MATTHEW ARNOLD AND HIS PRIME MINISTERS

THESIS

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By

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PREFACE

As Matthew Arnold saw the philosophies of the classical ancients as touchstones for evaluating the new political and social philosophies of his own time, Arnold himself has served as a "touchstone" for historians who must evaluate the political and social events of the Victorian Age. Arnold made many comments about the three great Prime Ministers of his time: Lord Palmerston, Benjamin Disraeli, and William E. Gladstone, and about the policies of their respective administrations. Arnold's point of view toward these men is reflected in personal letters to members of his family and in his most significant political works, *Culture and Anarchy* and *Friendship's Garland*.

In the study that follows, these selections are examined in terms of the three Prime Ministers. Chapter I is an introduction to Arnold's political philosophy and an account of Arnold's comments about Disraeli, for of the three, Arnold had the least to say about Disraeli. Arnold dwells almost exclusively on differences he has with the government, and he found less to disagree with in Disraeli's policies than with the others. Arnold's reactions to Disraeli were more personal in nature than political.
Chapter II deals with Lord Palmerston's administration and with key events and people associated with it. Chapter III deals more specifically with *Culture and Anarchy* and with political and social events that served as a background for Arnold's commentary. Finally, Chapter IV concentrates on the Gladstone years, concluding with Arnold's assessment of the Liberal party and its leader in "The Nadir of Liberalism."
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PREFACE</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arnold's Political Criticism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arnold and Disraeli</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. LORD PALMERSTON</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arnold's Introduction to Politics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Palmerston</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics in Education and Robert Lowe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. ARNOLD'S MAJOR POLITICAL COMMENTARY</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture and Anarchy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further Background of Arnold's Political Writings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. GLADSTONE: &quot;A MOST DANGEROUS MAN&quot;</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gladstone in Friendship's Garland and the Letters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arnold's Final Statement: &quot;The Nadir of Liberalism&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Arnold's Political Criticism

Matthew Arnold lived and wrote during the time that England and the world entered upon the modern age. He had comments on virtually every aspect of the human condition, most of which are pertinent even today. These comments occur in letters and articles published in numerous periodicals and newspapers. His most significant social and political writings are *Culture and Anarchy* and *Friendship's Garland*, both works begun as series of articles. The first was published in the *Cornhill* magazine over a period of several months. Arnold wrote a long preface, and the whole series was collected and published in 1869. The latter collection brought together the correspondence between Arnold and his imaginary Prussian friend, Arminius Von Thunder-ten-Tronckh, which was published in the *Pall Mall Gazette* from

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April, 1867, to June, 1869 (Super, V, vi). Also included in Friendship's Garland are two earlier essays, "My Countrymen" and "A Courteous Explanation."

As early as 1864, in "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time," Matthew Arnold set forth his basic political philosophy; it is directly related to his ideas of literary criticism as well.

Arnold says repeatedly that it is the duty of the critic to "see the object as in itself it really is."² And the business of criticism is simply "to know the best that is known and thought in the world" (Culler, p. 246); when the critic achieves this, he is able to generate a "current of fresh and true ideas" (Culler, p. 256). The way the critic achieves this end is to be "disinterested"—objective, unbiased, and cosmopolitan. Of course, it is this very quality, disinterestedness, that the British critics, political and social as well as literary, lack. Arnold points out that every political and social segment of English society has its own newspaper or magazine which interprets and criticizes everything from a biased point

of view. The Tories have the Quarterly Review, the Whigs have the Edinburgh Review, and the political Dissenters have the British Quarterly Review, to name a few. True objectivity and "seeing the object as in itself it really is" are impossible under these conditions.

Arnold takes to task those such as Sir Charles Adderley who expound on the perfection and true freedom of English society. He counters Adderley's idea that the English are "the best breed in the world" (Culler, p. 248). They aren't.

Arnold says it is the duty of the critic to refuse to be caught up in perpetual motion toward an end. He would not, for example, unequivocally support the liberal party on the grounds that no party is right all the time. Arnold himself was criticized for not supporting Bishop Colenso's work just because he was a liberal. Arnold says it is the duty of the critic "to be perpetually dissatisfied with these works, while they perpetually fall short of a high and perfect ideal" (Culler, p. 252). He goes on to say, "Criticism must maintain its independence of the practical spirit and its aims" (Culler, p. 255). Even Arnold admits that complete independence of thought is impossible for men to attain, but the critic, above all, should still continually strive to achieve it. Even so, Arnold
says, "I am bound by my own definition of criticism: a disinterested endeavor to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world" (Culler, p. 257). To know the best, one must look outside the thought of his own country. Arnold looked to continental Europe, and for this he had a goal,

a criticism which regards Europe as being, for intellectual and spiritual purposes, one great confederation, bound to a joint action and working to a common result; and whose members have, for their proper outfit, a knowledge of Greek, Roman, and Eastern antiquity, and of one another. Special, local, and temporary advantages being out of account, that modern nation will in the intellectual and spiritual sphere make most progress, which most thoroughly carries out this program. And what is that but saying that we too, all of us, as individuals, the more thoroughly we carry it out, shall make the more progress? (Culler, p. 258).

In the works mentioned above, Arnold makes many references to the three great prime ministers of his time: Lord Henry Palmerston; Benjamin Disraeli, the Earl of Beaconsfield; and William Evert Gladstone. Arnold categorically disapproved of almost everything England became under the leadership of these men. Generally, Arnold felt that Palmerston had spoiled the Englishman's image of himself. Palmerston was a grandiose Theodore Roosevelt with a charismatic personality, and he had a talent for making England the most meddling nation in all Europe. Because of this, the Englishman abroad was overproud,
and Arnold found this image generally distasteful. Gladstone was a meddler of a different kind. He did push through some domestic reforms which were greatly needed, but Arnold found himself in total disagreement with Gladstone on the issue of Irish Home Rule and earlier on the disestablishment of the Irish church. Arnold summed up his feelings about Gladstone in an article entitled "The Nadir of Liberalism."

Arnold and Disraeli

Probably the least distasteful of the three prime ministers was Benjamin Disraeli. He did much less to actively offend Arnold than the other two. Disraeli had the reputation of being a flatterer, a trait which he himself freely admitted. He was a romantic, a quality which made him Queen Victoria's favorite. In 1876, Disraeli pushed through a bill conferring the title of Empress of India on the Queen. A year earlier, he acquired one half of the shares in the Suez Canal. All of this seems to have escaped Arnold's critical eye; at least, Arnold found nothing offensive, politically or otherwise, in it which called for comment.

The first reference that Arnold makes to Disraeli is in a letter to his mother dated January 28, 1864. Arnold met Disraeli and his wife at a dinner party.
Mrs. Disraeli is not much to my taste, though she is a clever woman, and told me some amusing stories. Dizzy sat opposite, looking moody, black, and silent, but his head and face, when you see him near and for some time, are very striking. After the ladies went he was called over by the Bishop to take Mrs. Disraeli's vacant place. After a little talk to the Bishop he turned to me and asked me very politely if this was my first visit to Buckinghamshire, how I liked the country, etc.; then he said he thought he had seen me somewhere, and I said Lord Houghton had introduced me to him eight or nine years ago at a literary dinner among a crowd of other people. "Ah yes, I remember," he said, and then went on: "At that time I had a great respect for the name you bore, but you yourself were little known. Now you are well known. You have made a reputation, but you will go further yet. You have a great future before you, and you deserve it." I bowed profoundly, and said something about his having given up literature. "Yes," he said, "one does not settle these things for oneself, and politics and literature both are very attractive; still, in the one one's work lasts, and in the other it doesn't."

He went on to say that he had given up literature because he was not one of those people who can do two things at once, but that he admired most the men like Cicero, who could. Then we talked of Cicero, Bolingbroke, and Burke. Later in the evening, in the drawing-room, we talked again. I mentioned William Forster's name, telling him my connexion with him, and he spoke most highly of him and of his prospects, saying, just as I always say, how his culture and ideas distinguished him from the mob of Radicals. He spoke strongly of the harm he and Stansfeld and such men suffered in letting themselves be "appropriated," as he called it, by Palmerston, with whom they really had not the least agreement. Of Bright's powers as a speaker he spoke very highly, but thought his cultivation defective and his powers of mind not much; for Cobden's powers of mind he professed the highest admiration. "He was born a Statesman," he said, "and his reasoning is always like a Statesman's and striking." He ended
by asking if I lived in London, and begging me to come and see him. I daresay this will not go beyond my leaving a card, but at all events what I have already seen of him is very interesting. I daresay the chief of what he said about me myself was said in consequence of Lady de Rothschild, for whom he has a great admiration, having told him she had a high opinion of me; but it is only from politicians who have themselves felt the spell of literature that one gets these charming speeches. Imagine Palmerston or Lord Granville making them; or again, Lowe or Cardwell. The Disraelis went this morning.3

And Arnold's first reference to Disraeli in print appears in the conclusion to Culture and Anarchy. Although this is one of Arnold's most caustic works he chose not to make Disraeli one of the brunts of his criticism. In the Conclusion Arnold writes

> Every one is now boasting of what he has done to educate men's minds and to give things the course they are taking. Mr. Disraeli educates . . . [but] we, indeed, pretend to educate no one, for we are still engaged in trying to clear and educate ourselves (Super, V, 229).

Arnold is commenting on the fact that the people do not know any more now than they did in the past about social and political activities. Disraeli had made a speech in Edinburgh on October 29, 1867, at which time he said, "I had to prepare

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the mind of the country and to educate—if it be not arrogant
to use such a phrase—to educate our party . . . on this
question of reform" (Super, V, 336-447). The Reform Bill of
1867 was passed during Disraeli's term of office. With this
one exception, all other comments that Arnold made about
Disraeli appear in personal letters to members of his immediate
family.

The next reference Arnold makes about Disraeli is in a
letter to his mother dated December 5, 1869:

On Thursday evening I went to Latimer, and met
Disraeli and Lady Beaconsfield. . . . Dizzy was in
high force, and it was agreeable. He said to me
across the table at dinner, apropos to something
that was mentioned, "Sweetness and light I call
that, Mr. Arnold, eh?" (Russell, II, 26).

Almost exactly two years later, Arnold, in a comment
about the opening of Parliament during Gladstone's first ad-
ministration, reflects a more characteristic attitude about
politicians. He wrote to his mother on February 11, 1871,

Parliament seems to have opened stupidly,
but so it often does when one expects it to open
very interestingly. Disraeli's heavy pompous pound-
ing seems to have been more wearisome than ever,
and Gladstone's emotional verbiage much as usual.
The old actors are worn out, and the public begins
to tire of them; but the new actors do not yet
appear (Russell, II, 57).

The "new actors" that Arnold desired did not appear for over
fifteen years.
In January, 1872, Arnold had yet another encounter with Disraeli. He says,

I met that famous Jew, Dizzy, on Monday, and he was very amiable; what strikes one most when one sees him at a place like Latimer, where he wishes to be agreeable, is how very pleasant and amiable he is. He expressed great pleasure at meeting me, and talked to me a good deal. He said very few characteristic things; his reason for not having a speech this recess: "The ministers were so busy going about apologising for their failures that he thought it a pity to distract public attention from the proceeding," was one of them (Russell, II, 88).

At the same encounter, Arnold further describes what Disraeli said:

... the Liberals had never yet been able to get on without a Whig for their head, and he did not believe they at present could get on without one; Gladstone was not a Whig, but a sort of Radical, and there was no Whig forthcoming; Lord Granville had not weight enough, etc (Russell, II, 89).

It seems evident here that Arnold recognized and appreciated Disraeli's wit and social grace. Also he seemed to have a genuine concern and fondness for common people, something which Arnold could admire. Arnold noted in the same letter the following observation: "What is curious in Dizzy is his great knowledge about county families and their history; I really think not from anything servile, but because it interests him in bearing on English life, politics, and society" (Russell, II, 90).
Some years later, Disraeli had an occasion to pay a compliment directly to Arnold, who recounts the incident in a letter to his sister dated February 2, 1881:

He [Disraeli] went on to say that he read me with delight, that I was doing very great good, and ended by declaring that I was the only living Englishman who had become a classic in his own lifetime. The fact is that what I have done in establishing a number of current phrases--such as Philistinism, sweetness and light, and all that--is just the sort of thing to strike him (Russell, II, 219).

Arnold's observation about his phrases being the "sort of thing to strike" Disraeli is probably true. But we must also note that Disraeli's choice of flattery was just the sort of thing to strike Arnold. Arnold never said anything more derogatory about Disraeli besides calling him "Dizzy," something everybody else did, and refer to him as "pompous," something Disraeli probably admitted to himself.

When Disraeli became prime minister for the second time in 1874, Arnold made some predictions and philosophized about the future of the Conservative government in a letter to his sister.

I don't see how one can give Disraeli less than five or six years, unless he commits some signal folly, which I don't think he will. And it is even possible, if he and Lord Derby do well, that the present turn of things may last longer still, and give them a second Conservative Parliament; but say
it does not, but the nation wants more movement and swings back again to Liberalism by the time this Parliament is out, five or six years is a long time.

I am very glad both Houses of Parliament are the same way, and that the majority is a compact one; it gives a feeling of solidity such as we have not had for many a day (Russell, II, 130).

Arnold's prediction of a five- or six-year term of office was accurate. The error that led to the downfall of Disraeli's government was probably one he could not have controlled. On January 22, 1870, British forces were slaughtered by Zulu warriors in Esandlana, Africa. Arnold reacted to the report in a letter to his sister Fan.

The news from Africa is absorbingly interesting for the moment. Good will come, I suppose, of this disaster, because it will lead to a more thorough subjugation of the Zulus, and to a more speedy extension of Englishry as far as the climate will let them extend—that is, about up to the Tropic of Capricorn. And unattractive as the raw Englishry is, it is good stuff, and, always supposing is not to deteriorate but to improve, its spread is the spread of future civilisation (Russell, II, 219).

Arnold himself seems to have been caught up in the popular feelings toward British imperialism. He probably felt that the English soldier, for all his weaknesses, would bring some light to the Zulus of darkest Africa. This was the incident that made Disraeli's popularity wane. His Conservative party
was defeated in the general election of 1880. Arnold's comment appears in a letter to his sister dated April 2, 1880.

What a total scattering it is! ... Lord B. [Disraeli] was demoralising for our people, and the Tories show their bad side more and more the longer they stay in; and then the Tory Bottles, the shoddy conservative, Shock Exchange or commercial, is terrible. Still, the Radical Bottles, and the middle-class Liberalism in general—you know my opinion of them—at best, they are in a very crude state, and with little light or help in them at present. But through their failing, and succeeding, and gradual improving lies our way, our only way; I have no doubt of that (Russell, II, 193-194).

Arnold's optimism about the future of England under the Liberals soon became disillusionment. He took many opportunities to examine the actions of the Liberal Government; and when Gladstone and his party were defeated in 1886, Arnold was joyfully relieved.

Lord Henry Temple Palmerston and William Evert Gladstone represent a study in contrast. Historians and biographers continually point out the fact that Palmerston was as much an eighteenth century man as Gladstone was a nineteenth century man. Palmerston was thoroughly aristocratic in his thinking. He believed that the wealthy nobility were the ones best qualified to govern and with as little interference as possible from elected officials. Palmerston believed that the chief function of government was to maintain foreign relations,
conduct wars, and promote international recognition of England. Palmerston was much more inclined to spend money on building the army and navy than on public education. He had a vision of England's being the leader of Europe, if not the world, and he did everything he could to realize his vision.

Gladstone, on the other hand, had very different priorities from Lord Palmerston's. He supported industrial development at home. He thought the franchise should be extended to as many people as possible, and he was continually pressing for parliamentary reform. Palmerston and Gladstone were often at odds on such things as military spending. Gladstone argued that the amount was much too great. In the terms of the nineteenth century, Gladstone was a Liberal and Palmerston, a Conservative, yet Palmerston was an interventionist, Gladstone an isolationist. Both men achieved greatness in their own times. Both served two terms as Prime Minister: Palmerston in 1855-1858 and again in 1859-1865, and Gladstone in 1868-1874 and 1880-1885. Gladstone also served as Chancellor of the Exchequer in Palmerston's second administration, and although their disagreements were many, they were able to work compatibly. Whereas history seems to say that Palmerston was the more colorful of the two, Gladstone was the greater.
Arnold's Introduction to Politics and Palmerston

Matthew Arnold became interested in social problems and politics while still a young man. From the outset of his professional career he was very close to the English government. In his introduction to the *Letters of Matthew Arnold*, George Russell points out that Arnold was appointed private secretary to Lord Lansdowne, who was then Lord President of the Council (Russell, I, 2). Although Arnold does not yet mention Lord Palmerston in his correspondence, Palmerston was very much in evidence politically. In the first administration of Lord John Russell, Lord Palmerston was foreign secretary, and Lord Russell, the Queen, and Prince Albert often found him a source of great frustration. History characterized Lord Palmerston with some examples of conduct:

The personal feelings and value judgements of Lord Palmerston sometimes led him into alarming words and deeds. For example, in 1847 he advised the Italian rulers to avert revolution by making reforms. In 1848, without telling the cabinet, he authorized the Woolwich Arsenal to
supply the rebelling Sicilians with arms. He instructed the British ambassador in Vienna to inform the Austrians of the "disgust" their repressive vengeance against the liberals had excited in England. "The Austrians are really the greatest brutes that ever called themselves by the undeserved name of civilized man."¹

Arnold did not begin to publish works of social and political criticism prior to 1860 except his pamphlet, *England and the Italian Question*. Any other significant comments that he made before 1860 occur in his personal correspondence.

While still secretary to Lord Lansdowne, Arnold found himself on the fringes of political turmoil. The year of 1848 was a year of revolutions in Europe, and, quite naturally, it was feared by many that revolution would come to England as well. One of the most feared political movements was that of Chartism. In April, 1848, Arnold attended a Chartist meeting which he described to his mother:

I was at the Chartist convention the other night, and was much struck with the ability of the speakers. However, I should be sorry to live under their government--nor do I intend to--though Nemesis would rejoice at their triumph. The ridiculous terror of people here is beyond belief, and yet it is not likely, I fear, to lead to any good results (Russell, I, 8).

One of the ideas of the Chartists that Arnold most likely objected to was the idea of universal male suffrage. Arnold believed that the people were by and large not capable of making intelligent political decisions. As Arnold said later in "The Function of Criticism," the people are not yet ready for "right." Palmerston opposed reform, especially the extension of the franchise. Arnold records this conflict in a letter to Miss Frances Lucy Wightman who became his wife later that year. On February 21, 1851, he wrote,

> Ministers have managed to get beaten by forty-eight to-night by the Radicals on a motion for enlarging the franchise. Though such a vote cannot drive them out, it makes their weaknesses fearfully apparent (Russell, I, 19).

A governmental crisis seemed to be in the making, as Arnold reports the next day, February 22:

> I went to Laleham . . . and drove straight to Lansdowne House. There I found that Lord John had postponed the Budget till Monday and that Lord Lansdowne was not coming back to town till tomorrow. Tomorrow afternoon they will hold a Cabinet, and settle whether to resign, remodel themselves, try a little longer, or dissolve (Russell, I, 19).

Two days later on the twenty-fourth, Arnold reports that a crisis has been averted.

> I have just heard the statement in the House of Lords, and that Lord John had undertaken to reconstruct a Government. It is quite uncertain who will come in again with him of the old lot. Lord Lansdowne is
very much disinclined to remain. The old set of Whigs can never come in again; but a good many of them may come in in a fresh combination, and very likely Lord Lansdowne himself. If Lord Clarendon comes in Sugden will be Chancellor—not else; he is far too much committed on the Papal Aggression question to come in with a Whig or Peelite Ministry (Russell, I, 19).

The "papal aggression" referred to above is the bull issued by Pope Pius IX in 1850, which divided England into twelve territorial dioceses. Lord Russell declared the act "insolent and insidious" (Smith, pp. 612-613). Lord Palmerston was known to have referred to "His Emptyness the Pope."2 The Ecclesiastical Titles Bill declared the bull invalid, but the law was quietly forgotten and was finally repealed in 1871 (Smith, p. 613).

When Palmerston was foreign secretary under Lord Russell, Arnold was more interested in domestic affairs. For this reason, Arnold does not begin dealing with foreign affairs in his correspondence until the time of the Crimean War. When Palmerston became prime minister for the second time in 1859, and then in the later 1860's, after Palmerston's death, Arnold exhibits more freedom of expression in his reactions to this minister in Friendship's Garland.

There are gaps of several months throughout Arnold's correspondence. One can only speculate as to what he was thinking during those times. It is probable, however, that Arnold was continually concerned about what his country was doing.

Lord Aberdeen was prime minister from 1852 through 1855. Lord Palmerston had been dismissed from the foreign office for failing to inform the Queen of the content of a particularly sensitive dispatch. However, Palmerston was immensely popular and powerful, so he was back in the Cabinet very soon as home secretary.³ In 1854, when war was imminent with Russia and there was some discussion about where to fight, it was Palmerston who suggested the Crimea. According to Palmerston's biographer, Jasper Ridley, this area was appropriate because Britain wanted to relieve Turkey of a Russian threat, and she wanted the Black Sea to be neutral.⁴ Sometime in 1854, Arnold wrote the following to his wife:


There is no news today except that 4,000 cannon have been found in Sebastopol. Things being as they are, I do not see anything to object to in the Emperor's message. But the situation is altogether disagreeable until the English fleet or army perform some brilliant exploit (Russell, I, 54).

The Emperor's message that Arnold refers to is probably the assertion by Napoleon III of France of the guardianship claim over holy places in the Near East which had been conceded in 1740. This has been listed as one of the causes of the war. The siege of Sebastopol lasted twelve months, and many thousands of British soldiers suffered from extreme cold, starvation, and cholera due to the gross mismanagement of the army (Smith, pp. 619-622). According to Ridley, in January of 1855 the public was so frustrated and upset over the conduct of the war, Lord Russell resigned from the Aberdeen cabinet and the government collapsed. The Queen tried not to call Palmerston, even though it was the public opinion that he was the only one who could save the country. After calling four other men, the Queen finally sent for Lord Palmerston on February 4, 1855 (Ridley, pp. 432-435). Palmerston saw to it that the war was ended, and the Treaty of Paris was signed on March 30, 1856 (Smith, p. 621).

The settling of the Crimean War is really the most outstanding event of Lord Palmerston's first term. Arnold
comments on the demise of Palmerston's first Government in a letter to his sister Fan, written February 9, 1858.

There is no doubt that between India and the "French Colonel's Bill," as their enemies call it, the Government are in a critical situation [sic]. It is said that Lord Derby is both willing and eager to come in. Bright has appeared with a strong manifesto about Reform, written with great spirit; but in the first place, no one cares as yet about the Reform question; in the second place, everyone agrees that Bright could not be active in the House for a week without breaking down again (Russell, I, 70).

The "French Colonel's Bill" is Lord Palmerston's Conspiracy to Murder Bill, which was brought on by Orsini's attack on the Emperor Napoleon; the conspirators had hatched the plot while living in England. The bill made conspiracy a felony rather than a misdemeanor. Louis Napoleon was not popular in England, and the French had used abusive language about the way the whole problem had been handled, so Palmerston's majority disappeared and he resigned (Smith, p. 622). At the same time, British control in India was increasing, and the natives were fearful of losing all their rights. There was an uprising and many Europeans were killed. The result was the India Act of 1858 which gave complete control of the Indian government to the British (Smith, pp. 626-627).

Bright is John Bright, the Quaker Radical M. P. from Manchester. He was a constant thorn in Palmerston's side,
and they were always saying caustic things about each other. Bright spoke out against the Crimean War, and he was the object of a hate campaign which Palmerston supported even in Parliament. Palmerston attacked Bright in the House saying,

Bright "reduces everything to the question of pounds, shillings and pence," and that if he were confronted with the threat of immediate invasion, Bright "would sit down, take a piece of paper, and would put on one side of the account the contributions which his Government would require from him for the defence of the liberty and independence of the country, and he would put on the other the probable contributions which the General of the invading army might levy upon Manchester," and that if he found that it would be cheaper to be conquered than to pay for defence, "he would give his vote against going to war for the liberties and independence of the country rather than bear his share in the expenditure which it would entail (Ridley, pp. 427-428).

Bright's comments about Lord Palmerston were not complimentary either. When Lord Palmerston became Prime Minister in 1855, John Bright recorded the following in his journal:

'Feb. 14. Palmerston Prime Minister! What a hoax! The aged charlatan has at length attained the great object of his long and unscrupulous ambition. He is believed in by a shallow portion of the public, and he has had the advantage of a "cry" from a portion of the Press, but it passes my comprehension how the country is to be saved from its disasters and disgrace by a man who is over seventy years of age, who has never been known to do anything on which solid reputation could be built, and whose colleagues are, with one exception, the very men under whose Government every thing has been mismanaged.'
'Feb. 16. Palmerston's first night a failure. His speech not well received, and his promises with regard to army reforms not clear and satisfactory. The House bewildered and disorganised.'

At the time of Palmerston's defeat, Lord Derby and Disraeli headed the new government, but they lasted less than a year. In the interim, before Palmerston regained office on June 12, 1859, ideas of reform were in the air. On at least two occasions, Arnold heard John Bright speak on Parliamentary reform. Chartism was dead, and there were still many "rotten boroughs" represented in Parliament. Bright represented Manchester, one of the great industrial towns. Arnold heard Bright speak on reform in Birmingham, October 29, 1858. He had these comments for his sister Fan several days later.

Flu will have told you that I heard Bright to perfection. The company was dismally obscure, the dinner abominably bad, the speaking, all but his, unutterably wearisome; but his speech made amends. He is an orator of almost the highest rank--voice and manner excellent; perhaps not quite flow enough--not that he halts or stammers, but I like to have sometimes more of a rush than he ever gives you. He is a far better speaker than Gladstone (Russell, I, 88).

Arnold heard Bright speak on reform again, this time in Glasgow, December 21, 1858. He wrote to his sister K. about it the next month.

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I thought Bright's speech read as well as any but his Birmingham speeches. What a good speaker he is! I am so glad they heard him. You see the Times, after hanging poised for a day or two, at last rolls its waves decidedly against Bright's scheme. You hear everybody saying that it is unfair to the Counties, but I don't think there is much in that. The real cause for alarm is in the prospect of the people the great towns would return (Russell, I, 89-90).

Arnold expresses his concern about the sort of people the large industrial towns would send to Parliament. From this time forward, Arnold says much more about the relative worth of the upper, middle, and lower classes in England and Europe.

Arnold traveled extensively in continental Europe. He vacationed there frequently, and he went on official business for the English government as an Inspector of Schools. Early in 1859, Arnold was appointed Assistant Commissioner of the Commission to France and the French-speaking countries, Belgium, Switzerland, and Piedmont. His mission was to report on systems of elementary education there (Russell, I, 89). There was much political unrest, especially over the unification of Italy and diplomatic conflict between France and Austria. History explains the situation this way:

In Europe Palmerston and Russell, his foreign secretary, slowed the pace and pressure of British diplomacy. Russell was now old and sapless. Palmerston, as prime minister, had much to do besides manage foreign affairs, and he was an aging lion.
In a few cases, however, something of the earlier energy was displayed. For example, Palmerston and Russell left no doubt of England's position with respect to the movement for Italian unification. In 1859 Austria had dragged her weakening armies to wage war against Sardinia. Because Napoleon III had then fulfilled his promise to aid Count Cavour the usurping Austrians had been driven from Lombardy. Although Napoleon deserted his ally at the critical moment because he really did not wish to see Italy united from "the Alps to the Adriatic," the cause of Italian unification had been advanced considerably. When England firmly declared that the problem of Italian unification should be left to the Italians themselves other powers were reluctant to intervene. All through the struggle for unification under the house of Savoy the Italians were aided by liberal England. Meanwhile the Poles were supported in their revolt against a ruthless Tsar. The Ionian Islands were given to Greece because the inhabitants wished it so (Smith, p. 627).

Arnold wrote to his wife from Paris on May 10, 1859.

It appears certain that Francis Joseph keeps Hess at Vienna because he is jealous of him and has quarrelled; and Gieslay is a mere General d'Antichambre. If this is so, and it looks likely, the Austrians will be well beaten, and well they will deserve it; but it is said here that the French do not at present expect to do more than drive them back upon Verona. Verona, Mantua, etc., are too strong to take (Russell, I, 101).

By June 12, 1859, Palmerston was back in control as prime minister. From Strasbourg, Arnold writes to his sister Fan on June 25, 1859.

The Rhine provinces in 1815, after having belonged to France for only ten years, objected exceedingly to being given back to Germany. The truth is that, though French occupation is very detestable, French
administration since the Revolution is, it must be said, equitable and enlightened, and promotes the comfort of the population administered. They are getting very angry here with Prussia, and if Prussia goes to war there will be a cry in this country to compel the Emperor to take the limit of the Rhine whether he wishes it or no. That the French will beat the Prussians all to pieces, even far more completely and rapidly than they are beating the Austrians, there cannot be a moment's doubt; and they know it themselves (Russell, I, 110).

A month later, July 9, 1859, Arnold comments on England's attitude toward France and Prussia concerning Italy to his sister K.

What pains the English aristocracy seem to be taking to justify all I have said about their want of ideas. I hope the Emperor does not mean to stop before the Austrians are out of Venice as well as Lombardy. If he does, it will be out of apprehension at the attitude of England (Prussia, I have told you, they do not care for a rush), but it would be a mistake on his part or England's (Russell, I, 113).

The next week, Arnold's distress over the situation became more intense. Louis Napoleon supported the Catholic Church concerning Italian unification and therefore lost the support of England. Arnold says in a letter to his sister K.

Louis Napoleon's preponderance was really beginning to haunt me. He had possessed himself of an incomparable position. Our English Government entirely misunderstood, and were holding language that could only damage themselves, not affect him. Everything was going smoothly for him, and he was going to have obtained the unwilling recognition of the liberal through Europe as the necessary man of his time, when suddenly he stumbles, falls flat on his face,
and loses his chance for this time. I am sorry for the Italians; but it is incomparably better for Europe that they should wait a little longer for their independence, than that the first power in Europe, morally and materially, should be the French Empire. Morally after this blunder it loses its advantage, however strong it may be materially. I said . . . that I was convinced Louis Napoleon's one great and dangerous error was that he exaggerated the power of the clergy, and bid for their support far higher than it was worth (Russell, I, 115).

Back in England in August, Arnold explains to his sister K., commenting on reactions to his pamphlet, England and the Italian Question, which he had written that year.

I want to see the Morning Post, which has an article, because of its connexion with Lord Palmerston. There is a very clever and long answer "to the pamphlet in to-day's Saturday Review, by Fitzjames Stephen! . . . He is exceedingly civil this time, and no one can complain of his tone. Like you, he does not seem convinced by the nationalities section. As it first stood it was longer, exhausting the cases more. I had pointed out that isolated spots like Malta and Gibraltar could be, and in fact nearly were, denationalised and Anglicised. As to the Ionian Islands, I said what I believed to be true, that if Greece ever becomes a really great nation it will be impossible for us to keep them, being the size they are, on the Greek frontiers as they are, and the Greek race being what it is. All this I left out because I thought this about Corfu might give offence, and I wished to be as much swallowed as possible. But the worst of the English is that on foreign politics they search so very much more for what they like and wish to be true than for what is true. In Paris there is certainly a larger body of people than in London who treat foreign politics as a science, as a matter to know upon before feeling upon (Russell, I, 118-119).
Here it is interesting to note that of all the members of his family, it was his elder sister, Jane, whom Arnold calls K., who most often asked him to comment on his works of criticism and to clarify points for her.

Later that year, Arnold wrote to another sister about serving in the Queen's Westminster Rifle Volunteers. He was very distressed about the arming of the upper and middle classes, thus giving them physical superiority as well as greater wealth and intelligence they already had. Arnold also commented on the practice of appointing the wealthy to positions of leadership rather than men of ability. Being of the old school, Lord Palmerston would not hear of changing the method of appointing commissions. And it was not until Gladstone's time that the practice was changed. Arnold explains his position quite clearly.

Far from being a measure dangerous by its arming the people—a danger to which some persons are very sensitive—it seems to me that the establishment of these Rifle Corps will more than ever throw the power into the hands of the upper and middle classes, as it is of these that they are mainly composed, and these classes will thus have over the lower classes the superiority, not only of wealth and intelligence, which they have now, but of physical force. I hope and think that the higher classes in this country have now so developed their consciences that this will do them no harm; still, it is a consequence of the present arming movement which deserves attention, and which is, no doubt, obscurely present to the
minds of the writers of the cheap Radical newspapers who abuse the movement. The bad feature in the proceeding is the hideous English toadyism with which lords and great people are invested with the commands in the corps they join, quite without respect of any considerations of their efficiency. This proceeds from our national bane—the immense vulgar-mindedness, and, so far, real inferiority of the English middle classes (Russell, I, 126-127).

During the rest of the time Palmerston was in office, Arnold's attention was directed primarily to the problems of education, especially the education of the middle and lower classes. He was in almost constant conflict with Robert Lowe, Minister of Education, and those who supported his Revised Code of 1862.

Politics in Education and Robert Lowe

The Revised Education Code that Arnold so emphatically opposed can be compared to the modern philosophy of holding the teacher accountable for the performance of students in certain areas. Arnold explains that the Code grew out of an investigation into the increasing costs in education. It was found that teachers in elementary and junior grades were sometimes ambitious for promotion and therefore concentrated their efforts on upper-class children while neglecting most of the others. The investigating commission recommended that financial
grants be established according to the number of pupils who could pass an examination in reading, writing, and arithmetic (Russell, I, 168-170). Arnold further maintains that

improved schools had been but a dozen years at work; they had had to civilise the children as well as to instruct them; reading, writing, and ciphering were not the whole of education; people who were so impatient because so many of the children failed to read, write, and cipher correctly did not know what the children were when they came to school, or what were the conditions of the problems which their educators had to solve (Russell, I, 171).

Arnold acknowledged that the system of "payment by results" was attractive to the government; it even seemed logical. However, Arnold realized that children could not be put into a slot and then be cranked up to the next one. He further realized

That, by concentrating the teachers' attention upon enabling his scholars to pass in the three elementary matters, it must injure the teaching, narrow it, and make it mechanical . . . (Russell, I, 173).

The debate in Parliament over the Revised Code was quite heated. Arnold paid close attention to it, and he commented on it freely in the press and in his letters. However, for all his objections to it, Arnold was forced to operate under the Revised Code of 1862 until his retirement many years later.

In the March, 1862 issue of Fraser's Magazine, Arnold bitterly attacked Robert Lowe and the Revised Code in an
unsigned article. It must be emphasized that although Lowe was relatively insignificant in British history, he was extremely significant to Arnold. Lowe was a powerful domestic voice in Lord Palmerston's cabinet. It should also be remembered that Palmerston was inclined to do anything to save money in domestic programs in order to have more to spend on the military and national defense. Arnold told his mother about the article, "The Twice Revised Code," in two letters dated February 19 and 26, 1862. The first letter said, in part,

I have just finished correcting the proofs on my article for Fraser, and, what was harder, retouching and adding as was necessary. It will be very long, but I think not dull. Lowe's attack on the inspectors quite relieved me from all scruples in dealing with him, and I think my comments on his proceedings will be found vivacious. As to the article making a sensation, that I do no means expect. I never expect anything of mine to have exactly the popular quality necessary for making a sensation, and perhaps I hardly wish it. But I dare say it will be read by some influential people in connexion with the debate which will soon come on (Russell, I, 183).

A few days later Arnold again referred to the article in Fraser when writing to his mother.

I think you will find my article lively, and presenting the subject in its essence, free from those details with which it is generally encumbered, and which make "outsiders" so afraid of it. At the end Lowe's speech is noticed sharply enough, but I have no fears whatever of Lowe's vengeance: first, because he cannot officially notice an article not signed
with my name; secondly, because if he did, public opinion would support an inspector, attacked as we have been by Lowe, in replying in the only way open to us; thirdly, because, even if public opinion condemned what I did, it would never stand Lowe's resent- ing it, as he does precisely the same thing himself in the Times. Whenever he has a grudge at the Ministry of which he is a subordinate member he attacks it there (Russell, I, 185).

As Arnold predicted above, some influential people did read the article. It was so well received that Disraeli and the Anti-Code Committee wanted copies of it reprinted to distribute in Parliament. Arnold writes to his mother in March, 1862,

And, whether they get it from this article or not, I see Lord Derby and the Bishop of Oxford are coming to take the very ground I could wish them to take, namely, that the State has an interest in the primary school as a civilising agent, even prior to its interest as an instructing agent. When this is once clearly seen nothing can resist it, and it is fatal to the new Code. If we can get this clearly established in this discussion a great point will have been gained for the future dealings of the State with education, and I shall hope to see State-control reach in time our middle and upper schools (Russell, I, 187-188).

A week later, Arnold wrote to his wife about the Revised Code and the workings of Parliament.

I am delighted to find Walpole's Resolutions as good and firm as they are. I feared they would have been all shilly-shally. These Resolutions Lowe cannot possibly accept, or, if he does, he cannot possibly make the world believe that he is not giving up his Code by doing so. I am very much relieved, and the members of Parliament I see on circuit are all full of the absurdity of "Individual examination." I have written to Shuttleworth to tell him what I
think of things. It is true the Bishop of Oxford made a dreadful mistake by talking of his readiness to let the Education grant reach 2,500,000; that frightened the House of Commons, which thinks the grant formidable already (Russell, I, 189).

Spencer Walpole was a Tory member of Parliament who had become informed on the weaknesses of the Code from Arnold's article in Fraser and had acted on it. Also, it is interesting to note that Parliament, then as now, was most concerned with how much public education would cost.

Judging from what Arnold has said so far, one can conclude that Palmerston left the education controversy alone. As a man primarily interested in foreign affairs and national defence, he let his ministers deal with domestic problems.

Ridley explains it this way:

Palmerston might have held more progressive views on education had it not been for the fact that he thought it much more important to spend money on armaments than on schools. He had always believed, like so many other well-meaning men of his generation, that the spread of education among the lower classes would be the cure for many social evils. . . . But when proposals for free compulsory education were put forward during his last administration, he was far from enthusiastic.

. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

He was interested in schemes for the education of the middle classes, and in 1855 suggested that it would be desirable to establish some more public schools to do for the middle classes what Eton and Harrow did for the upper classes. He strongly supported
the proposal to introduce drill and rifle practice, as well as cricket and football, in the great public schools (Ridley, p. 508).

In the year 1862, Arnold left no fewer than ten lengthy letters in which he mentioned the Revised Code or Robert Lowe or both in consistently unfavorable terms. Following up on Walpole's resolutions, Arnold wrote to his mother on March 19, 1862, about an article which appeared in the Times.

The Times article today looks as if they did not feel confident, but it looks more and more as if it would be a party division, and then the number of Liberals staunch enough in the cause, or knowing enough about it to vote, as William Forster will, with Walpole, will be very small. Enough, however, I cannot help thinking, to carry the resolutions. I hope William Forster will speak, and think he may have another decided success if he does. He is thoroughly in earnest, and seizes the real point of error and false statesmanship in the Code, which so few outsiders have knowledge enough, or, in default of knowledge, penetration enough, to be able to seize (Russell, I, 190).

William Forster was the husband of Arnold's sister Jane. A liberal member of Parliament, Forster supported Arnold in his objections to the Code. Walpole's resolutions criticizing the Revised Code did well in Parliament, as Arnold reported to his mother on March 24, 1862.

I am extremely well pleased with Walpole's Resolutions. The first affirms just the principle I want to have distinctly affirmed--"To give rewards for proved good reading, writing, and arithmetic is not the whole duty of the State towards popular education" (Russell, I, 193).
In April, 1862, the debate over the Code was coming to an end. Arnold still disapproved of it, and he felt that the Code, the Government, and Lowe would be defeated if the Tories and Liberals would band together. He told his mother,

...The last division of the Code will, in my opinion, by no means do, and that the least we will take as maintenance-grant is one-half the whole grant. The idea of making the scholar's examination the measure of the State's aid to his school I hold to be altogether false; it should only be the measure of a reward to that individual scholar. It is, however, hardly possible to get rid directly of the prize-scheme element in the Code, worthless as I think it is; but for the grant which represents the State's real debt to elementary education we cannot accept a secondary character, it must be at least equal to the other. The Tories and Liberals will join together, "the Government will be beaten, the Code will be dropped, and Lowe will go out" (Russell, I, 197).

However, the Code was not defeated and neither was the Government. The opposition to the Code was strong enough to change its recommendations somewhat. Writing in 1887, Arnold explains the results of the debate:

The opposition to Mr. Lowe's Revised Code of 1862 so far prevailed that it was agreed to pay one-third of the Government grant on attendance, and but two-thirds on examination. Moreover, the grouping by age was abandoned, and the arrangement of the children in six classes, or standards, as they have come to be called, was substituted for it. The teacher presented the child in the standard for which he thought him fit; he must present him the next time, however, in a standard above that (Russell, I, 172).
Arnold strongly opposed the provision in the Code that called for the individual examination of each child in the three R's. He feared that teachers would teach only toward a satisfactory performance on the examination at the expense of educating the whole child. Knowing that several educators felt this way, many members of Parliament wondered if the inspectors had been doing their job. In March 24, 1862, Arnold wrote to his mother about it.

I see a great many members of Parliament and county gentlemen on circuit. I find their impression of the offensiveness of the school-masters is strong; but their impression that too much is taught, and foolishly taught, in schools for the poor is strong; but their impression of the absurdity and probable expense of the individual examination is strongest of all. And it was this examination, on the basis of State-payments, that I have from the first attacked (Russell, I, 194).

Arnold does not comment in his letters on the time that the Revised Code passed later in 1862, but he did have something to say about functioning as an inspector under the provisions of the Code. Basically, his role changed from helper and mentor to the teacher to one who scrutinized children to check the competency of the instruction they had received. For many teachers, the visit from the inspector became a dreaded experience rather than a welcome one. Arnold was
philosophical about being an inspector in a letter to his mother dated November 29, 1863.

It is very animating to think that one at last has a chance of getting at the English public. Such a public as it is, and such a work as one wants to do with it! Partly nature, partly time and study have also by the time taught me everything turns upon one's exercising the power of persuasion, of charm; that without all this fury, energy, reasoning power, acquirement, are thrown away and only render their owner more miserable. Even in one's ridicule one must preserve a sweetness and good humor (Russell, I, 233-234).

It was well known that Arnold felt that the government should provide for and control middle-class education. One of the middle-class newspapers, the Nonconformist, said in February, 1864, "Mr. Arnold has no notion of the depth of the feelings against State interference" (Russell, I, 263). Disagreeing with the statement entirely, Arnold told his mother on February 16, 1864, what he planned to do about the Dissenting ministers of the middle class.

I mean . . . to deliver the middle class out of the hand of their Dissenting ministers. The mere difficulty of the task is itself rather an additional incentive to undertake it. The malaise of the Council Office, as they see me gradually bring to their fold fresh sheep whom they by no means want, will be comic. But the present entire independence of middle class education is here an advantage to me; it being not in any way an official matter, the Council Office cannot complain of my treating it, as one of the public, without appearing to think our existing Education Department the least concerned (Russell, I, 264).
In 1865, Matthew Arnold made an extensive tour of the Continent gathering data on public education for the Schools Inquiry Commission (Russell, I, 283). Even though he was out of the country many months, Arnold managed to keep up with Robert Lowe and his activities. For example, when Lowe was called upon to testify before a committee in Parliament, Arnold watched with pleasure. Shortly before he left the country, he wrote to Lady de Rothschild, a long-time friend and admirer, on March 25, 1865.

Mr. Lowe's examination before Sir John Pakington's Committee, which is sitting to examine into the working of our office, is said to have been most amusing. It lasted all yesterday, and he comported himself en vrai enfant terrible, insulted poor Sir John Pakington so that there was quite a scene, and took such a line about the Council Office that his hostile cross-examination had to come from Mr. Bruce, his own friend and successor, who managed it, I hear, extremely well. Nothing could be cleverer than Mr. Lowe's present exhibitions, and nothing more indiscrete, I should think, as far as concerns his chance of office (Russell, I, 293).

Later in 1865, when the Revised Code controversy had subsided, the question of reforming the franchise came up again. Robert Lowe became involved. Although Arnold had bitterly attacked Lowe in the past, he was forced to concede that sometimes the man had something to say that was worth hearing. Arnold commented on a speech made by Lowe on reform in a letter to his sister Fan dated May 14, 1865.
I was much interested by Lowe's speech on Reform. I think I told you that what I saw of him in coming to Paris and going back to London struck me greatly. I found a side of him I did not know was there. I see by extracts from the Telegraph, etc., how furious he has made the vulgar Liberals; but he has necessitated a more searching treatment of the whole question of Reform, and the rank and file of English platforms and House of Commons speakers, though, no doubt, they will still talk platitudes, will, at any rate, have to learn new ones. Heaven forbid that the English nation should become like this nation [France]; but Heaven forbid also that it should remain as it is. If it does, it will be beaten by America on its own line, and by the Continental nations on the European line. I see this as plain as I see the paper before me; but what good one can do, though one sees it, is another question. Time will decide (Russell, I, 305).

Arnold was thoroughly convinced that the schools were a civilizing agent. He saw evidence of this on the Continent, and he wrote to Lady de Rothschild from Vienna about some of his observations.

I find . . . the education of the middle and upper classes a less important and interesting affair than popular education, as a matter of public institution I mean. So many other influences tell upon those classes that the influence of a public system of education has not the same relative importance in their case as in that of the common people, on whom it is almost the only great civilising agency directly at work. There, too, I am getting old, and don't like to have all my habits and pursuits violently interrupted for so long a period of one's term of life as six months (Russell, I, 351).

While Arnold was still on the Continent, Lord Palmerston's administration ended abruptly. He died suddenly on October 18,
1865. Obituaries were lavish, and many said that Palmerston had been the greatest minister in history. Arnold recorded his reactions to Palmerston's death in a letter to his mother dated October 24, 1865.

I do not deny his [Palmerston's] popular personal qualities, but as to calling him a great minister like Pitt, Walpole, and Peel, and talking of his death as a national calamity, why, taking his career from 1830, when his importance really begins, to the present time, he found his country the first power in the world's estimation and he leaves it the third; of this no person with eyes to see and ears to hear, and opportunities for using them can doubt; it may even be doubted whether, thanks to Bismarck's audacity, resolution, and success, Prussia, too, as well as France and the United States, does not come before England at present in general respect. The mass of the English public, too, with the want of ideas of its aristocratic class, the provincial narrowness and vulgarity of its middle class, and the nonage of its lower, is exactly Lord Palmerston's level and not a bit beyond it . . . (Russell, I, 356).

Even though the man was dead, Arnold was by no means through writing about Lord Palmerston. His philosophy had permeated English political thinking for many years, and Palmerston's ghost made itself evident in British politics even after his death. In less than ten years, Arnold wrote his most significant work of social and political criticism, Culture and Anarchy, and a lighter, more satiric work in the same vein, Friendship's Garland. Lord Palmerston, his actions during his administration, and those who had supported him often
became the targets of Arnold's criticism in these works. In the minds of many, Lord Palmerston had been "England," and Arnold set out to change that image.
CHAPTER III

ARNOLD'S MAJOR POLITICAL COMMENTARY

Culture and Anarchy

The year after Lord Palmerston's death, Arnold published an article in the February, 1866, issue of Cornhill entitled "My Countrymen." Arnold's article was in answer to one written by Fitzjames Stephen in the Saturday Review for December 3, 1864. Stephen's article was titled "Mr. Matthew Arnold and His Countrymen," and in it Stephen challenged Arnold's conclusions about the condition of England and the English middle class in "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" (Super, V, 360). Arnold first mentions "My Countrymen" in a letter to his mother dated December 12, 1864.

I have the idea of a paper for the Cornhill, about March, to be called "My Countrymen," and a number of things I want to say, about the course of this Middle Class Education Matter amongst others (Russell, I, 283).

The same ideas that produced "My Countrymen" also produced Culture and Anarchy.

After Palmerston's death in 1865 and after the long debates over the Revised Code had subsided, Arnold found himself
greatly concerned about the position England held in the
world. He feared that England's prestige had diminished under
Palmerston; he felt compelled to jar his countrymen into an
awareness of what had happened and was continuing to happen to
them. R. H. Super describes the situation.

Thus by the time the essay on "My Countrymen" was
published, nearly fourteen months after it was first
projected, both the discussion of middle-class edu-
cation and the reply to the Saturday Review had
become subordinate to an examination of the place
of England in the modern world—England, in the
midst of the democratic agitations that preceded
the Reform Law of 1867, as she appeared to her critics
at home and abroad (Super, V, 361).

Since "My Countrymen" and Culture and Anarchy came from the
same seed, Super says in a later comment,

    Culture and Anarchy grew directly out of
    political restlessness of England in the mid-
    nineteenth century, a restlessness that came in
    part from the rapid industrialization of the country
    with consequent depression of the lower classes,
    and that brought the country, as many people believed
    to the brink of revolution (Super, V, 413).

When Arnold wrote "My Countrymen" and Culture and Anarchy, he
saw himself more and more as a social prophet. He had been
able to stir the minds of influential men during the heated
debates over the Revised Code in the early 1860's, and it is
not far-fetched to assume that Arnold enjoyed exerting in-
fluence in high places. Early in 1866, Arnold wrote to his
mother about his feelings concerning "My Countrymen."
There will be a good deal of talk about my *Cornhill* article. . . . I am sure it was wanted, and will do good; and this, in spite of what the *Spectator* says, I really wish to do, and have my own ideas as to the best way of doing it. You see you belong to the old English time, of which the greatness and success was so immense and indisputable, that no one who flourished when it was at its height can ever lose the impression of it (Russell, I, 366-367).

Arnold wrote his mother of a further reaction to "*My Countrymen*" on March 23, 1866.

I think I told you Carlyle's being so full of my article; I hear that Bright is full of it also, but I have not yet heard any particulars of what Bright says. Carlyle almost wholly approves, I hear; I have had a great deal about it; two leading articles in the Edinburgh *Courant*, not by any means unfavourable, but trying to use it for their own Tory purposes. The Whig newspapers are almost all unfavourable, because it tells disagreeable truths to the class which furnishes the great body of what is called the Liberal interest (Russell, I, 368-369).

At this point, a word of summary is in order about "*My Countrymen*." Arnold's tone is satirical and clever. He mockingly laments his having called the British middle class Philistines, and he realizes that Mr. Robert Lowe is right when he said in effect that the middle classes were the very foundation of the nation. Pretending to accept the truth in the idea above, Arnold takes to task Mr. Basely, who said that middle-class education was in fine shape, and that he did not see why the government should even bother with it
(Super, V, 4). Of course, it had always been Arnold's conviction that the State should be responsible for the education of the people.

Once again, as he did in "The Function of Criticism," Arnold comments on the numerous and varied newspapers, all of which present their own biased version of the news. Every political, social, and religious interest group had its own newspaper or journal. Arnold recalls the obituary notices that referred to Lord Palmerston's death as a national calamity. He is forced to point out that Lord Palmerston came to power when England was ranked second among the nations of the world and he left her third. Yet all the newspapers said Palmerston was the best of England. And about the rank of England in the world's estimation, Arnold suggests, "He who disbelieves it, let him go round to every embassy in Europe and ask if it is not true" (Super, V, 10).

*Culture and Anarchy* was published in book form in January, 1869. The 1860's were a time of political turmoil in England and the rest of the world. The United States had fought the Civil War. When the Reform Bill of 1867 enfranchised virtually all males, there were those who felt that England was on the brink of anarchy. Other controversial issues which serve as
a backdrop for Arnold were the disestablishment of the Irish Church, a Real Estate Intestacy Bill, and the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill.¹ Looming in the background also was the old controversy over the Revised Code of 1862, and Arnold took every opportunity to make Robert Lowe a brunt of his biting criticism. Also a target for criticism in *Culture and Anarchy* is John Bright, the Quaker radical M. P. from Manchester who had been a strong antagonist of Lord Palmerston.

The philosophy of *Culture and Anarchy* is basically the same as that expressed in "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time." It was originally a series of articles which began with Arnold's last lecture as Professor of Poetry at Oxford. He wrote to his mother about it around June 10, 1867.

Flu [Arnold's wife] will have told you how well I was received, and that the lecture went off satisfactorily. I tried to make this last lecture one in which I could keep to ground where I am in sympathy with Oxford, having often enough startled them with heresies and novelties; and I succeeded (Super, V, 409).

In the published version which appeared in 1869, the Oxford lecture bore the title "Culture and Its Enemies." The title was changed to "Sweetness and Light" when the second edition

was published in 1875 (Super, V, 413). In this chapter, Arnold sums up and defines the origin of Victorian liberalism, of which Gladstone was the strongest advocate.

It was the great middle-class Liberalism, which had for the cardinal points of its belief in the Reform Bill of 1832, and local self-government, in politics; in the social sphere, free trade, unrestricted competition, and making of large industrial fortunes; in the religious sphere, the Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion (Super, V, 106).

In "Sweetness and Light," Arnold defines culture: "Culture... has its origin in the love of perfection; it is a study of perfection" (Super, V, 91). He equates "light" with intelligence, something the English people lacked. "Sweetness" is a demeanor which makes the person who has it tolerant of others and their views and which makes that person want to help others achieve it—a sweetness of temper. Arnold condemns the middle-class desire for wealth and material possessions. The timelessness of Arnold's philosophy is evident in his statement on "machinery"—means pursued as if they were ends.

Faith in machinery is... our besetting danger; often in machinery most absurdly disproportional to the end which this machinery, if it is to do any good at all, is to serve; but always in machinery, as if it had value in and for itself. What is freedom but machinery? What is population but machinery? What
are railroads but machinery? What is wealth but machinery? What are even, religious organizations but machinery? (Super, V, 96).

Arnold says that true culture tries to bring all people up to the highest level toward perfection. In this respect, "men of culture are the true apostles of equality" (Super, V, 113).

Chapter II of Culture and Anarchy is titled "Doing As One Likes." Arnold was inspired to write it, basically, in response to "Mr. Bright, who loves to walk in the old ways of the Constitution . . . that the central idea of English life and politics is the assertion of personal liberty" (Super, V, 117). Arnold raises the question, that if people have the freedom to say and do anything they like, is it worth saying and doing in the first place? Arnold was a "liberal conservative," and his conservatism reveals itself in "Doing As One Likes." He cautions against giving the people who riot in the streets and destroy property the right to vote. He feels that the state should take these people in hand and give them some "light." But, of course, the middle-class leaders objected to the state's interference in education. The state should be the tempering force of personal liberty. But who is the state? Arnold says,
The State, the power most representing the right reason of the nation, and most worthy, therefore, of ruling,--of exercising, when circumstances require it, authority over us all,--is for Mr. Carlyle the aristocracy. For Mr. Lowe, it is the middle class with its incomparable Parliament. For the Reform League, it is the brightest powers of sympathy, and readiest powers of action. Now culture, with its disinterested pursuit of perfection, culture, simply trying to see things as they are in order to seize on the best and to make it prevail, is surely well fitted to help us to judge rightly, by all the aids of observing, reading, and thinking, the qualifications and titles to our confidence of these three candidates for authority, and can thus render us a practical service of no mean value (Super, V, 124).

The great strength of the aristocracy, Arnold says, is its honesty. The aristocrats are honest enough to know that they lack sufficient light to rule the country alone. The middle class's great strength is its wealth, but it too lacks light. The working class's great strength is its energy and enthusiasm and a willingness to take over and rule everything. But they do not have enough light to know that they cannot do it.

Arnold's alternative is to find the means of perfection and moderation and combine all classes. He writes,

What if we tried to rise above the idea of class to the idea of the whole community, the State, and to find our centre of light and authority there? Everyone of us has the idea of the country, as a sentiment; hardly any one of us has the idea of the State, as the working power (Super, V, 134).

Arnold goes on to say that people fear giving the State power because they see it as always being above them, never with
them. But there would be no danger or reason for fear if we gave power of government to our best selves, because "by our best self we are united, impersonal, at harmony" (Super, V, 134). In a sense, Arnold has outlined the philosophy for the communist state—a classless society, and evidently he felt it would work if the rulers received the full light of culture. And, it should be added, Arnold's state would be based on culture, not on economics.

In Chapter III of *Culture and Anarchy*, "Barbarians, Philistines, Populace," Arnold defines the three classes and explains how they relate to each other. He then draws some comparisons between England's classes and those of foreign countries.

The Barbarians are the wealthy noble class, whose culture is mostly exterior. They are the aristocracy who should be capable of ruling because of their background, but they lack ideas. The Philistines are the middle class, and Arnold ironically includes himself in this group. The Philistines are brash, unsophisticated, and worship machinery. The lowest group Arnold called the Populace, the working class. They are ignorant, oppressed, and incapable of making intelligent decisions that affect themselves. All of these three classes
lack light. However, there were always some in every group that Arnold calls "aliens . . . persons who are mainly led, not by their class spirit, but by a general humane spirit, by the love of human perfection; and that this number is capable of being diminished or augmented" (Super, V, 146).

Later in the chapter, Arnold cites several examples of continental European "light" and how it is achieved there. He learned from travels abroad that "light" came with education. He concludes by quoting M. Renan on education in France:

"A Liberal believes in liberty, and liberty signifies the non-intervention of the State. But such an ideal is still a long way off from us, and the very means to remove it to an indefinite distance would be precisely the State's withdrawing its action too soon" and this, he adds, is even truer of education than of any other department of public affairs (Super, V, 162).

Chapter IV of *Culture and Anarchy* deals with the two opposing intellectual philosophies which govern the thinking of western man. These two philosophies are Hebraism and Hellenism. Arnold says, "The final aim of both Hellenism and Hebraism, as of all great spiritual disciplines, is no doubt the same: man's perfection or salvation. The very language which they both of them use in schooling us to reach this aim is often identical" (Super, V, 164). Hebraism came from the Judaeo-Christian background of western man, and
Hellenism stems from the philosophy of Plato and the ancient Greeks. Arnold's main point in the chapter is that the English have too much of Hebraism and not nearly enough of Hellenism. He says, "The governing idea of Hellenism is spontaneity of consciousness; that of Hebraism, strictness of conscience" (Super, V, 165). Hellenism is a source of "sweetness and light" and Hebraism is a source of obedience and discipline. "As Hellenism speaks of thinking clearly, seeing things in their essence and beauty, as a grand and precious feat for man to achieve, so Hebraism speaks of becoming conscious of sin, of awakening to a sense of sin, as a feat of this kind" (Super, V, 168).

Throughout history Hellenism and Hebraism have modified each other and have changed places several times in relative importance to the world. Arnold says, "For more than two hundred years the mainstream of man's advance has moved towards knowing himself and the world, seeing things as they are, spontaneity of consciousness; the main impulse of a great part, and strongest part, of our nation has been towards strictness of conscience" (Super, V, 175). With this observation, Arnold justifies the confusion of the middle and lower classes and the fears of the aristocracy of them.
In Chapter V, "Porro Unum Est Necessarium," Arnold reiterates his philosophy of sweetness and light, and Hebraism and Hellenism. In fact, he connects these two basic ideas to "Doing As One Likes." The title translates, "But One Thing Is Needed." Arnold maintains that what the British people need is Hellenism. Arnold says,

> The Hellenic half of our nature, bearing rule, makes a sort of provision for the Hebrew half, but it turns out to be an inadequate provision; and again the Hebrew half of our nature, bearing rule, makes a sort of provision for the Hellenic half, but this, too, turns out to be an inadequate provision (Super, V, 177).

The British function under the influence of their Hebraic half more than their Hellenic half; they need more Hellenism to achieve something approaching a balance between the two and thereby achieving their "best self."

Arnold startles his reader to submission by pointing out that the middle classes, the Philistines, are concerned primarily with two things: "the concern for making money, and the concern for saving [their] souls" (Super, V, 186). This is what Arnold sees as the narrowness of the role of religion in the minds of the British public. The ancient Greeks found beauty in life through nature, and they set the value of things through beauty. The British Philistine, the Hebraist, the
Puritan, set the value of things by function. Even religion has a function—salvation. The ancient Greeks worked to achieve human perfection by training the intellect, the spirit, and the body. But in contrast, Arnold says,

British freedom, British industry, British muscularity, we work for each of these things blindly, with no notion of giving each its due proportion and prominence, because we have no ideal of harmonious human perfection before our minds, to set our work in motion, and to guide it (Super, V, 189-190).

The last chapter of *Culture and Anarchy* is the longest. In "Our Liberal Practitioners," Arnold points out the Hebraic tendencies of government policies being discussed and implemented in 1868. In 1868, the Liberal party under the leadership of William Evert Gladstone had come to power; and, as will be seen later, Arnold found Gladstone the most distasteful and dangerous of the three great prime ministers of the Victorian Age.

"Our Liberal Practitioners" is divided into five sections, each dealing with a current political issue. The first section deals with the disestablishment of the Irish Church. To those who would argue for complete separation of church and state, Arnold says, "The State is of the religion of all its citizens, without the fanaticism of any of them" (Super, V, 193). In
essence, Arnold believes that all large groups that worship
the same way should be granted a government establishment.
He says that worship is a "collective matter" and that personal
belief about Jesus Christ is an "individual matter." Arnold
says in the same passage, "It does not help me to think a
thing more clearly that thousands of other people are thinking
the same; but it does help me to worship with more emotion
that thousands of other people are worshipping with me" (Super, V, 197).

Originally, the government had proposed discontinuing
church establishments to keep down abuses. But the Liberal
Party had to have the support of the Nonconformists to pass
the act which changed its purpose. About the Nonconformists,
who were many small splinter groups off the Anglican Church,
Arnold says,

Thinking by batches of fifties is to the full
as fatal to free thought as thinking by batches
of thousands. Accordingly, we have had occasion
already to notice that Nonconformity does not at
all differ from the Established Church by having
worthier or more philosophical ideas about God, and
the ordering of the world, than the Established
Church has. It has very much the same ideas about
these as the Established Church has, but it
differs from the Established Church in that its
worship is a much less collective and national
affair (Super, V, 198).
In part II, Arnold comments on the debate in Parliament on the Real Estate Intestacy Bill which proposed "to prevent the land of a man who dies intestate from going, as it goes now, to his eldest son, and was thought, by its friends and by its enemies, to be a step towards abating the now almost exclusive possession of the land of this country by the people whom we call the Barbarians" (Super, V, 200). Arnold is not so sure that this is a bad way to handle inheritance in the first place. He expresses the belief that most men would follow their conscience and provide for the welfare of their children anyway. Super's comments clarify Arnold's stand:

Arnold's position with respect to certain Liberal proposals in Parliament has sometimes been misunderstood. He ridiculed his friend John Duke Coleridge's Real Estate Intestacy Bill not because he had a fine conservative devotion to primogeniture, but because the bill was such a trifling patch upon the law of bequests, which . . . needed renovation from the ground up. The Deceased Wife's Sister Bill was in his view merely a way of currying favor with the Nonconformists; a just and rational settlement of the Irish Church question was made impossible by the attempt of the Gladstone ministry to win popularity in that same quarter (Super, V, 415).

During the debate over the bill that would allow a man to marry his deceased wife's sister, one of the proponents argued that "'Liberty is the law of human life'" (Super, V, 206). We are reminded of what Arnold said in "Doing As One
The goal of culture and Hellenism is to achieve human perfection, even in the middle class Philistine—"the development of his best self, not mere liberty for his ordinary self. And we no more allow absolute validity to this stock maxim, Liberty is the law of human life" (Super, V, 207). Man needs to Hellenize his interpretation of God's law, says Arnold. He quotes St. Paul when he says, "Christian duties are founded on reason, not on the sovereign authority of God commanding what He pleases; God cannot command us what is not fit to be believed or done, all his commands being found in the necessities of our nature"" (Super, V, 208).

Part IV of "Our Liberal Practioners" deals with free trade which Bright calls "the growth of intelligence" (Super, V, 209). Following what he said earlier, Arnold suggests,

... suppose we Hellenise a little with free-trade, as we Hellenised with the Real Estate Intestacy Bill, and with the disestablishment of the Irish Church by the power of the Nonconformists' antipathy to religious establishments, and see whether what our reprovers beautifully call ministering to the diseased spirit of our time is best done by the Hellenising method of proceeding, or by the other (Super, V, 209-210).

Arnold points out that free trade increases business and population. Increased population increases the demand for more products. The tax was lifted on bread so the poor man
could buy it, but there are more poor men as a result of increased population. The price of manufactured goods decreases with increased production, but the price of bread does not. What does it matter if a man can afford shoes for his children if he cannot afford bread and bacon for his table? Arnold's point is this:

In short, it turns out that our pursuit of free-trade, as of so many other things, has been too mechanical. We fix upon some object, which in this case is the production of wealth, and the increase of manufactures, population, and commerce through free-trade, as a kind of one thing needful, or end in itself; and then we pursue it staunchly and mechanically, not to see how it is related to the whole intelligible law of things and to full human perfection, or to treat it as the piece of machinery, of varying value as its relations to the intelligible law of things vary, which it really is (Super, V, 213).

Arnold comments a little later that "Hebraism seems powerless . . . to deal efficaciously with our ever-accumulating masses of pauperism, and to prevent their accumulating still more" (Super, V, 216). The "strictness of conscience" would dictate blind obedience to God's law: "Be fruitful and multiply," or the blind acceptance of the text "The poor shall never cease out of the land." However, Arnold says that the Hellenistic "spontaneity of consciousness" would have the intelligence to see that a man whose family is already underfed, unclothed, and uneducated should not have more children.
Throughout *Culture and Anarchy*, Arnold has pointed out many examples of situations that were in great need of reform. It was Arnold's hope that "through the help of that culture which at the very outset we began by praising and recommending, a frame of mind out of which the schemes of really fruitful reforms may with time grow" (Super, V, 221). Arnold concludes *Culture and Anarchy* by saying,

> In the meanwhile, since our Liberal friends keep loudly and resolutely assuring us that their actual operations at present are fruitful and solid, let us in each case keep testing these operations in the simple way we have indicated, by letting the natural stream of our consciousness flow over them freely; and if they stand this test successfully, then let us give them our interest, but not else (Super, V, 221).

In his introduction to *Culture and Anarchy*, J. Dover Wilson sums up the philosophical motivation that stirred Arnold to write this, his most significant work of social and political criticism. Wilson says,

> It is not to be supposed that Arnold really thought, with Carlyle, that England in 1869 was about to plunge into a whirlpool of anarchy. What he did was to use certain anarchical tendencies and lawless incidents of his own day, due to a temporary phase of intense political excitement, as illustrations of the deep-seated spiritual anarchy of the English people, an anarchy which expressed itself in its hideous sprawling industrial cities, its loud-voiced assertion of personal liberty, its dismal, stuffy, and cantankerous forms of Christianity, its worship of size and numbers and wealth and machinery
generally, its state-blindness, and its belief in collision (collision of parties, of sects, of firms) as the only way of salvation (Wilson, xxxiii).

A discussion of Culture and Anarchy would not be complete without careful examination of Friendship's Garland (1871) also. Basically, the same political and social attitudes that produced the former also produced the latter, but the literary style of Friendship's Garland, though bitingly satirical, is full of good humor. It is made up of a series of letters to the Pall Mall Gazette written during 1866-1867 and 1869-1870. "My Countrymen," which has already been discussed, was published with them.

Arnold carries on a running dialogue with Arminius von Thunder-ten-Tronch, described as a descendent of Dr. Pangloss in Candide. Arminius becomes Arnold's spokesman on issues that go back to the administration of Lord Palmerston, as well as those associated with Disraeli and Gladstone. Since the letters of Friendship's Garland span considerable time, they will be dealt with as the pertinent issues are mentioned elsewhere by Arnold.

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Further Background of Arnold's Political Writings

At the same time that Arnold was formulating and writing *Culture and Anarchy* and *Friendship's Garland*, the government was in a state of transition. After the sudden death of Lord Palmerston in October, 1865, it was assumed that Lord John Russell, who had been his foreign secretary would be Prime Minister. Although Russell was himself quite old, seventy-three, he agreed to serve. He was in for less than a year, but that was time enough to reestablish political alignments and to indicate who would emerge as the strongest leaders of the last third of the nineteenth century.

When Lord Russell took office, he asked Gladstone to be party leader in the House of Commons. Gladstone had been Chancellor of the Exchequer under Palmerston and had volunteered to remain in that capacity because he had been disturbed about the financial priorities of Palmerston's administration. As far as Gladstone's future was concerned, it was probably best that he did not serve in the Cabinet of Lord Russell. Partly because of his age and partly because of his shy

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personality, Russell was not popular with the people (Magnus, p. 174). The Times predicted his downfall, but Arnold disagreed in a letter to his mother dated February 28, 1866. "There is an article in the Times to the effect that the Ministry are out; but I believe there is no truth in it; and, if this should prove to be the case, the credit of the Times, already somewhat suffering, will sink still more" (Russell, I, 371). This time the Times was right.

In March, 1866, Arnold applied for Charity Commissioner which paid three hundred pounds a year more than he was making as an inspector. He did not expect to get the job, though, because it was really designed for a lawyer. However, Arnold felt it was not a bad idea to put his name before the Prime Minister (Russell, I, 373). Arnold did not get the post, and he wrote his mother about it shortly.

I did not get the Commissionership, but I had heard enough to convince me that only a lawyer would be appointed, and I had been so frightened by what I was told of the terrors of the post for one who was not a lawyer, that it was a relief to me when it was given to some one else. The truth is, I see nothing except a Secretaryship for Middle Class Education, which would really suit me, under my circumstances, better than the post I hold (Russell, I, 375).

In March, 1866, Gladstone introduced the Representation of the People Bill which proposed "to lower the property
qualifications [for voting] from a rental of £10 a year in the boroughs and £50 a year in the counties, to £7 and £14 respectively. It was calculated that some 400,000 voters might be added to the electorate . . ." (Magnus, p. 177).

In a speech he made, Gladstone staked the future of the government on the passage of this bill, but it was opposed on all sides. Arnold commented to his mother about the situation on April 7, 1866.

I think the defections from the Ministry are showing themselves to be more numerous than was imagined ten days ago. Gladstone's speech was by no means a rallying-cry. Bright did the Bill great harm (in London at least) by his letter, and I think things look rather shaky for them (Russell, I, 379).

The letter that Arnold refers to is one that Bright sent to a public meeting at Birmingham, demanding public demonstrations in favor of the Reform Bill (Russell, I, 379). By June, 1866, the Russell government was out, and the Tories under Lord Derby and Disraeli were in. Arnold's comment reflects his ideas in Culture and Anarchy.

For the out-going Government I have no attachment whatever, and at this moment, when foreign affairs are so all-important, I am glad that the Ministry which is directly answerable for the ignoble figure we at present cut in the eyes of the Continent should not represent us. The Tories may, and probably ought to, do nothing; but, at any rate, it is their good fortune to not like Lord [Palmerston], to have made us look ridiculous and vain-boastful; and they do
not, like a Liberal Government, lean on that class whose vulgarity makes it hard for a Minister who wants to please them, not to make England look ridiculous, vain-boastful, and ignoble. Neither Liberal Governments nor Conservative Governments will do for the nation what it most wants; but perhaps a Liberal Government flatters and foments most its worst faults (Russell, I, 388).

The next month, Arnold commented to his mother on the loss of the Reform Bill. Robert Lowe's opposition, which has already been discussed, caused much bitterness, distrust, and class feeling (Magnus, p. 180). Arnold's regret is evident when he says,

Not that I do not think it, in itself, a bad thing that the principle of authority should be so weak here; but whereas in France, since the Revolution, a man feels that the power which represses him as the State, is himself, here a man feels that the power which represses him is the Tories, the upper class, the aristocracy, and so on; and with this feeling he can, of course, never without loss of self-respect accept a formal beating, and so the thing goes on smouldering. If ever there comes a more equal state of society in England, the power of the State for repression will be a thousand times stronger (Russell, I, 390).

With defeat of the Reform Bill, the Russell Government was out, Disraeli took over leadership in the House of Commons while serving again as Chancellor under Lord Derby, and Gladstone was now leader of the Opposition in Parliament. The obvious differences between Disraeli and Gladstone are well known. As was mentioned in Chapter I, Arnold found Disraeli
infinitely preferable to Gladstone, both as a political leader and as an individual. It is no secret that Queen Victoria preferred Disraeli because he knew how to treat her. Several historians have said that to Gladstone, the Queen was an institution, while to Disraeli, she was a woman. Lytton Strachey in his biography of Queen Victoria, quotes Disraeli as having told Matthew Arnold the following: "'You have heard me called a flatterer and it is true. Everyone likes flattery; and when you come to royalty you should lay it on with a trowel!'" (Strachey, p. 346).

After the defeat of the Russell Government, Gladstone travelled abroad for awhile, which certainly did not hinder the growth of Disraeli's influence in Parliament. Early in 1867, the political situation was very different from what it had been. "John Bright and other Radicals had roused the Midlands and the North against Robert Lowe's suggestion that the wage-earners were the moral and intellectual inferiors of the bourgeoisie" (Magnus, p. 184). We have already examined Arnold's reaction to Lowe's glorification of the middle class as the source of social and political leadership. It is interesting to note that Arnold saw both Lowe and Bright as radical in their respective views, but he saw Bright as
the more dangerous of the two. J. Dover Wilson, in his Introduction to *Culture and Anarchy*, brilliantly explains Arnold's attitude toward Bright.

In 1866 Bright was a portent rather than a man; his real greatness had not made itself evident; and Arnold distrusted what he stood for and for passages in his speeches which flattered the pride of the unenfranchised middle and lower classes. Moreover, he dealt in "clap-trap" and believed in "machinery"; instead of employing his great powers in grappling with "pauperism and ignorance and all the questions which are called social . . . he still goes on with his glorifying of the great towns" and with his liberal nostrums like the disestablishment of the Irish Church and the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill. Arnold found him lacking in a sense of real values: he seemed a blind leader of the blind. He was one of those thinkers who had learnt "to call the desires of the ordinary self . . . of the community edicts of the national mind and laws of human progress and to give them a general, a philosophic, and an imposing expression." Not that he was a conscious hypocrite; "a generous statesman may honestly soon unlearn any disposition to put his tongue in his cheek in advocating these desires; and may advocate them with fervour and impulsiveness" (Wilson, p. xxvii).

Arnold became alarmed at the growing class feeling among the members of the middle class because he saw this as a step toward snobism, a trait of the aristocracy. He commented in February, 1867, to his mother about the growing conservatism among the middle class.

I am very much struck with the alarmed Conservative feeling I see growing up among the middle class tradesmen and employers of labour, of whom among my school managers there are so many. Their disgust
at Bright and the working class is as deep as that of the aristocratic world, and I cannot help thinking this disgust will tell on the next borough elections. However, I do not think there will be a general election just yet. I neither think that the Government will be certainly turned out, nor that, if it be turned out, it will dissolve Parliament (Russell, I, 400).

Arnold was correct in his observation that Parliament would not be dissolved for some time.

Meanwhile, in the early months of 1867, Disraeli intuitively sensed that another Reform Bill was inevitable. The people were demanding it. Disraeli gathered Conservatives and Liberals alike around him and took in all their suggestions. He behaved as a master politician. Gladstone denounced the bill as a "'gigantic engine of fraud'" (Magnus, p. 185). Magnus goes on to say,

The House of Commons, which had rejected a moderate measure of reform in the previous year had been greatly impressed by the subsequent agitation in the country and was now in a perplexed but malleable mood. Disraeli, the leader of the House, and Gladstone, the leader of the Opposition, were both distrusted by their Parties, and the Conservatives were in a decided minority; but Disraeli was as skillful in handling his followers, as Gladstone was stiff and obstinate (Magnus, p. 185).

In April, 1867, Arnold wrote to his mother about the progress of the Reform Bill in Parliament. William Forster, Arnold's brother-in-law who is mentioned in the letter, was Minister of Education when Gladstone became Prime Minister. Arnold says,
Gladstone has withdrawn the important and hostile parts of his Instructions, and leaves only the part empowering the Committee to amend the law of rating, which the Government have all along declared themselves willing to accept. So all looks favourable for the Bill once more. I was from the first disgusted with the Instruction, as having the appearance, at least, of a regular party move, and tending to throw the whole question into chaos again. The malcontents among the Liberal party had grown so numerous by yesterday that Brand was alarmed, and this afternoon they held a meeting attended by forty-five, one of whom told me this, at which it was agreed to move an amendment to Coleridge's Instruction, and to inform Gladstone of his intention, and the relinquishment of the poisoned part of his Instruction is the consequence. I told William yesterday what I thought of the Instruction, and found him, too, uneasy about it, and his uneasiness kept increasing till, finally, in the evening he departed to see Brand, and confide his doubts to him (Russell, I, 411-412).

Brand was the Liberal Whip in the House of Commons. In a postscript to the same letter, Arnold once again shows his intuition. He says, "I am afraid war between France and Germany looks almost certain" (Russell, I, 413). The Franco-Prussian War broke out in 1870.

The Reform Bill finally passed on August 15, 1867, was more far-reaching than anything that Gladstone had proposed. In fact, it probably would have been rejected if Gladstone had been the initial proponent (Magnus, p. 188). Most historians agree that the passing of the Reform Act of 1867, which granted
virtually universal manhood suffrage, was the most significant result of Disraeli's leadership in Parliament.

In 1867, Arnold was in the midst of writing the various articles of *Culture and Anarchy*. He writes to his mother about a follow-up to *Culture and Its Enemies* in November, 1867.

Now I have to do a sort of pendant to *Culture and Its Enemies*, to be called *Anarchy and Authority*, and to appear in the Christmas *Cornhill*. It will amuse me to do it, as I have many things to say; and Harrison, Sedgwick, and others, who have replied to my first paper, have given me golden opportunities (Russell, I, 437).
CHAPTER IV

GLADSTONE: "A MOST DANGEROUS MAN"

Gladstone in Friendship's Garland and the Letters

It has already been mentioned that Gladstone served in Lord Palmerston's Cabinet as Chancellor of the Exchequer. Also, we have said that Palmerston and Gladstone often disagreed about priorities in spending. They were in conflict especially over military spending. And of all Lord Palmerston's antagonists in Parliament, probably the most radically outspoken was John Bright. Whereas Bright was Palmerston's antagonist, he had profound influence on Gladstone, who weighed carefully all that Bright said to him.

Bright's words always carried weight with Gladstone. He told his intimates that it was Bright who had first made him realize that he might one day be Prime Minister. Gladstone did not possess one of those prophetic minds which are capable of peering far into the future; but his powers of analysis and synthesis were too acute to allow him to rest content with serving as an interpreter of other men's seminal ideas (Magnus, p. 144).

Perhaps it is because of the profound influence that Bright had on Gladstone that Arnold thought Gladstone should not be trusted.
Gladstone had not always been a member of the Liberal party. In the early years of his political career, he was an avowed Conservative. However, when the Italians were fighting for unification and independence in the early 1850's, Gladstone was converted to Liberalism. Magnus explains:

It was not until 1854 that Gladstone was converted, by Italian exiles in London, and particularly by Daniele Manin, from Venice, to the view that the attainment of Italian unity was the essential prerequisite for good government in Italy. And it was not until the 1880's that he became convinced, as he informed the Queen, to her horror, that it was useless to base appeals to the upper classes upon broad considerations of humanity and justice. Liberal at the end of the 1850's, it was the Italian question which administered the final shove. When he became, in his old age, a democrat, he recalled the deaf ear which even enlightened Conservatives, like Guizot, had turned to his appeal on behalf of the moral law in Naples (Magnus, pp. 100-101).

Arnold's pamphlet *England and the Italian Question* comments on the rising middle class throughout Europe, and it is possible that Gladstone read it.

In 1861, when Gladstone was still part of Palmerston's Cabinet, there were to be important commercial treaty negotiations with France. The idea for the treaty had originated with Bright (Magnus, p. 144). Gladstone was in charge of the treaty negotiations, and Bright's influence was keenly felt, as Magnus explains:
Lord Palmerston was partly dependent upon Radical support; and the new relations into which Gladstone entered with that as a result of the French Treaty were important. Gladstone, Cobden, and Bright all held that the Treaty enshrined a moral principle which was more valuable than any calculated commercial interest (Magnus, p. 144).

This treaty with France was a step toward free trade, a morally desirable aim according to Bright and his followers. Bright saw free trade as an example of high morality; Arnold saw it as "machinery."

On New Year's Day, 1861, Bright told Gladstone that his colleagues, Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell, belonged to a vanished age: "A new policy, and a wiser and higher morality are sighed for by the best of our people; and there is a prevalent feeling that you are destined to guide the wiser policy, and to teach the higher morality" (Magnus, p. 144).

As long as Lord Palmerston had been in office, Gladstone never had to worry about being re-elected to his seat in the House of Commons from Oxford. However, since he had become a Liberal and had associated with Nonconformists, Oxford became discontent. Gladstone lost his seat in July, 1865. Magnus writes:

Gladstone's frequent appearances at Nonconformist tea-parties were much publicized; and they caused bewilderment at Oxford. That bewilderment was increased by the speech which he made in the House of Commons on 28 March, 1865, about the Anglican Church in Ireland. A Radical member had moved a
Resolution which called, in effect, for that Church's disestablishment. Gladstone opposed it on the sole ground that the time was not yet ripe. He said that the position of that Church was profoundly unsatisfactory, because it catered for only a fraction of the Irish people. As a Missionary Church it was an obvious failure, because the proportion of Protestants to Roman Catholics had been greater during the sixteenth century than it was during the nineteenth (Magnus, p. 170).

Magnus goes on to say, "The event [Gladstone's defeat], although foreseen, was the most bitter and grievous political blow which Gladstone suffered in the whole course of his life. Palmerston prophesied that nothing would now restrain Gladstone from running amok" (Magnus, p. 171). Arnold was in Germany gathering material for the Commission on Education, but he too had a comment. Writing to his sister K., he said, perhaps a bit smugly, "The elections, of which I only see the accounts in the German newspapers, appear to be all right. I am sorry about Gladstone. But Oxford is moving still, though in its own way" (Russell, I, 340-341). Gladstone recovered quickly, and that same month, he travelled to Manchester and Liverpool, where he campaigned for and won a seat in Commons (Magnus, p. 172).

Also in 1865, Arnold gathered many ideas about how the rest of Europe felt about England. Most of the reactions were negative. Arnold wrote to his sister's husband, W. E. Forster,
M. P., on September 30, 1865, from Prussia. Arnold has been discussing the middle class and its role, or lack of a role, in several European countries. Speaking of them, Arnold says, "They all dislike England, though with their tongue perhaps more than their hearts; but the present position of England in European esteem is indeed not a pleasant matter . . ." (Russell, I, 355). In the same letter, Arnold mentions the plight of the English diplomat in Europe.

The English diplomatists are all furious at the position to which Lord [Palmerston], the Times, etc., have gradually brought them. The conclusion of the whole matter is men are wanted everywhere; not wealth, institutions, etc., etc., so urgently wanted as men; and we have all to try, in our separate spheres, to be as much of men as we can (Russell, I, 355).

Arnold is not specific about the "position" that the English diplomats are so upset about. It could be the generally meddlesome foreign policy that had been perpetrated for so many years by Lord Palmerston. Also, since France and England were entering into trade agreements, Prussia, Austria, and Russia might have been concerned about a possible military alliance. Another possibility for this reference, and perhaps the most plausible, is the fact that Prussia had recently been involved in the Seven Weeks War in the summer of 1866 with Austria. It happened as a result of the unresolved Schleswig-Holstein problem on
which England had refused to take a firm stand, thus leaving her ambassadors in an awkward position, especially in Austria and Prussia. Arnold makes a passing reference to this issue in the first letter in *Friendship's Garland*, dated July 19, 1866, just after the Seven Weeks War.

In the same letter to the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, Arnold reminds Arminius of the recent advice Gladstone had given to the Rumanians. By this time, Gladstone was leader of the Opposition in Commons and Disraeli was Chancellor of the Exchequer under Lord Derby, the recognized leader of the Conservatives. Arnold says to Arminius,

I hastened, with a few sentences taken from Mr. Gladstone's recent advice to the Roumanians, to pay my homage to the great principles of peaceful, industrial development which were invoked by my countryman. "Yes; war," I said, "interrupts business, and brings intolerable inconvenience with it; whereas people have only to persist steadily in the manufacture of bottles, railways, banks, and finance companies, and all good things will come to them in their own accord" (Super, V, 38).

Gladstone wrote a letter to the regent of Rumania after that country had forced the abdication of their king in February, 1866, suggesting the advantages of a peaceful settlement. Super quotes parts of it that appeared in the *Times* on June 15, 1866.
The progress on which the civilized world is now so intent should in all cases if possible be a peaceful progress. . . . Good commercial laws, well-understood relations, and consequent harmony between class and class, economical administration of the Government, liberal application of resources (Made possible by such economy) to useful and re-productive works, and especially to the improvement on communications . . . [are] the best and most solid preparation for the contingencies of that, I trust, prosperous and distinguished future which Providence may have in store for your country (Super, V, 379).

Arnold's feelings about free trade and industrial progress have already been outlined in the discussion of Culture and Anarchy.

Also, in the same letter, Arnold, through Arminius, introduces the British people to geist. Geist means intelligence and reason, or "light," as Arnold said it earlier. Un-geist is blind custom and prejudice. Arnold quotes Arminius near the end of the letter, saying,

You, my dear friend, live in a country where at present the idea of claptrap governs every department of human activity. Great events are happening in the world, and Mr. Goldwin Smith tells you that "England will be compelled to speak, at last." It would be truly sad if, when she does speak, she should talk nonsense. To prevent such a disaster, I will give you this piece of advice, with which I take my leave; Get "Geist" (Super, V, 42).

In the second letter to the Pall Mall Gazette, July 31, 1866, Arminius pens satirical remarks in reply to Matthew
Arnold's comments about French geist. Arminius comments that the Prussians have had "no great love for the French" since Napoleon's time. But the French had geist. However, Arminius says, 'Your 'earnest liberal' in England thinks culture all moonshine; he is for the spiritual development of your democracy by rioting in the parks, abolishing church-rates, and marrying a deceased wife's sister; and for leaving your narrow and vulgar middle class... just as it is" (Super, V, 46). The "earnest liberal" that Arminius refers to could be either Gladstone or Bright.

The first section of letters ends with April, 1867, only a few months before Gladstone began his first extended term as Prime Minister. R. H. Super records, "The Liberals were restored to power in December, 1868, on the issue of disestablishing the Anglican Church in Ireland, and proceeded forthwith to bring in a disestablishment measure" (Super, V, 449).

It was the issue of disestablishing the Irish Church and later the issue of Irish home rule that most troubled Arnold about Gladstone. Gladstone grabbed at the Irish Church question as if it were a torch that needed putting out, and he felt that, like a fire, it could be quelled in a short time. Gladstone's great desire was to retire from politics in a few years
after 1868 and devote himself to a religious life, but he found himself devoted instead to politics. In his biography of Gladstone, Philip Magnus explains:

Gladstone was not popular in Ireland because of his action in 1853 in extending to that country the income-tax which Peel had withheld. When he formed his Government in 1868 he had no experience and no real knowledge of the Irish problem, and his ignorance was shared by the whole of his Cabinet and by the mass of the British people. He had no suspicion that in the cause of Ireland he was destined to lead the Liberal Party to martyrdom, or that the whole of the rest of his life was to be devoted to that cause. If he had known, he would have been horrified, for he took office with the firm intention of accomplishing his mission within a year or two, and of retiring subsequently to Hawarden in order to devote himself to religion (Magnus, p. 196).

Arnold felt very strongly about the function of the established church, whatever it was. He believed, as has been said before, that the State was a combination of all religions and forms of worship without the fanaticism of any of them. Just as all "established" churches were part of the State, so all people were part of that same state. Arnold believed that the Irish were English and both states existed for the welfare of the other. Arnold found the debate over the disestablishment of the Irish Church nothing short of "clap-trap." Speaking through the tongue of Arminius in Friendship's Garland, Arnold says,
To abate feudalism by providing that in one insignificant case out of one million land shall not follow the feudal law of descent; to abolish English church-rates because the English Dissenters are strong, and to spare the Irish Church Establishment because the Irish Catholics are weak; to give a man leave to marry his deceased wife's sister; to give a man who lives in a particular kind of house a vote for members of Parliament—that is the pabulum by which the leaders of your people seek to develop "Geist."...

If this is not spiritual enough, as a final resource there is rioting in the parks, and a despotism in your penny newspapers tempered by the tears of your executive to hasten the growth of democracy in dignity and intelligence (Super, V, 45).

One example of the "clap-trap" Arminius refers to is an excerpt from a speech Gladstone made during the debate on the Irish Church on April 3, 1868. Gladstone said,

The intention and desire of the [Conservative] Government... is to set Established Churches—Presbyterians and Roman Catholics, and lesser bodies, all endowed out of the Consolidated Fund... I ask, Is the country prepared for such a policy...? It earnestly desired by the Liberal politicians of... a generation... [But now it] cannot and will not be adopted by the people of this country. It is detested by Scotland; it is not desired by England; it is repelled and rejected by Ireland (Super, V, 440-441).

It has already been suggested by Magnus that Gladstone really did not understand the Irish situation. In a passage that had originally appeared in "Our Liberal Practioners" of Culture and Anarchy before it was edited, Arnold further condemns Gladstone's activities.
If, I say, on testing the present operation of our Liberal friends for the disestablishment of the Irish Church, the truth about it appears to be very much this then, I think, even on the eve of an election... and with our Liberal friends making impassioned appeals to us to take a commendable interest in their operation and them, and to rally round what Sir Henry Hoare (who may be described, perhaps, as a Barbarian converted to Philistinism, as I, on the other hand, seem to be a Philistine converted to culture) finely calls the conscientiousness of a Gladstone and the intellect of a Bright, it is rather our duty to abstain, and, instead of lending a hand to the operation of our Liberal friends, to do what we can to abate and dissolve the mass of prejudice, Tory or Nonconformist, which makes so doubtfully begotten and equivocal an operation as the present, producible and possible (Super, V, 525).

On July 17, 1869, Arnold wrote to his mother about the impending Irish Church Bill.

You see how the Irish Church Bill is going. What made the proposition of the Lords so weak was that the Lords did not seem to recommend it with their whole heart, but rather to stumble into it, as a means of altering the Bill. One cannot imagine the Lords originating such a proposition from pure love of justice, if Gladstone's counter-project had not been there. The Protestant Dissenters will triumph, as I was sure they would. But I am equally sure that, out of the House and the fight of politics, I am doing what will sap them intellectually, and what will also sap the House of Commons intellectually, so far as it is ruled by the Protestant Dissenters; and more and more I am convinced that this is my true business at present (Russell, II, 20).

The Irish Church Bill passed in July, 1869. Arnold wrote his ironic "Recantation and Apology," now part of Friendship's Garland, which appeared in the Pall Mall Gazette on August 2,
1869, to make "peace" with the Liberal Party (Super, V, 471).

A letter Arnold wrote to his mother on that day makes no reference to the article. Arnold begins by saying,

The glorious and successful issue of the Liberal operation for disestablishing and disendowing the Irish Church, the chorus of mutual applause and the congratulation which I hear all round me, and I should add, perhaps, the universal disgust with which my *Culture and Anarchy* speculations have been received the severe but deserved chastisement which I have brought on myself by giving way to a spirit of effeminacy and cultivated inaction, have quite conquered me (Super, V, 319).

Arnold answers each of his critics in the article, from the press to Parliament. Arnold's main point is that the Irish Church Bill passed because its proponents did not allow for "free play of consciousness" among the men who had to decide (Super, V, 321). Parliament, led in this case by the Nonconformists, Hebraized rather than Hellenized the situation.

Arnold says about the House of Lords,

Their strongest impulse, as children of the established fact themselves, was to respect nothing. If no one else had stirred the question, an effort to abate Protestant ascendency in Ireland would never have come from the House of Lords; but the question was stirred and something had to be done (Super, V, 320).

With regard to the Liberal Party in the House of Commons, Arnold says,
I was wrong, and a free play of consciousness was here, as we now see, out of the question. A great and important principle of the Nonconformists had . . . to receive legislative sanction. That is, the Irish Church had to be destroyed by the power of that stock notion or fetish of the Nonconformists, Scotch and English, which proscribes establishments (Super, V, 321).

Finally, Arnold ironically concludes with the comforting thought that the Puritanism of England really has fine sentiments towards the Irish Catholics, whose "peace and contentment are now assured" (Super, V, 324). Arnold realized, evidently more than most other people, that Ireland's problems were only beginning and that the British were only making a bad situation worse.

Gladstone's first administration turned out to be a very busy one. There were three events in 1870 that stimulated response from Arnold. There was the Education Act of 1870, the Irish Land Bill, and the Franco-Prussian War. Philip Magnus says,

Between 1869 and 1874 there was enough work to satisfy even Gladstone's appetite, and in W. E. Forster's Education Act of 1870 the Prime Minister took only a lukewarm interest. Gladstone was never a zealous educationist; his chief concern was that children should continue to be taught the meaning of the Christian religion. Having resigned himself to the need for accepting some sort of distasteful compromise in order to meet the views of those who favoured an unsectarian system of national education, Gladstone was agreeably surprised to discover
that Forster's Act was nearer to his views than he had at first dared to hope (Magnus, p. 203).

In February, 1870, Arnold wrote to his mother about Forster's bill which Forster proposed as Minister of Education. "I think William's Bill will do very well. I am glad it is so little altered since I heard its contents in November. His speech in introducing it seems to have been a great success" (Russell, II, 31-32). However, when Gladstone realized that Forster's bill was closely allied with his own philosophy, he took over the campaign for its adoption. Arnold comments in June, 1870: "It is said Gladstone has taken William's Bill entirely into his own hands, and neither William nor Coleridge are to speak to-night; but we shall see. Gladstone, who is always shifting, is this year in a much more Anglican mood, as I judge by a curious letter he wrote me a week ago" (Russell, II, 39-40). The Education Act passed on August 9, 1870. It provided for the creation of local school boards who had the power to levy taxes, build schools, hire teachers, and to insist that children attend who were not receiving instruction elsewhere (Magnus, p. 204).

Before the Education Act was even written, Arnold had expressed the feeling that some kind of compulsory education was needed for the middle and lower classes. In April, 1867,
Arnold wrote two letters to the *Pall Mall Gazette* on compulsory education, which later became part of *Friendship's Garland*. Once again, the brunt of his satire is Robert Lowe, who, after he was Palmerston's Minister of Education, became Gladstone's Chancellor of the Exchequer (Magnus, p. 197). Lowe kept his faith that the great middle class produced the social and political leaders of England.

However, in the first of two letters Arnold wrote on compulsory education, he relates to Arminius the background of the magistrates in the trial of Zephaniah Diggs, a poacher. The magistrates on the bench that day were Reverend Esau Hittall, Viscount Lumpington, and Bottles, Esquire. Learning that the three men are diverse in their political philosophies, Arminius inquires about their intelligence and education that qualifies them to be magistrates. Actually none of them had received any instruction in law or in how to apply it. (Of course, Diggs has had no education at all, which is why he is a poacher in the first place.) Arnold tells Arminius blithely,

You know we English have no notion of your bureaucratic tyranny [in Prussia] of treating the appointments to these great foundations as public patronage, and vesting them in a responsible minister; we vest them in independent magnates, who relieve the State of all work and responsibility, and never take a shilling of salary for their trouble (Super, V, 60-70).
Arnold does not have to mention that these magistrates are subject to bribes from anyone who wishes to have a certain decision. Arnold also explains that these men got to be magistrates because of their standing in the community, not because of their qualifications.

In a second letter on compulsory education that soon followed, Arminius explains that the Prussians carefully examine nominees to fill such positions as magistrates to see if they are fully qualified. Magistrates must be trained in law, says Arminius. After a humorous exchange, Arnold says,

"To live at all, even at the lowest stage of human life, a man needs instruction." "Well," returned Arminius, "and to administer at all even at the lowest stage of public administration, a man needs instruction." "We have not found it so," said I (Super, V, 74).

Concluding this letter on compulsory education, Arnold says,

When I see the unexampled pitch of splendour and security to which these [Lumpington, Hittall, and Bottles] have conducted us, I am bent, I own, on trying to make the new elements of our political system worthy of the old; and I say kindly, but firmly, to the compound householder in the French poet's beautiful words, slightly altered; "Be great, 0 working class, for the middle and upper class are great!" (Super, V, 76).

Arnold and Arminius also discussed the situation of tenants. They draw the comparison between the Prussian land tenant before reform and the Irish land tenant of the present. Under the law, Arminius says, a man became
"a tenant for a term of years, a tenant who could not leave his holding to his son, a tenant whom his landlord could turn out the moment his term expired, a tenant with a tenant-right as hard to define, as much reposing on sentiment and custom, as any Irish tenant's tenant-right, got half his holding in absolute property, free from all feudal services, in return for giving up at once the other half to his landlord." "It really sounds," I answered, "too shocking to be lightly believed" (Super, V, 63).

The Irish Land Act of 1870 was a step toward reform, but it was too weak to be effective. Arnold mentions the act again in "The Nadir of Liberalism."

Later in the year, Arnold was introduced to Lord Salisbury, one of Gladstone's Cabinet Ministers. Arnold reports the meeting in a letter to his mother dated June 25, 1870. It may be noted here that the observations and comments Arnold makes about Gladstone in this letter recur sixteen years later in his article "The Nadir of Liberalism."

He [Lord Salisbury] told me it had been suggested to him [by Gladstone] that he ought to have addressed me as Vir dulcissime et lucidissime. He [Gladstone] is a dangerous man, though, and from his want of any true sense and experience of literature and its beneficient function. Religion he knows, and physical science he knows, but the immense work between the two, which is for literature to accomplish, he knows nothing of, and all his speeches at Oxford pointed this way. On the one hand, he was full of great future for physical science, and begging the University to make up her mind to it, and to resign much of her literary studies; on the other hand, he was full, almost defiantly full, of counsels and resolves for retaining and upholding the old ecclesiastical
and dogmatic form of religion. From a juxtaposition of this kind nothing but shocks and collisions can come; and I know no one, indeed, more likely to provoke shocks and collisions than men like Lord Salisbury (Russell, II, 40-41).

Lord Salisbury became Prime Minister after Gladstone resigned in 1885.

In the summer of 1870, the Franco-Prussian War broke out. Russia, encouraged by Bismark, seized the opportunity . . . to denounce the clauses in the Treaty of Paris of 1856 which had closed the Black Sea to Russian warships. British opinion was strongly anti-Russian, but France was prostrate, and Gladstone, who was always troubled by his share of the responsibility for the Crimean War, was helpless (Magnus, pp. 205-206.)

Arnold took the opportunity to air Arminius' views on the Black Sea Question. It all goes back to what Arnold said earlier about the degenerate image foreign countries have of the British. Arminius refers to the Crimean War, when Czar Nicholas did not know for sure what the British would do under Lord Palmerston and neither did the British ambassadors (Super, V, 336-337). Arminius says,

Because your governing part, your Philistine middle class, is ignorant and impracticable, Russia has unceremoniously taken a step in the Eastern question without you. And what does your going to war with Russia in the present posture of affairs mean? It means backing up the Porte to show fight; going in, in Lord Palmerston's old line, for the upholding and renovating the Grand Turk;--it means fighting against nature (Super, V, 337-338).
In the letter Arminius writes as he leaves England to join the Prussian Army in August, 1870, he re-emphasizes the ignorance of the middle and lower classes, and therefore their incapability of making intelligent decisions and exercising effective political influence. Arminius says, "Your ruling middle class have no great, seriously and truly conceived end;—therefore no greatness of soul or mind;—therefore no steadfastness and power in great affairs. While you are thus, in great affairs you do and must fumble" (Super, V, 331). Arnold's ideas on culture and Barbarians, Philistines, and populace are reiterated from Arminius' point of view. Arnold further reflects the plight of the British policy-maker in a letter to his mother written November 15, 1870.

But what a time we have come to, and how truly we may say as we look round Europe, "The fashion of this world passeth away." The danger for this country is the utter absence of a policy in any of our public men. They have not even a notion of such a thing being possible, but look anxiously to the public mind and its wishes, and endeavor to comply with them. The public mind and its wishes being blind and uncertain, and so we drift, and shall go on drifting. A man to rule the public, instead of being ruled by the public, is what our foreign policy wants, but this we are not likely to have at present (Russell, II, 52-53).
By January, 1871, the Franco-Prussian War was over with Prussia the victor. Arnold comments on the future of Europe and France to his mother on January 31, 1871.

It is an unspeakable relief to have the war, I suppose, over; but one may well look anxiously to see what is in the future for the changed Europe we shall see. Immense as are her advantages and resources, it does not seem as if France could recover herself now as she did in 1815, or indeed could recover herself within our time at all... Her fall is mainly due to that want of a serious conception of righteousness and the need of it, the consequences of which so often show themselves in the world's history... (Russell, II, 55).

Arminius was killed in the war, and he died still preaching his philosophy of geist. Not all of the letters in Friendship's Garland have been mentioned or discussed here. Those that have been excluded re-emphasized Arnold's social and political philosophy that was expressed in Culture and Anarchy. Also, some of them refer to historical events already covered in personal letters or elsewhere.

Between the Franco-Prussian War and the defeat of the Liberal party in 1874, Arnold makes a few specific comments about the politics of the government. Gladstone's popularity was steadily decreasing, and he was constantly having difficulties with Queen Victoria. For one thing, Gladstone had planned to make the Prince of Wales the Viceroy of Ireland, thereby giving him a job with a purpose instead of being idle. The
Queen objected to change of any kind in the life of her family, so Gladstone's idea was never put into practice (Magnus, pp. 208-216). Basically, the Queen found Gladstone growing more and more distasteful to her. She felt that "Gladstone stood for democracy and for radical changes in many fields. He represented new tendencies which the Queen did not understand and which she therefore disliked; and he was incapable of explaining things simply to her" (Magnus, p. 218). The Queen, like Arnold, felt Gladstone was dangerous. Regarding the Liberal government, Arnold makes some comments reflecting the growing dissatisfaction among some people. He does not, however, ever mention the Queen. Arnold probably felt that she was the worst Barbarian of them all.

On January 21, 1872, Arnold wrote to his mother about the government.

From another source I heard that Dale of Birmingham says the Dissenters really wish to see the Government out of office; they think that in opposition they can make their own terms with them and get the command of the party; and moreover that there are some very difficult and unpopular bills to pass, such as a Licensing Bill, of which a Tory Government had better have the unpopularity than a Liberal Government (Russell, II, 89).
On Christmas Day, 1872, Arnold comments more strongly to his friend M. E. Grant Duff, M. P., on his feelings about the Liberal party.

As to the Liberals, I believe that the wish and intention of the best and most intelligent of them is as you say; but what they actually manage to get done is very often not "as reason would," but as violent and ignorant influences in the mass of their party will; and I cannot look upon it as a triumph of reason, though it passes as one of the triumphs of the Liberal party (Russell, II, 104).

In 1873, Arnold spent considerable time on the Continent. And as the nation did not pass through any great political or social crises, Arnold's comments are negligible.

In February, 1874, Arnold did comment on the defeat of Gladstone and the Liberals to his sister K. and to Lady de Rothschild. He told both women the same thing, but the letter to his sister is more detailed. He says,

I do not affect to be sorry at the change; the Liberal party, it seemed to me, had no body of just, clear, well-ordered thought upon politics, and were only superior to the Conservative in not having for their rule of conduct merely the negative instinct against change; now they will have to examine their minds and find what they really want and mean to try for. I read the Nonconformist with much interest now, because there will be a great attempt to reconstruct the Liberal party on the Nonconformist platform, and from the Nonconformists knowing their objects clearly, and the Liberal party in general not knowing theirs, the attempt has some chances in its favour; but I do not think it will succeed, and still less
that mere secularist radicalism will succeed, but
the Liberal party will really, I think find a new
basis (Russell, II, 129).

In April, 1874, Arnold wrote to a French friend, M. Fontanes,
explaining the outcome of the election and British political
thinking generally. His slant is reminiscent of earlier writ-
ings but is quite subdued.

You ask about the elections; they are really explained
by the love of plain simple proceedings in Government
which is natural here, where the sense of continuity
is stronger than in any other country. The Gladstone
Ministry was straining itself to imagine and invent
all kinds of reforms; it had no clear ideas, it had
done what it had been set to do, it was not dignified
in its foreign policy, and many of its members were
pragmatical and dictatorial. The country expressed
its liking for "the old ways," for the present at
any rate, and turned to the Conservatives. The party
which has lost most by the recent elections is the
party of the political Dissenters. What follies the
Church may commit one can never tell; but if the
Church is prudent, and the Government gives it the
reforms it requires, Protestant Dissent is doomed,
in my opinion, to a rapid decline in this country
(Russell, II, 133).

Benjamin Disraeli was Prime Minister from 1874 to 1880,
and during his administration, the Queen was happy. Gladstone
relaxed to get his energy back, and Arnold was virtually silent.
He did continue to write articles, but nothing approaching the
thrust of Culture and Anarchy or Friendship's Garland.

Gladstone did some literary pieces, but his main subject
for composition was religion. Disraeli took up the cry of
imperialism that had been stirring the emotions of the middle class as they became more and more affluent, and as they continued to praise the greatness of England. Arnold had warned them about the consequences of the worship of materialism.

Arnold's article "A Last Word on the Burials Bill" appeared in the July, 1876, issue of Macmillan Magazine. There had been some controversy about whether Dissenters should be allowed to hold services in the church and to bury their dead in the church yards already nearly full with true believers.

The letter was to his sister Fan.

Of course, the Liberals will not like what I have said, but I think I have put the thing in a way to satisfy reasonable people who wish to decide the disputed matters fairly; and perhaps these reasonable people are not so few as is supposed. Coleridge told me he thought the Dissenters had a right not only to have their services in the parish churchyard, but also to have them in the parish church. For my part, I do not think that anybody has, or can have, any rights except such as are given him by the law; and I do not think the law will ever, in England, confer such rights as these. I met Gladstone in the street yesterday, who began to talk to me about my article. He said that undoubtedly, as soon as you got beyond abstract resolutions and had to legislate practically, the necessity of insuring a proper service in the churchyard would have to be provided for; and the difficulty of doing this while the Dissenters make pretensions they do now was almost insuperable (Russell, II, 152-153).
Gladstone continued to oppose Disraeli almost at every turn.

As the last round of the long duel between Gladstone and Disraeli opened, Gladstone, deriving his chief support from intellectuals, Nonconformists, and hosts of upright, God-fearing men and women many of whom had only recently been enfranchised, took his stand squarely on the moral issue. In that age his resolute insistence on that issue made his ultimate return to power inevitable (Magnus, p. 240).

The "moral issue" that Gladstone capitalized on was the plight of the Christians in the Balkans who were trying to revolt and who were being persecuted by their Turkish rulers. Disraeli narrowly avoided a war with Russia in 1876 over the possibility of British intervention there (Magnus, pp. 238-239). Of course, it was precisely those who had been recently enfranchised that were among the people who needed the most light, and it disturbed Arnold greatly that they sought it from Gladstone and the Liberals.

In 1877, Gladstone spoke his feelings about the Russo-Turkish War. The same controversy that had split the party thirty years before was back again--whether to support the Grand Turk or Russia. The two powers were fighting over the control of the Balkan states. In several resolutions "Gladstone constantly pointed out that the Balkan Christians were not seeking alliance with Russia, but deliverance from
oppression" (Magnus, p. 242). Gladstone wrote a pamphlet outlining his position and calling upon Russia to drive the Turks from Bulgaria. Disraeli was furious at the interference. He had already considered occupying the Dardanelles to stall a Russian invasion of Turkey. Actually, England attacked Serbia and Montenegro and threatened war with Russia (Magnus, p. 243).

Now it was Gladstone's turn to be incensed. Gladstone introduced a resolution in Parliament condemning the conduct of the British in the Balkans, but it was defeated May 14, 1877.

Arnold tells his wife about it on May 5.

Everybody is in a great way about Monday, and they are in consternation at the Reform Club, I hear, because while most of the Liberal party want to go with Lubbock and Lord Hartington, the Liberal constituencies are pouring in letters and telegrams to their members desiring them to vote with Gladstone. Chamberlain has organized the thing—with the hope, no doubt, of winning over Gladstone for future purposes; and he is a great organiser. I cannot say I much regret to see the Liberal party in a state of chaos, but I am sincerely sorry that a Charlatan like Dizzy should be Premier just now (Russell, II, 158-159).

The next day, May 6, Arnold saw Gladstone at an Academy dinner. He told his wife, "Gladstone was received with wonderful enthusiasm, but I think it was not a political reception, but the artists showing their feeling for him as a man of genius" (Russell, II, 160).
Before the vote was taken on May 14 that defeated the Resolution, Arnold wrote to his wife again about it.

You will hear by telegraph that Gladstone has altered his Resolutions so that his party can vote for them; to Forster this is evidently an immense relief. Whether the Government will now get the previous question moved by Drummond Wolff, on their own side, or what they will do is not certain. Perhaps they will ask for time to consider what to do in these new circumstances. In that case those who go down expecting an exciting debate will be disappointed (Russell, II, 161).

In December, 1877, Arnold had another occasion to have dinner with Gladstone. Bulgaria was still on people's minds, but so was Ireland. Arnold wrote to Fan about the evening.

An evening of Bulgaria is too much, of course Forbes knows nothing else, and Gladstone can go on for hours about that or any other subject.

Gladstone was not animated, and I think even he must have felt himself a little over-Bulgarianed. His position between Knowles and Forbes almost compelled him to talk Bulgaria to Forbes incessantly. After dinner Huxley and I talked to him a little about Ireland. . . . I am sorry to say he seemed full of that deep opposition in Ireland to England and English policy—for the present at any rate—that to go contrary was the main impulse there. One of the many blessings . . . which we owe to Puritanism is this impracticable condition of Ireland. I am glad to hear from Green, who is expanding his history, that the more he looks into Puritanism, and indeed into the English Protestant Reformation generally, the worse is his opinion of it all (Russell, II, 163).
In December, there was still talk of war with Russia. Arnold records his observations of the British Philistine's reaction to talk of war in a letter to Fan.

People at the club were talking much about the chances of war, but you know how they talk. That wonderful creature, the British Philistine, has been splashing about during this war, in a way more than worthy of himself. That is what is peculiar to England and what misleads foreigners; there is no country in the world where so much nonsense becomes so public, and so appears to stand for the general voice of the nation, determining its government (Russell, II, 166).

War with Russia was avoided by the settlement negotiated between Germany, England, and Russia, the Treaty of Berlin. The Balkans were carved up and England got Cyprus as a protectorate. Turkey and Russia were in check, and Disraeli came home having averted war with the slogan "Peace with Honor." The people of England were grateful, but Gladstone continued to denounce Disraeli as being a danger to the Constitution, and he was finally returned in the General Election of 1880 (Magnus, pp. 246-255). Arnold comments to his sister K. about the election on April 2, 1880.

I think you will expect a line from me of congratulations on William's [Forster] position on the poll at Bradford and on the number that voted for him. Both are satisfactory, and he will be well pleased, I suppose, to have brought in Mr. [Gladstone] along with him, though my joy at this other success I do not feel so sure. However, if the Liberals are to come in, my earnest desire is that their English and Scotch majority should be as large as possible, and in this view I may accept [Gladstone]. What a total scattering it is!
Lord B. was demoralising for our people, and the Tories show their bad side more and more the longer they stay in.

But that they [Liberals] will yet fail more than once, and give other chances to the Tories and to future Lord Bs, I think too probable (Russell, II, 193-194).

With Gladstone back in power, Arnold's pen began to flow again. In 1881, he wrote a series of articles for the *Nineteenth Century* about Ireland called "The Incompatibles." He repeated with new emphasis, his feelings about the Irish Church, Irish land, and the fact that Ireland and England must exist for the welfare of the other.

In 1882, Arnold announced his intentions to retire from the job of inspector of schools. He wrote to his friend John Morely on October 24, 1882. "I announced yesterday at the office my intention of retiring at Easter or Whitsuntide. Gladstone will never promote the author of *Literature and Dogma* if he can help it, and meanwhile my life is drawing to an end, and I have no wish to execute the Dance of Death in an elementary school" (Russell, II, 241). Almost a year later, Arnold was surprised to learn that he had been offered a pension by the government for his "service to the poetry and literature of England." He writes again to John Morley: "To my surprise,
I have just had a letter from your great leader [Gladstone] offering me a pension of £250 'as a public recognition of service to the poetry and literature of England.' To my further surprise, those about me think I ought to accept it, and I am told that _________ thinks the same" (Russell, II, 250-251).

Bush records that Arnold was promoted to Chief Inspector in 1884 (Bush, p. 16).

Gladstone was not known for his astute foreign policy, as has already been observed by Arnold and others. In 1885, he made a mistake that cost him the government for a time. General Gordon and his army were massacred at Khartoum; Gladstone had failed to accept the truth of the situation in the Sudan until it was too late, and so he did not send re-enforcements (Magnus, p. 321). This was the thrust that tumbled Gladstone's government.

Lord Salisbury formed a minority government until general elections could be held. Arnold wrote to Fan about it on December 4, 1885.

For the present I wish Lord Salisbury to stay in, the Liberals being so unripe. Lord Salisbury is an able man, and I think he improves and is capable of learning and growing. When one has seen Bismarck one feels the full absurdity of poor [Gladstone] transacting foreign affairs with him; and when one hears him, and perceives how earnestly he is putting his real mind to the subject in hand, one thinks of
[Gladstone] pouring out words as the whim may take him, or party considerations render convenient.

The wiser Liberals, if they have any real political sense, will be very strong in this Parliament. I hope they will not unite with the Tories, and will also resist steadily the temptation of going against their judgment with the Radicals, merely to keep a supposed party together (Russell, II, 555).

The General Election returned the Liberals and therefore Gladstone, to power on January 30, 1886. However, Lord Salisbury did become Prime Minister from late in 1886 to 1892. Arnold died in 1888.

The ideas concerning Ireland about which Arnold disagreed very strongly with Gladstone were the disestablishment of the Irish Church, already discussed, and Irish Home Rule. On December 21, 1885, Arnold wrote to his sister Fan, "What a move is this of Gladstone's in the Irish matter! and what apprehension it gives me!" (Russell, II, 364). Gladstone became as fanatical about this as he had about the Irish Church. If Arnold had been younger and felt he had the time, he might have resurrected Arminius for this situation.

On March 3, 1886, the debate over home rule was still strong. Arnold comments to Fan, "We are all against Gladstone's present policy, and I am glad to think it seems threatened with a check; but the mass of middle class Liberalism on which
he relies is so enthusiastically devoted to him, and so ignorant, that I am not sure of his being frustrated till I see it happen' (Russell, II, 379).

In the summer of 1886, Arnold went to the United States to visit his married daughter, Lucy. He wrote home to Fan about the American reaction to Gladstone's election. The letter is dated June 9, 1886.

They had made up their minds here that Gladstone was going to win; from the first I had thought he would lose, but I was not prepared for so good a majority. A load is taken off my spirit, but unless Lord Hartington and Goschen bestir themselves and seize the occasion, it will pass from them, and the Home Rulers, pure and simple, will win (Russell, II, 385).

On July 8, 1886, Arnold wrote to his sister K. from America. He makes reference to the problem of the Protestant counties in the north of Ireland. He sees no need for merger with the south.

But in Ireland, where government has been conducted in accordance with the wishes of the minority and of the British Philistine, the defects of the system have come into full view. Therefore, I am most anxious that the question of local government should be in every one's mind. If it comes to be fairly discussed, the Americans will be capable of seeing that there is no more need for merging Ulster in Southern Ireland than for merging Massachusetts in New York State (Russell, II, 390).
Then, on August 24, Arnold registers consternation over the reports in American newspapers mistakenly saying that he favored home rule. He writes to Fan:

But for you I should not have seen my letter in the Times. The state of things here is curious; no part of the letter which spoke of the best American opinion being adverse to Gladstone's proceeding was given, but a telegraphic summary of part of the letter appeared with this heading--Mr. M. A. favourable to Home Rule, and so they go on; not a word from any one except the Irish, or Englishmen who take part with them, and a constant assertion of the embarrassment of the Government, and of the estrangement, rapidly growing, of the Unionists. The situation is in truth so critical that it is easy to become alarmed when one is at a distance, and I shall be sincerely glad to have done with American newspapers (Russell, II, 400-401).

Arnold's Final Statement: "The Nadir of Liberalism"

On the question of Irish Home Rule, Gladstone's basic proposal was to establish an executive in Dublin and an autonomous Irish Parliament (Magnus, pp. 352-354). Of all Gladstone's ideas, Arnold disliked this one the most. He felt that Gladstone would be the death of the Liberal party, and he set out to write about it. On January 11, 1886, he wrote to his sister Fan about a future article on Liberalism.

If I had time I would write a last political article with the title of The Nadir of Liberalism. For all I have ever said of the Liberals calling successes not things which really succeed, but things which
take their friends, unite their party, embarrass their adversaries, and are carried--and how very, very far this is, in politics, from true success, has proved itself to a degree beyond which we shall not, it may be hoped, pass (Russell, II, 369).

The article, "The Nadir of Liberalism," appeared in the May, 1886, issue of Nineteenth Century. On July 29, 1886, Arnold wrote to his friend Grant Duff, M. P., about it. "I like to think that you will have been in general agreement with what I said about the Irish question and Gladstone in the Nineteenth Century" (Russell, II, 395). Also, on November 27, 1886, Arnold wrote to M. Fontanes in France about the article. By this time, Gladstone was again out of office.

In the last months of Mr. Gladstone's Government the Liberal party did indeed reach its lowest, its nadir. The result of the elections gave indescribable relief. The process, however, is still very anxious. I confess I do not look forward to any close alliance of this country with France, the character and aspirations of the two nations have become so different, and are daily becoming more so (Russell, II, 414).

In "The Nadir of Liberalism," Arnold brings together all the comments and criticisms he made about Gladstone and the Liberal party. Arnold disagrees somewhat with the traditional historical point of view that Gladstone represented the man of the nineteenth century. Arnold says of Gladstone what historians said about Lord Palmerston--that he was a man behind his time, too slow to keep up with the century. It may be
closer to the truth to say that it was Arnold who was placed in the wrong century. He foresaw many of the problems that would face the twentieth century. He knew that disestablishment of the Irish Church, Home Rule, or the merging of Ulster with southern Ireland would not make the Irish happy or solve their problems which, even then, were rooted in centuries of discontent. He foresaw the futility of striving for material wealth for its own sake. He said in *Culture and Anarchy*, "Our coal, thousands of people were saying, is the real basis of our national greatness; if our coal runs short, there is an end of the greatness of England" (Super, V, 96). In the twentieth century, England was not only unconcerned about running out of coal, but the burning of it for heating has been outlawed in major cities. Gladstone was a worshipper of material wealth, and the means of acquiring it, free trade. Were he living today, perhaps Arnold would say that one of the causes of the spiraling inflation in the world has come as a result of the worship of machinery. Mass production has driven down the price of manufactured goods, but a food shortage has driven up the price of bread so much that manufactured goods are inconsequential luxuries.
The main point that Arnold makes in "The Nadir of Liberalism" is that Gladstone was not a true statesman because he was not successful. For a statesman to be successful, Arnold says that he must have "really satisfied vital needs and removed vital dangers of the nation." Gladstone's lack of success in foreign affairs was well-known, but at home, Arnold points out that he had three chances for success: the Irish Church, the Irish land question, and the obstruction of Parliament (Neiman, p. 267). Arnold's reaction to the policies regarding the Irish Church have already been discussed. With regard to the Irish Land Act, it was proven to be ineffective. Gladstone had hoped to insure that Irish tenants got "fair rents, fixity or security of tenure, and the right to sell freely their holdings when they wished" (Neiman, p. 268). Arnold points out that the Irish are not yet happy or free of danger. As for the obstruction of Parliament, Gladstone's fanatical pressure about the Irish question very nearly disorientated Parliament from other problems of government that needed solving. In addition to reiterating his feelings about

the fallacies of the Liberal government's Irish policy, Arnold presents a character sketch of Gladstone. This is how Arnold saw the Liberal leader.

Mr. Gladstone is the minister of a party in a period of expansion, the minister of the Liberals—the Liberals whose work it should be to bring about the modern development of English society. He has many requisites for that leadership. Everybody will admit that in effectiveness as a public speaker and debater he cannot be surpassed, can hardly be equalled. Philosophers may prefer coolness and brevity to his heat and copiousness; but the many are not philosophers, and his heat and copiousness are just what is needed for popular assemblies. His heat and copiousness, moreover, are joined with powers and accomplishments, with qualities of mind and character, as admirable as they are rare. The absence in him of aristocratical exclusiveness is one of the causes of his popularity. But not only is he free from morgue, he has also that rarest and crowning charm in a man who has triumphed as he has, been praised as he has: he is genuinely modest.

If one could be astonished at anything in political partisans, I should be astonished at the insensibility of his opponents to the charm of Mr. Gladstone. I think him an unsuccessful, a dangerous minister; but he is a captivating, a fascinating personality (Neiman, pp. 268-269).

After drawing a profile of Gladstone, Arnold set about to draw up an assessment of the condition of the government of England, and this is what he says:

Such, then, is our situation. A captivating Liberal leader, generous and earnest, full of eloquence, ingenuity, and resource, and a consummate parliamentary manager—but without insight, and who as a statesman has hitherto not succeeded, but
failed. A Liberal party, of which the strength and substance is furnished by two great classes, with sterling merits and of good intentions, but bounded and backward. A third factor in our situation must not be unnoticed—an element of Jacobinism. It is small, but it is active and visible. It is a sinister apparition. We know its works... it has the temper of hatred and the aim of destruction. There are two varieties of Jacobin, the hysterical Jacobin and the pedantic Jacobin; we possess both, and both are dangerous (Neiman, p. 271).

Arnold's assessment of the condition of the Liberal party proved to be correct, because, "except for one interval, the Liberals remained out of power for twenty years" (Smith, p. 656).

Matthew Arnold remained intensely interested in politics until the day he died, April 15, 1888. He wrote several more articles after "The Nadir of Liberalism," among them its sequel, "The Zenith of Conservatism." The main figure of the article was Lord Randolph Churchill, Chancellor of the Exchequer, but Churchill resigned his office before the article was published, making, as Arnold says, for "an awkward circumstance" (Russell, II, 419).

Perhaps it is not too bold to say that Matthew Arnold was as astute an observer of his own times as any man has been, before or since. He was an acute observer who could take a man's idea, pass it over his stream of enlightened consciousness, and pick out the motivation, purpose, and the consequences of
the idea. His influence on methods of literary criticism are well-known, but one does not have to look very far to see traces of Arnoldian political analysis in use today. The reporting and analyzing of current events takes place, as much through oral media as the printed word. The world of the press and politicians has a cast of notable characters just as it did in Arnold's day. The Matthew Arnolds of today are the Walter Cronkites and the Edward R. Murrows. They have analyzed and put into perspective the comments of the radical Nicholas von Hoffmans and Hubert H. Humphreys, the John Brights of today, and the conservative Joseph McCarthys and Barry Goldwaters, the Robert Lowes of today. Just as Arnold's comments influenced historians of the nineteenth century, so the comments of noted newsmen will influence those who will write about Watergate and the political personalities today.

Of course, no analogies to figures in the twentieth century are valid unless we consider them in relation to Arnold's own time. The key point in all cases is the point of objectivity. Arnold criticized Lord Palmerston because he was not "objective" in matters of foreign policy. He was biased and pompous enough to think that any decision England made with regard to the rest of the world was the right decision. Gladstone was biased and emotional enough to think that any decision he made about
the fate of Ireland was the right one. Palmerston and Gladstone were offensive in the pressing of their decisions on the English public and the rest of Europe. The other eminent Prime Minister, Benjamin Disraeli, was a flatterer, but he was enough like Arnold in this respect—he did not offend the esthetic sensitivity of Europe or our political and social critic. Of the three, Disraeli alone was able to touch Arnold at his weak point. Disraeli, like Arnold, was a literary man, and he understood the importance of the "way" a person said something—the "grand style." For this reason, Arnold kindly overlooked most of his political inadequacies. Palmerston and Gladstone were Philistines of the highest order; whereas Disraeli, although a Philistine in background, was perhaps the exception Arnold says occurs occasionally in every class. One of the key issues in the reporting of American political news today has been the question of objectivity. And the examples of those in the American press cited above illustrate the same ideas that Arnold deals with in Culture and Anarchy and Friendship's Garland. The only difference is that Arnold had no one to fall back on or to call "objective" in the British press because there was no one as objective as Arnold himself.
Matthew Arnold called himself a Liberal tempered by Conservatism and experience. Perhaps the result of this formula is the disinterested observer who can see the thing as, in fact, it really is.
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