouragement, Arnold was to write "Eugénie deGuérin" a few months later.

In this essay, Arnold considers Eugénie primarily in the way that she relates to other writers. First, there is Eugénie's maternal relationship to her brother. Although Arnold is not explicit, there seems to be a subtle inference that the Eugénie-Maurice relationship is similar to that of Dorothy and William Wordsworth. In fact, Arnold does find some of Maurice's descriptions worthy of Wordsworth and he particularly cites "ce beau torrent de rumeurs." Arnold also considers Eugénie's relationship to Obermann, when he describes her emotional nature as having "...an inquietude, an ennui, which endures to the end and which leaves one, when one finally closes her journal, with an impression of profound melancholy."<sup>45</sup> It is, then, in her relationship to people of seemingly greater import that Arnold examines Eugénie deGuérin.

Near the beginning of the essay Arnold subtly disparages, as he does so often, the continuing insularity of the typical Victorian literary critic. He writes that parts of Eugénie's:

...journal were several years ago printed for private circulation, and a writer in the National Review had the good fortune to fall in with them. 46

Arnold's criticism of the critics heightens and becomes less subtle as he continues:

The bees of our English criticism do not often roam so far afield for their honey, and this critic deserves thanks for having flitted in his quest of blossom to foreign parts,...He had the discernment to see that Mlle deGuérin was well worth speaking of, and he spoke of her with feeling and appreciation 47

But these introductory remarks are concluded by Arnold as he acknowledges that this was several years ago, and that it is necessary to periodically renew homage.<sup>φ</sup> His point, that too seldom did the English writers of the nineteenth century look beyond their own horizons for excellence in literature, is well made. And as if it were not enough to justify the study of Eugénie as Maurice's sister, Arnold re-enforces his choice of subject by admitting that Sainte-Beuve also singled out Eugénie for study and analysis.

Arnold wrote that Eugénie was an intelligent individual and it was in her intellectual expressiveness that she displayed her literary powers. But that these were related to her religion because her:

...extraordinary power of intelligence, extraordinary force of character, and extraordinary strength of affection; ... were under the control of a deep religious feeling 48

Although Arnold admits that Eugénie's writing does not have the same beauty as that of her brother, he virtually belies this in a translation

---

<sup>φ</sup>This admission was true of Arnold's own nature because he himself often reviewed the same subject a number of years later; witness his 'Obermann Once More', and his later essays on Sand and Sainte-Beuve.



of a beautiful passage describing her return from midnight mass -- past bushes transformed by the snow into flowers for garlands. In another quotation from the journal in which Eugénie describes her disappointment in finding her former curé had been replaced by a younger, less understanding priest, the romantic words of the girl resemble those of Mlle. deMauprat in George Sand's novel Mauprat.<sup>49</sup> We come to know Eugénie most strongly in terms of her compassion with the people around her, and the reader cannot be surprised when Arnold recognizes the change in the woman when her brother dies. Arnold observes that the "...energy of life ebbed in her being" and he quotes one of her final lines "tout est change," which might well be her inscription.

But we cannot turn away from this essay without considering one very significant comparison made by Arnold which reveals something of his own inner turmoil and his own allegiances. While reflecting on Mlle deGuérin's vitality as a member of the Roman Catholic church, he comments that the "memoir and poems of a young Englishwoman, Miss Emma Tatham ...came into his hands," and he goes on to write that "...one could not but be struck with the singular contrast which the two lives -- in their setting rather than in their inherent quality, -- present."<sup>50</sup> Arnold sees them both as "fervent Christians" who are more than a channel apart because of the circumstances and also because of the different situation in which they exist. He has already described Eugénie's Christmas centred around the village church and her Easter spent at the chapel of moss, and against this he contrasts very unfavourably Miss Tatham's Margate with its brick-and-mortar Protestantism. The scene

Arnold depicts is that of the ritual of the Protestant religion being doled out while its worshippers, bereft of any signs of humanity, sit in their pews. Arnold describes the Protestant ethics of Margate with a sneer in which he concludes that the:

...signal want of grace and charm in English Protestantism's setting of its religious life is not an indifferent matter; it is a real weakness. This ought ye to have done, and not to have left undone. 51

Although Arnold does not close his eyes to the problems inherent in the Roman Catholic religion, he writes ironically that Mlle deGuérin's own particular religion is different in that it is free of the cold dogmas associated with Miss Tatham's Protestant faith. Instead of going to church for her weekly confessional, Eugenie goes to the little church where she has "laissé tant de misères."<sup>52</sup> Furthermore she does not show any inclination towards the superstition generally associated with Catholicism; her prayers are simple and childlike, and humility and good conduct are the basic premises of her life. Although Arnold does not go to the fullest extent and draw the comparison of Eugénie representing France and Emma representing England, the inference is certainly there.

Arnold's tribute to Eugénie deGuérin was, in fact, a tribute to the girl's simplicity and charm. The essay is written in such a way that it gives voice to his sympathies with the more aesthetic qualities of Catholicism. It is, in addition, a tribute to the more aesthetic qualities he found in France compared to England's concern with production and expansion which gave birth to such places as "Margate" and "Mapperly

Hills." Eugénie deGuérin seems to represent all that Arnold finds good in France, and the essay bearing her name is in reality a tribute to France.

This is not to say that everything in France was above reproach, however, because less than a year later Arnold observed that:

There is a world of ideas and a world of practice; the French are often for suppressing the one and the English the other; but neither is to be suppressed. 53

The year after writing the Eugénie essay in 1864, Arnold wrote an essay in tribute to another French writer who was little known on the north side of the English Channel -- this was Joseph Joubert. Joubert was not a prolific writer although his long life did span the years from 1754 to 1824. Again we find that Arnold's selection of French personae was influenced by Sainte-Beuve. Arnold writes that despite the lack of recognition of Joubert in France, "M. Sainte-Beuve has given him one of his incomparable portraits."

The first evidence Arnold gives of his interest in Joubert is in the same letter to his mother in 1863 in which he mentioned his forthcoming essay on Eugénie deGuérin. In outlining his plans for his summer at Fox How he adds, almost as an afterthought, "perhaps I may add to these one on Joubert, an exquisite French critic, a friend of Chateaubriand."<sup>54</sup> In Arnold's notebooks, the earliest entry on the subject was in 1861, when he included Pensées et Maximes de M. Joubert on his reading list.

Arnold, in tracing the history of Joubert, observed that most of the Frenchman's papers were accumulated in boxes and drawers, and only published by Chateaubriand fourteen years after Joubert's death with the reluctant agreement of his widow. Arnold's empathy with Joubert's writings and ideas allows him to use his essay to compare Joubert's writings with those of Samuel Taylor Coleridge - a man with whom Arnold was often out of sympathy. As a matter of fact, the subject matter of the essay very possibly accounts for Arnold's decision to ignore Coleridge in his second series of essays written later in the century, when he devotes most of his criticism to the English Romantic poets. It would seem that Arnold finds Joubert more to his liking than Coleridge who, he admits, was much less intelligible.<sup>55</sup>

At the outset of the essay, Arnold states the reason why he rarely writes about well-known authors. He says:

Why should we ever treat of any dead authors but the famous ones? Mainly for this reason: because from these famous personages, home or foreign, whom we all know so well, and of whom so much has been said, the amount of stimulus which they contain for us has been in great measure disengaged; people have formed their opinions about them, and do not readily change it. 56

He continues:

Now in literature, besides the eminent men of genius who have had their desserts in the way of fame, besides the eminent men of ability who have of fame, there are a certain number of personages who have been real men of genius, -- by which I mean, that they have had a genuine gift for what is true and excellent, and are therefore capable of emitting a life-giving stimulus, -- but who, for some reason or other, in most cases for very valid reasons,

have remained obscure, nay, beyond a narrow circle in their own country, unknown. 57

Arnold has given us a statement of purpose which is intended to justify not only his essay on Joubert but also his concern about most of the other French writers whom he chose to venerate.

This essay is sensitive almost to the point of being reverential. Arnold senses that Joubert had established a "father-image" at the university at which he taught and as a result, was sought after to advise on moral and social matters. Arnold writes that:

Fontanes did nothing in the university without consulting him, and Joubert's ideas and pen were always at his friend's service. When he was in the country, at Villeneuve, the young priests of his neighborhood used to resort to him, in order to profit by his library and by his conversation. He...was particularly qualified to attract men of this kind and to benefit them... 58

But as is normal with Arnold he does not use the essay simply to discuss the subject at hand; he also uses it as a springboard for many other observations. Perhaps the most significant digression, in terms of this paper, is an argument against the translation of literary works into a foreign language, and characteristically Arnold discusses the works of Abbé Delille, Racine, Chateaubriand, and Sainte-Beuve -- in fact, everyone but Joubert.

Arnold, in his discussion of English men of letters, uses Coleridge as his scapegoat to show a writer's foolishness in criticizing a literature which he doesn't fully understand. He calls this tendency "impudently absurd judgement" or saugrenu. Arnold heatedly writes:

But when a critic denies genius to a literature which has produced Bossuet and Molière, he passes the bounds; and Coleridge's judgements on French literature and the French genius are undoubtedly...saugrenus 59

On the other hand, Arnold also criticizes Joubert for his fault-finding of Delille's translation of Paradise Lost. Arnold calls this saugrenu, which when practiced is at best unscholarly and at worst absurd.

Arnold's definition and examples provide us with an interesting clue to his own criticism. Since his knowledge of French was adequate but not such that it could be considered fluent, Arnold was no doubt attracted to those French works which were written in a conventional style with which he would be most familiar on the basis of his own French language training. The authors whom he had read and obviously understood were traditional for the most part; including, as we have already noted, Sainte-Beuve, the deGuérins, and Joubert. These were people who wrote mainly in prose form -- a form normally much more lucid and easier for the foreigner to interpret than poetic writings. Although there are brief passages of poetry in George Sand and in Senancour, the bulk of their work is also in prose form. Arnold did not specifically indicate a difficulty with French poetics, but it is too much of a coincidence that he should ignore this literary form completely, considering his wide range of interest in French literature. It could well be that he felt inadequate to deal with the French poets.<sup>60</sup>

Further study of the essay on Joubert substantiates this theory because Arnold finds Joubert's "power and richness" and his constant

striving after "clearness of expression" as the major factors which elevate the man. It is this latter trait which causes Arnold to rank him ahead of Coleridge. Arnold translates Joubert's doctrine for the reader as:

The true science of metaphysics which consists, not in rendering abstract that which is sensible, but in rendering sensible that which is abstract; apparent that which is hidden, imaginable, if so it may be, that which is only intelligible; and intelligible, finally, that which ordinary attention fails to seize. 61

Joubert's claim is that metaphysics are to be distrusted and that only words which have been able "to get currency in the world" are to be trusted. Joubert asserts "Combien de gens se font abstraits pour paraître profonds! La plupart des termes abstraits sont des ombres qui cachent des vides." (XII, 32). Although Arnold doubts that metaphysicians will adopt the rules of Joubert, he recommends them to the man of letters because it:

...is by means of familiar words that style takes hold of the reader and gets possession of him [and quoting from Joubert] "Be profound with clear terms and not with obscure terms." 62

Arnold found much enjoyment in Joubert's writings and one cannot but know Arnold himself through the reading of his interpretations of Joubert's works. The "touchstones" which Arnold wanted to use as a means of examining literature, and Arnold's desire to see things clearly and see them as a whole, are closely related to Joubert's philosophy as defined by Arnold.

Much of the essay is devoted to translated quotations from

Joubert's writings, and Arnold uses them to demonstrate stylistic techniques which found favour with him. It is surprising to note certain of Arnold's selections which run almost counter to his own writings. Although it is not the intention to analyze the selections, one cannot help but feel that Joubert's comment that we should not "...bring into the domain of reasoning that which belongs to our innermost feelings and that we should state truths of sentiment, and...not try to prove them. That there is a danger in such proofs,"<sup>63</sup> would find more support in Tennyson's 'In Memoriam', than in Arnold's poetry.

Arnold also devotes much of the essay to a discussion of Joubert's writings on religion. It is quite probable that some of Arnold's own writings on the subject, which for the most part occurred later in his career, were inspired by the extensive work done by Joubert. But it is the field of literary criticism that provides the most relevant influence for this particular study. One passage on the subject of novels, which Arnold translates, is particularly revealing in so far as Arnold himself is concerned. The translation reads:

Fiction has no business to exist unless it is more beautiful than reality. Certainly the monstrosities of fiction may be found in the bookseller's shops; you buy them there for a few francs, but they have no place in literature, because in literature the one aim of art is the beautiful. Once you lose sight of that, and you have the mere frightful reality. 64

Although Arnold takes up the rallying cry and writes that these "...monstrosities have no place in literature" and that the men who produce them "are not really men of letters," he does not identify what Joubert



or himself has in mind. In using Joubert's maxims and commenting on them briefly, Arnold lacks specificity and his criticism is of a superficial nature. So often, in these short essays, he concurs with the idea or attitude, taps the well, but fails to make use of the water.

Arnold managed to ignore such writers of fiction on his side of the Channel, as Dickens, Eliot, and Meredith, as well as Hugo, and Balzac across the Channel in France. The only fiction writers to whom he gave plaudits were people such as Senancour and Sand whose work was more critically attuned to the "beautiful" than to "reality." (Much later, Arnold did write an essay on Leo Tolstoi.) Assuming that Arnold agrees with Joubert's premise that the "one aim of art is the beautiful," one can also appreciate another reason why Arnold chose to ignore those French poets who portrayed life in its decadence. Obviously we cannot go too far in an analysis based not on what Arnold said but on what he left unsaid -- tempting as it may be.

G. T. Fairclough in A Fugitive and Gracious Light develops an interesting study of the relationship between the thought of Joubert and that of Arnold structured around the metaphor of light. Fairclough notes Arnold's acknowledgment of the French author, but he also notes that Arnold particularly identifies Joubert's "possession of light-intellectual and spiritual illumination and clarity,"<sup>65</sup> a beam strong and clear. He goes on to prove that Coleridge's inferiority to Joubert, in Arnold's mind, was due to the fact that Coleridge's light was not concentrated into a single ray, starting from one point. The metaphor of light was generally

used by Arnold to represent the perceptive intellect and it is used, of course, throughout Culture and Anarchy. Fairclough, in his careful analysis, brings together a trinity of powers which bind together Arnold and Joubert, consisting of "intelligence, conduct, and emotion."<sup>66</sup> Fairclough admits that it is an easy temptation to discuss the "literary influence and indebtedness" of one writer to another (and specifically Arnold's indebtedness to Joubert); hence he simply presents the facts and leaves the final assessment to the reader. Using a statistical approach, Fairclough enumerates the number of references to Joubert in Arnold's notebook and also the number of occasions on which Joubert's quotations are cited by Arnold. All in all it would seem that Arnold not only shared many of the same literary ideals as Joubert, but that there was a strong empathetic bond between Arnold and Joubert regarding the larger issues of life itself.

Another contemporary of Arnold, Ernest Renan, a man whose life-span closely paralleled that of Arnold, also seems to have exerted considerable influence on Arnold. In Renan we see another French writer who, in today's French literary circles, has fallen out of favour. R. M. Chadbourne in his recent book writes that "...Renan's works are less widely read today than in his own time. His ambiguous attitude towards Christianity and his reputation (exaggerated) for evasiveness may have something to do with his diminished influence."<sup>67</sup> In an earlier appraisal of Renan's writings, Chadbourne had seen his most brilliant works as "unread classics," and his reputation:

... reduced to brief mention in nineteenth century survey courses, [while] other writers including Balzac and Stendahl, Baudelaire and Rimbaud [had long ago replaced him] 68

Renan was a prolific writer whose most famous work was Vie de Jésus but whose writings also included literary, social, and political criticism, magazine articles, and hundreds of essays. Chadbourne describes Renan as a man "between two worlds" because he withdrew from the cloistered training for priesthood at Saint-Sulpice to find his place "...in the larger theatre of secular life."<sup>69</sup> Again the persistent thread of disillusionment which runs through the lives of Obermann, Maurice deGuérin, Arnold's Scholar-gipsy and now Renan.

It was probably through the Revue des deux mondes that Arnold first became interested in Renan. Arnold had always maintained steadfastly, against Clough's earlier objections, that this periodical represented the most valuable expression of European opinion<sup>70</sup> and it was in this periodical that many of Renan's works were published. It appears that Arnold came to know of the extensive nature of Renan's work following the publication of Essais de Morale et de Critique, because he wrote to his sister:

I thought the other day I would tell you of a Frenchman whom I saw in Paris, Ernest Renan, between whose line of endeavour and my own I imagine there is considerable resemblance, that you might have a look at some of his books... The difference is, perhaps, that he tends to inculcate morality, in a high sense of the word, upon the French nation as what they most want, while I tend to inculcate intelligence, also in a high sense of the word, upon the English nation as what they most want, but with respect both to

morality and intelligence, I think we are singularly at one in our ideas, and also with respect both to the progress and the established religion of the present day. 71

Arnold is particularly enthusiastic about Renan's essay entitled 'Sur la poésie des races celtiques' and admits to his sister that he has long felt that the British race owed far more both spiritually and artistically to the Celtic races than to the "somewhat coarse" Germanic race.<sup>6</sup> Arnold published his essay entitled "On the Study of Celtic Literature" a few years later in 1867. S. M. Coulling states that Arnold's main purpose in writing this study is to emphasize those Celtic characteristics which he finds in English poetry, whereas Renan is mainly concerned with the Celtic traits which might make significant contributions to modern thought.<sup>72</sup> Arnold only acknowledges Renan's work once in his essay when he singles out the trait of "sentiment" which Renan had called "infinie délicatesse de sentiment qui caractérise la race Celtique" and he sees it as the quality "which marks where Celtic races touch and are one."<sup>73</sup> There are several instances where Arnold seems to have Renan in mind in the Celtic lectures, but despite Renan being the probable inspiration of the work, Arnold's thesis is different.

From 1860 on there appear to be a number of Arnold's works which relate to those of Renan being published during the same period. It is doubtful that the influence worked both ways, because although we are able to note a number of references to Renan in Arnold's writings; the

---

<sup>6</sup>Arnold's mother had expressed great pride in her Celtic background.

opposite does not hold true. E. K. Brown writes, after a visit to the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris, that "all of Arnold's works of religious criticism were there,"<sup>74</sup> but he observes "neither Renan nor anyone else had cared to cut more than a few pages of any volume."<sup>75</sup> Much may be read about this one-way influence and its strongest supporters include Lewis F. Mott with his 'Renan and Matthew Arnold', and Joseph W. Angell's with 'Matthew Arnold's Indebtedness to Renan's Essais de Morale et de Critique',<sup>76</sup> but the article by S. M. Coulling, mentioned above, provides us with a different perspective.

Coulling claims that there are some obvious influences but denies that they are as extensive as most previous critics maintain. Whereas some of the earlier critics felt that Renan influenced the direction of Arnold's literary criticism as well as his social criticism, Coulling does not agree. He finds it easy to refute the first claim on the grounds that Arnold had already written his 1853 Preface and had delivered many of his lectures on literary criticism at Oxford when he stepped into the chair of Poetry in 1857. Although Coulling admits that Arnold's Celtic lectures resulted from, but were different from, Renan's Celtic essay, he also argues that Culture and Anarchy was formulated before the appearance of Questions Contemporaines, the latter being published only months ahead of Arnold's social treatise. Coulling admits that certain theories developed by Arnold possibly had their origin in Renan's works including the terms Hebraism and Hellenism which Renan defines in Études d'Histoire Religieuse as:

...Le résultat essentiel de la philologie moderne a été de montrer dans l'histoire de la civilisation l'action d'un double courant, produit par deux races profondément distinctes des moeurs, la langue et d'esprit; d'une part, la race indo-européenne... de l'autre, la race...sémitique...A la race indo-européenne appartiennent presque tous les grand mouvements militaires, politiques, intellectuels de l'histoire du monde; à la race sémitique, les mouvements religieux... 77

But on the other hand he argues that Arnold's theory of "disinterestedness" does not, as is often thought, come from Renan's Vie de Jésus because Arnold's essay 'The Function of Criticism at the Present Time' was formulated prior to his reading of Renan.

One essay that is often cited by the critics to demonstrate Renan's influence on Arnold is Arnold's 'The Literary Influence of the Academies'. This first appeared in Cornhill Magazine in August, 1864, and was eventually included in the first series of Arnold's Essays in Criticism. Coulling admits that Arnold's source for this essay was either Sainte-Beuve or Renan, but he is unwilling to identify which one. Both men had reviewed the recent book Histoire de l'Académie Française by Pellisson and D'Olivet. Coulling's argument is that it is difficult to determine the stronger influence because Arnold acknowledges both critics frequently. Chadbourne ultimately sees Arnold as the "... heir to the best in Renan"<sup>78</sup> and he demonstrates this by equating Renan's "curiosity" to Arnold's "disinterested love of a free play of the mind on all subjects, for its own sake."<sup>79</sup>

Despite the numerous references to Renan in his works, however, Arnold was not always in accord with Renan's ideas. By 1879, in a letter to M. Fontanès, he was becoming critical of Renan and wrote:

...I have begun Renan's discourse, but have only got a little way. His taking Victor Hugo's poetry so prodigiously au sérieux does, I confess, amaze me in so fine and delicate a mind; but Renan is not sound, I think, in proportion to his brilliancy. 80

And by 1883 he was declaiming Renan's lack of literary sense in another letter to Fontanès in which he states:

Renan has much less of it than a person of far less regular life and conversation, and far less wide and exact attainments[than]-- Sainte-Beuve. 81

He also de-emphasized the similarities between himself and Renan such as the "mission to promulgate intelligence to their respective nations,"<sup>82</sup> which had been noted in his earlier writings.

The other area of common ground explored by the two men was in their religious writings, and before leaving Renan, these should be considered briefly. Jean Vigneault writes that:

...one thing we have firmly to grasp in our discussions of Arnold's and Renan's view upon God, is their difference of opinion concerning the availability to religion of a God divested of all personality, achieving no great concreteness for the mind of man than that of eternal tendency guiding the evolution of the universe. 83

Arnold valued religion only in so far as it was able to improve man and society. In Culture and Anarchy culture becomes an extension of religion and Arnold sees the perfection of human nature resulting not from a "having and a resting" but from a "growing and a becoming."<sup>84</sup> In 'On the Study of Poetry' when comparing religion to poetry, Arnold relates both to right conduct, and Renan would have agreed that culture will wean humanity from the supernatural aspects of religion and create in its stead "la religion entendue dans le sens élevé." In his

Literature and Dogma, Arnold revealed that it was the style along with its eloquent sweetness in Renan's interpretation of St. John's gospel which fascinated him. It was, in other words, Renan's culture and refinement, that attracted and held Arnold. Ultimately, then, Arnold saw Renan as one of the great men of culture who are:

those who have had a passion for diffusing, for making prevail, for carrying from one end of society to the other, the best knowledge, the best ideas of their time; who have laboured to divest knowledge of all that was harsh, uncouth, difficult, abstract, professional, exclusive; to humanize it, to make it efficient outside the clique of the cultivated and the learned, yet still remaining the best knowledge and thought of the time, and a true source, therefore, of sweetness and light. 85

It was another French relationship that was most meaningful to Arnold.

Arnold's essay 'The Literary Influence of the Academies' was mentioned earlier as being influenced by both Renan and Sainte-Beuve. It is an essay which is also interesting for its own sake. Arnold traces the history of the French Academy and discusses the value of such an institution in preserving the heritage of a country's language. Arnold considers the reasons for the existence of the Academy and he feels that much is due to attaining

... to a standard higher than one's own habitual standard in intellectual matters... [and] those whose intelligence is quickest, openest, most sensitive, are readiest with this deference [whereas] ...those whose intelligence is less delicate and sensitive are less disposed to it. 86

He goes on to state that this is why the French have such an academy and the English do not. Arnold discusses the seriousness and orderliness



of the French language, which does not allow for the misuse or misspelling of words, and claims that with severe discipline there is no opportunity for anarchy in the language. Because England does not have such an institution, such a "sovereign organ of opinion" according to Sainte-Beuve, or such a "recognized authority in matters of tone and taste" according to Renan, Arnold finds a "note of provinciality" in the writings of his countrymen.

This particular essay also provides another important clue to Arnold's attitude towards French verse, because while deploring English prose he also rejects Gallic poetry. He claims that his own nation is far greater in poetry than in prose and he writes of England's mastery in this field:

...how much better...do the productions of its spirit show in the qualities of genius than in the qualities of intelligence (and it is this first quality that produces truly great poets), how much more striking, in general, does any Englishman...seem in his verse than in his prose. 87

While admitting that English poetry is not flawless, Arnold says that it is definitely superior to English prose. The opposite is true in France:

... with a Frenchman of like stamp, it is just the reverse: set him to write poetry, he is limited, artificial, impotent; set him to write prose, he is free, natural, and effective. 88

He concludes this section of his essay by establishing that the "power of French literature is in its prose writers" and that the "power of English literature is in its poets." Obviously then, according to Arnold, it is this same intelligence fostered by the Academy, which does not permit the

development of such men of poetic genius as Shakespeare, Marlowe, and Milton.

Arnold concludes the essay by admitting that England probably should not have such an Academy, despite the fact that he himself feels that there is something to be gained in the orderliness of language by having such an institution. The tone of his essay makes it clear that his thoughts are but a prelude to the ideas expressed in Culture and Anarchy. Again an important aspect of Arnold's thought was stimulated by a French work and excited by French critics.

Although he was not familiar with the work of Henri-Frederic Amiel until after Amiel was dead and until the year before his own death, Arnold did write one essay on the Swiss writer as well as mentioning him in other writings. In the essay entitled 'Amiel', which first appeared in Macmillans Magazine in September of 1887, Arnold quickly disposes of Amiel's poetry by inference when he writes that "even Victor Hugo's poetry leaves me cold."<sup>89</sup> He then moves on to Amiel's Journal. This book interested him because not only Mrs. Ward (the translator of Amiel) but also Edmond Scherer, both of whom Arnold respected, wrote<sup>90</sup> that it surpasses Obermann's letters. Arnold sets out to prove that such critics were wrong and that Senancour's work was far better than that of Amiel both in depth and in eloquence. Arnold was dissatisfied with Amiel's pessimism and despair, which caused the author to have a "melancholy outlook on all sides and a disquiet with himself." Arnold felt that this feeling was far removed from Obermann's ennui. He admitted

that Amiel was superior to Senancour in philosophical depth, but objects that such thought is not necessarily significant unless it may be assessed honestly and provide a positive value. Arnold finds Amiel's lack of a humane philosophy "futile;" he finds the Journal filled with much Germanized speculative philosophy and also finds it of little interest.

Arnold uses, in the first part of the essay, a significantly different manner than is his custom. Normally he treats his subject with deference. In the case of Amiel, however, one begins to ponder the reasons for his writing about an individual who did not seem to command his respect. Finally, about mid-way through the essay, he identifies Amiel's strong point as being his fine handling of literary and social criticism. It is in this field that Arnold considers that Amiel makes his greatest contribution and he writes that any "...one single page of [ his ] criticism is worth, ...a hundred...pages"<sup>91</sup> of his philosophy. Even more important, however, is an admission by Arnold that he will talk about Amiel's fine criticism, and that this is the purpose of the essay, because "I would have abstained from writing about him if I had only to disparage and find fault." Here again Arnold has provided us with an important clue as to why there are such extensive and apparent gaps in his writings -- gaps which omit writers who could have logically been included in Arnold's canon. Obviously he was not prepared to include anyone about whom he could only be derogatory. Perhaps another clue may be gained as to why Amiel was selected for recognition when we read of Amiel's tribute to Sainte-Beuve which was published shortly after the latter's death. Again, we see the pattern repeated: Arnold's respect

for a French writer seems to be directly related to either Sainte-Beuve's recognition of the writer or in this case to the writer's recognition of Sainte-Beuve. Amiel's total output of literary criticism, according to Arnold, is not voluminous but deserves attention. Arnold feels duty-bound to bring it to the attention of the English reading public.

This particular essay is rather weak fare by any standard, but it particularly lacks the convincing tone which Arnold generally uses in his essays. This is a piece of writing which one doubts would have seen the "light of day" in Arnold's more critically perceptive years. One cannot help but feel that the value of this essay is not in what is said about the subject, but in what may be discerned about Arnold's own less well-defined views.

Arnold's interest in France was not always associated with literary figures. A publication entitled A French Eton resulted from a visit made in 1859 to France, Holland, and Switzerland. It represented one of his earliest points of departure from literary concerns to social issues. His commentary on the French school system is, however, that of a man of letters. Describing the French programme, he writes that it includes:

... the scientific instruction and the study of the mother-tongue which our school course is without [and he continues] ... that French prose works [and] ... perhaps even poetical works [provide a better classical base than do English works] 92

Arnold is not explicit at this point and it would be interesting to examine the records of the French schools of the period to ascertain which French writers were included in the course of study.

Arnold found much to laud in the French school system, and he was particularly impressed to find the middle classes attending state schools. He also found a number of things of which he was very critical. As a result his essay or, perhaps more correctly, his treatise, was not so much an appraisal of the French system as it was an admonition to the English "philistines" in order to gain their support in broadening the English school system. A French Eton supports the French system which advocates the extension of the public school system rather than the proliferation of private schools as was prevalent in England.<sup>φ</sup> This was the only way that more "barbarians" would have an opportunity to be exposed to "sweetness and light." The tone of the essay is clearly critical of France as well as England, and despite the plaudits he awards to the French system he stands at a critical distance. This essay demonstrates a clear change in Arnold's view of French culture because in it he no longer maintains that because a thing is French, it has to be good.

Another essay entitled 'High Schools and Universities in France' presents an historical overview which shows how, after the revolution, the University Jurisdiction was abolished, and with the reviving prosperity in nineteenth century France, the middle class became more and more capable of meeting the moderate charge for their children' education. On the other hand Arnold does admit that "...no Frenchman,

---

<sup>φ</sup>The terms "public" and "private" are used, in this discussion, in the sense of the English school system of the nineteenth century, e.g. "public" is a "private school."

except a very few in Paris who know more than anybody in the world, knows anything about anything."<sup>93</sup> From all of this we may deduce that although Arnold was impressed by the opportunity of the French people to have access to higher learning, he was not at all impressed by, for the most part, the quality of the teaching or in the common Frenchman's ability to learn.

Arnold's notebooks<sup>94</sup> indicated that he had a number of uncompleted projects planned on the subject of French writers, including articles on Alexander Vinet, Saint-Martin, Joseph Milsand, Vauvenargue as well as another article on George Sand after having read her later volumes of correspondence. These plans, however, never materialized. But we have ample evidence to vindicate the truth of his own statement in Discourses in America that "...people in England often accused [him] of liking France and things French far too well."<sup>95</sup>

ce 25 janvier 1863

Cher Monsieur et Ami,

Non, ce mois-ci ne se passera pas sans que je m'acquitte d'un devoir qui est un plaisir: j'ai reçu avec reconnaissance ce souvenir délicat daté du 1<sup>er</sup> janvier; toutes les délicatesses s'y joignaient, c'est un souvenir amical, ἔπιτιμον, c'est un écrit de vous, c'est un écrit d'un poète que nous aimons et que j'ai eu l'honneur d'annoncer pour ma part et d'introduire. Je vous ai lu avec tous les genres d'intérêt: il est un mot que néanmoins j'aurais voulu modifier et adoucir: à une époque où vivaient Carlyle, Villemain, Gervinus, Renan et d'autres, je ne peux ambitionner qu'un honneur, c'est d'être compté parmi les critiques qui ont leur coin d'originalité et qui savent leur métier: plus est trop et votre amitié ici va au-delà de ce qui peut être accordé par des indifférens. Cette gronderie faite, j'ai lu le tout avec bien de la satisfaction et du profit: vous aussi, vous avez été pastor in Arcadia; vous êtes de ceux qui, avec des paroles murmurées, avez su pénétrer les secrets enchantemens et soulevé le voile de la grande Isis. J'ai retrouvé, en vous lisant, le prestige et l'âme de ces années envolées où vous suiviez les sentiers d'Oberman sur l'Alpe solitaire, et où vous alliez interroger l'écho dans les bosquets de Nohant! Vous avez traversé notre littérature et notre poésie par une ligne intérieure: profonde, qui fait les initiés et que vous ne perdrez jamais. Vous combinez ainsi bien des points de comparaison: la Grèce, la France, et votre riche veine britannique. Votre goût y gagne de pouvoir établir de ces rapports qui font beaucoup rêver et que je voudrais avoir le temps d'approfondir, ainsi Keats, Shelley, Godwin! mais je me contente de deviner, de soupçonner et je passe.

Ma vie est celle d'un manoeuvre qui aime assez sa besogne, qui n'en rougit pas, mais qui y est, y sera et y mourra enchainé comme à la glèbe. J'ai à peine le temps de relever la tête, de regarder en arrière et de respirer. Votre pensée me vient souvent quand je songe à ces richesses qu'un peu plus de loisir eût mises à ma disposition et où je vous eusse demandé d'être un guide, mais ce sont des regrets superflus! Notre littérature, malgré nos efforts de critique pour faire bonne contenance et pour couvrir nos faiblesses, est bien peu de chose au regard de l'invention et de l'imagination: il n'arrive rien de nouveau, les nouveaux-venus n'apportent rien d'espéré ou d'in-espéré. Nous sommes dans la fatigue des combinaisons et des fabrications bizarres. Salammbô est notre grand événement! L'Impératrice en est tellement frappée qu'elle veut s'habiller en Salammbô à quelque mascarade de cour, et qu'elle a désiré connaître l'auteur. Ce dernier à qui je faisais compliment

après la présentation, et qui est d'ailleurs brave garçon et homme d'esprit, me disait à ce propos: « Eh bien! si j'avais eu du goût, je n'aurais pas eu ce succès-là! »

Venez nous voir, cher Monsieur et ami, et accordez-moi (je vous retiens d'avance) une bonne soirée à causer. Coudez sur table: encore une de ces soirées-là dans ma vie.

A vous de tout coeur et de toute gratitude,

Sainte-Beuve

Soyez heureux en vous et dans les vôtres!



#### CHAPTER IV

Arnold, then, exposed himself to a segment of the French literary milieu during his early years, and maintained a deep interest in it throughout the rest of his life. The almost adolescent admiration for Rachel and George Sand eventually gave way to a more mature worship for Senancour and Sainte-Beuve. Ironically the influence of Sainte-Beuve was ultimately to turn Arnold away from the romanticism of Sand and Senancour and point him in the direction of the deGuérins, Joubert and Renan. Because of these later studies, he turned with renewed enthusiasm to the literature of his own country, on which he was raised. In a sense he completed a cycle.

Matthew Arnold's writings were undeniably affected by his exposure to certain French men and women of letters. But his attitude towards most of these writers was, in the final analysis, ambivalent. With the exception of his mentor Sainte-Beuve, he eventually either renounced or lost interest in his earlier enthusiasm with all of the rest.

Rachel was remembered by him as a "dying middle-aged woman." Marguerite's eyes of blue dimmed for Arnold even before they were replaced by Frances' eyes of grey. And even the image of George Sand ultimately became somewhat tarnished. Arnold wrote in his last essay on Sand, that she "suffers from the absence of moral education."<sup>1</sup> It is apparent that, for him, the value of her views and her philosophies diminished with time. As late as 1877, he wrote to his wife:

G. Sand is beginning to weigh upon me greatly, though she also interests me very much; the old feeling of liking for her and of her refreshment from her faults, comes back. 2

The same vacillating admiration is present in an even later comment:

" we feel that she is greater than we know."<sup>3</sup> It is the same uncertain attitude he had demonstrated years earlier when he wrote to Clough that he was "...trying to reread Valentine and that he was stuck... except in the scenery bits."<sup>4</sup> At that earlier turning point in his life he declined to be un enfant du siècle.

Harding<sup>5</sup> finds the same changing position in Arnold's later view of Senancour. He feels that Arnold came eventually to find his earlier idol less significant<sup>φ</sup> just as the "natural magic" of Maurice deGuérin ceased to charm. Harding<sup>6</sup> relates Arnold's disillusionment with Senancour to Arnold's own resolute change in values. Arnold's mature stoicism did not harmonize with Senancour's epicureanism; Senancour's ennui was replaced by a version of the work ethic.

Probably the period immediately following his marriage to Frances Wightman marked one of the major transitional phases in Arnold's attitude towards France. It was during this period that he wrote the Preface and also 'Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse'.

There is a further change in attitude towards France, by Arnold,

---

<sup>φ</sup>Harding does concede that Arnold still admired Senancour's "nature descriptions" as was indicated in the essay 'Amiel'.

in his later years. Although he still held many of her writers in high esteem, he also became more aware of literary strengths in English authors and at the same time he began to notice weaknesses in the French literary and social scene. Symptomatic of this change in attitude is his 'Introduction' to T. H. Ward's The English Poets which was written in 1880. In this essay he charged his readers with the responsibility of not only becoming familiar with their own literature, but also getting to know the best in that literature and getting to know it well.

At one stage he seems to find equal merit on both sides of the channel. In his essay 'A French Critic on Goethe', he writes:

This ground of sympathy between Englishmen and Frenchmen has not been enough marked, but it is a very real one. They owe it to their having alike had a long continued national life, a long continued literary activity, such as no other modern nation has had...its literature, for centuries past, powerful and incessant. England has these in common with France. 7

Although these thoughts do not express a strong linking of the literatures of the two countries, the attitude is non-partisan. But the sense of pride in his own literary heritage coincides with his disenchantment with much of the literature of France. This change in attitude probably stemmed from 1870 when Germany defeated France -- a defeat which Arnold attributed to France's moral decay. In writing about the event, he chose to use a line from his own poem to relate this defeat to France's aesthetic views by stating "France, famed in all arts, in none supreme." Again this seems to be a far cry from the earlier Arnold who felt that France offered England its finest model of

equality and general intelligence and excellence -- a model which could be copied to provide a means of ridding the English of the flaws of British Philistinism.

In closing, I would like to return to the comments of some of the critics who have discussed Matthew Arnold and France. Iris Sells feels that this relationship had an important influence on Arnold's work, and that ultimately it was Senancour, of all the French writers, who meant the most to him. She writes: "...Arnold, indeed, went to Senancour because he found in him a kindred spirit, whose experiences, intellectual and sentimental, were strangely like his own."<sup>8</sup> But the evidence also supports Harding who found that it was Sainte-Beuve with whom Arnold shared much in common<sup>9</sup> including, most significantly, an European outlook.

Miss Sells is correct, of course, that the influence of Senancour-Obermann may be seen in many of the poems including not only 'Obermann' and 'Obermann Once More', but also 'Resignation' and 'Empedocles on Etna'. Certainly the younger Arnold was deeply touched by the French writer, but it did not have the lasting effect that Sainte-Beuve was to exert. For this reason, Harding's view is also valid, particularly if we value the criticism more than the poetry.

The evidence, however, cannot be overlooked that George Sand started it all. She led Arnold to both Senancour and Sainte-Beuve, and it was ultimately Sainte-Beuve who led him to the deGuérins, Joubert, Renan, Amiel, and then finally turned him back towards English poetry.

And basically it was Sainte-Beuve who re-enforced Arnold's lack of "...appreciation for French poetry and drama [and] the message of Gautier's 'le beau sensoriel' [which passed] by him."<sup>10</sup> As a result, Arnold was unaware that a great new French poetic movement was afoot.

There can be little doubt that Arnold saw himself as the English champion of French literature and as its interpreter to the English reading public. His choice of writers now seems eccentric and it is surprising that, although these writers were all tinged with romanticism, they escaped condemnation. The fact that most of the writers were little-known was not significant to Arnold; he obviously felt, at least for a time, that they were beautiful or profound.<sup>φ</sup> After all, each and every one had been identified by his mentor -- Sainte-Beuve.

In summary, Arnold did provide three very significant clues which assist in understanding his French literary selections as well as his non-selections. First of all there was his discussion in his essay 'Joubert' concerning his reluctance to write about "famous authors" because they are already too well known. Next was his concern about working with translations which he admitted was unsatisfactory. When this is coupled with his difficulty in translating poetry, his favouring of prose appears most logical. Finally, his obvious dislike for French poetry is expressed in a number of essays and his ultimate rationale is clearly

---

<sup>φ</sup>Arnold's admiration for many of these writers lasted well into the period when he began his famous tirades against the English romantics (Essays in Criticism, II).

stated in 'The Literary Influence of Academies'. In this essay he writes of the Frenchman that once you "...set him to write poetry, he is limited, artificial, and impotent; set him to write prose, he is free, natural and effective."<sup>11</sup>

Much of Arnold's finest work resulted from his relationship with France. As well as the Obermann poems, the 'Rachel Sonnet Sequence', and the 'Switzerland' poems, all of which were directly related, we have numerous other poems such as 'Resignation', 'Empedocles on Etna', and 'The Buried Life', which were also influenced by this relationship. Furthermore we have many essays, including 'Joubert', 'Maurice deGuérin', 'Eugénie deGuérin', 'Amiel', 'The Literary Influence of Academies', and numerous short works. The Preface of 1853 also owed much to his discovery of French criticism through Sainte-Beuve.

And in return Arnold paid his literary debt. As Enid Starkie puts it "...in spite of his ultimate recantation, Arnold had done his work well..."<sup>12</sup> in interpreting French literature to English readers at a moment in time when interest in France's literature was at a particularly low ebb.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER I

<sup>1</sup>This apocryphal quotation cannot be specifically identified. The writer, however, vividly recalls its use by a University instructor during class discussion.

<sup>2</sup>Alfred Lord Tennyson, Selected Poetry, ed. H. M. McLuhan (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1964), 'In Memoriam' cxxvii.

<sup>3</sup>Although the main thrust of the paper is directed towards the French influence on Matthew Arnold, the influence of Arnold on certain French writers will be considered where it relates to the study.

<sup>4</sup>Matthew Arnold, Letters, (Vol. 1), p. 141.

<sup>5</sup>Matthew Arnold, Five Essays, p. 71.

<sup>6</sup>David J. DeLaura, Arnold and Carlyle, (reprint) (New York: Modern Language Assoc. of America, 1964), p. 10. DeLaura also uses this stylistic device in defining Arnold's "insight into truth." DeLaura sees this "insight" as stages related to Arnold's poetry, his early essays, and his later writings.

<sup>7</sup>Ruth Z. Temple, The Critic's Alchemy, (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1953), pp. 56-57.

<sup>8</sup>Iris Ester Sells, Matthew Arnold and France (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935), p. viii.

<sup>9</sup>Frank J. Kermode, Romantic Image, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1957), pp. 12-13.

<sup>10</sup>Louis Bonnerot, Matthew Arnold, Poète (Paris: Librairies Marcel Didier, 1947), pp. 420-1.

<sup>11</sup>George Saintsbury, A History of English Criticism (London: Wm. Blackwood & Sons, Ltd., 1949), pp. 483-9.

<sup>12</sup>Enid Starkie, From Gautier to Eliot (London: Hutchinsons of London, 1960), p. 25.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER II

<sup>1</sup>Iris Ester Sells, Matthew Arnold and France (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935), p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>F. J. W. Harding, Matthew Arnold: The Critic and France (Geneva: Libraire Droz, 1964), p. 16.

<sup>3</sup>Fraser Neiman, Matthew Arnold (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1968), p. 31.

<sup>4</sup>Arthur Hugh Clough, The Correspondence of Arthur Hugh Clough, ed. F. L. Mulhauser (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), p. 178.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 178.

<sup>6</sup>William A. Madden, Matthew Arnold: A Study of the Aesthetic Temperament in Victorian England (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967), p. 10.

<sup>7</sup>Harding, p. 18.

<sup>8</sup>Sells, p. 27.

<sup>9</sup>Matthew Arnold, Mixed Essays (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1896), pp. 236-9.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 241.

<sup>11</sup>Neiman, p. 27.

<sup>12</sup>Matthew Arnold, Mixed Essays (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1896), p. 249.

<sup>13</sup>H. L. Marchand, The French Pornographers (New York: Panurge Press, Inc., 1965), pp. 257-9.

<sup>14</sup>Clough, pp. 159, 503.

<sup>15</sup>One may begin to see that although the recognition of the works of Mme. Sand in England was not prolific it was, where it did appear, deep-rooted and healthy. Several years later Irving Babbitt, having followed Arnold's critical approach to Sand's work, was to write that:

She (Mme. Sand) grew toward her ideal as the plant grows towards the sun, and not like the modern specialist mechanically in one direction.

and again he re-emphasized that her work centred around man's ideal life.



FOOTNOTES CHAPTER II (Cont'd)

<sup>16</sup>F. W. H. Myers, Essays, Classical and Modern (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1921), pp. 70, 82.

<sup>17</sup>Matthew Arnold, Mixed Essays (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1896), p. 240 and footnotes.

<sup>18</sup>Enid Starkie, From Gautier to Eliot (London: Hutchinsons of London, 1960), p. 21.

<sup>19</sup>Sells, viii.

<sup>20</sup>Matthew Arnold, "George Sand, Aug. 12, 1884", p. 249.

<sup>21</sup>Sells, viii.

<sup>22</sup>Arnold as an adolescent had spent his summers at Fox How in the English Lake District which is less than three miles from Wordsworth's home at Rydal Bank. A form of neighbourliness was cultivated by Thomas Arnold which resulted in a number of visits back-and-forth between the households.

<sup>23</sup>Although Arnold has been variously described as a "faded romantic" and the "last of the romantics", his attitude towards the English romantics is at best ambivalent. It was only natural that he would be affected by the giants of the Romantic Movement who, with the exception of Wordsworth, were dead before Arnold did any serious writing. Arnold showed very little respect for Shelley, whom he describes as an "ineffectual angel," nor for Keats of whom he writes:

My dearest Clough, what a brute you were to tell  
me to read Keats' letters. However, it is over now...  
What harm he has done in English poetry. (Sept. 1849)

He had at best a mixed reaction to Byron. In a letter from Switzerland in 1848, he wrote:

...I have seen clean water in parts of Lake Geneva  
(which whole locality is spoiled by the omnipresence  
there of that furiously, flaring, bethiefed rushlight,  
the vulgar Byron.) (Sept. 1848)

Yet two years later Byron was included in 'Memorial Verses' as having taught us little but yet we felt his force because;

... our soul  
Had felt him like the thunder roll. (ll. 8-9)

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER II (Cont'd)

Coleridge fares somewhat better when he is used as the touchstone in a later Arnold essay for evaluating the French writer Joseph Joubert. Coleridge is found to be a man who was able to stem the tide of English neo-classicism just as the eighteenth century Joubert was able to recognize and judge properly Voltaire and Rousseau and earn for himself the title of one of the "children of light." (Essays in Crit., I, pp. 297-9)

However, we can turn to significant works in Arnold's canon where he clearly defines his views on the English Romantics and their tradition. He writes of them in the 'Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse'

...  
The sufferers died, they left their pain -  
The pangs which tortured them remain.

What helps it now, that Byron bore,

...  
The pageant of his bleeding heart?

What boots it, Shelley! that the breeze  
Carried thy lovely wail away. (ll. 131-140)

and a decade later in his 1864 essay 'The Function of Criticism at the Present Time', Arnold identifies the real fault of English Romanticism when he writes:

It has long seemed to me that the burst of creative activity in our literature, through the first quarter of the century, had about it in fact something premature... this prematureness comes from having proceeded without having its proper data, without sufficient materials to work with. In other words, the English poetry of the first quarter of the century, with plenty of energy, plenty of creative force, did not know enough. This makes Byron so empty of matter, Shelley so incoherent, Wordsworth even, profound as he is, yet so wanting in completeness and variety.

(Essays in Crit. I, p. 7).

No doubt Arnold felt that he had been born into the post-romantic period, and since the romantic legacy as modified by both Tennyson and Browning did not satisfy him, he felt the need to create a genuine poetry of his own period. For inspiration Arnold began to look towards other literatures, because he was not sympathetic with his own English contemporaries.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER II (Cont'd)

<sup>24</sup>D. G. James, Matthew Arnold and the Decline of English Romanticism (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), pp. 21-22.

<sup>25</sup>Quoted by P. Baum, Ten Studies in the Poetry of Matthew Arnold (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1958), p. 61.

<sup>26</sup>Lionel Trilling, Matthew Arnold (New York: The World Publishing Company, 1965), p. 114.

<sup>27</sup>One interesting interpretation of this relationship is made in a novel entitled The Buried Self by Isobel MacDonald, published in London by Peter Davies in 1949. Miss MacDonald's novel goes beyond Arnold's two meetings and the parting, and includes his subsequent marriage to Frances Lucy Wightman. The novelist follows the routes of Arnold's travels throughout the area by referring to the journey mentioned in 'Obermann Once More' and also includes references to his visits derived from his correspondence with Clough. Briefly, the story consists of Arnold's meeting of a group of young people including Marguerite, Martin and Olivia (mentioned in Arnold's poem 'A Dream'), and two others whom the author identifies as Denis and Edouard, at Thun in Switzerland in September, 1848. These young people are vacationing at the Bellevue Hotel accompanied by Marguerite's aunt. They have come from France and Ireland (Olivia and Denis) to spend a few weeks in the beautiful Thun area. At first Arnold is considered an outsider and his English conservatism causes him difficulties in getting to know the crowd. Finally Arnold is accepted and the group spends much of their time discussing the ideologies of the French Revolution as well as life, death, the church, and current music and literature of France and England. The warm September days are spent picknicking and on excursions in the area. Time passes quickly and soon the six young friends return to their respective homes with promises to come back the following year.

In the intervening months between October, 1848 and August, 1849, Arnold's writings were, according to the novelist, to include what now stands as the last verse of 'Dover Beach', i.e. "Ah love, let us be true... armies clash by night," a fragment which would not be concluded until after his marriage to Miss Wightman.

The following September, Arnold returned to Thun but the reader's knowledge of the lines in his poem 'Meeting' prove troublesome even though the reunion of Marguerite and her "Mathieu" is described in idyllic terms. The other young people are not there; Martin has died, Olivia is to be married, and only Marguerite and her aunt have returned for a vacation. The young couple are infatuated with one another but when Arnold proposes marriage, Marguerite admits that her life has been very different to the way it must appear to him. Her admission that "...je ne suis pas vierge" and that she can be his mistress but not his wife virtually devastates him. Young Arnold is torn between a sense of revulsion as he listens to her experiences during her earlier days as an actress, and a deeper love possibly based on sympathy. Nevertheless they part physically but not spiritually and Arnold is inspired to write numerous short poems about his experiences and his memories from the two vacations.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER II (Cont'd)

Miss MacDonald, by means of Arnold's poetry, letters, and with the assistance of Iris Sells' Matthew Arnold and Frances provides one interpretive picture of the Marguerite incident which provides interesting speculation for the student of Arnoldian lore.

<sup>28</sup>G. Robert Stange, Matthew Arnold, The Poet as Humanist (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967), p. 247, and R. H. Cuper, The Time-Spirit of Matthew Arnold (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1970), p. 4.

<sup>29</sup>Letters to Clough, p. 91. (Sept. 29, 1848).

<sup>30</sup>Letters to Clough, p. 110. (Sept. 23, 1849).

<sup>31</sup>Kenneth Allott, in describing this poem, writes that G. Saintsbury sees parallels between it and Thackeray's The History of Pendennis, and J. Coleridge sees Arnold's indebtedness to Coleridge's "Christabel". (p. 123).

<sup>32</sup>By the time Arnold published 'Dover Beach' in 1867, (almost twenty years later), the "sea of life...between us thrown" has been changed into a "sea of faith."

<sup>33</sup>Several other poems and fragments including 'Absence', 'Human Life', 'Courage', and 'Destiny' also allude to Marguerite.

<sup>34</sup>From Arnold's 1850 poem 'Absence' in which the "fair stranger" is identified by Kenneth Allott as Frances Lucy Wightman (Arnold's future wife).

<sup>35</sup>Etienne Pivert de Senancour, Obermann: Volumes I and II, translated and introduction by J. A. Barnes (London: Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., 1960), introduction viii.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid, I, introduction xii.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid, I, introduction xii.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid, I, p. 4.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid, I, p. 7.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid, I, p. 129.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid, II, p. 239.

<sup>42</sup>J. A. Barnes, translator and editor of Obermann, finds it paradoxical that Senancour, who lived alone for so long, is capable of writing for the good of humanity. Obermann, I, xxxvii.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER II (Cont'd)

- <sup>43</sup>James, p. 24.
- <sup>44</sup>J. Warren Beach, The Concept of Nature in Nineteenth Century English Poetry (New York: Pageant Book Co., 1956), p. 397.
- <sup>45</sup>Stange, p. 107.
- <sup>46</sup>deSenancour, I, pp. 64-8.
- <sup>47</sup>Stange, p. 161.
- <sup>48</sup>Quoted from 'The Scholar-Gipsy'.
- <sup>49</sup>deSenancour, II, pp. 267-8.
- <sup>50</sup>Ibid, I, p. 22.
- <sup>51</sup>Ibid, I, p. 7.
- <sup>52</sup>Ibid, I, p. 25.
- <sup>53</sup>Ibid, II, p. 242.
- <sup>54</sup>Ibid, I, p. 33.
- <sup>55</sup>Ibid, I, pp. 42-3.
- <sup>56</sup>Ibid, I, p. 207.
- <sup>57</sup>Ibid, II, p. 212.
- <sup>58</sup>Ibid, I, p. 146.
- <sup>59</sup>Ibid, I, p. 211.
- <sup>60</sup>Ibid, I, p. 7.
- <sup>61</sup>Ibid, I, p. 5.
- <sup>62</sup>Lucretius, De Rerum Natura (On the Nature of the Universe), trans. by J. H. Mantinband (New York: F. Ungar Publishing Co., 1965), Book III, ii., 130-416.
- <sup>63</sup>deSenancour, p. 64.
- <sup>64</sup>Letters to Clough, p. 110. (Sept. 23, 1849).

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER II (Cont'd)

<sup>65</sup>A year later, in 1850, Arnold wrote 'Memorial Verses' in commemoration of Wordsworth. Included in this poem were references to the greatness of Goethe and Byron, but not Senancour.

<sup>66</sup>Kenneth Allott sees these closing lines as "Arnold's farewell to youth, insouciance, and Marguerite - - and also, in the long run to the writing of poetry" in his exegesis of the poem.

<sup>67</sup>Sells, Appendix B. (This article appeared as a note to the poem in the second edition of New Poems - 1868).

<sup>68</sup>Sells, p. 264.

<sup>69</sup>Matthew Arnold, "Preface to the Poems of 1853" from the works of Arnold. (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), pp. xvii - xviii.

<sup>70</sup>Kermode, pp. 12-13.

<sup>71</sup>Trilling, p. 266.

<sup>72</sup>deSenancour, I, p. 79.

<sup>73</sup>Matthew Arnold, The Letters of Matthew Arnold to Arthur Hugh Clough ed. H. F. Lowry (Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 124. (Oct. 1852).

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER III

- <sup>1</sup>Letters to Clough, p. 118. (Dec., 1851).
- <sup>2</sup>Ibid, p. 120. (April, 1852).
- <sup>3</sup>Ibid, p. 126. (Dec., 1852).
- <sup>4</sup>Ibid, p. 128. (Feb., 1853).
- <sup>5</sup>William Madden, Matthew Arnold (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1967), p. 102.
- <sup>6</sup>Letters to Clough, p. 144. (Oct., 1863).
- <sup>7</sup>Matthew Arnold, Poems, ed. H. F. Lowry (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 38.
- <sup>8</sup>D. G. James, Matthew Arnold and the Decline of English Romanticism (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), p. 25.
- <sup>9</sup>Ibid, pp. 91-102.
- <sup>10</sup>John Holloway, The Victorian Sage (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1955), p. 226.
- <sup>11</sup>Paul F. Baum, Ten Studies in the Poetry of Matthew Arnold (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1958), p. x.
- <sup>12</sup>R. H. Super, The Time-Spirit of Matthew Arnold (Ann Arbor: The University Press of Michigan, 1970), p. 5.
- <sup>13</sup>Ibid, p. 95. (H. J. Mikell is quoted in Super's book).
- <sup>14</sup>Matthew Arnold, Poems, ed., H. F. Lowry (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 38.
- <sup>15</sup>Justin O'Brien, The French Literary Horizon (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1967), p. 36.
- <sup>16</sup>Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve, Selected Essays: trans. and ed. by F. Stiegmüller and N. Guterman (New York: Doubleday, 1963), p. xi.
- <sup>17</sup>Five Essays, p. 71.
- <sup>18</sup>Ibid, pp. 71-2.
- <sup>19</sup>Ibid, p. 72.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER III (Cont'd)

<sup>20</sup> Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve, Selected Essays: trans. and ed. by F. Stiegmüller and N. Guterman (New York: Doubleday, 1963). (The writer recalls this remark in association with reading the foregoing book. The exact page cannot be located).

<sup>21</sup> Letters, p. 225. (May 19, 1863).

<sup>22</sup> David deLaura, Hebrew and Hellene in Victorian England (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1969), p. 100.

<sup>23</sup> Although Arnold was to publish his final book of poems at the age of forty-five, the only significant works included (which were written after 1857) were 'Thyrsis' and 'Obermann Once More.'

<sup>24</sup> During the same visit to Europe, in his official capacity as Foreign Assistant Commissioner to the Newcastle Commission on Education, he was reassured that his prestige had not lessened. He writes that he "... was amused and flattered that his French friends magnified the importance of his official position. They introduced him as 'Monsieur le Professeur Docteur Arnold, Directeur - Generale de tout les Ecoles de la Grande Bretagne'," ('England and the Italian Question', Arnold, xiv). This trip included visits with the retired statesman Guizot, the academician Villemain, and acknowledgment by the author Prosper Mérimée as well as with Sainte-Beuve.

<sup>25</sup> F. J. W. Harding, Matthew Arnold, the Critic and France (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1954), p. 80. (Very little seems to remain of this correspondence but there are several references to it).

<sup>26</sup> Letters, pp. 122-123. (Aug. 21, 1859).

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, pp. 154-5. (March 20, 1861).

<sup>28</sup> Harding, pp. 43-4.

<sup>29</sup> A. Fryer Powell, 'Sainte-Beuve and Matthew Arnold,' The French Quarterly, 1921, p. 153.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, p. 153.

<sup>31</sup> Nancy P. R. Orwen, Matthew Arnold and Some Successors (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), p. 266.

<sup>32</sup> Five Essays, p. 78.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, p. 78.

<sup>34</sup> Essays Crit. I, pp. 80-1.



FOOTNOTES CHAPTER III (Cont'd)

- <sup>35</sup>Ibid, p. 81.
- <sup>36</sup>Ibid, p. 85.
- <sup>37</sup>Ibid, p. 106.
- <sup>38</sup>Harding observes, in Matthew Arnold: The Critic and France, that Arnold "... was not equipped by his literary training" to closely examine the complex linguistic devices of the French writers.
- <sup>39</sup>Essays Crit. I, p. 117.
- <sup>40</sup>Ibid, p. 96.
- <sup>41</sup>Letters, p. 209. (Jan. 7, 1863).
- <sup>42</sup>Ibid, p. 210. (Jan. 27, 1863).
- <sup>43</sup>Ibid, p. 217. (March 13, 1863).
- <sup>44</sup>Ibid, pp. 217-8. (March 13, 1863). The article was apparently read in its original version in Fraser magazine.
- <sup>45</sup>Essays Crit. I, p. 128.
- <sup>46</sup>Ibid, p. 123.
- <sup>47</sup>Ibid, p. 123.
- <sup>48</sup>Ibid, p. 133.
- <sup>49</sup>George Sand's novel Mauprat is centred on its young heroine who maintains an optimistic outlook on life despite overwhelming obstacles.
- <sup>50</sup>Essays Crit. I, p. 141.
- <sup>51</sup>Ibid, p. 143.
- <sup>52</sup>Ibid, p. 144.
- <sup>53</sup>Ibid, p. 12.
- <sup>54</sup>Letters, p. 212. (Feb. 4, 1863).
- <sup>55</sup>Arnold's essay 'Joubert' was originally entitled 'A French Coleridge'.
- <sup>56</sup>Essays Crit. I, p. 265.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER III (Cont'd)

<sup>57</sup>Ibid, pp. 265-6.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid, p. 271.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid, p. 278.

<sup>60</sup>French critics have taken Arnold to task for not only ignoring some of their greatest poets, but also for selecting inferior verses to study when he did look at French nineteenth century poetry. Typical of such criticism is Emil Legouis' attack in Défense de la Poésie Française in which he writes:

Arnold s'esquive en insinuant simplement que le rythme des vers français satisfait mal les Anglais, et ici que pouvons-nous répondre? Mais tout le même il laisse entendre en passant que le vers est l'écueil où vont naufrager ceux que nous appelons nos hommes de génie, et alors la condamnation serait absolue. Voyons pourtant son argumentation. Il choisit deux vers français, deux alexandrins, non point célèbres ni populaires, - j'avoue que je ne les ai jamais entendu citer que par lui et que j'ignore où il les a pris, bien qu'il y ait dans l'antithèse et la balancement artificiel de leurs hémistiches quelque chose qui dénonce Hugo en ses moments les moins heureusement inspirés. Ce distique médiocre, Arnold le prend comme type de notre rythme et de notre vers, de tous nos vers. Et que met-il en regard? Deux vers lyriques d'une des plus exquises et fameuses chansons de Shakespeare, deux autres également mémorables d'un chant de Heine! Il compare les incomparables sans se demander un instant si le même Hugo (?) n'a pas des vers aussi chantants que le Take, O take those lips away, ni non plus si Shakespeare n'en a pas des centaines qui sentent l'artifice autant que ce fâcheux couplet notre mirliton romantique. pp. 21-2.

<sup>61</sup>Essays Crit. I, p. 281.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid, pp. 283-4.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid, pp. 285-290.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid, pp. 292-3.

<sup>65</sup>G. Thomas Fairclough, A Fugitive and Gracious Light (Lincoln: The University of Nebraska Press, 1961), p. 5.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid, p. 23.

<sup>67</sup>Richard M. Chadbourne, Ernest Renan (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1968), p. 6.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER III (Cont'd)

<sup>68</sup>Richard M. Chadbourne, Ernest Renan as an Essayist (New York: Cornell University Press, 1957), xvi.

<sup>69</sup>Richard M. Chadbourne, Ernest Renan (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1963), p. 28.

<sup>70</sup>Letters to Clough, pp. 192-3. (March 6, 1848).

<sup>71</sup>Letters, pp. 128-9. (Dec. 24, 1859).

<sup>72</sup>Sidney M. B. Coulling 'Renan's Influence on Arnold's Literary and Social Criticism,' Florida State University Studies, 5, (1952), p. 101.

<sup>73</sup>Matthew Arnold, On the Study of Celtic Literature (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1893), pp. 75-6.

<sup>74</sup>E. K. Brown, "The French Reputation of Matthew Arnold," Studies in English, preface, iv.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid, iv.

<sup>76</sup>Both Mott's and Angell's articles are acknowledged by Coulling in his article.

<sup>77</sup>Ernest Renan, Etudes d'Histoire Religieuse (Paris: Levy, 1880), pp. 84-5.

<sup>78</sup>Richard M. Chadbourne, Ernest Renan as an Essayist (New York: Cornell University Press, 1957), pp. 236-7.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid, pp. 236-7.

<sup>80</sup>Letters, p. 184. (Easter Sunday, 1879).

<sup>81</sup>Ibid, p. 250. (June 29, 1883).

<sup>82</sup>Harding, p. 26.

<sup>83</sup>Jean Vigneault, A Comparative Analysis of the Religious Thought of Matthew Arnold and Ernest Renan (Toronto: University of Toronto Thesis, 1965), p. 19.

<sup>84</sup>Matthew Arnold, Culture and Anarchy (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1903), p. 48.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid, p. 70.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER III (Cont'd)

<sup>86</sup>Essays Crit. I, p. 49.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid, pp. 52-3.

<sup>88</sup>Ibid, p. 53.

<sup>89</sup>Essays Crit. II, p. 301

<sup>90</sup>Ibid, p. 302.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid, p. 316.

<sup>92</sup>Matthew Arnold, A French Eton (London: Macmillan and Co., 1895),  
p. 11..

Although this essay was not published until 1864, the material  
was gathered by Arnold on his 1859 trip.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid, p. 21.

<sup>94</sup>R. L. Brooks, 'Some Unaccomplished Projects', Studies in Biblio-  
graphy (Charlottesville, Virginia: Bibliographical Society of the Univer-  
sity of Virginia, 1963); pp. 213-217.

<sup>95</sup>Matthew Arnold, Discourses in America (New York: The Macmillan  
Co., 1902), p. 38.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER IV

- <sup>1</sup>Matthew Arnold, 'George Sand' Collectors Vol. IV (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1903), p. 246.
- <sup>2</sup>Letters, p. 158. (May 5, 1877).
- <sup>3</sup>'George Sand', p. 249.
- <sup>4</sup>Letters to Clough, p. 139. (August, 1853).
- <sup>5</sup>F. J. W. Harding, Matthew Arnold: The Critic and France (Geneva: Libraire Droz, 1964), pp. 43-4.
- <sup>6</sup>Ibid, pp. 43-4.
- <sup>7</sup>Essays Crit. II, p. 211.
- <sup>8</sup>Iris Ester Sells, Matthew Arnold and France (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935), p. 255.
- <sup>9</sup>Harding, p. 94.
- <sup>10</sup>Ibid, p. 184.
- <sup>11</sup>Essays Crit. I, p. 53.
- <sup>12</sup>Enid Starkie, From Gautier to Eliot (London: Hutchisons of London, 1960), p. 25.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Arnold, Matthew. Poems. Ed. by H. F. Lowry. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1949.
- Arnold, Matthew. The Poems of Matthew Arnold. Ed. by K. Allott. New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1965.
- Arnold, Matthew. Five Uncollected Essays of Matthew Arnold. Ed. by K. Allott. University Press of Liverpool, 1953.
- Arnold, Matthew. The Complete Works of Matthew Arnold. 15 Volumes. London: Macmillan & Company, 1895.
- Arnold, Matthew. Letters of an Old Playgoer. New York: Columbia University Press, 1919.
- Arnold, Matthew. "The Introductica to The English Poets" (anthology collected by T. H. Ward. London: Macmillan & Co., 1880.
- Arnold, Matthew. The Letters of Matthew Arnold to Arthur Hugh Clough. Ed. by H. F. Lowry. London: Oxford University Press, 1932.
- Arnold, Matthew. Unpublished Letters of Matthew Arnold. Ed. by Arnold Whitbridge. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1923.
- Babbitt, Irving. The Masters of Modern French Criticism. New York: The Noonday Press, 1912.
- Bates, William J. Criticism: The Major Texts. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1952.
- Baudelaire, Charles Les Fleurs du Mal. New York: Bantam Books, 1964.
- Baum, Paull F. Ten Studies in the Poetry of Matthew Arnold. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1958.
- Beach, J. Warren. The Concept of Nature in Nineteenth Century English Poetry. New York: Pageant Book Co., 1956.
- Benson, Arthur C. The Leaves of the Tree. London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1912.
- Bonnert, Louis. Matthew Arnold, Poète. Paris: Libraries Marcel Didier, 1947.
- Brooks, E. L. "Arnold: Some Unaccomplished Projects," Studies in Bibliography. Charlottesville, Va.: Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia, 1963.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY (Cont'd)

- Brooks, Van Wyck. The Malady of the Ideal. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1947.
- Brown, E. K. Studies in English "The French Reputation of Matthew Arnold." Studies in English, p. 237.
- Chadbourne, Richard M. Ernest Renan. New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1968.
- Chadbourne, Richard M. Ernest Renan as an Essayist. New York: Cornell University Press, 1957.
- Charvet, P. E. Literary History of France. Volume 4. London: Ernest Benn, Ltd., 1967.
- Clough, Arthur H. The Correspondence of Arthur Hugh Clough. Ed. by F. L. Mulhauser. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957.
- Coulling, Sidney M. B. "Renan's Influence on Arnold's Literary and Social Criticism," Florida State University Studies. Vol. 5. Tallahassee: Florida State University Press, 1952.
- Culler, A. Dwight. Imaginative Reason: The Poetry of Matthew Arnold. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966.
- DeLaura, David J. "Arnold and Carlyle," Periodic of Modern Language Association, March, 1964.
- DeLaura, David J. Hebrew and Hellene in Victorian England. Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1969.
- deSenancour, Etienne Pivert. Obermann. Vol. I & II, Translated with notes by J. A. Barnes. London: Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., 1960.
- Eliot, T. S. Selected Essays. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1932.
- Fairclough, G. Thomas. A Fugitive and Gracious Light. Lincoln: The University of Nebraska Press, 1961.
- Fleming, Dorothy B. A Survey of the Reviews of the Literary Criticisms of Matthew Arnold from 1853 until 1869. (M. A. Thesis, New York University, 1933).
- Frykman, Erik. Bitter Knowledge and Unconquerable Hope. Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1966.
- Goodstein, J. D. Matthew Arnold's Literary Criticism: A Twentieth Century View (PhD Thesis, New York University, 1968.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY (Cont'd)

- Harding, F. J. W. Matthew Arnold: The Critic and France. Geneva: Libraire Droz, 1964.
- Holloway, John. The Victorian Sage. London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1953.
- James, D. G. Matthew Arnold and the Decline of English Romanticism. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961.
- Kelso, A. P. Matthew Arnold on Continental Life and Literature. Oxford: B. H. Blackwell, 1914. (Reprint.)
- Kermode, J. Frank. Romantic Image. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1957.
- Legouis, Émile. Défense de la Poésie Française. London: Constable & Co., Ltd., 1912.
- Lucretius. De Rerum Natura (On the Nature of the Universe). Translated by J. H. Martinband. New York: F. Ungar Publishing Co., 1965.
- MacDonald, Isobel. The Buried Self. London: P. Davies, 1949.
- Madden, William A. Matthew Arnold: A Study of the Aesthetic Temperament in Victorian England. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967.
- Marchand, H. L. The French Pornographers. New York: Panurge Press, Inc., 1965.
- Myers, F. W. H. Essays, Classical and Modern. London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1921.
- Neiman, Fraser. Matthew Arnold. New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1968.
- O'Brien, Justin. The French Literary Horizon. New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1967.
- Orwen, Nancy P. R. Matthew Arnold and Some Successors. University of Toronto Press, 1965.
- Powell, A. Fryer. "Sainte-Beuve and Matthew Arnold - An Unpublished Letter," The French Quarterly. 1921.
- Raleigh, John Henry. Matthew Arnold and American Culture. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957.
- Renan, Ernest. Études d'Histoire Religieuse. Paris: Levy, 1880.
- Sainte-Beuve, C. Augustin. Selected Essays. trans. & ed. by F. Stiegmüller & N. Guterman. Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1963.



BIBLIOGRAPHY (Cont'd)

- Saintsbury, G. A History of English Criticism. London: Wm. Blackwood and Sons, Ltd., 1949.
- Sells, Iris Ester. Matthew Arnold and France. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935.
- Stange, G. Robert. Matthew Arnold, The Poet as Humanist. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967.
- Starkie, Enid. From Gautier to Eliot. London: Hutchinsons of London, 1960.
- Super, R. H. The Time-Spirit of Matthew Arnold. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1970.
- Temple, Ruth Z. The Critic's Alchemy. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1953.
- Tennyson, Alfred. Selected Poetry. Ed. H. M. McLuhan. Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964.
- Timothy, Helen D. The Reputation of Matthew Arnold During His Life. (University of Toronto Thesis). Toronto: 1963.
- Trilling, L. Matthew Arnold. New York: The World Publishing Co., 1965.
- Vigneault, Jean. A Comparative Analysis of the Religious Thought of Matthew Arnold and Ernest Renan. (University of Toronto Thesis). Toronto: 1965.
- White, Greenborough (ed). Matthew Arnold and the Spirit of the Age. (Papers of the English Club of Sewanee). New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, T Knickerbocker Press, 1898.